

BYLAWS OF CONCERNS OF POLICE SURVIVORS, INC.

MISSION

Rebuilding shattered lives of surviving family members and co-workers affected by line of duty deaths.

VISION

C.O.P.S. is the premier organization providing exceptional lifelong services and peer support to surviving family members and co-workers following a line of duty death as well as vital law enforcement wellness and trauma training.

CORE VALUES

Integrity: We uphold the values of confidentiality, respect, and honesty, setting the standard in every aspect of service to C.O.P.S.' mission.

Support: We are dedicated to providing exceptional service, advocacy, and peer support for surviving families, co-workers, and the law enforcement community for as long as they need us.

Compassion: We inspire hope through a safe, accepting and caring environment.

Fiscal Responsibility: We recognize the faith our partners have placed in us, embracing transparency and responsibility in the management of our financial resources.

Diversity: We value and embrace all survivors, recognizing that our different life experiences combined, make us stronger.

PREAMBLE

In the implementation of its mission statement, C.O.P.S. ministers to the needs of families who have suffered the loss of a law enforcement officer in the line of duty (as reported by the Federal Bureau of Investigation [FBI], Bureau of Justice Assistance's Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program [PSOB], the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund [NLEOMF], or the Fraternal Order of Police [FOP]). C.O.P.S. extends a helping hand to assist with their psychological, financial, and legal well-being. C.O.P.S. educates them with information that others suffering the same loss can be of service to them during their periods of helplessness. C.O.P.S. also focuses on the problems of the law enforcement profession that directly or indirectly may lead to the loss of an officer's life. C.O.P.S. provides training to law enforcement agencies regarding survivor/victimization issues.

ARTICLE I
NAME OF ORGANIZATION

This organization shall be known as Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc. (C.O.P.S.), and was incorporated in the State of Maryland on April 9, 1984.

ARTICLE II
PURPOSE OF ORGANIZATION

- Section 1. Concerns of Police Survivors (C.O.P.S.) shall address the emotional, psychological, financial and legal problems that arise from the loss of a loved one in the law enforcement profession. The family of any officer who has died in the line of duty in the United States and its Territories may use the services of C.O.P.S. Concerns of Police Survivors members, while providing support to fellow survivors, shall also address the problems that affect active officers, their families and their law enforcement agency and help them better understand the mission of C.O.P.S.
- Section 2. It shall be the aim of this organization to minister to the needs of law enforcement survivors in offering support during troubled times, securing financial aid for counseling, and focusing on the problems that affect the law enforcement community and law enforcement survivors.
- Section 3. C.O.P.S. will also engage in community awareness campaigns to encourage communities and citizens to recognize the daily sacrifices made by law enforcement officers and their families.

ARTICLE III
MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1. C.O.P.S. membership is limited to surviving family members (spouse, child {natural, adopted and step}, parent, and sibling), "significant others", fiancés, other family members and co-workers affected by the loss of any law enforcement officer dying in the line of duty as determined by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Bureau of Justice Assistance's Public Safety Officers' Benefit (PSOB), National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund (NLEOMF) or Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) criteria.
- Section 2. C.O.P.S. membership will also be provided to United Kingdom, Care of Police Survivors (UK COPS) survivors, residing in the United States, after verification of such survivorship from the President or Executive Director of UK COPS.

- Section 3. Members should acknowledge their commitment to the mission of C.O.P.S., and be willing to abide by the rules and regulations of C.O.P.S. Individual members shall have no national voting authority.

ARTICLE IV SERVICES

- Section 1. Any family member (spouse, child {natural, adopted and step}, parent, and sibling) of any law enforcement officer who has died in the line of duty as defined in Article III, Section 1 is eligible to use the services provided by C.O.P.S. C.O.P.S. also recognizes “significant others”, fiancés, other family members and co-workers as a category of survivorship.
- Section 2. C.O.P.S. will also recognize reciprocal services to United Kingdom, Care of Police Survivors (UK COPS) survivors, residing in the United States, after verification of such survivorship from the President or Executive Director of UK COPS.
- Section 3. Services provided by C.O.P.S. shall be provided free of charge to law enforcement survivors in need of particular services. This section does not preclude the National Board from assessing a charge for returning survivors to National Police Survivors’ Conference and other fees deemed appropriate.
- Section 4. All members shall be treated equally without regard to race, religion, sex, disability, age, national origin, sexual orientation, or marital status in all practices including advertising, recruiting, interviewing, training, benefits, and Hands-On Programs.

ARTICLE V FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the Concerns of Police Survivors organization shall be from April 1 to March 31, inclusive.

ARTICLE VI OFFICERS

- Section 1. The elected officers of the National Board of Concerns of Police Survivors shall be a National President and nine (9) Trustees.
- Section 2. The non-elected officers of the National Board of Concerns of Police Survivors shall be the Executive Director and Executive Director Emeritus.
- Section 3. The National President, Immediate Past President and nine (9) Trustees shall be law enforcement survivors of line-of-duty death.

- Section 4. Survivors shall not serve as an officer of Concerns of Police Survivors until at least one year has elapsed since the loss of their officer. To be eligible for National President, a survivor shall serve a minimum of one term as a National Board member.
- Section 5. No two survivors of the same line of duty death may serve as a member of the National Board at the same time.
- Section 6. No individual can serve in more than one elected position. If there is a situation that does permit an individual to hold multiple positions, he/she will be entitled to only one vote on an issue.
- Section 7. The Immediate Past President shall be the President immediately preceding the current National President. If the Immediate Past President is unable or unwilling to serve, the position will be appointed by the National President to any Past National President and approved by majority vote of the National Board.
- Section 8. The National President shall be the Presiding Officer and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Concerns of Police Survivors. Term of office for National President is one (1) year and shall serve no more than two (2) terms.
- Section 9. The nine (9) Trustees shall be elected to represent specific geographical areas designated at the time of their election. The Trustee must reside in the geographical area he/she represents. Should a Trustee move their legal residence outside of their region at any point during their term, that position will immediately be declared vacant by the National President. The National President will appoint a replacement Regional Trustee according to Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).
- Section 10. A Trustee may serve a maximum of two (2) consecutive two-year terms as Trustee. After a break in service of one term, a member becomes eligible to be a candidate for Trustee.
- Section 11. Should a Regional Trustee step down from their board position, that position shall be filled by the National President according to the SOPs.
- Section 12. One Trustee shall be appointed as National Board Treasurer immediately following the national elections.
- Section 13. One Trustee shall be elected by majority vote of the Trustees as ‘Chair of Trustees’ at the Board Meeting held immediately following the national elections. The Chair of Trustees shall act as President Pro Tem of the organization when necessary and shall replace the National President should the National President be unable or unwilling to fulfill his/her term of office.
- Section 14. Should the presiding National President resign and the Chair of Trustees be unable or unwilling to accept the position of National President, the Immediate Past President will be asked to serve in this position. If the Immediate Past President is unable or unwilling to serve, the National Board will elect the interim National President from the members of the National Board by approval of the National Board.

- Section 15. Any interested candidate for National President, if not a current sitting board member, shall have served on the National Board within the last four (4) years of submitting their application.
- Section 16. The Executive Director shall be hired as an employee under the direction of the National Board. The Executive Director should be knowledgeable of the wants, needs, problems, and emotions of law enforcement life and understand the issues involved with traumatic death. The Executive Director shall hire any additional employees of C.O.P.S. that meet the criteria set forth by the Executive Director as approved by the National Board.
- Section 17. Those officers serving as voting member of the C.O.P.S. organization are the National President, Immediate Past President, and nine (9) Trustees. Those officers serving as non-voting members of the C.O.P.S. organization shall be the Executive Director and the Executive Director Emeritus.
- Section 18. The Executive Director and Executive Director Emeritus, who shall be non-voting members of the National Board, shall have voice during meetings but shall not have the right to make motions. They may, however, recommend action for the National Board's consideration.
- Section 19. The Past National Presidents, after having served at least one full term as Immediate Past President, become ex-officio, non-voting members of the National Board.
- Section 20. Should an officer be unable or unwilling to fulfill his/her term or if a position is declared vacant, the National President, with the approval of the National Board, shall appoint someone to that position according to the SOPs.
- Section 21. Should it become necessary to hire an Executive Director, a search committee shall be appointed by the National President, with approval from the National Board, to conduct a nationwide search, receive resumes', conduct interviews and make recommendations of the finalists to the National Board. The Executive Director shall be hired by a 2/3 vote of the National Board.
- Section 22. The National President, with approval from the National Board, shall appoint a suitable temporary replacement for the Executive Director until a permanent Executive Director can be hired.

ARTICLE VII

DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS

- Section 1. Board officers/members shall serve in the best interest of the organization. They are entrusted with responsibilities of promoting the organization, securing funding for the organization, acting honorably and ethically and ensuring that the integrity of the organization is preserved.
- Section 2. Honorariums, consulting fees, presenting fees (as distinguished from reimbursement

for expenses), and instructors' fees earned by Board officers/members as a result of their status with C.O.P.S. shall be turned over to the organization.

- Section 3. Any Board Officers/members accused of violating Section 1 or 2 of this Article shall be notified in writing of the alleged violation(s) by the Grievance Committee and given an opportunity to present a defense of the violation(s) as outlined in SOPs.
- Section 4. Any Board Officers/members found to be in violation of Section 1 or 2 of this Article shall be dismissed from the National Board and/or organization and the National President shall declare the position to be vacant. Should the National President be dismissed, the Chair of the Trustees will assume the Presidency and fill the vacancy in his/her region according to SOPs. Dismissal of a member of the National Board requires a 2/3 vote of all the voting members of the National Board, regardless of the number of board members present for the meeting.
- Section 5. Activity reports of the Board shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Director, or their designee, twenty-one (21) days prior to the July and December/January Board meetings.
- Section 6. Any possible conflict of interest shall be disclosed to the National Board of C.O.P.S. by the person concerned. When any such conflict of interest is relevant to a matter requiring action by the National Board, the interested person shall call it to the attention of the National Board (or its committee) and such person shall not vote on the matter (see SOPs). In the absence of a conflict of interest, a board member may not abstain from voting.
- Section 7. National Board members may not have a family member employed by C.O.P.S. while he/she is serving on the National Board. Should a family member of a board member become employed by C.O.P.S. during his/her term, that board member will resign his/her position immediately or the position will be declared vacant by the National President.
- Section 8. Each board member may miss only one scheduled board meeting per year without an absence which has been approved by the National Board. If a board member exceeds this limit, his/her position shall be declared vacant by the National President and, with the approval of the National Board, the National President will fill the vacancy according to SOPs.
- Section 9. The National President has the responsibility to make sure that the directions from the National Board are followed by the Executive Director and the Executive Director performs his/her function according to the job description. The National President is the representative of the National Board and is considered the immediate supervisor of the Executive Director.
- Section 10. The National President shall serve as the voting member of the NLEOMF Executive Board and Names Committee, and any advisory committees of the organization. The National President may appoint another board member and/or national office staff member to fulfill these roles.

Section 11. The National Board Treasurer shall convene and provide leadership to the Audit and Finance Committee, serve as financial liaison to the National staff and board, and act as signatory on official documents.

Section 12. Additional duties of the National President, Immediate Past President, Trustees, Executive Director, and Executive Director Emeritus are written in SOPs.

ARTICLE VIII

NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Section 1. Anyone seeking nomination for any of the elected officer positions (National President and nine (9) Trustees) must follow the procedures established by the Nominations and Elections SOPs.

Section 2. All candidates for the National Board must be an advocate for, and supporter of, Concerns of Police Survivors and dedicated to work in the best interest of the C.O.P.S. organization.

Section 3. The National President shall be elected by a majority vote of the nine (9) Trustees, the Immediate Past President and all chapters. The Trustee shall be elected by a majority vote of the chapters within his/her specific region, and one collective vote of the nine (9) Trustees and the Immediate Past President.

Section 4. Elections will be completed each July following the process directed by SOPs. Elected officers shall begin his/her term at the close of the last board meeting of the preceding term in July. Newly elected officers will be sworn in as the last order of business at this board meeting.

Section 5. Trustees terms of office shall be staggered to preserve and maintain continuity. The Trustees for the Central Plains, Northeast, Northwest, Southeast and Western Regions shall complete their terms in odd-numbered years. The Trustees for the Atlantic, Midwest, South Central, and Southwest Regions shall complete their terms in even-numbered years.

ARTICLE IX

MEETINGS

Section 1. The annual meeting of the membership of Concerns of Police Survivors shall be the opening day of the National Police Survivors' Conference. Those members present during the opening ceremonies shall constitute a quorum of C.O.P.S. membership.

Section 2. Regularly Scheduled board meetings are as follows: July and December/January.

- Section 3. The presence of seven (7) voting members of the National Board shall constitute a quorum.
- Section 4. A majority vote of the National Board present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the National Board unless the act of a greater number is required by the Articles of Incorporation or elsewhere in these Bylaws.
- Section 5. Special meetings may be called by the National President or at the written request of a majority of the National Board. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated in the request made to the National President. When requested by the majority of the National Board, it is the responsibility of the National President to schedule any such meeting at the earliest available opportunity.
- Section 6. The National Board, national committees, and special committees are authorized to meet via electronic communications as long as all the members present may simultaneously hear each other and participate during the meeting. If deemed by the Committee Chairperson to be necessary and approved by the National President a Committee meeting may be held at a location that provides open and face to face discussion. Such shall be funded by the National Office.
- Section 7. Members of the National Board may be polled and votes may be taken by email presentation of the vote, or the presentation of the vote by email is simple enough to be explained completely in the body of the email and contains an option to request further discussion at a meeting before voting.
- Section 8. Any member of C.O.P.S. has the right to attend any regular board meeting; however, executive session shall be restricted to current National Board members.
- Section 9. The Past Leadership Committee will receive approved National Board meeting minutes, excluding executive session minutes.
- Section 10. Approved non-executive session board meeting minutes will be available to C.O.P.S. members, with a restriction for members use only and are not to be shared by non-members.
- Section 11. Detailed minutes shall be taken of all Board Meetings.
- Section 12. Executive Sessions shall be held only for confidential and sensitive issues.

ARTICLE X

NATIONAL BOARD

- Section 1. The officers of Concerns of Police Survivors, including both voting and non-voting officers, shall constitute the National Board of Concerns of Police Survivors.
- Section 2. The National Board shall have general supervision of the affairs of Concerns of Police Survivors and shall perform such duties as are specified in these Bylaws and SOPs.

- Section 3. The Executive Director Emeritus is a lifetime board position granted to Suzanne Sawyer, founder of Concerns of Police Survivors. The Executive Director Emeritus, as a non-voting member shall have a voice during meetings but shall not have the right to make motions. She may, however, recommend the National Board consider particular action.

ARTICLE XI COMMITTEES

- Section 1. The National President shall appoint Standing Committees with the approval of the National Board at the first meeting of the new term. All committee members shall execute a Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest agreement. Special Committees, between elections, may be appointed by the National President with the approval of the National Board. No Committee shall be comprised of a majority of the current voting National Board. If it is deemed that additional members are required to conduct the business of the Committee, then these additional members may be Past National Presidents or others who have training and/or experience specific to that committee, and will be appointed by the National President with National Board approval. Special committees shall serve until the task is complete or until the next election, whichever occurs first, at which time they will terminate.
- Section 2. No committee shall keep monies of the organization. All committees receiving monies belonging to the organization shall immediately forward such monies to the Executive Director.
- Section 3. Committee Chairmen shall submit a written report to the Executive Director, or their designee, twenty- one days prior to Board meetings.
- Section 4. The Executive Director shall prepare all reports to be distributed to the National Board prior to the beginning of all board meetings and shall have copies of these reports available through the C.O.P.S. office.
- Section 5. The standing committees shall be:
- a. **Bylaws/SOP Committee:** responsible for the preparing of proposed amendments to the Bylaws, proposed Special Rules of Order, and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs); to present those amendments and Special Rules of Order to the National Board and chapters; be responsible for writing all SOPs; and ensure consistency with other rules and, in consultation with Legal Counsel, ensuring compliance with applicable laws.
 - b. **Nominations/Elections Committee:** responsible for overseeing the annual elections of the C.O.P.S. officers. The Election Audit Committee shall be a sub-committee and is tasked with tallying elections results.
 - c. **Development Committee:** responsible for providing ideas to the Development

team and Executive Director, and to represent C.O.P.S. at fundraising events, upon request of the Development team.

- d. **Volunteer Committee:** responsible for coordinating volunteers to work during National Police Week.
- e. **Audit and Finance Committee:** responsible to ensure an audit is conducted on an annual basis and that the entire audit process is completed. The committee will review quarterly financial statements/budget prior to distribution to the National Board. The committee will seek clarification on any items and share with the National Board and be available to consult as needed about significant financial decisions. Chair of this committee shall be the National Board Treasurer.
- f. **Strategic Planning and Development Committee:** responsible for planning the strategic direction of C.O.P.S. with respect to programming, marketing, strategic partnerships, and development. Further, they will develop concepts and ideas to ensure its future growth and success. It is this committee's responsibility to develop the 5-year strategic plan.
- g. **Performance Evaluation Committee:** responsible for evaluating the performance of the organization's Executive Director. The Chair of the Trustees will serve as the Chair of the committee with the National President as a participating committee member. This committee will use various sources to obtain information pertinent to job performance and salary.
- h. **Training Committee:** responsible for developing curriculum for all training programs of the organization. It shall oversee training for C.O.P.S. national trainers and C.O.P.S. chapter presenters.
- i. **Grievance Committee:** responsible for investigating and responding to all complaints and grievances as set forth in the Standard Operating Procedures.
- j. **Communications Committee:** responsible for previewing printed materials before going to print in order to maintain the integrity of our publications. They shall ensure that all videos and brochures are updated as needed.
- k. **Past Leadership Committee:** serves in an advisory role to the National Board, utilizing his/her leadership experience and history within the organization. This committee shall be chaired by the Immediate Past President. The Committee shall be comprised of the Executive Director Emeritus and Past National Presidents who have met the criteria to serve as ex-officio members of the National Board as defined in this document.

Section 6. Standing committee members serve for a term of one year or until a replacement is appointed.

ARTICLE XII

CHAPTERS

- Section 1. Local, state or regional chapters of Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc., may organize to provide peer support to the survivors of law enforcement officers. Local chapters shall:
- a. form bereavement/growth groups where survivors can offer and receive emotional support;
 - b. provide adjudication advocacy, when possible, to aid survivors' understanding of the judicial process;
 - c. provide a centralized source of information about appropriate services which may exist within the local community;
 - d. provide other services as appropriate to further the purpose of the chapter and/or the National organization;
 - e. Hold regular business/support meetings according to SOPs.
- Section 2. National C.O.P.S. does exercise some supervisory control over Chapters that consists of certain reporting requirements of C.O.P.S., IRS, and Corporate issues. C.O.P.S. also reserves the right to intervene, including the revoking of the Chapter Charter if it is determined that the actions of the Chapter membership and/or leadership are detrimental to the effective functioning of the Chapter for the furtherance of the mission of C.O.P.S.
- Section 3. Concerns of Police Survivors shall charter only one chapter within any one geographical area as defined by chapter charter. An applicant group consisting of fifteen (15) survivors may be granted a charter after having met the requirements outlined in SOPs.
- Section 4. Fundraising activities of chapters shall not be in conflict with the activities of Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc. Chapters may not contract for direct-mail or telephone solicitation.
- Section 5. C.O.P.S. chapters shall adopt the National "Standard Operating Procedures for C.O.P.S. Chapters."
- Section 6. National C.O.P.S. shall notify chapters of any proposed change(s) to the National Organization that may impact chapters to allow them an opportunity to participate in the discussions about said change(s).
- Section 7. A chapter may have its designation as a chapter revoked if it is determined by the National Board of Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc., that its continued operation is contrary to, or inconsistent with, the best interests of Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc., other C.O.P.S. chapters, or the requirements for exemption under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

ARTICLE XIII

INDEMNIFICATION

Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc., shall indemnify and hold harmless from and against all claims, judgments, liabilities, fines and penalties, any officer, director or employee of the corporation if he or she is made a party to any legal or administrative proceeding as a result of any acts or decisions taken or made, in a good faith effort to further the mission of the corporation by said officer, director, or employee in his or her capacity as a member of the board of directors, an officer of the corporation, or as an employee of the corporation, to the maximum extent permitted by the state and federal laws. Without limiting the foregoing, the corporation shall pay any and all legal fees and litigation expenses, including court costs, travel, lodging, etc., related to defending said individual to the maximum extent permitted by the state and federal laws.

ARTICLE XIV

PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rule of Order Newly Revised* shall govern in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws and any Special Rules that may be adopted.

ARTICLE XV

AMENDMENT

- Section 1. Article I of these Bylaws may be amended only upon amendment of the Articles of Incorporation.
- Section 2. These Bylaws may be revised only upon authorization by the National Board.
- Section 3. Bylaw amendments may be proposed at any time and shall be considered and acted upon at any regular National Board meeting.
- Section 4. These Bylaws may be amended by the National Board by following subsections a-b and by a two-thirds vote of the National Board:
 - a. Shall have been submitted to the Bylaws Committee for review.
 - b. Shall have been submitted by the Bylaws Committee to the National Board and the chapters forty-five (45) days prior to the National Board meeting that will consider and act upon the amendment.
- Section 5. Amendments or revision of these bylaws shall be published in the C.O.P.S. newsletter and/or made available to members on the National website.

ARTICLE XVI

SPECIAL RULES OF ORDER

Section 1. National SOPs may only be revised by the National Board.

Section 2. National SOPs may be revised as needed, but must adhere to the following rules:

- a. Shall have been submitted to the Bylaws/SOP Committee for review.
- b. Proposed changes to National SOP 3.0 (Chapters) shall be submitted by the Bylaws/SOP Committee to the National Board and chapters thirty (30) days prior to the meeting the change will be voted on.
- c. SOP changes shall be amended by a majority vote of the National Board.

Section 3. Changes to the SOP shall be published in the C.O.P.S. newsletter and/or other media.

Revised and accepted by the National Board of Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc., November 17, 2013.

Revised and accepted by the National Board of Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc., November 17, 2015, Grapevine TX; Brenda Donner, National President.

Revised and accepted by the National Board of Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc., November 14, 2016, Grapevine TX; Brenda Donner, National President.

Revised and accepted by the National Board of Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc., December 4, 2017, Miami FL; Cheryl Schultz, National President.

Revised and accepted by the National Board of Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc. July 25, 2018, Camdenton MO; Cheryl Schultz, National President.

Revised and accepted by the National Board of Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc. January 18, 2024, Grapevine TX; Connie Moyer, National President.

Revised and accepted by the National Board of Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc. January 31, 2024, via Zoom; Connie Moyer, National President.

Provisionally accepted by the National Board of Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc. May 1, 2024; ratified at the July 25, 2024 meeting; Connie Moyer, National President.

Revised and accepted by the National Board of Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc. January 25, 2025, Key Largo FL; Connie Moyer, National President.