

PARALEGAL DIVISION

State Bar of Texas



STANDING RULES

JUNE 2026

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DEFINITIONS

The following are acronyms and terms frequently used throughout the Standing Rules of the Paralegal Division, State Bar of Texas (hereinafter commonly referred to as “PD” or “the Division”):

ABA

ABA references the American Bar Association.

Active Member

An Active Member is any resident of the State of Texas, while not admitted to the practice of law in Texas, who has, through education, training, or experience, demonstrated knowledge of the legal system, legal principles and procedures, and who has satisfied at least one (1) of the criteria for membership established by the PD Board of Directors as set forth in the PD Standing Rules, and is eligible to become an Active Member of the PD.

Ad Hoc Committee

A Committee appointed by the President of the Paralegal Division that is not a part of a Standing Committee, which will be charged with specific duties to accomplish for that Committee.

Annual Meeting

The official meeting of the Board of Directors and the members of the Paralegal Division to conduct the annual business of the PD.

Annual Report(s)

Annual Report(s) refers to a summary report of the events for the PD’s Fiscal Year to be prepared for the PD’s Annual Meeting.

Ambassador

Ambassador refers to past PD Presidents who participate in a program for purposes of continuing PD involvement, sharing their commitment to the PD after serving as President by making presentations to local paralegal associations, educational paralegal programs and community service presentations upon request.

Associate Member

An Associate Member is defined as a Paralegal who has not yet satisfied the employment experience or education requirement criteria for Active Membership status, but who otherwise satisfies the criteria for Active Membership and is eligible and may apply for Associate Member status in the PD. An Associate Member shall not be entitled to vote, hold office or serve as the chair on any committee, but may serve as a Subchair on a Committee.

Award of Excellence

An Award of Excellence is an award conferred by the PD Board of Directors, to recognize an individual who has made a substantial contribution to the paralegal profession. The award is given for outstanding merit and shall not be required to be conferred annually.

Board or Board of Directors

Those members that currently serve as the elected Board of Directors of the Paralegal Division, State Bar of Texas.

Board Advisor

A Board Advisor is a PD Board member assigned to a PD Committee to act as advisor and conduit of information between the PD Committee and the PD Board of Directors.

Board Certified Paralegal (BCP)

Board Certified Paralegal is a certification issued to a paralegal who has successfully completed the voluntary specialty certification examination administered by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization (“TBS”).

Board Meetings

PD Board Meetings are held in-person three times per year. The meetings are usually held in June, Fall and Winter.

Budget

The Budget is a financial forecast prepared by the PD Coordinator and PD Treasurer and submitted to the PD Board of Directors for revision and approval each year.

Bylaws

The Bylaws of the PD are the governing rules of the organization. Such rules are revised from time to time by a vote of the Active Voting Members of the PD and approval of the State Bar of Texas.

CC or Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct adopted by the Board of Directors of the Paralegal Division which is further defined and adopted in these Standing Rules to govern the conduct of the Board on behalf of the PD.

Certificate of Appreciation

A Certificate of Appreciation is awarded to Committee members who have earned recognition by their participation and contribution to the PD and the paralegal profession. Recipients are recommended by the Committee Chairs and awarded such Certificate within thirty (30) days after the PD’s Outgoing Board Meeting.

Certificated

Certificated is a term applied to those persons completing a formal paralegal program and receiving a certificate of completion.

CE or Code of Ethics

The CE refers to the Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility of the Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas

CEC

CEC is an acronym for the term “Continuing Education Committee.”

Chair or Committee Chair

The person(s) appointed by the President each Fiscal Year to serve on Standing or Ad Hoc Committees for the PD.

CLA/CP and ACP

Acronyms for Certified Legal Assistant, Certified Paralegal and Advanced Certified Paralegal certification designations after the successful completion of examinations administered by NALA – The Paralegal Association.

CLE

CLE references continuing legal education.

College

College refers to the Texas Bar College, f/k/a The College of the State Bar of Texas.

Committee

A Committee is a group of members who are given specific assignments/projects to be accomplished on behalf of the PD. A Committee's composition shall be recommended by the PD Directors.

Committee Chair

A Committee Chair is an appointed leader of a specified committee. Committee Chairs are appointed by the PD President for a Term of one (1) year beginning immediately after the adjournment of PD's Outgoing Board Meeting and shall expire at the close of the PD's Outgoing Board Meeting the following year.

Complaint

A written allegation from any person, agency or entity of professional misconduct as defined in these Standing Rules.

Complainant

The person who files a formal Complaint against a member of the Paralegal Division.

Correspondence

The term Correspondence used herein can refer to letters via a mail or parcel delivery service, communication via email, communication via text, or other electronic means.

Director or District Director

An elected representative from a District of the PD serving on the Board of Directors.

District

The geographical region of the State of Texas comprised of counties assigned to that District, for purposes of representation by an elected District Director.

Division

An abbreviated term referring to the Paralegal Division, State Bar of Texas.

PD Attorney

Legal counsel retained by the PD Board to represent the PD and render advice and legal opinions.

Draft Minutes

Draft Minutes are the initial Minutes prepared and distributed by the PD Secretary within thirty (30) business days following the PD Board Meeting for review and comment by PD Board members.

Dropbox

A cloud-based platform utilized by PD for sharing and storing all PD Correspondence and documents for the PD Board and the individual Districts and committees.

E-Group

E-group is a term which may refer to the PD's list serve available to PD members through the PD's website.

Electronic mail or Email

A system for sending messages to one or more recipients via telecommunications links between computers using dedicated software or a web-based service.

Electronic signature

A form of computing electronic proof of a person's identity.

Emeritus Member

A PD membership category identified as "Emeritus" is an Member who is no longer employed as a Paralegal, has attained the age of 70 and is still employed as a Paralegal, who has retired from the profession, who has moved out of state, or who has taken a leave of absence and desires to continue receiving information on the PD's activities and its publications. This category shall be for renewal purposes only and cannot be applied for on an initial PD Membership Application. An Emeritus member may not vote, hold office or serve as the Chair of any Committee, but may serve as a Subchair on a Committee.

E-Newsletter

The monthly electronic newsletter known as "The Paralegal Pulse."

Ethics Committee Chair

The person appointed each Fiscal Year by the President of the Paralegal Division to serve as the Chair of the Professional Ethics Standing Committee.

Exceptional Pro Bono Award

The Exceptional Pro Bono Service Award is an annual award. Its purpose is to promote the awareness of pro bono activities, and shall be presented annually by the President at the Annual Meeting.

Executive Committee or "EC"

The "Executive Committee" or "EC" of the PD's Board is comprised of Board Officers, i.e., President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer and Parliamentarian.

Executive Session

An "Executive Session" may be called by the PD President during any PD Board Meeting or General Meeting. Such call for "Executive Session" shall mean that the recording of Minutes are taken separately, all non-board members are not allowed to be present unless authorized by the PD President, and a Special Meeting shall convene into a closed session for the discussion and/or action on a specified topic considered to be of a confidential nature not affecting the general business and membership of the PD. Examples may include intra-board disputes; disciplinary matters involving the EC, Board members or PD Coordinator; legal issues; or other highly confidential issues.

Expense Reimbursement Form

The Expense Reimbursement Form which is approved by the Board of Directors and posted on the PD's website.

Fall Board Meeting

The official meeting of the Paralegal Division Board of Directors held in the Fall of each Fiscal Year.

Felony

A Felony is a serious criminal offense that can result in a prison sentence of at least one year and are typically crimes against people or property.

Finalized Minutes

Finalized Minutes are an edited version of the Minutes submitted to the PD Board for approval. Corrections to the Finalized Minutes shall be effective only upon Board action.

Fiscal Year

Fiscal Year refers to the 12-month year observed by the Paralegal Division beginning June 1 and ending May 31 of each year.

Gender

The use of masculine, feminine, or neutral gender shall be interpreted to reference the other genders.

Governing Documents

The official documents of the Paralegal Division as approved by the Board of Directors and/or the membership, which include the Bylaws, Standing Rules, and Procedures Manual.

Grievance

A formal Complaint made to the Paralegal Division involving a Paralegal Division Member that alleges a Paralegal has violated binding professional rules, and more specifically the Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility of the Paralegal Division and/or the Texas Paralegal Definition and Standards.

Grievance Committee

Grievance Committee means the group of PD members appointed by the President of the PD to serve on a Committee to investigate any Grievance complaints received by the Ethics Committee regarding a PD member.

Historian

The Historian is the Immediate Past President or a person appointed by the PD President, who shall maintain a complete, permanent historical record of the PD's activities for the preceding year.

Incoming Board Meeting

The first meeting of each Fiscal Year of the PD.

Liaisons

Liaisons are PD Board members appointed to interface with other legal-related organizations, i.e., American Bar Association ("ABA"), NALA – The Paralegal Association ("NALA"), National Federation of Paralegal Associations ("NFPA"), Texas Board of Legal Specialization ("TBLS"),

Texas Young Lawyers Association (“TYLA”), and other organizations.

June Board Meeting

The official meeting of the PD Board of Directors held during the month of June of each Fiscal Year.

Mail

The term Mail shall be defined as transmittal by way of distributing either electronically, i.e., email or via the United States Postal Service.

MCLE

MCLE references minimum continuing legal education as required of attorneys by the State Bar of Texas. MCLE credit may also be given to a paralegal who takes an MCLE approved course by the State Bar of Texas. As a Paralegal Division member registered, attending, and properly reporting an MCLE approved course, the State Bar of Texas will automatically add the credit from the MCLE course to your record at the State Bar of Texas, which will transfer onto your Paralegal Division record on the www.txpd.org website.

Membership

Membership shall refer to the general Membership of the PD. *See* Active Member", "Associate Member", “Emeritus Member”, "Subscribing Member", “Student Member”, and “Sustaining Member”.

Minutes

See "Draft Minutes," "Finalized Minutes," or "Official Minutes."

Misdemeanor

A criminal offense that is punishable by up to one year in jail and/or a fine.

Moral Turpitude

Moral Turpitude is a crime that involves a serious violation of the community’s moral standards. It can be defined as a crime that involves dishonesty, fraud, deceit, misrepresentation or violence.

NALA

NALA is an acronym for the “NALA – The Paralegal Association” NALA is a national paralegal association.

NFPA

“NFPA” is an acronym for the “National Federation of Paralegal Associations, Inc.” NFPA is a national paralegal association.

Number

The use of either the singular or plural number shall be interpreted to include the other number unless such an interpretation or particular sense is inconsistent with the general tenor of this document.

Officers

PD Board Members elected as Officers by majority vote of the PD Board of Directors. The PD President and President-Elect are non-voting Board members, except for purpose of breaking a tie vote, and in that event, the President shall cast the determining vote.

Open Meetings

All meetings of the PD Board shall be open to PD members and to visitors (except at those times when Executive Session may be held for matters of a confidential nature) provided that only the elected PD Board members shall be entitled to vote.

Official Minutes

Recordation of meetings as taken by the PD Secretary or person appointed to perform the Secretary's duty and adopted by the PD Board.

Outgoing Board Meeting

The final Board Meeting of the PD which is held closest to the end of the Fiscal Year.

PACE

An acronym for a Registered Paralegal certification designation after the successful completion of examinations administered by National Federation of Paralegal Associations, Inc.

PD

PD is an acronym meaning the Paralegal Division, State Bar of Texas.

PD Bookkeeper

The PD Bookkeeper is an independent contractor representing the PD, whose duties include attending to the day-to-day financial business and operations of the PD.

PD Coordinator or Paralegal Division Coordinator

The independent contractor representing the PD, whose duties include attending to the day-to-day business affairs and operations of the PD.

PD Financial Procedures

The established financial protocol set forth by PD regarding financial policies and procedures regarding travel, continuing education events, networking events, District funds, District CLE funds and expense reimbursements of any type in connection with the PD approved annual budget.

PD Sharefile

The unified online workspace platform utilized by the Paralegal Division for collecting and transferring data and documents to be used by PD, such as Correspondence, materials, reports and other documents for collaboration to conduct PD business.

Paralegal

A Paralegal is a person, qualified through various combinations of education, training, or work experience, who is employed or engaged by a lawyer, law office, governmental agency, or other entity in a capacity or function which involves the performance, under the ultimate direction and supervision of an attorney, of specifically delegated substantive legal work, which work, for the most part, requires a sufficient knowledge of legal principles and procedures that, absent such person, an attorney would be required to perform the task.

Paralegal Definitions or Standards

The definition of Paralegal which was adopted by the State Bar of Texas Board of Directors on April 21, 2006, to further define "Paralegal," as stated in full in these Standing Rules.

Paralegal Pulse

The monthly electronic newsletter published to the members of PD.

Parliamentarian

The Parliamentarian is an Officer position for the PD, and is elected by the PD Board of Directors by May 15th of each year. The Parliamentarian serves for a Term of one (1) year, beginning at the Incoming Board Meeting and ending on the succeeding Outgoing Board Meeting. A person may run for re-election for the Office of Parliamentarian for one succeeding one (1) year Term, for a total of two consecutive Fiscal years, only.

President

The PD President is elected by the PD Board of Directors and serves for a Term of one (1) year, beginning at the Incoming Board Meeting and ending on the succeeding Outgoing Board Meeting.

President-Elect

The President-Elect is elected to fill the office of PD President immediately following the adjournment of the Outgoing Board Meeting or the resignation or removal of a currently serving PD President.

Procedures Manual

“Procedures Manual” is a manual adopted by the Board containing procedural information regarding operation of the PD, and to be interpreted in conjunction with the PD Bylaws and Standing Rules.

Professional misconduct

A violation by a member of the rules set forth in the Governing Documents of the Paralegal Division.

Purpose

The Purpose of the Division shall be to enhance a paralegal’s participation in the administration of justice, professional responsibility and public service in cooperation with the State Bar of Texas.

Quickbooks

Quickbooks is the official bookkeeping and accounting software utilized for financial and bookkeeping records of the PD by the PD Coordinator, PD Bookkeeper, Treasurer, and Auditors.

Quorum - Board

A Board Quorum shall be a simple majority of PD Directors attending any PD Board Meeting, unless otherwise provided in the Bylaws.

Quorum - Membership

A Membership Quorum shall be a simple majority of Active Voting Members in attendance at any PD Meeting.

Registered Voter

A Registered Voter is an Active Member of the Paralegal Division who is eligible to vote in any election conducted by the PD.

Robert's Rules

The current edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised* as the generally accepted Parliamentary Procedure Rules, which have been adopted by the PD.

Secretary

The Secretary is an Officer position for the PD, and is elected by the PD Board of Directors by May 15th of each year. The Secretary serves for a Term of one (1) year, beginning at the Incoming Board Meeting and ending on the succeeding Outgoing Board Meeting. A person may run for re-election for the Office of Secretary for one succeeding one (1) year Term, for a total of two consecutive Fiscal years, only.

Special Award

A Special Award is an award given to a PD member for outstanding service to the PD.

Special Election

An election held outside the regular schedule of elections as set forth in these Standing Rules.

Special Meetings

Special Meetings are any other meeting of the Board or the membership of the PD other than a regularly scheduled meeting, whether in-person or electronic, as set forth in these Rules.

Standing Committee

Standing Committee refers to any Standing Committee of the PD as set forth by its Bylaws, or any Standing Committee of the State Bar of Texas.

Standing Rules

The adopted Standing Rules of the PD, as amended from time to time. The Standing Rules shall govern the operation of the PD, consistent with the Bylaws, and may be suspended, amended, rescinded, or expanded from time to time by a majority vote of PD Board Members, present and voting, at a duly noticed meeting.

State Bar or SBOT

State Bar or SBOT shall be defined as the State Bar of Texas.

State Bar Act

The official State Bar Act of the State Bar of Texas as promulgated by Tex. Gov't Code Ch. 81.

State Bar MCLE

The term which stands for the State Bar of Texas Mandatory Continuing Legal Education, which is for attorney compliance only, and is not applicable to the PD.

Student Member

A Student Member shall be a PD membership category for students enrolled in a paralegal educational program. The educational programs meeting the criteria for membership in the PD shall be more strictly defined through the PD Bylaws and reflected on the PD Membership Application. Additionally, a Student Member may renew their Student Membership so long as they remain a student in a paralegal educational program. Once the student has completed the course of study the student will have to renew their membership as an Active or Associate member.

Subchair

A person appointed to a Standing Committee or Ad Hoc Committee by the President or the Chair of said Committee to assist in carrying out the duties of the Committee on behalf of their District.

Subcommittee

A Committee composed of some members of a larger Committee to perform specific work and reporting to such Committee.

Subscribing Member

A Subscribing Member shall be a PD membership category structured for individuals who do not otherwise qualify for membership in PD, but who subscribe to the goals and mission of the PD. This category will be non-voting.

Sustaining Member

A Sustaining Member shall be a PD membership category for any law firm, corporation, agency, institutionally accredited or ABA approved paralegal training program, or entity interested in supporting the purposes and goals of the PD. This category will be non-voting.

TAPS

An acronym meaning Texas Advanced Paralegal Seminar. TAPS is a seminar conducted by the PD on an annual basis, thereby providing its members with a variety of substantive legal topics with which to receive CLE credit as part of the requirement for PD membership.

TBLS

TBLS is an acronym representing the term Texas Board of Legal Specialization. *See* “Board Certified Paralegal.”

Term

Term is the specific length of time an elected or appointed individual is authorized to hold a particular position. For Officers, Term means no more than two consecutive one-year Terms in the same office. For Directors, Term means two consecutive PD Fiscal Years following their election by the members of their District. For Committee Chairs or Subchairs, Term means the one-year PD Fiscal Year following an appointment to the Committee. A Director elected during a Special Election or appointed for any period of time other than the elected two-year Term, is not considered to have served a full Term.

The Texas Bar College or TBC

The Texas Bar College is a professional society of legal scholars who are leaders in the Texas legal community and champions of legal education. Paralegals may be members of TBC.

Texas Paralegal Journal or TPJ

The *Texas Paralegal Journal* is the official electronic/digital publication of the PD and is published four times a year. The acronym for the publication is “TPJ.”

Treasurer

The Treasurer is an Officer position for the PD, and is elected by the PD Board of Directors by May 15th of each year. The Treasurer serves for a Term of one (1) year, beginning at the Incoming Board Meeting and ending on the succeeding Outgoing Board Meeting. A person may run for re-election for the Office of Treasurer for one succeeding one (1) year Term, for a total of two consecutive Fiscal years, only.

TYLA

TYLA is an acronym for the Texas Young Lawyer's Association.

U.S. Mail

U.S. Mail refers to hard copies of mail which is delivered by the United States Postal Service.

Winter Board Meeting

The official meeting of the PD Board of Directors held in the Winter of each Fiscal Year.

PARALEGAL DIVISION STATE BAR OF TEXAS

STANDING RULES

Adopted June 30, 1983 - Amended through June 2026

I. DEFINITION OF PARALEGAL AND STANDARDS

A. DEFINITION OF PARALEGAL (Adopted by Paralegal Division 6/30/83, revised February 2018)

A paralegal is a person, qualified through education, training, or work experience, who is employed or retained by a lawyer, law office, governmental agency, or other entity in a capacity or function which involves the performance, under the ultimate direction and supervision of an attorney, of specifically delegated substantive legal work, which work, for the most part, requires a sufficient knowledge of legal concepts that, absent such assistant, the attorney would perform the task.

B. PARALEGAL DEFINITION AND STANDARDS (Adopted by State Bar of Texas 2005)

In 2005, the State Bar of Texas Board of Directors, and the Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas, adopted a new definition for “Paralegal:”

A paralegal is a person, qualified through various combinations of education, training, or work experience, who is employed or engaged by a lawyer, law office, governmental agency, or other entity in a capacity or function which involves the performance, under the ultimate direction and supervision of a licensed attorney, of specifically delegated substantive legal work, which work, for the most part, requires a sufficient knowledge of legal principles and procedures that, absent such person, an attorney would be required to perform the task.

On April 21, 2006, the State Bar of Texas Board of Directors approved amending this definition by including the following standards, which are intended to assist the public in obtaining quality legal services, assist attorneys in their utilization of paralegals, and assist judges in determining whether paralegal work is a reimbursable cost when granting attorney fees:

1. Support for Education, Training, and Work Experience
 - a. Attorneys are encouraged to promote:
 - (1) paralegal attendance at continuing legal education programs;
 - (2) paralegal board certification through the Texas Board of Legal Specialization (TBLS);
 - (3) certification through a national paralegal organization such as the National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA) or the National Federation of Paralegal Associations (NFPA); and

- (4) membership in the Paralegal Division of the State Bar and/or local paralegal organizations.
- b. In hiring paralegals and determining whether they possess the requisite education, attorneys are encouraged to consider the following:
 - (1) A specialty certification conferred by TBLS; or
 - (2) A CLA/CP certification conferred by NALA; or
 - (3) A PACE certification conferred by NFPA; or
 - (4) A bachelor's or higher degree in any field together with a minimum of one (a) year of employment experience performing substantive legal work under the direct supervision of a duly licensed attorney AND completion of 15 hours of Continuing Legal Education within that year; or
 - (5) A certificate of completion from an ABA-approved program of education and training for paralegals; or
 - (6) A certificate of completion from a paralegal program administered by any college or university accredited or approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board or its equivalent in another state.
- c. Although it is desirable that an employer hire a paralegal who has received legal instruction from a formal education program, the State Bar recognizes that some paralegals are nevertheless qualified if they received their training through previous work experience. In the event an applicant does not meet the educational criteria, it is suggested that only those applicants who have obtained a minimum of four (4) years previous work experience in performing substantive legal work, as that term is defined below, be considered a paralegal.

2. Delegation of Substantive Legal Work

"Substantive legal work" includes, but is not limited to, the following: conducting client interviews and maintaining general contact with the client; locating and interviewing witnesses; conducting investigations and statistical and documentary research; drafting documents, Correspondence, and pleadings; summarizing depositions, interrogatories, and testimony; and attending executions of wills, real estate closings, depositions, court or administrative hearings, and trials with an attorney.

"Substantive legal work" does not include clerical or administrative work. Accordingly, a court may refuse to provide recovery of paralegal time for such non-substantive work. *Gill Sav. Ass'n v. Int'l Supply Co., Inc.*, 759 S.W.2d 697, 705 (Tex. App. Dallas 1988, writ denied).

3. Consideration of Ethical Obligations (See Note* below):

- a. Attorney. The employing attorney has the responsibility for ensuring that the conduct of the paralegal performing the services is compatible with the professional

obligations of the attorney. It also remains the obligation of the employing or supervising attorney to fully inform a client as to whether a paralegal will work on the legal matter, what the paralegal's fee will be, and whether the client will be billed for any non-substantive work performed by the paralegal.

- b. Paralegal. A paralegal is prohibited from engaging in the practice of law, providing legal advice, signing pleadings, negotiating settlement agreements, soliciting legal business on behalf of an attorney, setting a legal fee, accepting a case, or advertising or contracting with members of the general public for the performance of legal functions.

*Note: a more expansive list is included in the "General Guidelines for the Utilization of the Services of Legal Assistants by Attorneys" approved by the Board of Directors of the State Bar of Texas, May 1993.

II. INTRODUCTION

A. AUTHORITY

1. Although many organizations have separate constitutions and bylaws, the more common practice today is to combine these in one document as the highest body of rules of the organization and refer to it as the bylaws. The Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas has adopted Bylaws as the fundamental instrument establishing the organization and these Bylaws define the primary characteristics of the Division, the limitations on the powers of the organization, and the rights of its members. However, in order to give an organization the greatest freedom to act within its purpose, bylaws should be made no more restrictive nor more detailed in specification than necessary.
2. Standing Rules are rules which are related to the details of the administration of an organization and may be adopted or changed as any ordinary act of the organization. Generally, they are adopted individually by the governing body at any business meeting, if and when the need arises. During the course of the Division's first year of existence, the Division Board of Directors adopted certain Board policies to carry out the Bylaws and the purpose of the Division, and it is the expressed desire of the Board to adopt these policies and others as Standing Rules.
3. Pursuant to Article III, Section 6.a of the Bylaws, the Board of the Division hereby adopts the following Standing Rules deemed necessary to carry out the Bylaws and to serve the Purpose of the Division. These Standing Rules shall govern the operation of the Division where not inconsistent with the Bylaws and may be suspended, amended, rescinded, or expanded from time to time by a majority vote of the Board members present and voting at a duly noticed meeting.
4. Article III, Section 6a of the Bylaws authorizes the Board to establish, adopt, and amend Standing Rules, including the right to suspend or rescind such Rules, when such are deemed necessary to carry out the Bylaws and to serve the Purpose of the Division.

B. PURPOSE

1. The purpose of the Division shall be to enhance members' participation in the administration of justice, professional responsibility and public service in cooperation with the State Bar of Texas.

The Division shall at all times promote the purposes and objectives of the State Bar of Texas and shall never act in conflict with the rules of the State Bar of Texas and specifically shall never act in conflict with the State Bar Act and the SBOT Policy Manual.

2. As suggested in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*, if an organization as a whole meets less often than quarterly, the entire administrative authority of the organization is best left to the Board of Directors between the organization's meetings. Due to the size and geographical distribution of the Division membership, it is impractical to hold a general membership meeting more often than annually. However, the business of the PD must be conducted on a continuous basis and these Standing Rules are intended to provide the necessary guidance to the Board, the Committees, and the general membership in the day-to-day activities of the PD.
3. Although the Board has the authority to adopt, suspend, amend, rescind, or expand these Standing Rules, the members of the Board are cognizant of their capacity as representatives of the general membership. The Board hereby expresses its desire that the members of the PD contact their respective Directors with comments, questions, and suggestions with respect to these Standing Rules.

III. MEMBERSHIP IN THE PARALEGAL DIVISION *Amended June 2026*

A. GENERAL

Amended March 1985, June 1985, June 1986, March 1987, January 1992, April 1995, April 1996, June 2000, September 2001, February 2003, June 2020, June 2024

1. For the purpose of determining eligibility for membership in the PD, Paralegal work by a Paralegal is considered to be legal work which can only be done in direct assistance to an attorney, distinguishing it from other types of work which can be performed directly for members of the general public.
2. Each application for membership shall contain:
 - a. applicant's consent to the PD to contact present and/or former supervising attorneys for verification or clarification of qualifications for membership;
 - b. a statement that the applicant has read the Definition of a Paralegal, as set forth in these Standing Rules, and has read and agrees to be bound by the Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility;
 - c. an agreement to be bound by the Disciplinary Procedures adopted by the PD;
 - d. on Active and Associate Membership applications, applicant shall provide the name, phone number, email and bar number of a duly licensed supervising attorney;
 - e. that the applicant applying for Active Membership or Associate Membership works in the State of Texas under the direct supervision of a duly licensed attorney performing specifically delegated substantive legal work for at least 80% of the time for Active and at least 50% of the time for Associate Membership;
 - f. certification by the applicant that they meet one of the criteria for membership as set out by Section III. B of these Standing Rules;

- g. verification of whether the applicant has never been convicted of any Felony, or any Misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, including but not limited to, theft, embezzlement, or fraudulent misappropriation of money or other property;
- h. applicant's consent to the PD to conduct a criminal background check on applicant.

B. MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

1. CRITERIA FOR ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

Amended March 1985, March 1987, May 1990, January 1992, April 1994, February 2000, June 2000, June 2001, February 2003, February 2004, June 2006, November 2006, March 2007, June 2007, December 2011, June 2013, June 2020, June 2024, June 2026

- a. An applicant is eligible and may apply for Active Membership if the applicant works in the State of Texas as a paralegal under the direct supervision of a duly licensed attorney performing specifically delegated substantive legal work at least eighty (80) percent of the time and also meets one of the following criteria:
 - (1) Successful completion of a voluntary specialty certification examination administered by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization; or
 - (2) Successful completion of the CP/ACP (Certified Paralegal and Advanced Certified Paralegal) certification examinations administered by NALA – The Paralegal Association or the PACE (Registered Paralegal) examination administered by the National Federation of Paralegal Associations, Inc.; and have one (1) year of employment experience as a paralegal under the direct supervision of a duly licensed attorney; or
 - (3) A bachelor's or higher degree in any field and one (1) year of employment experience as a paralegal under the direct supervision of a duly licensed attorney.
 - (4) Successful completion of:
 - (a) ABA approved program/college of education and training for paralegals, and have one (1) year of employment experience as a paralegal under the direct supervision of a duly licensed attorney; or
 - (b) a paralegal program/college that consists of a minimum of sixty (60) semester credit hours (or equivalent quarter hours) of which fifteen (15) semester hours (or equivalent quarter hours) are substantive legal courses and have one (1) year of employment experience as a paralegal under the direct supervision of a duly licensed attorney; or
 - (c) a paralegal program/college that consists of fifteen (15) semester credit hours (or equivalent quarter hours) of substantive legal courses; and have two (2) years of employment experience as a paralegal under the direct supervision of a duly licensed attorney; or

- (d) a paralegal program that requires an associate's degree, bachelor's degree or higher in any field and consists of a minimum of 15 semester credit hours or a minimum of 100 clock hours **and** have two (2) years of employment experience as a paralegal under the direct supervision of a duly licensed attorney.
- b. A minimum of four (4) consecutive years of experience as a paralegal under the direct supervision of a duly licensed attorney.
- c. *Conviction of a felony offense, or a misdemeanor offense involving moral turpitude, makes an applicant ineligible for membership in the Paralegal Division.*

2. CRITERIA FOR ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

Amended June 1985, April 1986, March 1987, June 1987, January 1992, April 1994, April 1996, February 2000, June 2001, June 2002, February 2003, February 2004, June 2006, March 2007, December 2011, June 2013, June 2020, February 2021, June 2024, June 2026

- a. A paralegal who has not yet satisfied the requirement of employment experience as a paralegal under Section B above or who works under direct supervision of a duly licensed attorney performing specifically delegated substantive legal work at least fifty (50) percent of the time, but who otherwise satisfies the criteria for Active Membership, is eligible and may apply for Associate Member status in the Division.
- b. An associate's degree or higher in a field other than legal studies and has been employed as a paralegal for less than 4 years.
- c. An Associate Member shall have all the privileges and prerogatives of an Active Member, except that an Associate Member may not vote, hold office, or serve as the chair on any Committee.
- d. An Associate Member may renew as an Active Member during the renewal period should they satisfy the criteria for Active Membership under Section B above.
- e. *Conviction of a felony offense, or a misdemeanor offense involving moral turpitude, makes an applicant ineligible for membership in the Paralegal Division.*

3. CRITERIA FOR EMERITUS MEMBERSHIP

Adopted February 2004, June 2006, December 2011, November 2015, June 2020, June 2024

- a. During the renewal period, a current Active Member of the Division who (a) is no longer employed as a Paralegal, (b) has attained the age of 70 and is still employed as a Paralegal, (c) who has retired from the profession, (d) who has moved out of state, or (e) who has taken a leave of absence may renew as an Emeritus Member. Mandatory CLE is not required.
- b. An Emeritus Member shall have all of the privileges and prerogatives of an Active Member, except that an Emeritus Member may not vote, hold office or serve as the chair of any Committee. However, an Emeritus Member may serve as a District Subchair of any Standing Committee, or as a member of any Ad Hoc Committee.

- c. An Emeritus Member may apply for Active Membership during the renewal period at such time as they satisfy the criteria for Active Membership under Section B above by making application for a change of status on a form approved by the Board of the Division.
- d. *Conviction of a felony offense, or a misdemeanor offense involving moral turpitude, makes an applicant ineligible for membership in the Paralegal Division.*

4. CRITERIA FOR SUBSCRIBING MEMBERSHIP

Adopted February 2004, amended June 2004, June 2006, December 2011, June 2013, November 2015, June 2020, June 2024, June 2026

- a. Any individual, described below, who is interested in supporting the purposes and goals of the Division may be eligible for Subscribing Membership:
 - (1) is not currently employed as a Paralegal, but has completed a paralegal training program; or
 - (2) is not currently employed as a Paralegal, but has successfully become a Board Certified Paralegal through the Texas Board of Legal Specialization, successful completion of the voluntary certification examination administered by NALA – The Paralegal Association or the National Federation of Paralegal Associations, Inc.; or
 - (3) is currently employed as a Paralegal in another state other than Texas, and is working under the direct supervision of an attorney; or
 - (4) has previously been employed as a Paralegal, but is not employed at the time of application; or
 - (5) is an instructor or director in a paralegal program at an educational institute; or
 - (6) is a coordinator or supervisor of a paralegal program or department within a firm, corporation, or agency.
- b. Subscribing Members shall not be entitled to vote, hold office, or serve as the chair of any Committee.
- c. It is not the intent of the Division for Subscribing Members to use their membership in the Division for the purpose of marketing or supplying products or services to the legal profession.
- d. During the renewal period, a Subscribing Member may apply for Active or Associate membership if they satisfy the criteria for Active or Associate membership under Section B or Section C above by completing an online application for Active or Associate membership.
- e. *Conviction of a felony offense, or a misdemeanor offense involving moral turpitude, makes an applicant ineligible for membership in the Paralegal Division.*

5. CRITERIA FOR SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP

Adopted April 19, 1986, Amended April 1992, February 2000, February 2003, February 2004, June 2006, December 2011, June 2020

- a. Any law firm, corporation, agency, institutionally accredited or ABA approved paralegal training program, or entity interested in supporting the purposes and goals of the Division shall be eligible for Sustaining Membership by paying the membership dues established by the Board to the Division.
- b. Sustaining Members shall not be entitled to vote, hold office, or serve on a Committee.
- c. It is not the intent of the Division for Sustaining Members to use their membership in the Division for the purposes of marketing or supplying products or services to the legal profession.
- d. *Conviction of a felony offense, or a misdemeanor offense involving moral turpitude, makes an applicant ineligible for membership in the Paralegal Division.*

6. CRITERIA FOR STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

Adopted January 1992, February 2000, February 2003, February 2004, June 2006, March 2007, June 2007, December 2011, June 2013, June 2020, June 2024

- a. An applicant is eligible and may apply for Student Membership if the applicant is:
 - (1) Currently enrolled in an ABA approved program/college of education and training for paralegals; or
 - (2) Currently enrolled in a paralegal program/college that consists of a minimum of sixty (60) semester credit hours (or equivalent quarter hours), which includes not less than fifteen (15) semester credit hours (or equivalent quarter hours) of substantive legal courses; or
 - (3) Currently enrolled in a paralegal program/college that consists of fifteen (15) semester credit hours of substantive legal courses; or
 - (4) Currently enrolled in a paralegal program that requires an associate's degree or higher in any field and offers a minimum of 100 clock hours.
- b. A student may renew their Student Membership once, following the completion of the course of study, before having to apply as an Associate or Active Member.
- c. A Student Member shall have all the privileges and prerogatives of an Active Member, except that a Student Member may not vote, hold office, or serve as the chair of any Committee or Subcommittee.
- d. During the renewal period, a Student Member may apply for Active or Associate Membership if they satisfy the criteria for Active or Associate Membership under Section B or Section C above by completing an online application for Active or Associate Membership.

- e. *Conviction of a felony offense, or a misdemeanor offense involving moral turpitude, makes an applicant ineligible for membership in the Paralegal Division.*

C. MEMBERSHIP OFFICIAL RECORDS *June 2026*

1. A member's official address shall be the name and address of their place of employment, the location of which shall determine the District in which such member shall be listed.
2. It is a Division member's responsibility to keep their membership records up to date in their personal member account under the My Account section of the PD website.

D. PROCESSING MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

Amended March 1985, June 1985, March 1987, April 1989, June 1991, September 1991, April 1994, April 1995, February 2000, February 2003, February 2004, February 2009, February 2014, June 2020, June 2024, October 2024, June 2026

Membership applications are processed online through the website and shall be managed by the Paralegal Division Coordinator. The Fiscal Year of the Division is June 1 through May 31 of each year. Applications for membership received from June 1 through February 25 of each Fiscal Year shall be processed to apply to the current Fiscal Year. Applications for membership received February 26 through May 31 shall be processed to apply to the following Fiscal Year.

E. MEMBERSHIP DUES

Amended April 1986, February 2000, February 2004, June 2007, June 2013, June 2024

1. The annual membership dues, as determined by the Board from time to time, shall apply to the Fiscal Year June 1 - May 31, and when paid shall entitle the member to all the privileges and prerogatives of the respective membership, either Active, Associate, Subscribing, Emeritus, Sustaining, or Student.
2. The membership dues for all categories are:
 - a. If applying February 26 to November 30 dues are the annual amount determined by the Board; and
 - b. If applying December 1 to February 25, pro-rated dues are one-half of the annual amount determined by the Board of Directors.

F. MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL; DELINQUENCY

Amended April 1986, April 1993, February 2000, February 2004, October 2004, June 2005, November 2006, March 2007, February 2008, June 2008, November 2008, February 2010, October 2011, February 2013, February 2016, June 2017, October 2017, February 2018; June 2018, June 2020, June 2024, October 2024, June 2026

1. Membership renewals are processed online through the website and shall be managed by the Paralegal Division Coordinator. Membership expires upon the last day of the Fiscal Year (May 31), and renewals of membership shall require processing the renewal application and paying the appropriate fee, both as established from time to time by the Board. Any member who has not filed a renewal application and paid the appropriate membership fee prior to the beginning of the new Fiscal Year shall be considered delinquent and not in good standing, therefore not entitled to vote.

2. Any member who has not processed a renewal application and paid the appropriate fee on or before July 31 of the calendar year in which such membership expired shall be deleted from the membership rolls of the PD and will be required to submit a new application for membership. Any applicant who has been an Active or Associate Member within the previous twelve (12) months, and is re-applying for membership must show proof of completion of a minimum of six (6) CLE hours, one (1) hour of which is mandatory legal ethics obtained within the past 12 months in order to be eligible for Active or Associate membership status.
3. Renewing Active and Associate Members must complete six (6) hours of substantive CLE, one (1) hour of which must be legal ethics, for each Fiscal Year. Substantive CLE completed during any Fiscal Year, in which a person was an Active or Associate Member, in excess of the minimum six (6) hour requirement for such period may be applied to the following Fiscal Year's requirement. The carryover provision applies to one (1) year only. Members are allowed no more than two (2) hours of self-study or pro bono service whether carried over from the previous year or completed during each membership year, in order to satisfy the minimum six (6) hour requirement. The one (1) hour legal ethics CLE requirement cannot be counted as a self-study hour and must meet the criteria below for accepted CLE. Members must report their own CLE into their 'My Account' on the PD website (txpd.org/my-account) under 'Manage My CLE Records.' The PD will use the following criteria for approval of continuing education courses for credit towards mandatory CLE requirements for membership:
 - a. The PD will accept substantive law CLE presented or approved by the MCLE Department of the State Bar of Texas, the Texas Board of Legal Specialization, NALA – The Paralegal Association, the National Federation of Paralegal Associations, and/or presented by the Paralegal Division, local bar associations, paralegal associations, law firms, or law office management programs accredited by the State Bar of Texas for credit towards the Paralegal Division mandatory membership renewal CLE requirement.
 - b. If the CLE course is not accredited by any of the above-referenced groups, the PD will accept a seminar if it is a substantive law course offered by a qualified presenter that would qualify for approval if submitted to one of the above organizations. "Substantive Law Course" means an organized program of legal education dealing with:
 - i. substantive or procedural subjects of law;
 - ii. legal skills and techniques;
 - iii. legal ethics and/or legal professional responsibility; or
 - iv. alternative dispute resolution.

If the requested CLE hours are in connection with auditing or attending a substantive law class, the CLE hours allowed shall be limited to the number of semester hours (usually a three-hour course) rather than the number of clock hours attended.

A "Qualified Presenter" means an attorney, judge, or paralegal who is familiar with the topic presented, or an expert in the particular subject matter comprising the course.

- c. Speaking and writing credit will be considered for approval under the same criteria as (a) and (b) above.
4. Members with extenuating circumstances who are not able to meet all the requirements for renewal of their membership may apply for a waiver of the requirements. Such extenuating circumstances may include a pro-longed medical disability, military service, or some other serious hardship which would make it impossible to meet the requirements. A request for waiver of the renewal requirements should be directed to the President, the President-Elect, the PD Coordinator, and the Membership Committee Chair, and include a detailed explanation of the member's circumstances with appropriate evidence to support the request no later than May 31st or it will not be considered. For example, evidence for members with medical circumstances may include a letter from a health care provider, and military members should include a copy of their military orders. Each request will be reviewed by the Board of Directors and decided on its own merit. The decision of the Board of Directors shall be final.
5. It is each member's sole responsibility to enter and update their CLE hours in their individual online PD member Continuing Legal Education History at www.txpd.org by logging into MyAccount, then Manage My CLE Records, and Add CLE Record. The PD does not retain any written records or certificates on behalf of PD members. Members are solely responsible for maintaining their own CLE records, including keeping copies of all CLE proof of attendance certificates for a minimum of three (3) years in order to comply efficiently should the member be audited. During a Member Renewal Spot Audit, the member will be required to submit their CLE certificates upon request.
6. Any continuing education courses that are sponsored by/approved by the State Bar of Texas that are assigned a specific MCLE course number, are not to be added by a PD member to their own record. All attended MCLE courses will appear on the member record. All MCLE courses are entered into member records by the SBOT and are updated mechanically via an import from the State Bar.
7. If the member seeking renewal has been the subject of a prior ethics Grievance proceeding under these Standing Rules and a determination was made that the member was in violation of any portion of the PD's Code of Ethics resulting in expulsion of membership and/or eligibility of that person for future membership, that information is to be maintained in the permanent records of the PD by the PD Coordinator to be available to reference if the member makes a new application for renewal at any time in the future.

IV. OFFICERS/EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE *Amended June 2026*

A. OFFICERS: GENERAL

1. The elected Officers of the PD Board are the President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer and Parliamentarian. The Executive Committee is comprised of the elected Officers, or as authorized by the Bylaws.
2. The PD President has exclusive authority to place matters on the agenda for discussion in an EC Meeting. If two (2) or more EC members request an item to be discussed in an EC Meeting, the President is obligated to call for an EC Meeting or place the item on the agenda for

discussion during the next scheduled EC Meeting. There must be four (4) members of the EC present to conduct business at an EC Meeting. Business to be conducted may include matters of a pressing, complex, or confidential nature that require study and recommendation for action(s) to be reviewed by the Board. The President will report to the Board matters discussed during an EC Meeting as soon as practicable.

3. If a situation should arise and business cannot be delayed until the next regularly scheduled Board Meeting, the President or a majority of the Officers may call for an emergency EC Meeting. Any EC Meeting beyond a regularly scheduled and announced EC Meeting is classified as an emergency EC Meeting.
4. Provide copies of all Correspondence on behalf of their office or PD to the President, President-Elect, and PD Coordinator.
5. Standards of Conduct: Maintain the highest standards of ethics, integrity and self-discipline. Misconduct and/or neglect of duty in office are serious offenses.
6. It is the duty and obligation of all Officers/EC of the PD to uphold and carry out the purpose of the PD which is: "to enhance members' participation in the administration of justice, professional responsibility, and public service in cooperation with the State Bar of Texas."

B. ELIGIBILITY

Amended June 2015, February 2016, June 2017, October 2024, June 2026

1. Any current or past Director who is currently an Active Member of the PD and who has completed at a minimum a full Term of two (2) consecutive years as Director is eligible to be elected as President or President-Elect.
2. Any current Director who has completed one full year of their current two-year Term, or has previously served a full Term as Director, is eligible to be elected as Secretary, Treasurer or Parliamentarian. A Special Election or appointment of a Director is not considered a Term.
3. Officers shall not be eligible for re-election after service of two consecutive one-year PD Fiscal Years in the offices of Secretary, Treasurer or Parliamentarian.
4. A candidate for the offices of President and President-Elect cannot be serving concurrently (dual serving) as the President or President-Elect of another paralegal-related association.
5. All Officers and Directors shall maintain Active Member status in good standing with the PD for their full Term of Office as an Officer and/or Director.
6. Each Officer shall promptly update their personal information in the "My Account" section of the PD website whenever there is a change in contact information, including, but not limited to, mailing address, telephone number, or email address.
7. Each Officer shall promptly notify the President of any change in employment. If, at any time during an Officer's term, the Officer experiences a lapse in employment of thirty (30) days or more and, as a result, is no longer actively employed on a full-time basis under the direct supervision of an attorney, thereby becoming ineligible to maintain Active Member

status in the PD, the Officer shall immediately resign from their Officer and/or Director position. The President shall immediately declare the position vacant and shall follow the procedures set forth in these Standing Rules to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the Term. The President may require proof of current employment at any time.

8. If the Director serving in the Office of Secretary, Parliamentarian, or Treasurer experiences a change in employment that results in a change of the District in which the Director is employed, the Officer/Director shall no longer be eligible to represent the District from which they were elected. The Officer/Director shall immediately resign as Director of that District, and such resignation shall also constitute a resignation from the Office held. The President shall immediately declare the position vacant and shall follow the procedures set forth in these Standing Rules to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the Term.
9. If the Director serving in the Office of Secretary, Parliamentarian, or Treasurer ceases to be an Active Member of the PD for any reason, including failure to renew membership at the end of the Fiscal Year, the Director shall no longer be eligible to serve as Director of the District from which they were elected. The Director shall immediately resign from both the Director position and the Office held. The President shall immediately declare the position vacant and shall follow the procedures set forth in these Standing Rules to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the Term.
10. If the Officer/Director fails to voluntarily resign their position in accordance with these Standing Rules as set forth above, the President shall call a Special Meeting of the Board to remove the Officer/Director from their position, declare the position vacant and shall follow the procedures set forth in these Standing Rules to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the Term.

C. ELECTIONS FOR OFFICERS

Adopted February 2016, October 2016, October 2024, June 2026

1. President-Elect Election:

- a. No later than the Winter Meeting, the President shall appoint a President-Elect Nominating Committee for an election to be held for the office of President-Elect.
- b. The purpose of this Committee will be to accept nominations of all eligible members as possible candidates for Board offices.
- c. The President-Elect Nominating Committee shall consider all eligible PD members as possible candidates for the office of President-Elect. Eligibility of any candidate for President Elect shall be confirmed by the President-Elect Nominating Committee once notification of a candidate's intent to run or acceptance by a candidate of nomination is received by the President-Elect Nominating Committee. Eligibility confirmation per Section B above must occur before voting occurs.
- d. If there are no individuals that declare to run for the office of President-Elect then such vacancy shall be presented to the Executive Committee and the PD Coordinator shall present to the Executive Committee a list of members who may be eligible for such office. Potential candidates shall be notified by the President by email of their eligibility to run for office of the vacancy; and the potential candidate(s) will be given seven (7) business days to submit a notice of intent and their resume for candidacy for such office

to the Nominating Committee. Within five (5) business days of receipt of notice(s) of intent, the President will call an emergency meeting of the Board in accordance with Article III, Section 8.b of the Bylaws. The Board will consider the candidate(s) and the President shall call for motions, as follows:

- (1) A motion to accept the Notice of Intent to run for office, followed by a vote;
- (2) A motion to forego the ballot procedures set forth in these Standing Rules and to allow the Board to vote, followed by a vote;
- (3) A motion to vote on the candidate(s), followed by a vote; and
- (4) A motion to destroy the ballots, followed by a vote.

2. **Secretary, Treasurer and Parliamentarian Elections:**

- a. No later than the Winter Meeting, the President shall appoint an Officer Nominating Committee for an election to be held for the offices of Secretary, Treasurer and Parliamentarian. The Committee shall be composed of Board members who either are not eligible for election as an officer for the ensuing year or have expressed a desire not to serve as an officer; or in the alternative, should there be no Board member willing to serve, former Board of Director members can serve as Committee members.
- b. The purpose of this Committee will be to accept nominations of all eligible members as possible candidates for Board offices.
- c. The Officers Nominating Committee shall consider all eligible current Board members as possible candidates for the offices of Secretary, Treasurer and Parliamentarian, and before the nomination period begins shall announce to the President the Board members who are eligible to run. Eligibility of any candidate shall be confirmed by the Officer Nominating Committee once notification of a candidate's intent to run or acceptance by a candidate of nomination is received by the Officer Nominating Committee. Eligibility confirmation per paragraph 3 above must occur before voting occurs.
- d. If there are no individuals that declare to run for the office of Secretary, Treasurer or Parliamentarian, then such vacancy(ies) shall be presented to the Executive Committee, and the PD Coordinator shall be consulted to determine which Board members are eligible for any such office. Potential candidates shall be notified by the President by email of their eligibility to run for office of the vacancy; and the potential candidate(s) will be given seven (7) business days to submit a notice of intent and their resume for candidacy for such office to the Nominating Committee. Within five (5) business days of receipt of notice(s) of intent, the President will call an emergency meeting of the Board in accordance with Article III, Section 8.b of the Bylaws. The Board will consider the candidate(s) and the President shall call for motions, as follows:
 - (1) A motion to accept the Notice of Intent to run for office, followed by a vote;

- (2) A motion to forego the ballot procedures set forth in these Standing Rules and to allow the Board to vote, followed by a vote;
 - (3) A motion to vote on the candidate(s), followed by a vote; and
 - (4) A motion to destroy the ballots, followed by a vote.
- 3. Once the Nominating Committees have published the dates for the nomination period until the end of the nomination process, there cannot be any motions presented regarding nominee eligibility or revisions to the rules pertaining to the nomination or election process. These types of motions may only be presented or discussed during a Board Meeting.
- 4. The President and PD Coordinator must be consulted by each of the Nominating Committee Chairs to confirm that all persons running for any Officer election, including President-Elect, are eligible to run under these Standing Rules.

D. ELECTIONS PROCEDURES AND CAMPAIGN GUIDELINES

Amended February 2016; October 2024, June 2026

- 1. A President Elect shall be elected by electronic mail in January by the current Board of Directors. Notice of the President Elect election will be given to the membership via eblast notification, through the monthly E-Newsletter and/or in the Winter Issue of the official publication of the Paralegal Division. The President-Elect shall take office at the June Board Meeting and shall serve for a Term of one full PD Fiscal Year. The President-Elect shall automatically serve as President the following year.
- 2. A Secretary, Treasurer, and Parliamentarian shall be elected by electronic mail vote no later than May 15 of each year by the current Board of Directors. Such Officers shall take office at the June Board Meeting and shall serve for a term of one full PD Fiscal Year, or until their successors are elected.
- 3. The President shall declare a vacancy for District Director immediately in the District in which the President-Elect represents. An election for Director of that District shall be held along with the other Director elections or as soon as practicable.
- 4. PD Board Members are elected as Officers by majority vote of the PD Board of Directors. In the event of a tie vote for any officer position, the PD President shall break the tie by casting the determining vote.
- 5. Each candidate running for an officer position must present a letter of intent to include a statement not to exceed 250 words on why the individual feels they are a candidate in good standing for their position, and a current curriculum vitae/resume which shall include details of involvement in the PD in date order to the Officer and President-Elect Nominations Committee Chairs for the office for which they are running. The Chair shall include these materials with the ballots to the Board for purposes of voting. Such materials must be received by the Officer and President-Elect Nominations Committee Chairs by the deadline designated to receive such nominations. Candidates for President-Elect should additionally include in their letter of intent information to include what projects they would like to see PD undertake, and/or the direction they believe PD should take in the future.

6. It is the sole responsibility of each candidate to comply with these Standing Rules and supply all appropriate information to the appropriate Nominating Committee Chair. The Chair(s) of these Committees should not communicate with any candidate regarding these materials. The Chair(s) should confirm which candidates have fully complied with these Rules prior to preparing the ballot to be presented to the Board. No candidate will be allowed to submit any further information after the required deadline. **If a candidate fails to provide all materials to the Nominating Committee Chair(s) on or before the deadline, the candidate shall not be included on the ballot as a candidate for the office.**

E. VOTING FOR CANDIDATES

1. PRESIDENT-ELECT:

- a. A President-Elect shall be elected each January by the current Board of Directors. All ballots for President-Elect shall be e-mailed by the Chair of the Nominating Committee for President-Elect to members of the Board for their vote by January 20. Included in this e-mail shall be a President-Elect ballot listing the candidate(s) and all materials provided by the candidate. The Chair must confirm that each Director has received their ballot timely. All ballots should be returned to the Chair of the President-Elect Nominating Committee by e-mail no later than January 31. The Chair must confirm by reply email to each Director that their returned ballot has been received. It shall be the Chair's responsibility to open the ballots, tally the votes and report the results of said election to the President. The President shall confirm the votes and results of the election to determine the winning nominee of the election. In the event of a tie-vote, the President shall cast the determining vote. The President shall advise the nominees of the election results prior to notifying the Board. The results of the election shall be reported to all members of the Board by e-mail by the President within 3-5 days of confirming the winning nominee of President-Elect. The Chair of the Nominating Committee for President-Elect is automatically discharged upon notification of the election results to the President.
- b. All returned ballots shall be destroyed upon motion and vote at the next Board Meeting.

2. SECRETARY, TREASURER AND PARLIAMENTARIAN:

- a. No later than April 30 of each year, the Chair of the Officers Nominating Committee shall present the ballot of candidates for the offices of Secretary, Treasurer and Parliamentarian by electronic mail, which shall also contain a blank line for any write-in nominations.
- b. Each Board member shall cast their vote on the written ballot and return it to the Officers Nominating Committee Chair by electronic mail.
- c. The Officers Nominating Committee Chair shall count the votes in each ballot and provide the results to the President who shall then announce the elected candidates. In the event of a tie-vote, the President shall cast the determining vote.

- d. All returned ballots shall be destroyed upon motion and vote at the next Board Meeting.

F. OFFICE OF PRESIDENT

1. It shall be the responsibility of the President to preside at all meetings of the PD and to perform such other duties as ordinarily pertain to this office. The President shall appoint committee chairs and committee members subject to the approval of the Board of Directors. The President shall be an ex-officio member of all Committees. The President serves as the spokesperson for the PD. The President shall perform such special duties, powers or authority as shall be fixed by the Board of Directors or the Standing Rules.
2. The PD President is chosen for their leadership skills, among other attributes. It is the President's duty to provide leadership to the Board, the EC, the Directors, and the membership.
3. The President is the official spokesperson of the PD on behalf of the members. All public relations announcements or press releases concerning the activities of the PD must have final approval by the PD President after having submitted same to the SBOT Communications Review for approval, and prior to release and/or publication on behalf of the PD.
4. It is the duty of the President to administer impartially and impersonally the affairs of the PD, all incident to the accomplishment of the purposes and goals of the PD.
5. The President-Elect of the current Fiscal Year automatically succeeds to the office of President for the following Fiscal Year. If for any reason the President cannot fulfill their full Term as President, the President-Elect would succeed to the office of President to fulfill the Term, and a new election would ensue to fill the office of the President-Elect for the current Fiscal Year.
6. The office of the President is a non-voting office. The PD President shall preside over all Board Meetings, shall be the chief executive officer, and shall be the liaison to the Board of Directors of the State Bar of Texas.
7. A person will only serve a one-year Term in the office of President.

G. OFFICE OF PRESIDENT-ELECT

1. It shall be the responsibility of the President-Elect to act in the absence of the President and to perform such other duties as may be designated by the President or the Board of Directors.
2. The office of President-Elect is a non-voting office.
3. The President-Elect is an elected position each Fiscal Year by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.
4. A person will only serve a one-year Term in the office of President-Elect, then will automatically succeed to the office of the President the following Fiscal Year.

5. The President-Elect shall serve as President upon the absence or removal of the President.
6. The President-Elect shall handle emergent matters as directed by the President.
7. The President-Elect shall be responsible on a continuing basis for keeping any necessary changes to the Standing Rules or Procedures Manual as they are voted upon by the Board of Directors to be incorporated into those documents.
8. The President-Elect shall be responsible for organizing the annual orientation for new Directors and Committee Chairs.

H. OFFICE OF SECRETARY

1. It shall be the responsibility of the Secretary to accurately record the proceedings of all meetings of the PD and of the Board of Directors and maintain them in a permanent form. All records, Minutes, and permanent files shall be delivered to the PD Coordinator with a copy to the successor at the close of their Term. The Secretary shall perform such other duties as may be designated by the President, Executive Committee, or Board of Directors or the Standing Rules.
2. The office of Secretary is an elected position each Fiscal Year by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.
3. The Secretary shall prepare the Minutes of all EC, Board Meetings and Annual Meeting, for review and approval of the President and President-Elect within 14 days immediately following each meeting. The President and President-Elect shall review and return to the Secretary within 7 days of receipt.
4. The Secretary shall finalize the Minutes and promptly distribute same to the Directors within seven (7) days of receipt from the President and President-Elect. If any Board member has comments or changes for the Minutes, they shall advise the Secretary within seven (7) days. The Secretary shall immediately finalize the Minutes and distribute to the EC, Board and PD Coordinator.
5. The Secretary is responsible for the safekeeping of all permanent Minutes and recording of official Minutes of all meetings therein. Minutes shall contain those items outlined in the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order.
6. A person may not serve more than two one-year Terms in the office of Secretary.

I. OFFICE OF TREASURER

1. The Treasurer will (a) review all expense reimbursements submitted for payment, as well as other invoices which may be necessary; (b) prepare bi-monthly check charts on or before the 1st and 15th of each month, and submit same to the PD Coordinator and PD Bookkeeper for processing; (c) shall maintain files of all expense reimbursements and invoices, along with the check charts through the PD Sharefile; (d) provide regular reports to the Board; (e) assist in reviewing proposed amendments to the current year's budget when deemed necessary; and (f) assist in preparing the annual budget for presentation to the Board. The Treasurer shall

perform such other duties as may be designated by the President, the Board of Directors or the Standing Rules.

2. The office of Treasurer is an elected position each Fiscal Year by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.
4. The Treasurer shall maintain accurate accounting records of PD funds, including, but not limited to, ledgers, journals, and other related files to reflect the income and expenses of the PD.
3. All requests for reimbursement of expenses shall comply with the PD Reimbursement Policies as set forth in the PD Procedures Manual.
4. Expenses related to the previous PD Fiscal Year must be made no later than one (1) month after the PD's Outgoing Board Meeting or no reimbursement will be made.
5. A comparable fee to that charged by the bank shall be charged for all checks written to the PD that are returned by the bank for insufficient funds or on closed accounts.
6. A person may not serve more than two one-year Terms in the office of Treasurer.

J. OFFICE OF PARLIAMENTARIAN

1. It shall be the duty of the Parliamentarian to receive all suggested written amendments to the Bylaws, and to study such suggested amendments to be proposed and submitted to the general membership for a vote. The Parliamentarian may also initiate suggested amendments to the Bylaws and Standing Rules and shall make recommendations to the Board concerning these Standing Rules and *Robert's Rules of Order* for the Conduct of the Annual Meeting and shall participate in the process of ballots for proposed amendments to Bylaws as set out in these Standing Rules. The Parliamentarian shall maintain the Bylaws.
2. The office of Parliamentarian is an elected position each Fiscal Year by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.
3. The Parliamentarian shall be thoroughly familiar with the Division's Bylaws, Standing Rules, Procedures Manual and *Robert's Rules of Order* and to give opinions and recommendations on the parliamentary procedure for the facilitation of all meetings.
4. The Parliamentarian shall maintain proper order in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order* during all meetings of the PD, including requiring all persons to maintain proper order and follow proper rules when conducting business of the PD.
5. A person may not serve more than two one-year Terms in the office of Parliamentarian.

K. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

1. It is the duty of an Officer:
 - a. To conduct themselves with integrity and civility at all times while representing the PD;

- b. To thoroughly review and become familiar with the PD Bylaws, Standing Rules and Procedures;
 - c. To supply leadership to the PD;
 - d. To supply leadership to the PD Board of Directors;
 - e. To attend all Board Meetings, including the mandatory Annual Meeting;
 - f. To be available at all times to further the objectives and meet the responsibilities of the PD;
 - g. To fully and responsibly carry out all of the duties of their respective office;
 - h. To be diligent in keeping employment and membership information updated at all times, to maintain Active Membership status while in office, and to immediately advise the EC of any employment changes;
 - i. To obtain approval of all communications and publications on behalf of the District as contained in these Standing Rules;
 - j. To be thoroughly familiar with all Governing Documents of PD including Bylaws, Standing Rules and Procedures Manual;
 - k. To be thoroughly familiar with and comply with all Financial Procedures of the PD;
 - l. To attend all orientation and training (whether in person or virtual) provided by the PD;
 - m. To perform such duties as the President or Board may from time to time direct; and
 - n. To fully conduct business on behalf of the PD by having a personal Dropbox account and email address that can be linked to use for PD business.
2. The duty of care sometimes requires reasonable and responsible inquiry. Where a problem exists, or a report on its face does not make sense, an Officer has a duty to inquire into the surrounding facts and circumstances. The duty of care includes monitoring responsibilities that have been delegated by the President, Officers and/or Board to various Committees and Subcommittees. When the Board has voted on an issue, it is the Officers' duty of loyalty to support that Board decision. Discussion on the matter was held prior to the vote. The Board has acted and it is the Officers' job to see that the Board's decision is carried out.
 3. Standards of Conduct: Maintain the highest standards of ethics, integrity and self-discipline. Misconduct and/or neglect of duty in office are serious offenses.

L. VACANCIES OF OFFICERS

Adopted February 2000

When the office of Secretary, Treasurer, or Parliamentarian becomes vacant due to resignation or removal during a Fiscal Year, the Board shall appoint, by majority vote, a replacement from among

the eligible members of the current Board, who shall serve the remainder of the Term of office in which the vacancy occurred.

V. DIRECTORS *Amended June 2026*

A. DIRECTOR DUTIES ON BEHALF OF DISTRICT

1. Director is an elected position by the members of each District of the Paralegal Division in accordance with the Bylaws. Upon election, a Director will serve two consecutive Fiscal Years, also known as a "Term" for Directors, and may be eligible to run for re-election to serve another Term. A Director may not serve more than two consecutive Terms as Director but may be eligible to run for the position of Director in the future.
2. All Directors shall maintain Active Member status in good standing with the PD for their full Term of Office as a Director.
3. Each Director shall promptly update their personal information in the "My Account" section of the PD website whenever there is a change in contact information, including, but not limited to, mailing address, telephone number, or email address.
4. Each Director shall promptly notify the President of any change in employment. If, at any time during an Director's Term, the Director experiences a lapse in employment of thirty (30) days or more and, as a result, is no longer actively employed on a full-time basis under the direct supervision of an attorney, thereby becoming ineligible to maintain Active Member status in the PD, the Director shall immediately resign from their Director position. The President shall immediately declare the position vacant and shall follow the procedures set forth in these Standing Rules to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the Term. The President may require proof of current employment at any time.
5. If the Director serving in the Office of Secretary, Parliamentarian, or Treasurer experiences a change in employment that results in a change of the District in which the Director is employed, the Officer/Director shall no longer be eligible to represent the District from which they were elected. The Officer/Director shall immediately resign as Director of that District, and such resignation shall also constitute a resignation from the Office held. The President shall immediately declare the position vacant and shall follow the procedures set forth in these Standing Rules to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the Term.
6. If the Director fails to voluntarily resign their position in accordance with these Standing Rules as set forth above, the President shall call a Special Meeting of the Board to remove the Director from their position, declare the position vacant and shall follow the procedures set forth in these Standing Rules to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the Term.
7. Each Director's sole responsibility is to serve their members and act as representatives on behalf of the entire membership of their District and should at all times be reasonably and fiscally responsible on behalf of their members. As such, Directors should be aware of matters of importance that will benefit all members of their District and represent their members at all times, during Board Meetings and any other events attending and/or acting in their capacity as Director. Directors should act responsibly for their members in voting responsibilities on behalf of their District.

8. It is the duty of a Director:
- a. To conduct themselves with integrity and civility at all times while representing the PD;
 - b. To thoroughly review and become familiar with the PD Bylaws, Standing Rules and Procedures;
 - c. To be diligent in keeping employment and membership information updated at all times, to maintain Active Membership status while in office, and to immediately advise the EC of any employment changes;
 - d. Serve as a representative of the designated District by being a contact for members to email, telephone, or mail questions pertaining to the Division or District in which they are a member. In the event the Director is unable to answer questions, always forward such question to the Division's Coordinator, with a copy being sent to the President and President-Elect;
 - e. To supply leadership to the PD;
 - f. To supply leadership to the PD Board of Directors;
 - g. To attend all Board Meetings and Special Meetings, and to properly provide required reports prior to each Board Meeting of activities in their District since the prior Board Meeting;
 - h. To attend all team building or orientation events;
 - i. To attend the Annual Meeting luncheon that is held in conjunction with TAPS;
 - j. To serve as a volunteer and attend all networking events at TAPS if the Director is seeking reimbursement from PD for the TAPS seminar;
 - k. To attend and volunteer at all events in which PD has expended funds for the Director to be in attendance;
 - l. To be available at all times to further the objectives and meet the responsibilities of the PD;
 - m. To be an active representative of the PD within their District;
 - n. Provide a minimum of three (3) hours of CLE per Fiscal Year, and deliver any revenues collected from CLE events to the Division's Coordinator;
 - o. Coordinate two online CLEs per Fiscal Year that may be recorded and added to the PD online CLE library through InReach;
 - p. Timely respond to requests by the President, PD Coordinator, Committee Chairs and Subchairs, and members in their District;

- q. To advise the Board of local needs and programs being conducted within their District;
- r. To communicate with members of their District on a continual basis to ascertain opinions and to vote accordingly on their behalf at Board Meetings;
- s. To communicate with members of their District within 30 days following each Board Meeting to advise of information and updates of business of the PD;
- t. Meet with District sub-chairs quarterly to discuss District events and goals as well as planning events. Delegate specific tasks to the District sub-chairs to help accomplish District goals;
- u. Foster new leaders in their District. This is important for the future of the Paralegal Division vision and for continued advancement of the profession;
- v. Prepare a submission by the 20th of each month for inclusion in the Paralegal Pulse, including all relevant local CLE and events and other information of interest in their District;
- w. Interact with all local paralegal associations as well as other local legal associations in their Districts (such as local bar association, local paralegal associations, and local young lawyers association);
- x. Interact with local paralegal schools;
- y. Monitor District member accomplishments, such as certifications, awards, college graduations, etc.;
- z. Be active on their District Facebook page with content that has been approved by the SBOT as set forth in these Standing Rules;
- aa. To submit a list of sub-chair appointments annually to the President and before the June Outgoing Board Meeting. Directors are responsible for appointing all Subchairs for their District;
- bb. In the event a Subchair position is vacant, it will be the Director's responsibility to carry out the duties and responsibilities of that Subchair until a new Subchair is appointed by the District Director;
- cc. To promote PD programs within their District;
- dd. To be available at all times to further the objectives and meet the responsibilities of the PD;
- ee. To perform such duties as the President or Board may from time to time direct;
- ff. To fully prepare for each Board Meeting by being familiar with the materials to aid discussion on matters before the Board;

- gg. To obtain approval of all communications on behalf of the District as set forth in these Standing Rules;
 - hh. To be thoroughly familiar with and comply with all Financial Procedures of the PD;
 - ii. To attend all orientation and training (whether in person or virtual) provided by the PD;
 - jj. To fully conduct business on behalf of the PD by having a personal Dropbox account and email address that can be linked to use for PD business; and
 - kk. Provide copies of all Correspondence on behalf of their District or PD in general to the President, President-Elect, and PD Coordinator.
9. The duty of care sometimes requires reasonable and responsible inquiry. Where a problem exists, or a report on its face does not make sense, a Director has a duty to inquire into the surrounding facts and circumstances. The duty of care includes monitoring responsibilities that have been delegated by the Board to various Committees and Subcommittees. When the Board has voted on an issue, it is the Director's duty of loyalty to support that Board decision. Discussion on the matter was held prior to the vote. The Board has acted and it is the Director's job to see that the Board's decision is carried out.
10. Standards of Conduct: Maintain the highest standards of ethics, integrity and self-discipline. Misconduct and/or neglect of duty in office are serious offenses.

B. DIRECTOR DUTIES AS BOARD ADVISORS

- 1. General Duties
 - a. Act as liaison between the Board and Committee Chair in an advisory capacity.
 - b. Communicate relevant Board activity in writing to the Committee Chair within ten (10) business days following any meeting of the Board.
 - c. Present the Committee Report in the absence of the Committee Chair at all Board Meetings.
- 2. Responsibilities
 - a. Attend all meetings of the Committee as deemed appropriate.
 - b. In the absence or removal of the Committee Chair, assume the duties as Chair of the Committee, but in a non-voting capacity, until a successor is appointed.
 - c. Review the Committee reports and any proposed action or recommendation prior to distribution to the Board.
 - d. Prepare motions for Board approval that stem from any proposed action or recommendations laid out in Committee report.
 - e. Contact Committee Chair prior to each Board Meeting and at other necessary times to verify projects, determine status and answer questions.

- f. Provide copies of all Correspondence as liaison to the organization or PD in general to the President, President-Elect, and PD Coordinator.

C. DIRECTOR DUTIES AS LIAISONS WITH OTHER LAW RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

- 1. Facilitate communication between the PD and the organization to which they are assigned.
- 2. Submit written reports to the Board of any matters of interest to the PD.
- 3. Encourage joint projects of mutual benefit.
- 4. Make suggestions and recommendations for improving the effectiveness of the relationship with the organization, if necessary.
- 5. Provide copies of all Correspondence as liaison to the organization or PD in general to the President, President-Elect, and PD Coordinator.

D. ESTABLISHING ADDITIONAL DIRECTORSHIPS

Amended March 1985, June 1985, April 1995, September 1996, February 2000, November 2015, February 2016, June 2016, February 2017, June 2024, June 2026

1. COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD

- a. The governing body of the PD consists of a Board composed of one elected representative from each District of the PD. The Board may establish and eliminate an additional directorship for a District; however, each District has one vote on the Board regardless of the number of Directors, which vote shall be cast by the Director in the District with the most seniority as a Director on the Board. In the event of no Director with seniority, the Directors from that District will designate which Director will cast the District's vote by advising the President.
- b. Directorships in Districts having more than one Director shall be designated by numbered Places.

2. PROCEDURE

- a. A District must have 500 or more members from that District for a minimum of two consecutive Fiscal Years, as determined by the membership count provided by the State Bar of Texas as of September 1 prior to submitting a request for additional directorship.
- b. If a District meets the criteria of a. above, and upon request by the Board Member of that District the President shall notify the Board that the subject of an additional directorship for a District will be on the agenda for the Fall Board Meeting.
- c. Nothing in these Standing Rules shall require or mandate an additional Directorship; any compliant request is subject to consideration and determination of the Board.
- d. The Director submitting the request for an additional directorship in their District shall provide the Board with the following information prior to the Fall Board

Meeting: the number of members in the District, the active volunteers, (calculated by sub-chairs and volunteers for specific events or projects), the size of the geographic area and population of the District, the number of CLE programs held in the past year, and the number of local paralegal associations within the District.

- e. At the Fall Board Meeting, in deliberating any such request, the Board will consider the data presented by the requesting Director as listed in this section, as well as any other information brought before it, including the estimated cost of an additional directorship and assessment of whether a new District should be composed in lieu of an additional directorship.
- f. By majority affirmative vote of the Board members present and voting at the Fall Board Meeting, an additional directorship may be established and shall be designated by a Place numbered immediately consecutive to the existing Place numbers in that District. If only one Directorship exists in that District, the existing directorship shall be designated by Place 1. The next additional directorship shall be designated as Place 2, and consecutively numbered thereafter, in the event of additional directorships.

3. FILLING ADDITIONAL DIRECTORSHIP

- a. When an additional directorship for a District has been established by the Board, the President shall call for an election to be held at the same time as other elections of Directors that Fiscal Year, as provided in Article III, Section 5 of the Bylaws.
- b. The President shall cause to be sent notice of the election to all Active Members of the PD whose principal places of business are in the District wherein the new Directorship has been established.

4. TERM

- a. Any additional directorship so established by the Board shall have a Term of office commencing at the Board Meeting immediately following the Annual Meeting and expiring in the year following the Term expiration of the Place 1 Director existing in that District; except that if that Place 1 Director takes office at the same time as the new Place 2 Director, then the new Place 2 Director shall serve for one year, with an election for Place 2 for a two-year Term to be held the next year, so that the directorships are staggered in elections.
- b. Any additional directorship established by the Board will continue until completion of the added Director's two-year Term.
- c. If the number of members in the District where an additional directorship has been added, drops below 500 members for two consecutive Fiscal Years, as determined by the membership count provided by the State Bar of Texas on or after September 1, the President shall place on the agenda for the fall Board Meeting the topic of elimination of the additional Directorship, for determination by a majority vote of the Board.

- d. If by majority vote, the Board eliminates the additional Directorship, then no election would be held for the Director's Place in the next election.

E. REALIGNMENT OF PD DISTRICTS

A District must maintain a membership of at least 30 members to remain an active District. If membership in a District falls to 30 or below members for a period of two consecutive years, the Board may consider realignment of Districts to merge counties into other adjacent Districts.

VI. PARALEGAL DIVISION BOARD OF DIRECTORS' CODE OF CONDUCT

Amended June 2026

- A. The Board of the PD has adopted the following Code of Conduct (defined here as "CC") for its Officers, Executive Committee, and Directors (collectively referred to in these Standing Rules as "Board") when participating in the affairs of the Board and its Committees. This CC is not intended to override or conflict with any applicable laws or obligations pursuant to the State Bar of Texas Act, Rules, policies, the PD Bylaws, or the PD Code of Ethics. Board members are to be guided by this CC in carrying out their responsibilities as Officers and Directors. No code of conduct can anticipate every situation that may arise. Accordingly, this CC provides guiding principles to be applied in various circumstances. Generally, the goal is to ensure that Board members strive to foster PD's Mission Statement and act in an ethical manner by setting a minimum standard for the conduct of PD Board Members.
- B. *The purpose (mission) of the Paralegal Division shall be to enhance members' participation in the administration of justice, professional responsibility, and public service in cooperation with the State Bar of Texas.*
- C. *Professionalism and Ethics.* The reputation of the PD depends upon the way Board Members conduct themselves and the way the public and PD members perceive that conduct. Board Members must adhere to a high standard of professionalism and act ethically in conducting their duties. This includes being honest and acting with integrity. Unethical actions, or the appearance of unethical actions, are not acceptable.
- D. *Care, Inquiry and Attendance.* Board Members shall apply themselves with due care when conducting PD business. Board Members are expected to be generally familiar with the PD Bylaws, Standing Rules, Procedures Manual, and all other documents of the PD. Board Members shall take such steps as are reasonably necessary to be sufficiently informed to make decisions on behalf of the PD and to participate in an informed manner in the Board's activities. Board Members should aspire to attend all meetings of the Board and attempt to schedule personal and work obligations around meetings of the Board.
- E. *Compliance with Laws, Rules and Regulations.* Board Members shall comply with all laws, rules and regulations applicable to the PD, including the PD Bylaws, Standing Rules, Procedures Manual and other documents of the PD. Board Members shall at all times also promote the purposes and objectives of the State Bar of Texas and shall never act in conflict with the rules of the State Bar of

Texas and specifically shall never act in conflict with the State Bar Act and the SBOT Policy Manual.

- F. In accordance with Section 39.06 of the Texas Penal Code, a Board Member may not disclose or misuse information obtained in closed session and must keep such information confidential.
- G. *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.* Board Members should aspire to create an inclusive environment, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, color, national origin, age, sex, disability (physical or mental), military and/or veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or other characteristics protected by applicable federal, state or local law. Board Members shall not engage in behavior intended to discriminate, harass, intimidate, degrade, or humiliate others based on these characteristics.
- H. *Enforcement and Corrective Action.* A violation of this CC shall be enforced as set forth in VII of these Standing Rules. Corrective action may include, without limitation, a private warning removal of the Board Member from the Board, and/or a referral to the Grievance Committee.

VII. DISCIPLINE OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Amended September 1996, June 2003, June 2013, June 2024, June 2026

A. FOR GOOD CAUSE

- 1. The Board shall have the power to discipline or remove Officers and Directors for good cause. Good cause shall include:
 - a. Any violation of the Code of Conduct as set forth in VI. above;
 - b. Professional misconduct as that term is defined in these Standing Rules;
 - c. Failure to attend two (2) duly noticed Board Meetings during their two-year Term without good cause;
 - d. Failure to faithfully and professionally represent their District at all times, including engaging in conduct that disparages the Paralegal Division, and to refrain from actions or statements that could reasonably be viewed as disparaging the Paralegal Division or detrimental to its mission and objectives;
 - e. Neglect of duty in Office which includes but is not limited to:
 - (1) Failure to timely report to the District membership the actions taken by the Board of Directors within 30 days of each regularly scheduled Board Meeting;
 - (2) Failure to timely file written reports to the Board when required;
 - (3) Failure to provide three (3) hours of required CLE to District members and two (2) Online CLEs to the PD Online CLE library through InReach per Fiscal Year;
 - (4) Failure to provide information on a monthly basis to their members, including submissions to the monthly Paralegal Pulse;

- (5) Failure to monitor actions of District Subcommittee members;
 - (6) Failure to timely respond to requests by the President for electronic votes on any issues placed before the Board of Directors;
 - (7) Failure to timely respond to any requests by the PD Coordinator or the President regarding any Board matters;
 - (8) Failure to timely respond to requests from members, President or PD Coordinator; and
 - (9) Generally, failure to comply with the duties of directors as set out in the PD Procedures Manual or requests of the President.
- f. When there appears to be good cause for the discipline of an Officer or Director, the President shall call a meeting of the Executive Committee, excluding the person who is subject to potential discipline if a member of the Executive Committee, to consider the matter. If the President is subject to potential discipline, the President-Elect shall call the meeting, excluding the President, and shall fulfill the responsibilities of the President under this Standing Rule until such matter is resolved by the Board.

B. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

1. The Officer or Director who is subject to potential discipline shall be notified in writing via electronic mail by the President of the date, time, and place of the Executive Committee Meeting no less than ten (10) days prior to said meeting. The notice shall set forth the specific nature of the conduct or neglect of duty which appears to be good cause for removal, and shall be clearly marked, "PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL: TO BE OPENED BY ADDRESSEE ONLY."
2. If the Executive Committee determines by majority vote that there are sufficient grounds to present the matter to the Board for a hearing, the matter will be scheduled for Executive Session at the next regular meeting of the Board, and the Director who is subject to potential discipline and the other members of the Board shall be so notified via electronic mail.
3. If two-thirds of the Board vote in favor of discipline of the Officer or Director, the President shall call for a vote by the Board as to the appropriate sanction. If two-thirds of the Board vote in favor of removal of the Director from the Board, the President shall declare the removed Director's office vacant, and a successor shall be appointed by the Board pursuant to Article III, Section 9.b of the Bylaws.
4. If a majority of the Board members present vote in favor of a sanction other than removal, that sanction shall be imposed by the Board. If no single sanction receives a majority vote, the President shall announce the two sanctions other than removal which received the most votes and a tie in the most votes cast for other sanctions receiving the next highest total). The Board shall again vote for one of the two (or several) sanctions, and the sanction receiving a majority of the votes cast shall be imposed by the Board.
5. Sanctions may include private reprimand, withholding of expense reimbursements, suspension or removal from the Board.

VIII. PARALEGAL DIVISION COMMITTEES *Amended June 2026*

A. GENERAL

Amended June 1985, June 1986, September 1991, September 1996, June 2026

1. The PD can function more effectively with active participation by its members serving on Committees.
2. The President appoints a Chair for each Standing Committee to serve for the Fiscal Year. The President also appoints any Ad Hoc Committees as they deem appropriate and appoints a Chair for each of those Committees for the Fiscal Year. The President, in accordance with the Bylaws, shall appoint Committee Chairs for Standing and Ad Hoc Committees from among the Active Members.
3. Each Director is responsible for appointing Committee Subchairs for the Committees that require subchairs from their District.
4. Each Standing Committee Chair will be appointed for a one-year Term by the incoming President. The incoming President will appoint an Ad Hoc Committee Chair for each of those Committees that they have appointed as a new Committee, and each Ad Hoc Committee that they have reappointed from the previous Term.
5. The President appoints a Board member as an advisor for each Committee to serve as a liaison between the Committee and the Board. The Board Advisor shall notify each Committee Chair of any Board action that affects the Committee and be a representative of the Committee at Board Meetings. The Advisor should, when fiscally possible, attend all Committee meetings and receive copies of all Committee's Correspondence, agenda and Minutes.
6. All Committees shall maintain records detailing that Committee's projects and activities that shall serve as a historical record for the Committee.
7. Prior to each Incoming Board Meeting in June, the President shall provide the current year's Committee Charges to each incoming Committee Chair for review and consideration in developing the Committee Charges for the ensuing year. Each Committee Chair shall have the opportunity to propose goals, projects, and other objectives for their Committee and shall communicate such recommendations to the President for consideration and inclusion. The President shall prepare the proposed Committee Charges for the ensuing year and present them to the Board at the Incoming Board Meeting for review and final approval.
8. The Chair of each Committee shall be responsible for fully developing and completing the charges for their Committee throughout the Fiscal Year.
9. In the absence of a Subchair being appointed from each District for any Committee as required, the Director for that District shall act as the Subchair for that Committee.
10. In the absence of a Subchair being appointed from each District for any Committee as required, the Director for that District shall act as the Subchair for that Committee.

11. The Chair shall keep the President, President-Elect, PD Coordinator and Board Advisor updated throughout the year on all matters regarding their Committee.
12. The Chair of each Committee shall provide reports to the President, President-Elect, PD Coordinator and Board Advisor for compilation and presentation at each Board Meeting regarding the work of the Committee and the status of the Committee charges.
13. Membership on Committees shall include representation from as many Districts as is practicable. In addition, a balance should be maintained between members who have previously served on a particular Committee and those who have not. The Terms of office shall expire at the end of each Fiscal Year.
14. Provide copies of all Correspondence on behalf of their Committee or PD in general to the President, President-Elect, and PD Coordinator.

B. STANDING COMMITTEES *June 2026*

1. **CONTINUING EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

a. **District Continuing Legal Education Committee**

This Committee shall be composed of the Chair and at least one eligible member from each District. This Committee shall be responsible for planning and presenting at least three hours of continuing legal education in each District per Fiscal Year.

b. **Online Continuing Legal Education Committee**

This Committee shall be composed of the Chair and at least one eligible member from each District. The Committee shall be responsible for the management of the online continuing legal education program and obtaining two programs for each District during each Fiscal Year.

2. **ELECTIONS COMMITTEE**

This Committee shall be composed of the Chair and at least one eligible member from each District who shall serve as a Subchair for their District. This Committee will be concerned with the process of elections for Directors and with the process of balloting on proposed amendments to the Bylaws and shall assure compliance with the guidelines for each such process.

3. **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**

This Committee shall be composed of the Chair and at least one eligible member from each District who shall serve as a Subchair for their District. This Committee will be concerned with qualifications for membership and the criteria to be used in determining eligibility and shall promote membership to non-members, and growth within the PD.

This Committee shall also promote the benefits of membership in the PD, distribute membership materials and information, reach out to new and current members, reach out to

local paralegal programs, reach out to local paralegal associations and in general promote the PD.

This Committee on an annual basis shall review and evaluate each category of membership and make recommendations for criteria for each category to best serve PD members, including enhanced networking and continuing education opportunities.

4. **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

This Committee shall be comprised of the Chair and any other members which may be appointed by the Chair or President to assist in various projects for promoting and enhancing the professional development and career growth of paralegals and to encourage current and future leaders in the involvement of the service to the PD and the paralegal profession.

5. **PROFESSIONAL ETHICS COMMITTEE**

This Committee shall be composed of the Chair, with the primary purpose of educating and promoting ethics among the members of the PD. The Chair shall interpret and recommend amendments to the Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility and make recommendations to the Board with respect to disciplinary procedures. In the event a Complaint is received against a member of the PD, the President will appoint Active PD Members to serve as a Grievance Committee in accordance with these Standing Rules.

6. **PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

This Committee shall be composed of the Chair and at least one eligible member from each District. The purpose of this Committee shall be to promote the activities and member benefits of the PD; to study and develop various means to better inform the legal profession and the general public about the paralegal profession; and shall nurture positive relationships with local and national associations of paralegals and other associations throughout the country. In addition, this Committee shall inform both members and non-members of the activities and benefits of the PD using social media and other means of communication, in accordance with the guidelines of the State Bar of Texas.

6. **PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE** *June 2026*

a. **Texas Paralegal Journal Committee**

This Committee shall be comprised of the Committee Chair and other eligible members appointed by the PD President. This Committee shall be responsible for reviewing and submitting various items for publication in the *Texas Paralegal Journal*. This Committee shall also be responsible for reviewing and submitting various items for publication in non-PD periodicals. A disclaimer must be added to any publication of the Division, whether print or electronic, which includes advertising. The disclaimer will read as follows: **“The publication of any advertisement herein does not imply endorsement in any manner.”**

a. **Paralegal Pulse Committee**

This Committee shall be comprised of the Committee Chair and other eligible

members appointed by the PD President. This Committee shall be responsible for creating and publishing the Paralegal Pulse which is the monthly E-Newsletter that contains current news and information to keep members updated on current events in the PD.

C. AD HOC COMMITTEES

Amended October 2024, June 2026

Ad Hoc Committees may be established from time to time as may be deemed necessary by the President or a majority vote of the Board members present and voting at a Board Meeting. The tenure of an Ad Hoc Committee shall not extend beyond the next Fiscal Year unless reappointed by the incoming President.

D. REPORTS

Amended April 1995, September 1996, October 2024

1. The Committee Chairs should submit a written report to the President President-Elect, PD Coordinator and the Board Advisor for the Committee no later than the deadline given by the PD Coordinator.
2. Oral reports may be given at the Board Meeting, at the request of the President, by the Committee Chair or designee, or by the Board Advisor to the Committee. If action by the Board is to be recommended by the Committee, the Board Advisor for the Committee should submit the recommendation in the form of a motion to the Board for discussion.
3. All Committees shall submit a written annual report to the President, President-Elect, PD Coordinator and Board Advisor no later than June 1 of each year. The annual reports shall be made available to the general membership on the PD website.

E. PD ANNUAL AWARDS *June 2026*

1. **Award of Excellence**

The Award of Excellence is the PD's highest recognition to an individual who has made a major contribution to the PD and/or the paralegal profession. Nominees for the Award of Excellence may be made by a Director to the President either orally or in writing, prior to the Winter Board Meeting. Upon review of the nominations, Board shall vote for recipients of the Awards of Excellence at the Board's Winter Meeting. It is not mandatory that Awards of Excellence be presented each year. Awards of Excellence, if any, shall be presented by the President at the Annual Meeting.

2. **Exceptional Pro Bono Service Award**

The Exceptional Pro Bono Service Award is an annual award. Its purpose is to promote the awareness of pro bono activities and to encourage PD members to volunteer their time and specialty skills to pro bono projects within their community by recognizing a PD member who demonstrates exceptional dedication to pro bono service. The award shall be presented annually by the President at the Annual Meeting.

3. **Other Awards and Certificates of Appreciation**

The Board may consider other awards to be presented to PD members for their involvement and support of PD through the current Fiscal Year. The Board shall discuss these awards at the Winter Board Meeting and vote on any nominees. Such awards may include: Committee Chair(s) of the Year, Special Awards, Certificates of Appreciation or other such awards at the discretion of the Board. It is not mandatory that these awards be presented each year, but any such awards will be presented by the President at the Annual Meeting.

IX. PARALEGAL DIVISION CONTRACTED EMPLOYEES *June 2026*

A. PARALEGAL DIVISION COORDINATOR

The PD Coordinator is a contracted employee position, for a contract period each Fiscal Year of the PD. An annual contract for the position is prepared and presented to the Board for consideration and approval and presentation to the SBOT for final approval, with terms of employment and compensation spelled out in the contract. The PD Coordinator provides administrative and consultation services for the PD. A complete list of duties and procedures of this position shall be included in the PD Procedures Manual and kept updated as duties for the position change.

B. PARALEGAL DIVISION BOOKKEEPER

The PD Bookkeeper is a contracted employee position, for a contract period each Fiscal Year of the PD. An annual contract for the position is prepared and presented to the Board for consideration and approval and presentation to the SBOT for final approval, with terms of employment and compensation spelled out in the contract. The PD Bookkeeper provides general bookkeeping and consultation services for the PD in conjunction with the PD Coordinator and PD Treasurer. A complete list of duties and procedures of this position shall be included in the PD Procedures Manual and kept updated as duties for the position change.

C. TEXAS ADVANCED PARALEGAL SEMINAR (TAPS) MEETING PLANNER

The TAPS Meeting Planner is a contracted employee position for the annual TAPS Seminar. A contract for the position is prepared and presented to the Board for consideration and approval and presentation to the SBOT for final approval, with terms of employment and compensation spelled out in the contract. The TAPS Meeting Planner duties include coordinating the hotel contract for the location of the annual TAPS seminar, working with various vendors necessary for the TAPS seminar, coordinating the registration process for the seminar, and attending the seminar to assist for on-site needs during the seminar. A complete list of duties and procedures of this position shall be included in the TAPS Procedures Manual and kept updated as duties for the position change.

X. PARALEGAL DIVISION REPRESENTATIVES *June 2026*

A. PD AMBASSADORS

PD Ambassadors are past presidents of the PD who, upon invitation, agree to serve as an

Ambassador for the purpose of furthering the goals of the PD and the paralegal profession. PD Ambassadors are encouraged to make appearances and presentations on behalf of the PD for educational purposes to further the profession and build goodwill between PD and other organizations.

B. TEXAS BAR COLLEGE

1. The PD President shall appoint a PD Liaison to the Texas Bar College to serve a three-year Term on the Board of Directors of the College, to serve as a voice for PD members to the College, relative to (a) Paralegal CLE needs; (b) Paralegal participation in the College; (c) raising the bar in awareness, gratification, and self-fulfillment of an individual's CLE attendance.
2. The PD Liaison shall serve as a conduit between the College and Texas Paralegals in promoting awareness of associate membership in the college.
3. The PD Liaison shall work with College Active Members to promote awareness of the PD to their office Paralegals.
4. The PD Liaison shall agree to perform the aforementioned tasks and prepare written reports to the PD for each PD Board Meeting.
5. The PD Liaison shall have the following qualifications to serve:
 - a. Be an Active Member in good standing of the PD;
 - b. Be a member in good standing of the College;
 - c. Be committed to fulfill the three (3) year Term on the Board of Directors of the College, except under special circumstances (i.e. medical conditions, workload, relocation out of state, etc.) brought before the Board of directors of the College and the PD. The PD Liaison shall also maintain membership in good standing in both the PD and the College during their Term. The Liaison may be re-appointed for one consecutive three (3) year Term following the initial Term.
 - d. The PD Liaison will provide a written report at each PD Board Meeting and upon request shall attend the Outgoing Board Meeting for the current year.
 - e. The PD President will provide written notification to the President of the College on the appointment of the newly appointed PD Liaison.
 - f. The current PD Liaison will forward all documents associated with the position to the newly appointed PD Liaison within ten (10) business days of the appointment of the new liaison.

XI. RULES OF ORDER FOR PARALEGAL DIVISION MEETINGS *June 2026*

A. AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE.

Amended September 1996, June 2026

1. The stated parliamentary procedure which governs all meetings of the PD is the current edition of *Roberts Rules* (Article VI, Section 3 of the Bylaws).
2. Rules of order for an assembly are the written rules of parliamentary procedure related to the orderly transaction of business in meetings. Ordinarily, the general parliamentary authority designated in the Bylaws governs the conduct of business at meetings, but special Rules of Order are sometimes necessary due to the nature of a society, the infrequency of meetings of the general membership, the amount of business to be conducted, and the limitations of time in which that business may be completed.
3. All meetings of the PD or any of its Committees shall be open meetings, unless deemed to be a confidential meeting. Board Meetings shall be noticed to the entire membership. EC Meetings shall be noticed to the Board. Executive sessions of the PD may be held to cover discussion/action on personnel matters. The EC may go into Executive Session to discuss disciplinary matters relating to a Director or to discuss other confidential business of the PD.

B. ANNUAL MEETING

Amended April 1995, September 1996, October 2024. June 2026

1. The Annual Meeting of the Membership of the PD shall be held annually in conjunction with the TAPS seminar.
2. Notice shall be given to the membership in accordance with the Bylaws.
3. The Annual Meeting shall be open to all members of the PD, and guests as approved by the President.
4. The Annual Meeting of the PD shall be governed by the PD Bylaws, the current edition of *Robert's Rules*, and any special Rules of Order adopted by the assembly.
5. Unless otherwise required by the Bylaws, *Robert's Rules* or these Rules, all motions shall require a simple majority vote of the Active Voting Members present and voting to be passed.
6. Introduction of business, motions, and seconds to motions may be made by any Active Member of the PD in good standing. Any person wishing to be recognized must register with the Secretary, address the President, state their name, city of employment and District number, and the matter to which the member wishes to speak. If the subject to be addressed is a motion before the assembly, the member shall also inform the Secretary whether they will speak for or against the motion. No member shall be permitted to speak until recognized by the President.
7. The President may limit time for debate on any subject, and no speaker shall be permitted to speak more than twice on any one subject and not more than three (3) minutes each time, except by permission of the President. Provided, however, that no member shall be permitted

to speak a second time on the same subject as long as any member who has not spoken on the subject desires to do so. Two (2) timekeepers shall be appointed by the President to assist the Secretary in enforcing this rule.

8. Debate or discussion on a motion shall be limited to six (6) speakers, three (3) for the motion, including the member who made the motion if that member wishes to speak, and three (3) against the motion. The President shall let the floor alternate, as far as possible, between those favoring and those opposing the motion.
9. At the close of debate as declared by the President, the question shall be put to a vote. Voice vote shall be determined by the President unless more than a simple majority vote is required on a matter on the floor, in which event the vote shall be taken by a show of hands, division of the assembly (standing vote), or written ballot. The President shall appoint a judge and four (4) tellers to supervise and tally all votes cast in this manner, and the judge shall certify the results to the President, who shall announce the results to the assembly.
10. Should members desire to confer with others from their District before casting their votes, a recess of not more than five (5) minutes may be allowed by the President upon request of at least three (3) members from the particular District. If the members present from at least three (3) Districts desire a recess, the President may grant such a request.
11. No proxy voting shall be permitted, and no member shall be permitted to speak to any motion on behalf of other members in the speaking member's District.

12. Annual Meeting Agenda

Amended September 1991, April 1995, September 1996, June 2026

Unless otherwise deemed necessary and announced by the President, the business of the assembly shall be conducted in the following order:

- a. Call to Order. When the appointed time of the meeting has arrived, the President shall determine that a Quorum is present and call the meeting to order.
- b. Code of Ethics. The Chair of the Professional Ethics Committee, or their designee, shall be recognized to read the Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility of the PD.
- c. Welcome Address. The Director(s) of the host District and the President of a local association of Paralegals may be recognized by the President to give brief welcoming remarks.
- d. Introduction of Special Guests. The President may recognize any special guests who are in attendance.
- e. Introduction of Officers and Directors. The President may introduce to the general membership the Officers and Directors of the PD.
- f. Appointment of Special Officers. The President may appoint such special officers as are deemed necessary for the orderly conduct of the business of the assembly.

- g. Rules of Order. The President shall recognize the Parliamentarian to read the Rules of Order set forth in Section C of this Standing Rule. In the event special Rules of Order for the meeting are proposed, the Parliamentarian shall read the proposed rules and move for their adoption.
- h. Minutes of the Previous Annual Meeting. The President shall recognize the Secretary to read the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the previous year and shall entertain a motion to approve those Minutes. Upon motion, reading of the Minutes may be waived, provided written copies of the Minutes are available to the assembly.
- i. Report of the Board. The President shall report to the assembly any action taken by the Board not previously reported to the general membership. If the Board has by majority vote requested ratification by the general membership of any action taken by the Board, a member of the Board other than the President shall move for its ratification.
- j. Annual Report for Preceding Fiscal Year. The President shall recognize the Treasurer to give the annual report required by Article VII, Section 4 of the Bylaws.
- k. Reports of Standing Committees. The President may recognize the Committee Chair or designee, or the Board Advisor to a Committee, to give the annual report of the various Standing Committees.
- l. Reports of Ad Hoc Committees. If there is a report from any Ad Hoc Committee, the President may recognize the Committee Chair or designee, or the Board Advisor to the Committee, to give the report. If the Committee is recommending action by the assembly, the President shall entertain a motion at the conclusion of the report.
- m. New Business. The President shall call for New Business, and members may introduce new items of business to the assembly.
- n. Welfare of the PD. Time permitting, the President may recognize any members who have registered with the Secretary at Arms for the purpose of offering informal observations regarding the work of the PD pursuant to its purpose. Any member desiring to do so should consult with the President sufficiently ahead of time which this item may be called in order to determine the propriety of the matter and any time constraints.
- o. Announcements. The President may make, or call upon other members to make, any necessary announcements. The placing of general announcements at this point in the order of business does not prevent the President from making an urgent announcement at any time.
- p. Program. If there is to be a program of an educational nature, or a guest speaker, it will be presented before the Annual Meeting is adjourned. If, in courtesy to a guest speaker who is present, the President wishes the speaker to make their presentation at an unscheduled point within the business portion of the meeting, the President may call for unanimous consent of the assembly to hear the speaker's address out of order. If there is no objection, the action is decided. If there is objection, the President may

entertain a motion to suspend the rules for the purpose of hearing the speaker's presentation out of order.

- q. Adjourn. The President shall entertain a motion to adjourn the Annual Meeting and upon second and simple majority vote, the meeting shall be adjourned until the next Annual Meeting of the PD.

C. MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS *June 2026*

1. Other membership meetings may be called as determined by the President.
2. Except as provided in the Bylaws and Standing Rules, all meetings and all procedures of any meeting shall be conducted in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*.
3. The PD is not subject to the Texas Open Meetings Act (Government Code Chapter 551) because the Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas is not a governmental body. This opinion was rendered in 1995.

D. BOARD MEETINGS

Amended June 1985, September 1996, June 2026

1. GENERAL

- a. All meetings of the Board shall be open to members of the PD and to visitors (except at those times when Executive Sessions may be held for matters of a confidential nature) provided that only the Directors shall be entitled to vote.
- b. Board members are prohibited from discussing any actions or recommendations that are a result of EC Meetings unless said actions or recommendations that are acted upon by the Board and entered into the Minutes of the PD.
- c. Any motions or amendments shall be presented to the Secretary in writing before presented to the President for action to be taken.
- d. At the first Board Meeting of each Fiscal Year, the Board shall set goals for the Fiscal Year as well as any long-term goals, as its strategic planning for the growth and development of the PD.
- e. The President has the discretion to decide which Committee Chairs to invite to regular Board Meetings as communicated through the President.
- f. The President shall acknowledge the presence of persons attending Board Meetings and shall, as time permits, recognize members who have registered to address the Board.
- g. Members may address the Board only upon invitation by the President after written request. Any person wishing to be recognized must register with the Secretary, address the President, state their name and District number, and the matter to which the member wishes to speak. If the subject to be addressed is a motion before the

Board, the member shall also inform the Secretary whether they will speak for or against the motion. No member shall be permitted to speak until recognized by the President.

- h. Visiting members will not be allowed to speak once a motion is on the floor. Any address by a visiting member shall be limited to three (3) minutes.
- i. However, Committee Chairs (or their duly authorized representatives) who are on the agenda to make a report to the Board may speak on motions arising out of the Committee's report.
- j. Written communications to the Board from members of the PD shall either be read or distributed to the Board and entered into in the official Minutes of the meeting.

2. **SPECIAL MEETINGS AND ELECTRONIC MEETINGS**

October 2016, October 2024, June 2026

- a. Authority. As authorized by Article III, Section 8.b of the Bylaws.
- b. Categories. All Special Meetings of the Board can be conducted by telephone, or electronic mail as determined by the President.
- c. Policy. If any items for Board action are best addressed before the next regular Board Meeting, the following factors will be considered by the President.
 - (1) How soon a decision is required.
 - (2) Whether the decision would be better made after further discussion and/or whether alternatives should be considered.
 - (3) Whether a conference call meeting can be scheduled and held for discussion purposes.
 - (4) Whether the directors have indicated they will waive the discussion period regarding the issue at hand and if they will be available to transmit vote.
 - (5) If after considering the above factors, the President determines it would be best to proceed with the meeting and vote, then the following procedure should be followed.
- d. Procedure.
 - (1) The President shall send an electronic mail notice to all Board members stating the reason for calling the Special Meeting and providing an agenda or outline of the issue to be discussed. The Special Meeting procedures shall be attached to the electronic mail.
 - (2) Motions shall be presented, seconded and the President shall open the issue for discussion by following the same rules and procedures in regular meetings with the exception of motions to table or motion to call question rule. Motion

to table or motion to call question rule are suspended during this Special Meeting time.

- (3) The President shall allow for a discussion period to be open for a reasonable time frame as determined by the President, such as 1-5 days, unless discussion will take place via telephone or virtually.
- (4) Once the discussion period has ended, the President shall start the voting period by calling for a vote. The voting period should last 1-2 days. As set forth in the Standing Rule X.B.4.a., two-thirds majority vote of the Board shall be required to approve any item of business conducted by Special Meeting/electronic meeting.
- (5) Each Director shall send their vote by electronic mail to the President only. The President shall tally the votes and announce the results at the end of the voting period. During the voting period, there should be no amendments, motion to table or other dilatory or procedural motions, such as set forth in these Standing Rules.
- (6) Once the voting results are announced by the President, they will declare the Special Meeting/Electronic meeting closed.
- (7) The President shall bring a written copy of the discussion and electronic votes of any Special/Electronic Meeting to the next in-person Board Meeting for a written record of the vote to be ratified in the Minutes.

3. **MOTIONS**

Amended June 1987, September 1996, June 2026

- a. Motions and seconds to motions may be made only by voting members of the Board. Motions are prepared by a Board member on the approved PD motion form; a second to the motion must be obtained from another Board member; any documents relative to the motion must be attached; the motion is then given to the Secretary to be held until called upon by the President. A Board member shall be recognized by the President before making a motion or second and should speak up for the benefit of all Board members and other members present. The President must read the motion into the record to open discussion on the motion.
- b. The three-minute rule shall not apply to Board members, nor shall the limit of speaking only once on the same motion. However, Board members should limit discussion to a "reasonable" length of time and to the motion or discussion on the floor at the time. If discussion by one Board member extends to considerable length, the President or the Parliamentarian shall call for time on the discussion, unless by majority vote of the Board the time is extended. If any Board member calls the question on the motion, a second is required, is not debatable, requires a majority vote to pass, and there is no further discussion. If passed, the Board votes immediately on the main motion.

4. **VOTING**

Amended September 1996, June 2026

- a. Unless otherwise required by the Bylaws or these Standing Rules, a majority vote of the Board members present and voting shall be required to approve items of business brought before the Board. In case of a tie vote, a second vote shall be taken, and if the second vote results in a tie, the motion is lost.
- b. Voting on any motion may be by written ballot upon announcement by the President.

5. **REPORTS** *June 2026*

- a. Reports to the Board shall be made in writing prior to the meeting at the direction of the President and PD Coordinator, with an oral summary being reported at the Board Meeting, and shall be maintained in the official record of the PD.
- b. No motion is required for acceptance of Committee reports, but any recommendation of a Committee for Board action shall be put in the form of a motion by a member of the Board.

6. **MINUTES**

Amended September 1996, June 2026

The only official Minutes of Board Meetings are those taken in written form by the Secretary (or person designated by the President) during the Board Meeting and approved by the Board of Directors. Other verbatim recordings, electronic or otherwise will not be allowed.

7. **DIRECTORS' ATTENDANCE AT PD MEETINGS**

June 2018, June 2026

- a. All members of the Board of Directors are required to attend all meetings as scheduled and noticed by the President including but not limited to Board Meetings, Special Meetings, and the Annual Meeting. Any Director absences will be addressed by the Executive Committee and may result in invocation of Article IV of the Bylaws and/or these Standing Rules.
- b. Attendance by Board Members via teleconference or any video conferencing will not be allowed for scheduled and noticed in-person Board Meetings, Special Meetings or Annual Meeting.

8. **BOARD VOTE BY ELECTRONIC MAIL**

Amended January 1989, September 1996, June 1999, October 2014, October 2016, October 2024, June 2026

a. Authority.

As authorized by Article III, Section 8.d of the Bylaws, the Board may conduct a vote by electronic mail. The following procedures shall govern such a vote.

b. Procedure.

A notice or call for a vote shall not be presented to the Board without a Special

Meeting or a time frame allowing for an open discussion period regarding the matter to be voted upon as set forth in these Standing Rules. Unless the majority of the Board agree that no Special Meeting or open discussion period is necessary for the item upon which a vote is to be taken.

c. Notice/Vote by Electronic Mail.

- (1) The President shall prepare a written explanation of the matter to be voted on and transmit such written explanation by e-mail to each Board member, with notification of the date set by the President, on which an open discussion period will take place and a vote will be taken by e-mail.
- (2) The Board members shall be required to return their electronic mail vote to the President only, in accordance with the instructions prescribed by the President.

d. General.

- (1) A majority vote of the Board shall be required to approve any item of business which is the subject of an electronic mail vote.
- (2) The President shall immediately inform Board members in writing of the results of the electronic mail vote.
- (3) Any Board vote by electronic mail shall be compiled by the President and printed or electronically provided to the President-Elect, Secretary and PD Coordinator for the historical record and will be ratified by the Board at its next meeting.
- (4) Any Board member wishing to call a vote by electronic mail shall be responsible for contacting other Board members to obtain the required one-third approval for such vote. The Board member who has polled the other Board members shall report to the President in writing the names and all Board members who are requesting the vote.
- (5) No amendments, motions to table or other dilatory or procedural motions will be allowed in the period from the notice of a vote by electronic mail until the vote is taken.

XII. ELECTIONS

Adopted June 1985; Amended June 1986, March 1987, January 1989, April 1992, April 1993, January 1994, April 1995, September 1996, September 1998, February 2000, June 2002, September 2003, February 2004, June 2004, June 2005, October 2011, June 2013, February 2017, October 2017, June 2024, June 2026

A. ELECTIONS SUBCOMMITTEES IN DISTRICTS

1. The Elections Committee of the PD is composed of one member from each District within the State. In each District required to hold an election, the District Committee Member shall form an Elections Subcommittee of at least one other Active Member. The District Committee member appointed by the Board will chair such Subcommittee. No PD member

seeking the office of Director shall be eligible for membership on an Elections Subcommittee.

2. The purpose of the Subcommittees shall be to carry out the election process for the Director of each respective District and any run-off elections for Director that may be necessary.
3. In the event of the failure to have a volunteer willing to serve as Subcommittee Chair for any District holding an election, the Elections Chair shall serve as the Subcommittee Chair for the District, unless the Chair is a candidate for Director for their District in the election, then the President will appoint a Subcommittee Chair.

B. ELECTION PROCEDURES

1. Defined Terms. All defined terms used herein shall have the same meanings ascribed to such terms as set forth in these Standing Rules.
2. Notice of Election. The appropriate Committees shall coordinate the preparation and transmittal of the Notice of Election pursuant to Article IX, Section 2 of the PD Bylaws.
3. List of Registered Voters. The PD Coordinator shall prepare and transmit to the Elections Committee Chair an alphabetical List of Registered Voters by District for each District holding an election pursuant to Article IX, Section 3 of the PD Bylaws.
4. Transmittal of List of Registered Voters to the Districts. Upon receipt of the List of Registered Voters from the PD Coordinator, the Elections Committee Chair shall immediately forward a copy of the List of Registered Voters for each District to all Elections Subcommittee Chairs representing Districts holding an election prior to the commencement of the Nominating Period.

C. DIRECTOR ELECTIONS

1. Preparation of Nominating Petitions for Director Elections. The Elections Committee Chair shall cause to be prepared a nominating petition for the nomination of candidates for the office of Director on or before the Voter Registration Deadline Date.
2. Requirement for Nominating Petitions and Invalidation.
 - (1) Name of Candidate, District Number, and Number of Required Signatures;
 - (2) The statement: “We the undersigned openly acknowledge the above-named candidate is seeking the office of Director from this District.”
 - (3) The statement: “EACH REGISTERED VOTER EXECUTING A NOMINATING PETITION MUST PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING. FAILURE TO DO SO WILL RESULT IN THE INVALIDATION OF YOUR PETITION.” Blank lines should follow this language on the petition for the above to be written in and signed by each Registered Voter.
 - (a) The printed name of each Registered Voter;

- (b) The Registered Voter's Division membership number; and
 - (c) The Registered Voter's Signature. The Registered Voter's signature which may be an actual signature or a locked electronic/digital signature such as Adobe or Acrobat Sign, DocuSign, PDCflow.
 - (d) The statement: "RETURN PETITION TO THE ELECTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON FOR YOUR DISTRICT. NOMINATING PETITIONS MUST BE FILED NO LATER THAN (date to be included as determined by the Elections Chair.)"
- 3. The Elections Chair may sign a nominating petition of a candidate in their own District.
- 4. Each member of the District may only sign a nominating petition for one candidate, not multiple candidates.
- 5. Electronically Submitted. The Elections Subcommittees must be in receipt of a candidate's petition and resume/curriculum vitae at least 30 days prior to the date ballots are due to be posted in order for the nominating petition to be valid. Petitions with signatures which may be an actual signature or a locked electronic/digital signature such as Adobe or Acrobat Sign, DocuSign, PDCflow may be accepted as proof of a candidate's eligibility for nomination.
- 6. Eligibility Requirements. No Active Member's name shall be printed on the official ballot as a candidate for Director unless such Active Member has satisfied the eligibility requirements pursuant to Article IX, Sections 1 and 4 of the PD Bylaws and the candidate has submitted a petition and resume/curriculum vitae.
- 7. Transmittal of Nominating Petition by the Elections Committee Chair to Elections Subcommittee Chairs. The Elections Committee Chair shall be responsible for transmitting the form of a nominating petition to every Elections Subcommittee Chair in Districts holding Director elections.
- 8. Voter Registration Deadline. The Voter Registration Deadline for candidates shall be no later than January 15th of each year.
- 9. Transmittal of Materials to Prospective Candidates for Director by the Elections Subcommittees. The Elections Subcommittee Chairs shall prepare and forward, upon request, the following materials to potential candidates for Director in their respective Districts at any time during the Nominating Period:
 - a. A copy of the List of Registered Voters for their District;
 - b. A nominating petition; and
 - c. A copy of these Standing Rules that contain the Guidelines for Campaigns for Candidates for Candidates as Director.
- 10. Verification of Nominating Petitions by the Elections Subcommittee and Notification to Prospective Nominees. Thirty (30) days prior to the date ballots are due to be posted, each

Elections Subcommittee shall verify the signatures on the nominating petitions for the candidates in the respective Districts pursuant to Section these Standing Rules and the number of signatures pursuant to Article IX, Section 4c of the PD Bylaws. Each Elections Subcommittee Chair shall notify every nominee of the approval or rejection of such candidate's petition. Such approval or rejection shall be transmitted to the nominee via electronic mail.

11. Twenty days (20) prior to the date ballots will be posted, each Elections Subcommittee Chair shall forward copies of the Verified Nominating Petitions by electronic mail to the Elections Committee Chair.
12. The Elections Committee Chair shall compile a listing of verified candidates who meet the requirements and forward to the PD Coordinator no later than 10 days prior to the date ballots being posted.
13. Ballots for Election of Directors.
 - a. Every ballot prepared for the election of Directors shall contain the following:
 - (1) The District number (and position number, if applicable) of each candidate for Director;
 - (2) The name of each candidate, including any professional accreditation, in alphabetical order by last name and the city and county of such candidate's principal place of business; and
 - (3) A conspicuous and clearly identified space for a write-in candidate.
14. Posting Ballots by the Paralegal Division Coordinator. On the date designated to post ballots, the PD Coordinator shall cause to be posted on the PD's website, the following:
 - (1) Ballot. The ballot for that District prepared pursuant to these Standing Rules;
 - (2) Resumes. In the case of an election of Directors, the resume of each candidate.
15. Security of Ballots. The PD Coordinator shall keep online voting results in a secure location.
16. Tallying the Votes. The votes are automatically tallied by the PD website and a report is prepared from the data by the PD Coordinator.
17. Destruction of Petitions/Ballots. Once the approval of the candidate has been made, and the election has been completed, the Elections Committee Chair shall notify the Subcommittee members to destroy all petitions regarding each candidate, and the Elections Committee Chair shall also destroy all petitions/ballots regarding each candidate.

D. RUN-OFF ELECTIONS FOR DIRECTOR

Amended April 1992, September 1996, June 2024, June 2026

1. No Majority Vote. If no candidate shall have received a majority of the votes cast for a particular office of Director in the general election of a particular District pursuant to Article

IX, Section 8a of the PD Bylaws, a run-off election shall be conducted and only the names of the two candidates who received the highest number of votes for such office shall be placed on the run-off ballot.

2. Tie-Vote.

a. If no candidate shall have received a majority of the votes cast pursuant to Article IX, Section 8A of the PD Bylaws and there is a tie for the highest number of votes received, a run-off election shall be conducted, and the names of all candidates in the tie position shall be placed on the run-off ballot.

b. If no candidate shall have received a majority of the votes cast pursuant to Article IX, Section 8A of the PD Bylaws and there is tie for the second highest number of votes received, a run-off election shall be held, and the name of the candidate receiving the highest number of votes and the names of all candidates in the tie position shall be placed on the run-off ballot.

3. Authority to Call a Run-Off Election. The President shall have the authority to order the Elections Committee Chair to coordinate one or more run-off elections to be held no later than 30 days after the general election votes have been tallied.

4. Procedure. Each Elections Subcommittee Chair shall cause the preparation of the ballots for the run-off election in such Subcommittee Chair's District in accordance with Sections VII.B. of these Standing Rules, as modified by a run-off elections timeline prepared by the Elections Committee Chair, subject to the approval of the President of the PD.

5. Tally of Votes. The tally of the votes for run-off elections shall be pursuant to Section VII.B. of these Standing Rules, as modified by a run-off elections timeline prepared by the Elections Committee Chair, subject to the approval of the PD President.

6. Announcement of Run-Off Election Results. The announcement of run-off election results shall be pursuant to Article IX, Section 10 of the PD Bylaws, as modified by a run-off elections timeline prepared by the Elections Committee Chair, subject to the approval of the President of the PD.

E. BYLAWS AMENDMENTS

1. Petitions for Proposed Amendments to Bylaws.

a. Petitions. Active Members may propose amendments to the Bylaws by submitting the proposed amendment(s) to the Parliamentarian. A separate petition shall be submitted for each Article of the Bylaws that is the subject of the proposed amendment(s).

b. Form and Content of Petitions. Every petition proposing an amendment to the Bylaws shall contain the following:

(1) Revisions to Existing Bylaws. The exact article number, section number and wording of the existing Bylaw provision to be revised together with the

proposed amendment language either underlined or sidelined so that the amendment is clearly identifiable; and/or

- (2) Deletion of Existing Bylaws. The exact article number, section number and wording of the existing Bylaw provision to be deleted together with the deletion clearly indicated in the text of the existing Bylaws; and/or
- (3) Additions to Existing Bylaws. The full text of the Bylaw provision(s) to be added together with a clear indication as to the exact article number and section number of the existing Bylaws where such addition(s) shall be inserted; and
- (4) Additional Bylaws Affected. A full statement indicating all other Bylaw provisions that may be affected by the proposed amendment; and
- (5) Supporting Statement. A statement explaining why the proposed amendment(s) to the Bylaws is/are needed along with a brief explanation of the concepts underlying such proposed amendment(s); and
- (6) Petitioning Member's Contact Person. The name and address of one of the petitioning Active Members designated as the individual who will receive all communications for and on behalf of the petitioning Active Members; and
- (7) Active Member Signatures. A minimum of 35 Active Member's signatures comprised of members from at least three different Districts of the PD. Every Active Member executing a petition for proposed amendment(s) to the Bylaws must provide the following:
 - (a) The printed name of each Active Member;
 - (b) The Active Member's PD membership number; and
 - (c) The Active Member's signature.

FAILURE TO DO SO WILL CAUSE THE ACTIVE MEMBER'S SIGNATURE TO BE INVALIDATED.

- c. Electronically Submitted Petitions. The Parliamentarian must be in receipt of the petitions containing electronic signatures in order for the petition to be valid. Electronic signatures may be accepted as proof of the proposal's eligibility for placement on the ballot.
- d. Transmittal of Petition by the Parliamentarian to Prospective Petitioners. The Parliamentarian shall be responsible for transmitting the form of a petition to any Active Member at such member's request.
- e. Verification of Petitions by the and Notification to the Petitioning Active Members. The Parliamentarian, or their designee, shall request an alphabetical list of all Active Members by District dated as of the most recent date practical from the PD

Coordinator. The Parliamentarian, or the designee, shall verify the signatures on the petition within 30 days of the receipt of such petition pursuant these Standing Rules. The Parliamentarian shall notify the petitioning Active Members though such members' designated contact person of the approval or reasons for rejection of the petition(s) within 45 days of the receipt of such petition(s). Such approval or rejection shall be in writing and shall be transmitted to the designated contact person via electronic mail.

- f. Notification of PD Board of Directors. Upon verification of the petition(s) by the Parliamentarian, the Parliamentarian shall furnish a copy of the petition(s) to the PD Coordinator for immediate dissemination to the Board of Directors of the PD.
- g. Drafting of Ballots. The ballots for the proposed amendments to the Bylaws shall be prepared pursuant to Rule V.B, Section 9.b. of the Standing Rules.
- h. Deadline for Placement on the Ballot. All petitions verified on or before 30 days prior to the next regularly scheduled Voter Registration Deadline Date shall appear on the next regularly scheduled election⁶⁷ ballot.

2. Preparation of Ballots for Bylaws.

a. Ballots for Amendment(s) to Bylaws.

- (1) Every ballot prepared for Bylaws amendment(s) shall contain a reference to the Article and Section by number and title, and a reference to the publication of said amendment(s).
- (2) Twenty (20) days prior to the date ballots are due to be posted, the Elections Chairperson, with assistance from the President, Parliamentarian and PD Coordinator shall:
 - (a) draft a proposed ballot for the amendment(s) to Bylaws; and,
 - (b) shall cause the final draft of the ballot for the amendment(s) to Bylaws to be electronically delivered to the PD Coordinator no later than 10 days prior to the date ballots are due to be posted.

b. Ballots for Referendum.

- (1) Every ballot for proposed measures that are the subject of a referendum shall contain each proposed measure that is the subject of the referendum.
- (2) Twenty (20) days prior to the date the ballots are due to be posted, the Elections Committee Chair, shall draft a ballot for the measures that are the subject of the referendum and shall electronically deliver same to the President or their designee for final review and approval.
- (3) The President or their designee shall review and approve the proposed ballot for the measure(s) that is/are the subject of the referendum and shall cause the final draft of the ballot for the referendum to be electronically delivered

to the PD Coordinator no later than 10 days prior to the date the ballots are due to be posted.

- c. All Ballots. Every ballot shall contain on the face thereof the following:
 - (1) The words "Official Ballot" prominently displayed;
 - (2) The full name of the Division and the Division's logo;
 - (3) Deadline. The deadline for voting shall be 15 days after the date the ballots are posted (the "Marked Ballot Deadline Date"). Each ballot shall also conspicuously set forth on the face thereof the following statement:

THE DEADLINE FOR VOTING IS [insert the Marked Ballot Deadline Date]. ONLINE BALLOTS CAST BY 11:59 CT ON [insert the Marked Ballot Deadline Date] SHALL BE TALLIED.
- d. Posting Ballots by the Paralegal Division Coordinator. On the date designated to post ballots, the PD Coordinator shall cause to be posted on the PD's website, the ballot for that District prepared pursuant to these Standing Rules;
- e. Security of Ballots. The PD Coordinator shall keep online voting results in a secure location.
- f. Tallying the Votes. The votes are automatically tallied by the PD website and a report is prepared from the data by the PD Coordinator.
- g. Verification is automatically made by the PD website based on the members' District.

F. VOTING

- 1. Directors. The Registered Voter receiving a majority of the votes cast for the office of Director shall be declared Director-Elect for that office pursuant to Article IX, Section 8a of the PD Bylaws.
- 2. Amendment(s) to Bylaws. Any proposed Bylaw amendment receiving a two-thirds majority of the votes cast pursuant to Article IX, Section 8b of the PD Bylaws shall become an amendment to the PD Bylaws effective as of the date specified in the Notice of Election pursuant to Article IX, Section 2.C.3.d.
- 3. Referendum(s). Any proposed measure that is the subject of a referendum receiving a majority of the votes cast for such measures shall be enacted as of the date specified in the Notice of Election pursuant to Article XI, Section 2.C.3.d.
- 4. Votes Not Eligible/Ballots Not Counted. The following ballots may not be counted:
 - a. Online ballots cast by members who do not work in the District for which they cast a vote for Director;

- b. Online ballots cast past the date and time set out herein.
 - c. If the ballot is not counted, the printout from the website made by the PD Coordinator contains the information regarding the ballot.
5. Ballot Register.
- a. The PD Coordinator shall prepare a ballot register stating the following:
 - (1) The total number of ballots received;
 - (2) The total number of invalidated ballots;
 - (3) The total number of ballots received by District;
 - (4) In the case of an election of Directors, the total number of votes counted for each candidate by District; and
 - (5) In the case of an election to amend the PD Bylaws and/or referendum, the total number of votes counted for each proposed amendment.
 - b. The PD Coordinator shall sign the printout from the website to the PD President.
6. Announcement of Vote Results. The announcement of the vote results shall be in accordance with Article IX, Section 10 of the PD Bylaws.

XIII. CAMPAIGN RULES FOR DIRECTOR CANDIDATES *Amended June 2026*

Experience has demonstrated that campaign rules are helpful to all candidates for the position of director or officer, whether by election of the membership, election by the Board, or appointment by the Board. These rules can effectively restrain campaign tactics and practices preventing any problems. With this in mind, the following specific guidelines are hereby established.

A. GENERAL CAMPAIGN RULES

Amended June 2002, September 2003, June 2004, February 2017, June 2024, June 2026

- 1. If a candidate for director timely provides the required resume/curriculum vitae with the nominating petition according to these Standing Rules XII deadline, it shall be posted on the PD website with the election information made available to the PD members. Such resume/curriculum vitae shall not exceed two 8-1/2" x 11" pages. If the resume/curriculum vitae is not timely received, it will not be posted to the website.
- 2. The excessive use of telephone or email solicitation by persons other than candidates is discouraged.
- 3. Solicitation by mail, email or other support by individual Paralegals is proper, provided that:
 - a. Such mailing or communication by electronic mail must only be conducted by members of the PD. No mailing or communication can be conducted by any individual/entity not a member of the PD.

- b. Candidates themselves, in addition to the mailing/electronic mail authorized in paragraph 1 above, may campaign by personal solicitation. The full expense of such mail solicitation shall not exceed the sum of \$500.00. However, to the fullest extent possible, all communications and solicitations, whether by letter, card, telephone or electronic mail, should concentrate on the candidate's merits and should avoid criticism of the other candidate or candidates. Any expenses incurred by any candidate is at the expense of the candidate and are not reimbursable by the PD.
4. Directors running for re-election cannot use Director communication as a form of campaigning. Any incumbent director must conduct their campaigning by personal, separate communication.
5. Candidates shall avoid personal campaigning prior to 30 days before the date designated to post ballots or the next following business day when the signatures on the nominating petitions for Director have been verified.
6. Nomination to the office of Director is an expression of confidence and trust in the candidates by their peers. Each candidate and their supporters should make a reasonable effort to present their candidacy in a dignified manner.
7. The Elections Subcommittee in each District where an election is to be held shall serve as the election supervisory committee to assure compliance with these rules.

XIV. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES OF PARALEGAL DIVISION MEMBERS

Amended June 2026

A. INTRODUCTION

Amended January 1991, February 2000, June 2026

1. A Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility (the "CE") was adopted by the PD's Board of Directors and ratified by the membership in June 1982. Each applicant for membership shall agree to be bound by the Code and the disciplinary procedures.
2. Membership in the PD is voluntary. The CE, Grievance procedures and disciplinary sanctions apply only to PD members. Any reference to a "Paralegal" in this Standing Rule is a reference to a member of the PD unless otherwise stated.
3. A mere claim of misconduct cannot justify the imposition of discipline. Proof of misconduct must be shown.

B. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Amended January 1991, October 1993, September 1996, February 2000, June 2020, October 2024, June 2026

1. A member may be expelled and membership thereby terminated or application for reinstatement of membership may be rejected if, while a member, any one of the following occurs:
2. A conviction of any Felony.

3. A conviction of a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, including, but not limited to, theft, embezzlement, or fraudulent misappropriation of money or other property.
4. A revocation or disciplinary suspension of a license or permit to practice or engage in a profession or occupation.
5. An expulsion from or disciplinary suspension of membership in a law related professional association.
6. A permanent injunctive decree or a judgment granted in favor of the Supreme Court of Texas Unauthorized Practice of Law Committee (“UPL Committee”) entered against the member.
7. A determination there has been a willful misrepresentation of a material fact upon the member’s application for membership.
8. A misrepresentation of certification or licensure (e.g., NALA, TBLS, NFPA, or other professional organization or licensing entity).
9. A misrepresentation of any information contained in the Paralegal’s application or renewal application for membership in the PD.
10. A finding by a Grievance Committee of professional misconduct in violation of the PD Code of Ethics.

C. DISCIPLINE

Amended January 1991, February 2000, October 2024, June 2026

1. Records Secret. The permanent records of Grievance matters shall remain confidential and be maintained under strict security by the PD Coordinator.
2. Sanctions. Sanctions may include:
 - a. Private reprimand;
 - b. Public reprimand;
 - c. Suspension of membership or future membership for a stated period;
 - d. Expulsion from membership in the PD;
 - e. Ineligibility for future membership in the PD.
3. Resignation. The Board may accept the resignation of a Paralegal who has agreed to a disciplinary sanction and may set conditions for subsequent reinstatement.

D. PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT

Amended January 1991, September 1996, February 2000, October 2024, June 2026

1. For purposes of the disciplinary procedures set out herein, the following shall constitute professional misconduct:
2. Any of the grounds for expulsion described in Section B; or
3. Violation of any Canon contained in the PD Code of Ethics.

E. COMPLAINTS

Amended January 1991, January 1993, September 1996, October 2024, June 2026

1. Definition. A "Complaint" is defined as a written allegation from any person, agency or entity of professional misconduct as defined in Section D. Allegations which do not show probable cause of professional misconduct shall not be classified as Complaints. All pertinent information to aid the investigation and determination of the Complaint shall be included.
2. Filing Complaint. Any allegation of wrongdoing shall be submitted in writing through the PD website or by email to which will advise the PD and the Ethics Committee Chair of the Complaint.
3. If an allegation is made against a non-member, the Ethics Committee Chair shall advise the complainant that the PD has no jurisdiction. The matter shall remain confidential.
4. Complaints will be processed when received by the Ethics Committee Chair. In the event the PD has received more than one Complaint against different persons the Complaints will be processed and investigation and procedures will be followed for each Complaint in order of receipt by separate appointed Grievance Committees. If the Ethics Committee Chair determines there are any more Complaints lodged at any one time than can be handled expeditiously, the Ethics Committee Chair shall advise the President for a determination to be made on how to proceed.
5. In the event a Complaint received is made against the Ethics Committee Chair, the President will appoint a PD member to act as Chair of the Grievance Committee which will be appointed for that particular Complaint.
6. Prior to each Board Meeting, the Ethics Committee Chair shall provide a brief confidential summary report of the current status of each Complaint pending to the President, President-Elect and PD Coordinator as to the receipt, processing and status of any Complaints currently pending before the Grievance Committee. The report shall not include confidential details, including names of persons or factual details of the investigation, but shall include District number of the Paralegal under investigation, and the procedures taken in the Grievance investigation as set forth in Section G.

F. GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

Amended January 1991, April 1995, September 1999, February 2012, November 2012, October 2024, June 2026

1. The Chair of the Professional Ethics Committee shall serve also as the Grievance Committee Chair (the "Chair") during the Term of appointment by the President. The Chair will have no voting power with regard to the matters before the Grievance Committee and shall remain impartial at all times and not offer opinions to the members of the Grievance Committee. Only in the event of a tie vote by the Committee members will the Chair be allowed a vote for the purpose of breaking the tie vote.
 - a. Upon receipt of a Complaint, the Chair shall request the President appoint a Grievance Committee.

- b. The Grievance Committee shall be composed of the Ethics Committee Chair and representatives from the Districts to comprise an odd number of members on the Committee, as follows:
 - (1) if the Grievance is filed against a person in an even numbered District, a member from each of the odd numbered Districts;
 - (2) if the Grievance is filed against a person in an odd numbered District, a member from each of the even numbered Districts;
 - (3) if there is no representative from a District and the Committee has an even number of members, the Ethics Committee Chair shall appoint a person to serve on the Committee in order to achieve an odd number of Committee members.
- 2. The Grievance Committee shall exercise the power and perform the duties conferred on it herein as well as any other powers and duties imposed by the Board.
- 3. The Grievance Committee shall investigate any Complaint and comply with these Standing Rules.

G. DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS

Amended September 1990, January 1991, April 1996, September 1996, February 2000, November 2012, February 2015, October 2024, June 2026

- 1. General. No Paralegal shall be disciplined herein until the Grievance Committee has made a final determination of professional misconduct.
- 2. Confidentiality. All Correspondence, documents and other information (electronic or otherwise) regarding any Complaint, investigation of a Complaint, and any proceedings resulting therefrom involving such Complaint shall be confidential. Any envelope or email containing a notice of Complaint, investigative report, notice of hearing, or any other matter pertaining to the Complaint or the proceedings related thereto shall be clearly marked **"PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL: TO BE OPENED BY ADDRESSEE ONLY"**. The Chair shall take steps to document in the permanent file regarding the Complaint that all Correspondence with the Paralegal or Complainant or other persons involved in the proceeding have received or acknowledged receipt of such Correspondence.
- 3. Formal Proceedings.
 - a. To initiate formal proceedings, the Chair shall forward a copy of the Complaint by electronic mail or U.S. mail, along with a copy of the Disciplinary Proceedings as set out in Section G2, to the Paralegal and the Complainant, with acknowledgement of receipt of same.
 - b. If an allegation of professional misconduct is received jointly involving an attorney and a Paralegal, the Chair shall forward a copy of the allegation to the General Counsel of the State Bar of Texas, without comment.

4. Investigation.

- a. The Grievance Committee shall conduct a complete and confidential investigation to determine all acts and circumstances relevant to the allegations of the Complaint.
- b. The following procedures shall be followed by the Grievance Committee in an investigation:
 - (1) Interview the Complainant to obtain details of the allegation including the names and addresses of persons with knowledge of relevant facts, and a request for any documentary information which Complainant believes supports their allegation(s).
 - (2) Interview the Paralegal to obtain details of the allegations including the names and addresses of persons with knowledge of relevant facts, and a request for any documentary information which the Paralegal believes is relevant to the allegation(s), or the Paralegal's position regarding the allegation(s). If the Paralegal declines to be interviewed, the Grievance Committee shall not allow the lack of participation in an interview by the Paralegal to have a negative effect against the Paralegal during deliberations.
 - (3) Make a determination whether other persons identified by Complainant or the Paralegal should be interviewed, and if so, conduct such interviews.
 - (4) Make a determination whether the supervising attorney, or any other attorney responsible for the Paralegal's work should be interviewed, and if so, conduct such interviews.
 - (5) Conduct any and all other investigation as necessary.
 - (6) No interviews will be recorded during the investigation.
- c. If during the investigation, allegations surface involving both an attorney and Paralegal, the proceedings concerning the Paralegal shall not be delayed.
- d. If at any time during the investigation it is determined by the Committee Chair that the Paralegal has pled guilty or nolo contendere to any Felony, or to the offense which is under investigation by the Committee, such Paralegal shall immediately become subject to any sanctions allowable under these Standing Rules.
- e. If during the investigation the Grievance Committee finds the Paralegal may have committed the unauthorized practice of law ("UPL,") the Grievance Committee shall pause its investigation and request the UPL Committee of the State Bar of Texas conduct an investigation of the allegations of UPL. The Grievance Committee must accept the findings of the UPL Committee.
- f. In lieu of conducting an investigation by the employer of the Paralegal, the Grievance Committee may vote to accept the findings of the employer's investigation of the Paralegal. The Grievance Committee shall then proceed to vote on its recommendations.

5. Hearing

- a. Upon conclusion of the investigation, or at any time while the Complaint is still an open matter with the Grievance Committee, a hearing(s) may be conducted at the request of either the Grievance Committee or the Paralegal who is the subject of the Grievance in accordance with the procedures set forth in this section. If neither the Grievance Committee nor the Paralegal requests a hearing, the Grievance Committee may proceed to make its determination based upon the investigative findings and submitted materials.
- b. If the Paralegal declines the option to have a hearing, the Grievance Committee may request written confirmation from the Paralegal they are declining the option of a hearing.
- c. The Paralegal is required to present all evidence and materials to the Grievance Committee as set forth in these Rules. At any time additional evidence becomes known to the Paralegal prior to the Committee's final recommendation, they shall contact the Chair of the Grievance Committee to offer the additional evidence.
- d. Only matters that have been fully investigated and completed to a final vote and recommendation by the Grievance Committee will be presented to the Board of Directors. The Board shall not hear matters that have not been fully investigated to conclusion by the Grievance Committee.

6. Scheduling of Hearing.

- a. The Chair shall schedule and preside at a hearing, if any, to be held at the conclusion of the investigation. No fewer than three (3) Grievance Committee members shall attend the hearing with the Chair.
- b. Notice. At least thirty (30) days before the hearing, the Chair shall notify the Paralegal by electronic mail or U.S. Mail, of the date, time and place of said hearing. Copies shall be electronically mailed or mailed by U.S. Mail to the complainant and members of the Grievance Committee. The notice shall give the Paralegal twenty (20) days from the date of receipt of said notice within which to respond in writing to the allegations. The Chair shall provide copies of any response to the aforementioned parties.
- c. Extension of Time. For good cause shown, the time for the Paralegal to respond in writing and the hearing date may be extended for no more than thirty (30) additional days. Notice of extension and rescheduled hearing shall be sent by electronic mail or U.S. Mail to the Paralegal and the complainant, with copies to members of the Grievance Committee.
- d. Guidelines. The following guidelines shall be followed by the Grievance Subcommittee in conducting hearings.
 - (1) The hearing may be held via video conference or in person. In the event the hearing is held via video conference, the Paralegal, the Complainant, and all

Grievance Committee members shall appear on camera at all times. Any witnesses that may testify at the hearing will appear on camera only for their testimony.

- (2) All persons testifying at the hearing shall be issued an oath by the Chair prior to testifying, as follows: "Please raise your right hand and respond to me: 'Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give in this hearing is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?'"
- (3) Any party may present witnesses to testify and present evidence relevant to the allegations contained in the Complaint.
- (4) The Paralegal has the right to be present during all testimony. If the Paralegal chooses not to attend the hearing, the Grievance Committee shall not allow the lack of attendance by the Paralegal to have a negative effect against the Paralegal during deliberations.
- (5) The Chair shall determine the order of appearance of witnesses. Each witness shall be heard privately and out of the presence of other witnesses.
- (6) The Chair shall make an electronic recording of the full hearing and shall immediately reduce such recording to a written record. The recording, written record, and all pertinent documentation shall be forwarded to the PD Coordinator who shall keep such record in the confidential files of the PD. Such recording and written record shall be available only for the use and inspection of the Grievance Committee and the Board sitting as the Disciplinary Committee pursuant to Section 11. The Coordinator shall confirm in writing receipt of the file from the Chair, and once confirmation is received by the Chair from the Coordinator that the file has been received and downloaded, the Chair shall remove all materials from the link provided to the Coordinator.
- (7) If the Paralegal or the Complainant fails to attend the hearing, the Chair may determine that a full hearing is not required and may make a record of the failure of the Paralegal and/or the Complainant to appear, and shall read the Complaint into the record, read the criteria set forth in these Standing Rules into the record, and advise the Committee members of the next steps to be taken by the Committee. No further discussion is to be held. The Chair will then follow the procedures to call for a vote by the Committee members based on the known information at the time the hearing was scheduled.

7. Grievance Committee Recommendations. If the hearing was held, the Chair shall within 30 days of the hearing forward copies of the written record of the hearing to the Grievance Committee and the PD Coordinator via email.

- a. Committee members who attended the hearing shall have fifteen (15) days from the date of the email to cast their votes in writing. The Committee members who attended the hearing shall vote by email to the Chair either (i) a finding of "No Professional misconduct"; (ii) a finding of "Professional misconduct" and the

recommended disciplinary sanction; or (iii) a request for a new hearing before a special Appeals Subcommittee.

- b. A majority finding of "No Professional misconduct" shall be final, and the Chair shall so notify the Paralegal and the complainant by electronic mail or U.S. Mail with copies to the Grievance Committee members and the PD Coordinator.
 - c. Notice of a majority finding of "Professional misconduct," shall be sent to the Paralegal electronic mail or U.S. Mail. That finding will become final unless, within ten (10) days after receipt of the notice the Paralegal files an appeal in writing with the Chair and submits additional information relevant to the allegations contained in the Complaint.
 - d. If the Paralegal fails to file an appeal in writing and to submit additional information, the Grievance Committee's finding of "Professional misconduct" shall be final, and the Chair shall, pursuant to Section 12, recommend to the Grievance Committee appropriate disciplinary sanctions.
 - e. If the Paralegal files an appeal in writing and submits additional information, the Chair shall furnish a copy of the additional information to the Complainant by electronic mail or U.S. Mail. The Complainant may respond to the Chair within ten (10) days of receipt. The appeal process shall be conducted as set out in Section 8.
 - f. If a majority of the Grievance Committee votes a request for a new hearing before a special Appeals Subcommittee, the Chair shall proceed under Section 8.
 - g. If the vote of the Grievance Committee fails to show a majority, a finding of "No Professional misconduct" shall be made and is final. The Chair shall notify the Paralegal and the complainant by electronic mail or U.S. Mail, with copies to the Grievance Committee members and the PD Coordinator.
8. Appeals Subcommittee. If a majority of the Grievance Committee votes to request a new hearing before a special Appeals Subcommittee, or if the Paralegal files an appeal, the Chair shall appoint five other members of the Grievance Committee, including the Committee Chair as the Appeals Subcommittee.
- a. Notice. Within thirty (30) days from the request for rehearing or appeal, notice of the date, time, and place of the hearing shall be sent by electronic mail or U.S. Mail to the Paralegal and the Complainant, with copies to the Appeals Subcommittee and the PD Coordinator.
 - b. Hearing. The hearing shall be held via video conference, or if in person it shall be held in the Paralegal's District on a date not fewer than thirty (30) nor more than sixty (60) days from the date of notice of said hearing. The hearing shall be conducted as set forth in Section 6.
 - c. Vote. The Appeals Subcommittee shall vote a finding of (i) "No Professional misconduct" or (ii) "Professional Misconduct" and recommend appropriate disciplinary sanctions to the Grievance Committee.

- d. If the vote of the Appeals Subcommittee fails to show a majority recommending a finding of "Professional Misconduct," a final finding of "No Professional Misconduct" shall be entered for the Committee. The Appeals Subcommittee Chair shall so notify the Paralegal and the Complainant by electronic mail or U.S. Mail, with copies to the Grievance Committee members and the PD Coordinator.
 - e. If a majority of the Appeals Subcommittee votes to recommend a finding of "Professional Misconduct" and appropriate disciplinary sanction, said finding shall be final. The Appeals Subcommittee Chair shall so notify the Paralegal and the complainant by electronic mail or U.S. Mail.
9. Recommendations for Sanction. The Chair shall prepare a confidential report to the PD President, President-Elect, PD Coordinator for presentation to the Board of Directors, advising in writing an outline of the steps of investigation taken by the Committee in accordance with Section 4, together with the disciplinary sanctions recommended by the Committee and the Appeals Subcommittee for determination by the Disciplinary Committee. Copies of said report shall be electronically mailed to the Grievance Committee and the PD Coordinator.
10. Notice. The Chair shall notify the Paralegal by electronic mail or U.S. Mail of the date, time and place of the next Board Meeting which will be at least twenty (20) days but not more than one hundred eighty (180) days after the date of the notice that the Board will be presented the recommendation of the Grievance Committee for a final determination.
11. Board of Directors Acting as Disciplinary Committee. Pursuant to notice given in Section 10, the Board shall meet in executive session as a Disciplinary Committee to determine the appropriate disciplinary sanction.
- a. Vote in Executive Session. The Disciplinary Committee shall by majority vote of those in attendance determine an appropriate disciplinary sanction and impose such sanction on the Paralegal.
 - b. Disciplinary Subcommittee. If the vote fails to show a majority of the Board in attendance for a single disciplinary sanction, the Executive Committee of the Board shall meet in Executive Session as a Disciplinary Subcommittee. The Disciplinary Subcommittee shall by majority vote determine an appropriate disciplinary sanction. The PD President shall announce the decision of the Disciplinary Subcommittee to the Disciplinary Committee, and by majority vote of those in attendance, the Board shall ratify the decision which shall be final.
12. Implementation of Sanctions.
- a. Private Reprimand. If the disciplinary sanction is a Private Reprimand, the PD President shall notify the Paralegal of the reprimand and any conditions in connection therewith. The identification of the Paralegal shall remain confidential.
 - b. Public Reprimand. If the disciplinary sanction is a public reprimand, the PD President shall return to open session and shall announce the sanction. The name

and county of place of business of the Paralegal and the sanction imposed shall be published to the general membership in the PD's official publication.

- c. Suspension or Expulsion of Membership. If the sanction involves Suspension or Expulsion of membership, the Board shall return to open session and the PD President shall announce the sanction. The name and county of place of business and the sanction imposed shall be published to the membership in the PD's official publication.
 - d. Notice of Sanctions. The PD President shall promptly notify the Paralegal by email or U.S. Mail of the sanction imposed. In the case of suspension or expulsion of membership, written notice shall also be sent to the attorney who verified the Paralegal's application renewal.
13. At such time as the Chair determines the Grievance is concluded, they shall furnish all Complaint, investigation, hearing and appeal documents to the PD Coordinator in an electronic link for the permanent records of the PD. Once the records have been downloaded and download is confirmed by the PD Coordinator, the Chair deletes the electronic link. The Chair does not retain any copies of the documents of the Grievance once they have been downloaded by the PD Coordinator.

XV. GENERAL INFORMATION *June 2026*

A. CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATION ON BEHALF OF THE PD

- 1. No PD Officer, Director, or Committee Chair is authorized to enter into or sign any contracts or in any way conduct business involving expenditures of PD funds on behalf of the PD. Any contracts entered into by or on behalf of the PD must be presented to SBOT for consideration, approval and signature. All such matters must go through the PD President, PD President-Elect and/or PD Coordinator. A PD Officer, Director or Committee Chair may only incur expenses and receive reimbursement if the expenses meet the PD's Expense Reimbursement Policy and the approved budget. All expenditures require prior approval. Always consult the PD President, PD President-Elect, PD Coordinator and PD Treasurer regarding expenditures.
- 2. As the President or their designee is the official spokesperson for the PD, all public relations announcements or press releases concerning the activities of the PD must have final approval by the PD President after having submitted same to the SBOT Communications Review for approval, and prior to release and/or publication on behalf of the PD.
- 3. All written Correspondence, reports and communications relating to PD business shall be on PD stationery.
- 4. If possible, and with the express approval of their employers, the Board, Committee Chairs, Ad Hoc Committee Chairs, Subchairs and PD Coordinator are urged to create a separate email signature block for all PD business emails that includes the PD banner (below) and the title of the PD position held by them. If it is not a viable option, then they are ***strongly***

encouraged to include their PD title after their name in the email signature block when conducting business in that capacity for the PD.

5. Paralegal Division Approved Banner

- a. The use of the PD banner below is limited to the Board, Committee Chairs, Ad Hoc Committee Chairs, Subchairs and PD Coordinator when communicating in an official capacity with members. Any PD member not serving on the Board or a Committee may use the banner only with express prior approval of the President and President-Elect.



b. Paralegal Division approved badge in email signature blocks

The PD encourages the use of the PD badge set out below in its members' email signature block. However, if a member wishes to add the PD badge to their work email signature block, the PD strongly recommends that members do so only after express permission to do so by their employers. The approved badge can be downloaded from the MyAccount Section after the member logs into their account.



A PROUD MEMBER OF
PARALEGAL DIVISION
OF THE STATE BAR OF TEXAS

c. Guidelines to keep in mind when including the PD badge in an email signature block

The PD is mindful that everyone receives all types of emails in addition to business related emails, however, please be mindful when sharing or responding to emails to remain professional. Remember that when you include the PD badge in your emails you are effectively representing the PD.

d. Unauthorized Use of the PD Banner and/or badge

If the PD is informed that the banner and/or badge are being used by a non-member of the PD, the PD President will contact the non-member in writing to inform them that the use of the banner and/or badge are for the exclusive use of PD members, and are to immediately refrain from using the banner or badge.

B. PD RECORDS RETENTION POLICY

1. Electronic records are to be kept for a period of ten (10) years and paper records are to be kept for a period of five (5) years. The exception to this policy is that the Minutes of the PD are to be kept electronically in perpetuity.
2. The PD Coordinator will retain all official records of the PD in the PD OneDrive account.
3. The paper versions of all Minutes and motions of the PD are to be given to the PD Coordinator at the end of each Fiscal Year.
4. All paper financial records of the Treasurer are to be given to the PD Coordinator at the end of each Fiscal Year.
5. A PD Dropbox account with individual folders for each PD Board and Committee position will be maintained by the PD Coordinator.
6. Board Members and Committee Chairs will have a dedicated Dropbox folder for their respective position with the PD during their Term in that position. All Correspondence, records, reports, District and online CLE events, member events, budget information and other information should be retained in Dropbox by each individual while serving in that position for the PD, and shall remain in the Dropbox folder when they are no longer in that position. At such time as the individual no longer serves in that position, the Dropbox folder will be activated to the successor for that position.

XVI. GUIDELINES FOR PUBLICATIONS

Amended April 1995, September 1996, October 2024, June 2026

A. PURPOSE

1. This Standing Rule is intended to provide guidance to those who submit information for publication and communication and to those who must decide what information is to be published by the PD, as promulgated by the SBOT, and will remain in effect until further notice from SBOT. It is not intended to stifle the expression of various viewpoints and opinions; however, it is in the best interest of the PD and its members not to publish information which is unduly critical of the judicial system, the legal profession, or the Paralegal profession. Any published material shall be germane to improving the quality of legal services, the regulation of the legal system through attorneys and Paralegals, or the functioning of the state's courts or legal system **and** *that they be clearly connected to the practice of law.*
2. In order that the membership be made aware of the procedure for getting information published by the PD, these guidelines, adopted by the Board, are published and made a part of these Standing Rules.
3. All proposed social media or other mass communications are required to be submitted to the SBOT communications review process by email to for review and approval ***PRIOR to being disseminated or published.*** This process will be conducted under the direction of the President and PD Coordinator.

4. Send all materials to president@txpd.org, president-elect@txpd.org, pd@txpd.org and commchair@txpd.org prior to publishing same in any format for the same to be processed and approved by the SBOT. If there are any questions or concerns at all regarding communications, please direct those directly to the same four persons above.

B. GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. Express the Legal Connection Up Front

Some articles in newsletters or social media posts discuss subjects that might raise a question to a casual reader about how it relates to the practice of law. Include a connection to Paralegals or the legal system or practice of law in general in titles of material, or in the content of the material to make a connection in the first few sentences to avoid confusion.

2. Avoid Descriptions of Events or Activities That Might Create Confusion

Legal social events or even pro bono service efforts can be characterized in a way that may leave someone who is not familiar with the event confused at how it could improve legal services or be related to the practice of law or Paralegals. Use language that makes clearer the event's connection to law and Paralegals such as describing them as "legal networking" or "pro bono legal services" events.

3. Avoid the Appearance of Taking a Position Outside of PD Policy

Do not use a title or phrase in any material that may imply a bias or a possible position on any issues that are legislative, judicial, executive actions or political in nature, but rather use language appropriate to avoid the appearance of bias or taking a position unless the position has been approved by the Board.

C. GUIDELINES FOR PUBLICATIONS

1. Members of the Publications Committee and e-Newsletter Committee shall make a determination of the propriety of publishing articles and information submitted for publication. If said article or information is not approved in its first draft, the Publications Committee and/or e-Newsletter Chair shall have the following options:

- a. Returning the material to the author with any editorial comments or suggestions for redraft that the Editorial Subcommittee may have, if the Subcommittee has determined that the subject matter of such material is publishable; or
- b. Disapproving the article in its entirety.

2. Articles.

- a. Articles and information submitted for publication by the PD should be informative, educational, of interest to Paralegals, and enhancing to the professionalism of Paralegals. If possible, they should be written with a positive and optimistic attitude. Articles including constructive criticism and articles of a controversial nature should

not personalize the critical remarks or the controversial issue and should clearly state both sides of the question.

- b. Presenting one side only will be allowed in instances where there will be two articles published simultaneously, one representing each side of an issue. If the length of the articles prohibits publishing both at the same time, the first article published shall include an editorial comment that the other side of the question will be published in the next available publication, and the second article published shall include an editorial comment referring to the previous publication of the other article.

3. News Items and Reports.

- a. The Publications Committee and/or e-Newsletter Committee Chair shall work closely with the PD Coordinator in compiling news items of interest to the PD membership, such as schedules of events, notices, capsule reports of Board Meetings and Annual Meetings, Committee reports, etc.
- b. News items from local associations of Paralegals shall be submitted to the Publications Committee Chair and/or e-Newsletter Chair, and the same procedure followed as set forth above.

D. GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNICATIONS

Amended April 1995, September 1996, October 2024, June 2026

- 1. Members of any PD Committees shall make a determination of the propriety of publishing information for communication via email, social media or other communication to PD members or outside of the PD.
- 2. Articles and information submitted in communications by the PD should be informative, educational, of interest to Paralegals, and enhancing to the professionalism of Paralegals. If possible, they should be written with a positive and optimistic attitude. Communications, including constructive criticism or of a controversial nature, should not personalize the critical remarks or the controversial issue and should clearly state both sides of the question.
- 3. Social Media Items That Do Not Require Review for Reposting or Liking
 - a. Pre-Approved Content: Reposting or liking content that was previously approved by the SBOT and PD for social media dissemination does not require additional approval, provided the content remains substantively the same and does not include added non-approved substantive commentary.
 - b. Official PD Content: Reposting or liking content originally shared by SBOT and PD official social media accounts is permitted without prior approval so long as the content does not include additional substantive commentary.
 - c. Judicial or Government Content: Reposting or liking content from official accounts of judicial, State or Federal governmental and law-related entities with content related to the practice of law is permitted without prior approval so long as the content does not include additional substantive commentary, does not purport to

advocate for any policy or political position on any matter, and is not (nor appears to be) controversial.

- d. SBOT or PD CLE Programs: Reposting or liking non-controversial content that is directly related to a SBOT or PD accredited CLE program is permitted without prior approval, so long as the content does not include additional substantive commentary, does not purport to advocate for any policy or political position on any matter, and is not (nor appears to be) controversial.
- e. SBOT and PD Promotion: Reposting or liking non-controversial promotional content that is directly related to official SBOT and PD events is permitted without prior approval, so long as the content does not include additional substantive commentary, does not purport to advocate for any policy or political position on any matter, and is not (nor appears to be) controversial.