

# TENNESSEE EXTENSION ASSOCIATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS

## CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

### Article I – Name

#### Section 1:

The Association shall be known as the Tennessee Extension Association of Administrative Professionals. The motto of the Association is... ***Better Together***.

### Article II – Mission and Objectives

#### Section 1:

The mission of the Association is to provide and maintain a structure through which Extension support professionals may be united in professional development, advancement opportunities, and stronger working relationships across the state for the benefit of themselves and Tennessee Extension.

#### Section 2:

The objectives of this Association shall be as follows:

- To be recognized by Tennessee Extension as professionals.
- To provide a platform to inspire members to exceed performance expectations by maintaining standards of excellence.
- To seek opportunities for professional development with the intent of advancing skills and knowledge in order to elevate the profession and individual career goals.
- To encourage and promote mentorship, supporting fellow administrative professionals and providing an environment for success.
- To provide opportunities for administrative professionals across the state to exchange relevant information in order to maintain a high quality of service.
- To increase membership and networking opportunities that will allow skill growth, increased morale, and resource sharing amongst members, which results in being ***Better Together***.

### Article III – Organizational Structure

#### Section 1:

The Association shall be organized as one state entity, the same as Tennessee Extension. The state entity encompasses all regions and UT/TSU campus areas and shall be recognized accordingly.

### Article IV – Membership

#### Section 1:

The membership of the Association shall be composed of:

1. All regular Tennessee Extension office support staff professionals, which includes those who support Extension programs regardless of the employees' source of funding and/or exemption

status on a case-by-case basis. This may include those working in regional and county offices, 4-H centers, the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture campus (“Knoxville Campus”), Tennessee State University campus (“TSU Campus”), and UT research station field locations.

Section 2:

Membership in the Association shall consist of four classifications: Active, Associate, Ex-officio and Honorary.

Section 3:

Active members shall be currently employed in any of the Tennessee Extension entities noted in Article IV Section 1.1 who have paid annual dues into the State Association, are in good standing, and are contributing as a productive member. All new and renewed members shall be entitled to vote, hold office, and participate in discussions and activities of the Association. New membership fees must be paid in full 60 days prior to elections/voting opportunities in order to have voting privileges.

Section 4:

Associate members shall be former active members who have retired and who have paid annual dues into the State Association. Associate members are a valued part of membership; however, they shall not have the privilege to hold office or vote. Retired members will also be given the option to become Associate Lifetime Members by paying the one-time lifetime dues.

Section 5:

Ex-officio members are exempt Tennessee Extension staff who contribute to or oversee components, which assist in reaching the goals of the Association. Ex-officio members shall not pay dues, are not entitled to vote, and do not have the privileges of active membership.

Section 6:

Honorary membership may be bestowed upon a member/retired member in recognition of outstanding service to the Association. Recommendation in writing shall be made to the State Membership Committee Chair. The State Chair will present a recommendation to the Board of Directors who, after two-thirds of the vote, shall recommend the candidate to the Association at an annual meeting. A majority vote of the members assembled shall be required to confer the honor. An Honorary Member shall pay no dues except where she/he is an Active or Associate Member.

Guidelines: Recommendation for members and retired members shall be made in writing to the Board of Directors using the following guidelines:

1. Cooperation
2. Participation
3. Contributions
4. Leadership
5. Approval by members

Section 7:

Five days per calendar year shall be allowed for members of the Tennessee Extension Association of Administrative Professionals to attend meetings related to the Association.

Section 8:

Membership may be suspended or terminated if the member is not in good standing and the action is voted upon by the Board of Directors with a quorum present.

**Article V – Officers and Their Duties**

Section 1:

The elected officers of the Association shall be President, President-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Section 2:

The President shall:

1. Preside at all meetings of the Association and Board of Directors;
2. Call special meetings of the Board of Directors at her/his discretion or upon the request of a majority of the Directors;
3. Serve as an official representative of the Association at meetings of groups working for the advancement of Extension and the Association;
4. Be an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee; and
5. Recommend to the Board of Directors, for their appointment, persons to fill vacancies occurring on the Board of Directors between elections, except that of President.

Section 3:

The President- Elect shall perform the duties assigned by the President with the approval of the Board of Directors and preside in the absence of the President. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the President, the President-elect shall become President and assume the duties of the office for the unexpired term. Upon completion of her/his term as President-Elect, succession to the Presidency shall occur.

Section 4:

The Secretary shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings of the Association and the Board of Directors. In addition to these minutes, she/he shall save the file in the Association's electronic storage:

1. A copy of all amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws;
2. All resolutions which are adopted by the Association; and
3. A list of active, associate, honorary, and Ex-officio members. The secretary shall search the records for information requested by officers or members; shall make the minutes of all meetings available to the Board of Directors within six weeks after the conclusion of the meeting; and shall conduct the correspondence of the Association as directed by the President and/or the Board of Directors.

Section 5:

The Treasurer shall be responsible for receiving the funds of the Association and shall disburse them in accordance with the adopted budget. In cases of emergency when funds need to be transferred between accounts, the Treasurer is authorized to do so upon approval of the President.

During the term of office, the Treasurer shall serve as Finance Committee Chair and Financial Advisor to said committee the following year. The accounts of the Treasurer shall be reviewed at the close of the association year by a Review Committee, to be appointed by the President.

Section 6:

The Association Advisor shall be the current past president and will serve on the Executive Board by being present (in person or via virtual means) at all meetings and shall give counsel and guidance as needed.

Section 7:

The Regional and Campus Representatives shall be the voice of the three regions and two campuses (UT and TSU) across the state and bring back any concerns, issues, or items of discussion to the Executive Board and/or Board of Directors. They will also serve in a capacity where they will disseminate information to their respective areas.

Section 8:

The following positions will serve the terms defined below. The President, President-Elect, and Secretary will each serve a one-year term.

- The Treasurer will serve a two-year term.
- The Regional and Campus Representatives will each serve a one-year term and have the option to be nominated and elected for a second term but not exceed more than two years in the position.

**Article VI – Elections**  
**(To begin January 1, 2025)**

Section 1:

Elections shall be held via an online ballot each year the last week of August. Executive Board shall be elected by the active members of the Association.

Nominations will be taken by an online ballot the first week of August. The Election Commission chair or her/his appointee will send out an email with a link for nominations. The nomination window will open on Monday and close the following Sunday. Nominations will be taken from eligible members, and a concerted effort will be made to have representation from regional and county offices, 4-H centers, Knoxville Campus, TSU campus, and UT research station field locations.

After receiving the nominations, members of the election committee will then draw up an election ballot consisting of all nominations. The election committee chair or her/his appointee will then send a link via email to all members for a final vote. The online election ballot window will open on Monday and close on the following Sunday. Once the elections are finalized, election results will be shared with members via email, social media, website, and on the TEAAP TEAMS site.

Elected officers will be installed preferably at the State Association meeting or remote, if necessary, each year. Their terms of duty will begin January 1 and be held through December 31.

Section 2:

The President-Elect shall succeed to the Presidency upon recommendation of the Election Commission. Should the Election Commission determine the President-Elect is not suitable to assume the position of President, nominations will be taken for President and President-Elect.

Section 3:

All candidates for office must give consent to serve before being added to the election ballot.

Section 4:

No officer may hold two Executive Board positions concurrently in TEAAP at the state level.

Section 5:

Nominations for officers and representatives shall be made through the Election Commission composed of at least one representative from each of the regions (including county offices), Knoxville Campus, and 4-H centers, as well as one representative each from TSU campus and UT research station field locations, if possible. The Election Commission will consist of no less than five and no more than nine members.

### **Article VII Executive Board**

Section 1:

The Executive Board of the Association shall consist of the:

- President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, Advisor, and Regional and Campus Representatives.
- The Parliamentarian (chair of Election Commission) shall serve as advisory member of the Executive Board without voting privileges.
- The outgoing President shall serve as Advisor of the Executive Board upon term completion for a period of one year and shall not have any privileges of voting on Executive Board matters.
- The Executive Sponsor is an Ex-officio member who counsels the Executive Board on an as-needed basis.

Section 2:

The Executive Board shall meet as necessary to transact the business of the Association. Two-thirds of voting members shall constitute a quorum. All efforts will be made to notify all officers in the case of business that needs to be conducted prior to the next scheduled meeting, so they have the option to attend. The business conducted will be written and distributed to the Executive Board within three business days.

Section 3:

The Executive Board shall be included in the composition of the Board of Directors.

Section 4:

- The Association shall pay the Executive Board members' travel expenses and up to per diem subsistence expenses with receipts for TEAAP meetings, pending availability of funding.
- In addition, the Association shall pay the President's and President-Elect's travel expenses and up to per diem subsistence expenses with receipts for Association representation at required meetings, pending availability of funding.
- Approved mileage will be reimbursed at the IRS rate per mile at the time the travel occurs, pending availability of funding.

## **Article VIII – Board of Directors**

### Section 1:

The Board of Directors shall consist of the executive board and committee chairs. The founding members of TEAAP will form the Founding Advisory Council and will join the Board of Directors as non-voting members of the board.

### Section 2:

The Chair of the Board of Directors shall be the President. Section 3:

The Board of Directors shall:

1. Direct the program and formulate policies concerning the Association and the general nature and scope of its activities.
2. Approve the proposed budget.
3. Fill by appointment all vacancies occurring on the Board of Directors between elections, except the offices of the President and President-Elect
4. Meet prior to and during the annual State meeting.
5. Be empowered to conduct business via mail, virtual, or in-person meeting.
6. Meet at the call of the State President or upon written request of a majority of the Board.
7. Set time and place of annual meetings, if necessary.

### Section 4:

A majority of members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

## **Article X – Meetings**

### Section 1:

The Association shall hold an annual meeting on a rotational basis between all regions and UT/TSU campus areas. The invitation shall be extended to the entire membership at the state meeting by the upcoming year's host region. The events and professional development committees will collaborate with the host region to provide a planned educational activity(s) to promote professional development during the days of the annual meeting. In the event the annual association meeting cannot be conducted in person, a virtual option will be provided.

### Section 2:

The Association may hold special meetings at such times and places as may be determined by the Board of Directors.

### Section 3:

Members will be notified in writing at least two weeks prior to the date of each meeting.

## **Article XI – Dues**

### Section 1:

The annual State Association dues shall support a balanced budget.

### Section 2:

Annual dues must be paid starting October 1 and paid no later than December 1 each year to be a voting member. Membership year runs from January 1 through December 31. Membership each year may also include dues to our national counterpart, TERSSA (The Extension Research & Support Staff Association).

### Section 3:

New members will be accepted throughout the year but membership must be paid in full 60 days prior to elections in order to have voting privileges. Other privileges will still be in effect.

## **Article XII – Committees**

### Section 1:

The Standing Committees of the Association shall be (1) Membership; (2) Public Relations/Technology; (3) Election Commission (including Rules & Bylaws); (4) Mentorship; (5) Finance; (6) Events (7) Professional Development, and (8) Recognition & Awards, (9) Audit Committee, (10) Service.

### Section 2:

An Audit Committee shall be appointed to review the accounts of the Treasurer and a report thereof given at the annual meeting, a copy of which shall be included in the Annual Report to the Association.

### Section 3:

The Chairs of each committee shall submit a written report to the Board of Directors and, if requested, to the annual meeting.

### Section 4:

Any committee shall have the privilege of functioning via synchronous or asynchronous means.

### Section 5:

A majority of the members of any committee shall constitute a quorum.

### **Article XIII – Quorum**

#### Section 1:

Members present at the annual meeting shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

- At an Executive Board meeting, three voting members of the Executive Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
- At a Board of Directors meeting, a majority of the voting members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
- At a committee meeting, a majority of members of any committee shall constitute a quorum.

### **Article XIV – Parliamentary Authority**

#### Section 1:

The rules contained in Robert’s Rules of Order, Revised, shall govern the Association in all instances in which they are inconsistent with the Constitution.

#### Section 2:

The Parliamentarian shall assist in conducting business meetings of the association following Robert’s Rules of Order, Revised, and shall be appointed by the President.

### **Article XV – Amendments**

#### Section 1:

Amendments to these Bylaws may be made at any meeting of the general membership by a two-thirds majority vote of those present, after notification in writing to each member at least two weeks before the meeting at which the voting is to take place; or, if the emergency of the measure so dictates, by a two-thirds vote of written ballots returned.