

Addison County Firefighters’ Association Incorporated Bylaws *(Est. December 14, 1944)*

Article I: Name

The name of this organization shall be the Addison County Firefighters’ Association, Incorporated *(hereinafter “Addison County Firefighters’ Association (ACFA)”*).

Article II Purpose

The purpose of the ACFA shall be to provide better fire protection and prevention in the area served by the member fire departments through:

- a) More efficient and better cooperation among the member departments in the protection of life, property, and the environment.
- b) Improved systematic alarm, dispatch, and related fire departments.
- c) Improved response time to emergencies, more adequately staffed apparatus, preplanning for fire control, cooperative training programs and facilities.
- d) Cooperative operations and facilities as are appropriate to and consistent with the general purposes of the Addison County Fire Mutual Aid (ACFMA) system.

Article III Principal Place of Business

The principal place of business of the ACFA shall be at the Department of Public Safety Field Station, 2490 Ethan Allen Highway, in the Town of New Haven in the County of Addison and the State of Vermont.

Article IV Membership

The membership of the ACFA shall consist of municipal or recognized private fire departments within Addison County; subject to meeting the minimum standards established by the ACFA; recommendation from the Advisory Board with approval of the ACFA membership; and signatory to these articles as represented by their respective fire departments, namely:

Addison	Cornwall	Middlebury	Orwell	Shoreham	Weybridge
Bridport	Ferrisburgh	Monkton	Ripton	Starksboro	Whiting
Bristol	Lincoln	New Haven	Salisbury	Vergennes	
<i>Clause: In the event one of the fire departments named above withdraws from the ACFA or another Addison County fire department is accepted to the ACFA, changes to the list of these member-departments shall only require Advisory Board approval and not a revote of these Bylaws by the ACFA membership.</i>					

A municipality or private fire department may, by vote of its governing board, withdraw from the ACFA, but the withdrawal shall not be effective until 90 days after written notice of the withdrawal shall have been delivered to the ACFA President (20 V.S.A. § 2989).

Withdrawal from the ACFA automatically terminates the no cost mutual aid services. Future requests for mutual aid services shall be subject to billing.

Article V Membership Classifications

Active: Any person in good standing of a member-department of the ACFA may become an active member upon payment of annual dues.

Honorary: Conferred to any person that is not a member of the ACFA, in recognition of outstanding service to the ACFA by vote of the Advisory Board. Honorary members will not have voting privileges.

Life: Conferred on any active member in good standing of a member-department of the ACFA. Candidates for Life Membership shall be submitted to the Recognition and Awards Committee for evaluation. The recommendation of the Recognition and Awards Committee, that must include a written statement of support from the candidate's member-department, must be presented at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Advisory Board to be voted on. Life Members affiliated with a member-department of the ACFA shall retain voting privileges. Life Members not affiliated with a member-department shall not have voting privileges.

Life Membership may be conferred on any person in recognition of one of the following:

- a) Outstanding record of service and achievement in the fire service.
- b) Commitment, dedication, and service to the ACFA.
- c) Served a two (2) year term as ACFA President.

Article VI: Duties of Members

It shall be the duty of the members, acting through their respective fire departments, when called by a member-department of the ACFA to render the aid requested by the requesting department to the town or area which has requested such aid and to conform in all other respects to the plans or plan for coordinating the services of all fire departments belonging to the ACFA as established from time to time by the Advisory Board. It is understood that the authority vested in the Chief of the department requesting the assistance shall prevail and that all assisting departments shall be under the requesting Chief's jurisdiction or that of the Incident Commander. It is also understood that these obligations may be waived when local resources are already engaged within the locality and cannot be spared at the time of the request. It is also understood that these obligations shall not alter any previous commitments made by members to other towns, cities, or districts regarding financial reimbursement for fire protection.

Article VII: Officers

The officers of the ACFA shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. All officers shall be elected at the annual meeting and shall hold office until the next annual meeting and until their respective successors are elected and qualified.

The office of President and Vice President shall not be for more than two consecutive one-year terms. In the event of extenuating circumstances that prevent the election of the President and/or Vice President from occurring as determined by the Advisory Board, may elect to extend these offices for an additional one-year term.

The ACFA shall elect two (2) County Representatives annually for the purpose of representing the ACFA at the State level.

If any elective office shall become vacant by reason of death, resignation, disqualification, or other cause, the Advisory Board shall elect a successor at its next regular meeting. The successor shall hold office for the unexpired term.

Within the limits of available funds, the Advisory Board may employ and fix the compensation of agents and other necessary personnel who shall serve at their pleasure and have and exercise such powers and authority as they may delegate to them.

Article VIII: Duties of Officers

The President shall preside at all meetings of the ACFA and shall have general care and charge of the business and affairs of the ACFA, as authorized by the Advisory Board.

In the absence or inability to act of the President, the Vice President shall serve as and be vested with all the powers of the President and perform such additional duties as shall be ordered by the Advisory Board. The Vice President shall, at the request of the President, assist the President in the discharge of their duties and responsibilities.

The Secretary shall be the custodian of all ACFA records, should attend all meetings of the ACFA, shall keep full, true, and accurate records of all business transacted at such meetings and shall discharge all other duties properly pertaining to this office. Draft minutes from the ACFA Advisory Board and Quarterly/Annual meetings shall be distributed to their respective distribution lists no later than 14 days after each meeting and again 14 days prior to the next meeting.

The Treasurer shall have charge of the financial affairs of the ACFA and its monies to include but not limited to, the collection of annual dues assessed to the member-departments; preparation and presentation of financial reports at each meeting; preparation and presentation of the annual financial report at the Annual Meeting; maintenance of an accurate record of receipts and disbursements; paying of bills following approval of the President, the President's designee, or Advisory Board; providing all records and accounts for an annual audit by the Auditing Committee. The Treasurer, under the guidance of the President, shall prepare a budget annually to be approved by the December meeting of the Advisory Board and ratified by the membership at the annual meeting.

Article IX: Advisory Board

The affairs of the ACFA shall be managed by the Advisory Board who shall act with full authority on matters of policy and business of the ACFA. The Advisory Board shall consist of the officers, county representatives, committee chairpersons, unit leaders, and two representatives (one shall hold the rank of chief officer), or their designee, from each member-department.

Each member of the Advisory Board shall have one vote.

Article X: Official Year

The official year of the ACFA shall begin on January 1 (first) and shall end on the following December 31 (thirty-first).

Article XI: Meetings

Annual: Shall be held in January of each year at a time/place determined by the Advisory Board.

Quarterly: Shall be held on the third Wednesday in the months of April, July, and October at a time/place determined by the Advisory Board.

Advisory Board: Shall be held on the third Tuesday the months of March, June, September, and December at a time/place determined by the President.

Special: May be called as needed by the President or Advisory Board. Notification shall be made to each member-department three (3) to seven (7) days prior to the meeting. No business other than that for which the meeting was called shall be considered.

A quorum shall consist of fifty-one percent (51%) of the member departments for all ACFA meetings. A two-thirds (2/3) majority of voting members in attendance is required to pass a motion.

In the event of a national, state, or regional health emergency, weather emergency, natural disaster, or other significant risk to persons health or safety, the President shall have the authority to suspend, postpone, call, or cancel any meetings, functions, or events sponsored by the ACFA with the best interest of the ACFA membership as the determining factor.

All matters of business shall be conducted according to *Roberts Rules of Orders*.

Article XII: Annual Dues and Assessments

The dues and assessments to be charged against member departments for the ensuing year shall be set at the Annual Meeting. Payment of dues must be received by the ACFA Treasurer by April 1st to be considered "in good standing."

Member-departments not "in good standing" shall forfeit all voting rights on ACFA matters for its members and representatives. Voting privileges shall be reinstated upon receipt of payment from the member-department's indebtedness to the ACFA.

A member-department that has not paid their annual dues by April 1st will receive one past due notice. Past due notices shall be sent by certified mail to the member-departments mailing address on file with the ACFA. Following receipt of past due notice, a member-department shall have 30 days to make payment. If payment is not received by the ACFA within 30 days, the President shall issue a letter to the member-departments governing body to make notification that any services received from the Addison County Fire Mutual Aid system shall be subject to billing until such time dues are paid.

Article XIII: Standing Committees

Budget and Finance Committee: Shall consist of the ACFA President, Vice President and Treasurer for the purpose of determining ways of raising funds for the ACFA and the development of an annual budget.

Training Committee: Shall consist of six (6) members for the purpose of developing a training program for the ACFA. The training program shall consist of an annual training plan incorporating general topics, tentative dates and locations consisting of but not limited to seminars, fire schools, and other trainings. The committee chair or their designee shall be responsible for ACFA training records and the Paul Turpin training award (determined by County training hours).

Publicity Committee: Shall consist of three (3) members for the purpose of preparing regular news releases, and generally implementing an informational program related to the activities of the ACFA. This will be accomplished by using various forms of information sharing technology to create web content and dialogue around a specific issue or area of interest.

Recognition and Awards Committee: Shall consist of six (6) members for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a suitable plaque displaying the names, rank, department name and date of election of all Honorary and Life Members of the ACFA; to recognize the outstanding achievements of firefighters in Addison County; to give appropriate recognition to deceased fire chiefs, officers of the ACFA, Life Members and others who have given outstanding service to the ACFA; and to make arrangements for plaques, certificates or other appropriate ways of recognition for presentation to award recipients.

Annual awards recognized by the ACFA:

- Fire Chief of the Year Award
- Line Officer of the Year
- Firefighter of the Year
- Senior Firefighter of the Year
- Emergency Vehicle Maintenance Technician of the Year
- Training Officer of the Year
- Youth Firefighter of the Year
- Paul Turpin Training Award (decided and presented by the Training Committee)
- Life Members
- Friends of Addison County Firefighters Award
- President's Award (decided and presented by the President)

Radio Communications Committee: Shall consist of three (3) members who have the responsibility for making recommendations on best practice radio communication procedures, investigating violations and complaints, and generally making recommendations on how to best utilize county radio communications systems.

Auditing Committee: Shall consist of three (3) members, one (1) member to be elected each year that shall have the responsibility for conducting an audit of all records and accounts of the ACFA Treasurer and will present a written report at the Annual Meeting of the ACFA.

Nominating Committee: Shall consist of five (5) members who shall have the responsibility of preparing a list of interested and qualified candidates for the offices of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Auditor, and County Representatives, and for reporting the committee's recommendations to the membership for action at the Annual Meeting of the ACFA.

Bylaw and Standard Operating Guidelines Committee: Shall consist of six (6) members who shall have the responsibility of accepting suggested changes, amendments and alterations to the Bylaws and Standard Operating Guidelines of the ACFA; as well as performing an annual review of said documents and making recommendations to the Advisory Board.

Scholarship Committee: Shall consist of five (5) members with the purpose of presenting scholarships to students who reside in the ACFA service district.

Final Alarm Team: Shall consist of eight (8) members with the purpose of offering support and resources to the families of fire departments of fallen firefighters, providing support mechanisms needed before, during and after the funeral.

Ray E. Davison Training Foundation: Shall consist of the ACFA President and Treasurer, two (2) elected ACFA members (one of the two elected members will act as the committee chairperson), and one (1) elected community member. One of the three (3) elected positions shall be elected on a rotating basis with one (1) voted annually.

Article XIV: Standing Units

Fire Investigation Unit: Shall consist of five (5) members, one being the unit leader. When the incident commander determines the need for an investigation, the unit shall be notified.

Fire Department Inspection Unit: Shall consist of five (5) members, one being the unit leader, for the purpose of providing guidance to a department in complying with the ACFA Standard Operating Guidelines. The President or their designee may request an inspection upon receipt of a written complaint from a member-department.

Honor Guard Unit: Shall consist of a minimum of four (4) members, one being the unit leader. The primary responsibility of the honor guard unit is to represent the ACFA at services and events.

Article XV: Committee and Unit Appointments

All committee, committee chair, unit, and unit leader appointments shall be made by the President, subject to the approval of the Advisory Board at the December meeting and as needed should a vacancy occur. Equity among member-departments shall be considered when making appointments.

The President or the Advisory Board shall have the authority to create work groups for specific purposes. The President shall appoint interested and qualified persons to work groups and will consider equity among member-departments when forming a work group. Working groups shall be dissolved when discharged of their responsibilities by the President or the Advisory Board.

Article XVI: Standard Operating Guidelines

A set of standard operating guidelines shall be developed and maintained to forward the purpose of the ACFMA system as set forth in Article II of these Bylaws. These guidelines will relate to matters of departmental organization, department apparatus and equipment, department reports, and inspections and enforcement. The general intent is to encourage advancement and capability beyond the minimums and for this reason, the guidelines are not essentially restrictive or punitive.

Article XVII: Amendments to the Bylaws

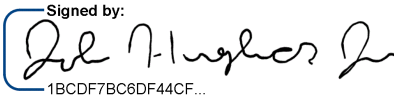
These Bylaws may be amended, altered, or repealed by a majority vote of the ACFA membership. The procedure for making an amendment shall be:

1. The proposed amendment shall be submitted thirty (30) days prior to an Advisory Board meeting for their review, discussion, and approval.
2. Following Advisory Board approval, the written proposal of the amendment(s) shall be distributed to each member-department (a minimum of forty-five (45) days) for their review, discussion, and vote.
3. The Advisory Board delegates from each member-department shall bring the tally of votes of its members to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Advisory Board.
4. Results shall be recorded, and proper notification shall be made.

This document was duly reviewed by each member-department as amended at their regularly scheduled department meetings in the year 2024. The amendments were duly warned in May of 2024, for a vote to be tallied at the Advisory Board Meeting on June 18, 2024, at the New Haven State Police Barracks.

This document, as amended in accordance with all Bylaw provisions, received approval and ratification by more than fifty-one percent (51%) of the ACFA membership.

Respectfully,

Signed by:


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John Hughes Jr., Secretary
Addison County Firefighters' Association, Incorporated
Dated: September 17, 2024

Cc: Original document filed in Association Secretary's permanent records
Governing body of member-departments
All fire chiefs of member-departments
All Advisory Board Delegates
ACFA Officers