GOVERNING ARTICLES
OF THE
NBLSA MID-ATLANTIC REGION

PREAMBLE

Pursuant to the authority granted by Article V of the NBLSA Constitution and Articles II and IV of the NBLSA Bylaws, this set of Governing Articles is established to govern the orderly and efficient operations of the Mid-Atlantic Region.

Now, therefore, we bind ourselves to the following provisions.

THE GOVERNING ARTICLES

ARTICLE I. THE REGION

Section A. *Name and Governing Authority*

1. The name of this association is the Mid-Atlantic Region of the National Black Law Students Association ("MABLSA" or "the Region"), a duly registered regional administrative jurisdiction under the National Black Law Students Association ("NBLSA").

2. The organization shall be the governance authority for the officers, committees, sub-regions, and local constituent chapters under its charge, and shall exercise all powers granted by these Governing Articles, the Regional Bylaws, Regional policy, and extant policies, rules, and pronouncements of the National Black Law Students Association.

Section B. *Objectives and Purposes*

1. The purpose of MABLSA shall be to utilize the collective resources of its officers, sub-regions, constituent chapters, and individual members to:

   (i) Articulate and promote the educational, professional, political, and social needs and goals of Black law students;

   (ii) Foster and cultivate adherence to professional competency standards;

   (iii) Engage the American legal system through dedicated programming, initiatives, and political/legal advocacy to advance the causes of social justice and equality, as well as provide greater access and opportunity to Black law students and alumni;

   (iv) Instill greater awareness and commitment to the social, political, and legal needs of the community-at-large; and,

   (v) Encourage and promote employment opportunities in the prosecutorial, judicial, and other public interest fields.

2. The Region shall be empowered to conduct all necessary and appropriate programming, initiatives, and operations to accomplish these objectives and others set by resolution of the Regional Assembly.

Section C. *Structure and Organization*

1. There shall be a Regional Assembly, which shall serve as the governing legislative and oversight body of the Region, and there shall be a Regional Board which shall serve as the administrative body of the Region.

2. There shall be sub-regions which shall consist of local chapters grouped by geographical jurisdictions defined by these Governing Articles, and there shall be local chapters who shall be constituted per the terms of the NBLSA Constitution and Bylaws and relevant policies of the Region.

Section D. *Regional Membership – Chapters and Individuals*

1. Chapter membership shall consist of duly created BLSA chapters located at law schools within the following states/jurisdictions: Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Southern New Jersey, Virginia, and West Virginia.

2. The sub-regional divisions of the Region shall be apportioned as follows:

   (i) **District of Columbia/Maryland Sub-Region**: University of Baltimore School of Law, University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law, American University Washington College of Law, Catholic University of America Columbus School of Law, University of the District of Columbia David A. Clarke School of Law, George Washington University Law School, Georgetown University Law Center, Howard University School of Law, and George Mason University School of Law;

   (ii) **Greater Philadelphia Sub-Region**: Temple University School of Law, University of Pennsylvania School of Law, Villanova University School of Law, Rutgers University School of Law-Camden, Widener University School of Law-Wilmington, and Drexel University School of Law;

   (iii) **Virginia Sub-Region**: College of William and Mary School of Law, Liberty University, Regent University School of Law, University of Richmond School of Law, University of Virginia School of Law, Washington and Lee University School of Law and Appalachian School of Law; and,

   (iv) **Pennsylvania/West Virginia Sub-Region**: University of Pittsburgh School of Law, Duquesne University School of Law, Widener University School of Law-Harrisburg, Pennsylvania State University Dickinson School of Law, Pennsylvania State University – University Park, and West Virginia University School of Law.

3. Individual members of the Region shall be law students matriculating at a law school at which a chapter of the Black Law Students Association is located who are financial and registered members of NBLSA and their local chapter, or have otherwise fulfilled the membership obligations of Article III of the NBLSA Constitution. Members of the Region shall be afforded the rights and privileges of Article III, Section IV of the NBLSA Constitution, as applicable and appropriate.

4. Chapters and individual members of the Regional shall be expected to actively participate in the activities, program, initiatives, and business of the Region.

5. Newly formed chapters, duly recognized by NBLSA, shall be assigned by the Regional Chair to the sub-region most geographically appropriate for its proper development as a chapter and participation in Regional and National events.

ARTICLE II. THE REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Section A. Name and Object

1. The legislative body of the Region shall be the Regional Assembly. It shall hereinafter be referred to as "the Assembly."

2. The objectives and plenary powers of the Assembly shall be to promote the interests and general welfare of the Region, to provide general oversight to the MABLSA and its entities, officers, programs, and operations, as well as to regulate and administer the student organization and programming structures of the Region, where appropriate.

3. The Assembly may set other objectives and policies for itself and the Region through appropriate legislation, provided that they are consistent with these Governing Articles, the Bylaws, and the policies of NBLSA.

Section B. Assembly Composition and Voting Membership

1. The Assembly shall be composed of delegates from each active chapter of the Region, and shall be constituted at the site of the annual Regional Convention.

2. The voting allocation of the various chapter delegations of the Assembly shall include the following:

   (i) One (1) vote for each chapter with ten (10) members or less;

   (ii) Two (2) votes for each chapter with eleven (11) to twenty-four (24) members;

   (iii) Three (3) votes for each chapter with twenty-five (25) to forty-nine (49) members;

   (iv) Four (4) votes for chapters with fifty (50) to seventy-four (74) members; and,

(v) Five (5) votes for chapters with seventy-five (75) members or more.

3. Voting strength calculations for plenary sessions shall be confirmed with each chapter by the Regional Director of Membership, and shall not be adjusted within thirty (30) days of the opening of the Regional Convention.

Section C. Assembly Authority, Powers and Responsibilities

1. All legislative and oversight authority shall be vested in the Assembly and shall be exercised within the context of the annual meeting of the Assembly or within its committees.

2. The Regional Assembly shall be empowered to exercise and/or delegate all authority conferred upon the Region by the policies and procedures of NBLSA.

3. The Assembly shall have the following enumerated powers and authority:

(i) The Assembly shall be empowered to set the overall policy direction, programmatic agenda, and objectives of the Region, and shall authorize the creation and execution of initiatives, events and programs to these ends.

(ii) The Assembly shall be empowered to regulate the operation and administration of the Region, including its powers and its responsibilities, as well as exercise oversight over itself and its officers, where necessary and proper.

(iii) The Assembly shall be empowered to regulate its internal operations and procedures, and to nominate and elect Regional officers, as necessary and compliant with these Governing Articles, for the purposes of executing and furthering its established will.

(iv) The Assembly shall be empowered to define the parameters and details of Region officer duties, where not in conflict with or contravening NBLSA policy, these Governing Articles, or the Bylaws.

(v) The Assembly shall be the authority on Region disciplinary measures, with power to suspend and remove officers, as well as suspend and expel its members, performing due diligence and affording due process, in doing so.

(vi) The Assembly shall be empowered to regulate and direct the actions of the members and officers who are performing actions in the furtherance of Region business, where appropriate.

(vii) All powers and authority not explicitly delegated by the Constitution or Bylaws shall be reserved by the Assembly, or by the chapters of the Region, at large.

4. The Assembly shall ensure that all programs, initiatives, and objectives fall within the principles and overall programmatic vision of the Region.

5. The Assembly shall be empowered to delegate, through legislation, any of the powers – in whole or in part – to specific officers or independent boards, councils, commissions, or working groups for specific, particularly defined purposes. The Assembly reserves the right to maintain appropriate oversight and amend, curtail or revoke any delegation of authority.

Section D. Meetings of the Assembly

1. The Assembly shall meet annually and hold its plenary meeting at the site of the Regional Convention, at a time and location that is announced to the membership in advance and that shall be suitable for transacting the business of the Region.

2. All meetings of the Assembly and applicable meetings of the Assembly committees shall be recorded in minutes maintained by the Regional Secretary.

3. Special or Emergency meetings of the Assembly can be authorized in a manner consistent with NBLSA policy, the Regional Bylaws or extant Regional Assembly legislation, the highest in precedence prevailing.

4. For the transaction of Assembly business, a quorum of a one-third (1/3) of the Region's active chapter membership shall be required to be present.

5. Only chapters who are present and accounted for at any meeting of the Assembly shall be allowed to vote on any question or in any election before the body. Voting by proxy shall only be permitted in manner detailed by the Bylaws or legislative acts of the Assembly.

6. Non-transactional news, reports, or other happenings may be discussed, but not acted upon, in the absence of a quorum.

Section E. Regional Committees

1. The Assembly and the Regional Board shall be empowered to establish Regional standing and ad-hoc committees to discharge the various decisions and programs of the Region.

2. Each committee shall be composed of at least three (3) members of the Region, and shall be headed by a committee chair, who shall be appointed by the Regional Chair, wherein such a position is not specifically designated by the Constitution or Bylaws.

3. Any active and financial member of the Region shall be eligible to serve on any applicable committee. At no time, shall participation on any Regional Committee preclude any individual member of the Region except as allowed by the Constitution and Bylaws.

4. The powers, duties, and responsibilities of Regional committees, where not otherwise contained in these Governing Articles, shall be stipulated in the Bylaws.

Section F. *Voting*

1. All questions coming before the Assembly shall require a majority vote to pass, unless otherwise stipulated by these Governing Articles, the Bylaws, special rules of order created by the Assembly, or the selected parliamentary authority of the Assembly.

2. The presiding officer of the Assembly shall be not be allowed to cast a vote except where it shall affect the outcome of a tie vote.

Section G. *Parliamentary Authority*

1. The most current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* shall be the parliamentary authority at all official meetings of the Assembly and any subset thereof, and shall be held as Region policy in any case where any superseding document is unclear or silent.

2. The Assembly may adopt rules of order that shall regulate the internal operations of the Assembly, and any subset thereof. Assembly committees, under the direction of the committee chairs, may adopt a more relaxed or informal method of meeting and collaboration, where appropriate.

ARTICLE III. REGIONAL OFFICERS

Section A. *Officers of the Region*

1. The elected officers of the Region shall include:

   (i) The Regional Chair

   (ii) The Regional Vice-Chair

   (iii) The Regional Secretary

   (iv) The Regional Treasurer

   (v) The Regional Attorney General

   (vi) The Regional Director of the Thurgood Marshall Moot Court Competition

   (vii) The Regional Director of the Constance Baker Motley Mock Trial Competition

   (viii) The Regional Director of Community Service

   (ix) The Regional Director of Programming

   (x) The Sub-Regional Directors

2. The appointed officers of the Region shall include:

   (i) The Regional Chief of Staff

   (ii) The Regional Historian

   (iii) The Regional Parliamentarian

   (iv) The Regional Financial Secretary

(v) The Regional Convention Director

(vi) The Regional Director of Communications

(vii) The Regional Director of Corporate Relations

(viii) The Regional Director of Career and Professional Development

(ix) The Regional Director of Membership

(x) The Regional Director of Alumni Affairs

(xi) The Regional Director of the Pre-Law Division

(xii) The Regional Director of Social Action

(xiii) The Regional Director of Government and Policy Affairs

3. The Regional Chair, with the advice and consent of the Regional Board, may create assistant directors, specialists, and other positions to support the operations of the Regional Board or individual members, thereof. The Regional Chair, in creating such a position, shall stipulate the specific duties and scope of operations for the position in question and propose it as an action item to the Board.

4. In appointing members of the Regional Board, the Regional Chair shall devise an application process or other open method of vying for the position which shall be made generally available to any eligible member of the Region.

5. The powers, authority, and responsibilities of the aforementioned officers shall be stipulated in the Bylaws.

Section B. The Regional Board

1. The Regional Board shall be the administrative body of the Region, having power to create and execute such policies as to further the established objectives, programs, and initiatives of the Region and administer its functions.

2. The Regional Board shall also set strategy for achieving established policy and programming objectives of the Region, within the context of these Governing Articles, the Bylaws, and Regional policies.

3. The Regional Board shall have the following enumerated powers and authority:

   (i) The Regional Board shall have power to establish Regional policies and procedures to regulation the operation, continuity, and administration of the Region, as well as to regulate the internal operations of the Board, its committees or any programs executed under its jurisdiction.

   (ii) The Regional Board shall be empowered to interpret and apply the policies of NBLSA and the Region, subject to the oversight of the Regional Assembly, the National Executive Board, and the National Assembly.

(iii) The Regional Board shall be empowered to make recommendations to the Assembly and communicate with the Regional membership as to matters of organizational, academic, and social importance.

(iv) The Regional Board shall be empowered to administer programming mandated by NBLSA, as well as create, approve, and execute regional programming. The Board shall be empowered to engage chapters for co-sponsorship or other joint efforts, as well as create internal Board committees for the purposes of Regional business.

(v) The Regional Chair and Regional Board shall be charged with the planning, execution, and preparation of the annual Regional Convention.

(vi) The Board shall exercise oversight and evaluate the progress of the Region, set the overall policy direction, programmatic agenda, and objectives of the Mid-Atlantic Region, and shall authorize the creation and execution of initiatives, events, and programs, receiving regular reports from the Regional Chair, Regional Vice-Chair, and other regional officers in this regard;

(vii) The Board shall, as occasion may arise, sit as an intermediate appellate review board, hearing appeals from disciplinary actions and other grievances transacted at or issued from the Chapter level;

(viii) Determines question of interpretation of national and regional policy, subject to the superseding interpretations of the National Executive Board or the NBLSA General Assembly, and resolves questions of Regional officer and Board member discipline;

(ix) Transacts the financial, operational, and internal business of the Region, including the establishing of fiscal priorities via a Regional Budget and authorizing allocations for expenditures, subject to NBLSA financial policies and procedures;

(x) Evaluates and acts upon nominations to vacant positions, as may be appointed from time to time by the Regional Chair; and,

(xi) Exercises all other explicit and implicit authority as granted by the NBLSA Constitution, NBLSA Bylaws, and any acts of the NBLSA General Assembly and/or Executive Board policies to accomplish the purposes for which the Region exists.

4. The Regional Chair shall serve as the Chair of the Board and shall primarily preside in its meetings.

5. The voting membership of the Regional Board shall be the elected and appointed officers found in Article III, Section A(1) and (2) of these Governing Articles. Board-approved subordinate officers,

specialists, and other positions created by action of the Regional Chair, may participate in the deliberations of the Regional Board, but may not vote.

6. Teleconferencing or other electronic means of communication approved by the Assembly or by the Regional Chair can be held as official meetings of the Regional Board, and may be used to conduct voting on discrete, non-adjudicatory, and non-policymaking matters as allowed by Regional Board policy.

7. For the purposes of substantive decisions and nomination confirmations, a simple majority of the Board in the affirmative shall be the required vote threshold for passage, unless explicitly specified in the Constitution, Bylaws, or Regional Assembly legislation.

8. The powers, authority, and responsibilities of the Regional Board, not otherwise contained within these Governing Articles, shall be stipulated in the Bylaws.

Section A. *Vacancies and Term of Office*

1. In the case of the resignation, removal, permanent incapacitation or any other vacancy in the office of Regional Chair, the Regional Vice-Chair shall become Regional Chair.

2. Should the offices of Regional Chair and Regional Vice-Chair be simultaneously vacant, the Regional Board shall meet within two (2) weeks of the applicable vacancy and the Regional Treasurer shall conduct an election for the office of Regional Chair. Until such a meeting shall occur, the Regional Treasurer shall carry out the functions of the Regional Chair.

3. The terms of office for elected Regional officers shall commence on April 1 of the year of their election, and shall conclude at 11:59 pm on March 31 of the subsequent year, unless intervened upon by removal, resignation, ineligibility, or permanent incapacitation.

4. The terms of appointed Regional officers shall run concurrently with that of the appointing Regional Chair from the point of their applicable appointment or confirmation, unless intervened upon by removal, resignation, ineligibility, permanent incapacitation, or other provision of policy, as passed by the Assembly or contained within the governing documents of the organization.

Section B. *Qualifications for Election or Appointment*

1. All Regional officers shall be dues-paying members of NBLSA, at the time of their election or appointment and for the duration of their term, and shall have had at least one (1) semester of financial membership immediately prior to their election or appointment.

2. All officers shall be in good academic standing with their academic institution and shall show evidence of such standing as the Regional Board may require.

3. The elected or appointed officer, in accepting their election or appointment, agrees to fulfill all duties as prescribed by NBLSA and

MABLSA policy, the Regional Chair, the Regional Board, and the fiduciary duties incumbent upon an officer of the Region.

ARTICLE IV. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section A. *MABLSA Policy Precedence & Procedures*

1. The Regional Order of Precedence for the policies of the Region shall be as follows:
   - *(i)* The NBLSA Constitution and Bylaws
   - *(ii)* Acts of the NBLSA General Assembly
   - *(iii)* Duly passed policies of the NBLSA National Board
   - *(iv)* The Regional Governing Articles and Bylaws
   - *(v)* The legislative acts of the Regional Assembly
   - *(vi)* Duly passed policies of the Regional Board
   - *(vii)* The most current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*
2. Pursuant to Article XVI of the NBLSA Constitution, all actions of the Region, and any subset or authorized agent thereof, shall comply with extant NBLSA policies, including the NBLSA Constitution, Bylaws, resolutions/acts of the NBLSA General Assembly, and actions of the NBLSA National Executive Board. Provisions of these Governing Articles found to conflict with NBLSA policy shall be severed, but shall not affect the effect, weight, and force of the remainder of the Articles herein.
3. Rulings of the Regional Chair or other presiding officer, within the context of the Regional Convention, Regional Board meetings, or Regional committee meetings on the interpretation of Regional or National policy or parliamentary procedure may be appealed per the dictates of *Robert's Rules of Order* and other extant policies.
4. No part of these Governing Articles may be suspended, set aside, or countermanded, except for policies dealing with procedural rules of order in the plenary or other business sessions of the Regional Convention or Regional Board meetings, which may be suspended under the provisions of the Bylaws and any rules of order authorized by the provisions of the same.

Section B. *General Policies of the Mid-Atlantic Region*

1. This Region, its officers, or any entity or chapter under its jurisdiction, shall not discriminate on the basis of ancestry, color, race, cultural or ethnic background/identity, economic status, political or ideological beliefs, marital or parental status, national, regional, or ethnic origin, physical disability, religious affiliation, gender, gender identity/presentation, or sexual orientation. Policies, actions, or statements affiliated with such stances are strictly prohibited by recognized entities, affiliates, officers, or members of the Region, and may open the offending person or body to such remedies as may be available under available policy.

2. Officers of the Region, by virtue of their election or appointment shall be held to have a fiduciary duty to the Region, where provided by NBLSA policy, and shall at all times operate in the bests interests of the Region and its constituent chapters. Officers shall be accountable to the voting membership of the Region, and shall act as responsible stewards of Regional resources, finances, and assets.

3. All officers of the Region shall be required to avoid explicit and implicit conflicts of interest when voting or acting in their official capacities. If such conflicts exist, members shall recuse themselves from action, as appropriate.

4. The Region shall be in active communion with NBLSA, pursuant to the NBLSA Constitution and Bylaws, and shall, when necessary and proper, provide representation to the various boards, working groups, and committees of the organization at large.

5. The Region, its officers, and its agents will comply with all relevant university policies, as well as local, state, and federal laws, while acting in the furtherance of MABLSA business.

ARTICLE V. AMENDMENT PROCEDURES

Section A. *Notice to Chapters*

1. Amendments to these Governing Articles may be put forward in writing to the Regional Assembly by the Regional Board or an active chapter of the Region. Such amendments shall be submitted to the Regional Parliamentarian no later than sixty (60) days prior to the opening of the Regional Convention. The Regional Parliamentarian, in consultation with the Regional Chair and Regional Secretary, may prescribe the format and method of submission.

2. The Regional Secretary shall compile and distribute the text of all proposed amendments to each active chapter of the Region at least thirty (30) days prior to the opening of the Regional Convention.

Section B. *Regional Assembly Consideration*

1. For all submitted amendments, the Regional Governing Articles and Bylaws Committee shall review the proposed amendments within thirty (30) days of the due date for amendment submissions. Amendments not having a majority of votes in the affirmative shall not be laid before the full Assembly for consideration.

2. The Regional Assembly shall debate and consider any proposed amendments having survived committee scrutiny. A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting delegates of the Assembly shall be required to ratify an amendment.

3. The Regional Parliamentarian shall, after the close of the Regional Convention, amend the Constitution in accordance with the actions of the Regional Assembly and publicly display the newly amended document. They shall have power to adjust the numbering and formatting of the Constitution and correct grammatical errors,

provided that such amendments do not substantively change the language or effect of the Constitution.

4. The Regional Secretary shall distribute the newly amended Constitution to the Regional Board and all Regional chapters. A copy shall be submitted to the appropriate National officers, including the National Parliamentarian and the National Chair.