



Widows Sons of New Jersey **Membership Bylaws**

Membership Pledge

When petitioning for membership, every applicant must affirm the following:

To support the welfare and general wellbeing of the Widows Sons Masonic Riders Association. As members of the Widows Sons Masonic Riders Association, we shall set a good example and never bring dishonor to the Association, Freemasonry or ourselves in general. This includes but is not limited to public intoxication at any event and/or while wearing your vest. We pledge that we will support our fellow Widows Sons regardless of race, creed, color, or national origin, and will never knowingly bring reproach upon a fellow member of the Association. We pledge to combat any forces, which would seek to undermine or bring reproach on the Widows Sons Masonic Riders Association or its members, and we shall always strive to bring respect and dignity to the Widows Sons Masonic Riders Association.

It is the pledge of each New Jersey member to conduct himself, when wearing any Widows Sons patch, insignia or logo, in a legal, dignified and respectful manner in compliance to the bylaws of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of New Jersey and the blue lodge in which he is a member.

Upon accepting an elected or appointed office every member pledges to rule and guide the association or chapter with due and equal regularity in the best interest of the Widows Sons Masonic Riders Association of New Jersey and to base all decisions on the betterment or improvement of the Widows Sons Masonic Riders Association.

Article I - Constitution

SECTION 1: This organization shall be known as the Widows Sons Masonic Riders Association of New Jersey, with the principle mailing address of the current State Secretary.

SECTION 2: The Association shall operate under the auspices of the Widows Sons Masonic Riders Association and will be governed by the Widows Sons Masonic Riders Association of New Jersey State Coordinators Executive Board. Here after known as "The Board".

SECTION 3: The "Board" will administer all the rules and responsibilities of the State of New Jersey and will be comprised of the 7 elected state Coordinators and the President and Vice President of each chapter, also all chapter Past Presidents. The Board shall have full authority and jurisdiction over the membership and activities of any and all New Jersey based chapters, including the grand chapter, as prescribed in this constitution. (Grand Chapter in New Jersey means the 1st chapter formed in New Jersey and is the same as all other chapters in New Jersey. In all cases each member will have 1 vote. If a chapter President is currently holding a position on the Board and is one of the 7 elected positions he will serve as his chapter representative as well, but is limited to 1 vote.

SECTION 4: The right to reserve specific areas and designate boundaries for districts for future Widows Sons Chapters, is reserved for future consideration by the Widows Sons Masonic Riders Association of New Jersey "Board" as appropriate.

SECTION 5: The Widows Sons Masonic Riders Association of New Jersey 'Board' reserves the right to issue or deny any and all use of the Widows Sons patch and logo to any chapter or individual within the borders of the State of New Jersey in accordance with these by-laws, and also reserves the right to revoke the charter or patches of any chapter or any of its members it has issued within the boundaries of the State of New Jersey, who violate the bylaws of the Widows Sons, and/ or governs themselves in a manner determined to be inappropriate by the "Board". This also applies to the wives, children, girlfriends or partners of said member.

Article II – Purpose

SECTION 1: It shall be the objective of each chapter of the Widows Sons Riders Association of New Jersey to contribute to the relief of the widows and/or orphans of Master Masons within the boundaries of their jurisdiction set by the Widows Sons Riders Association New Jersey 'Board' as appropriate, and to donate to charitable organizations selected by the President of each Chapter. All Chapters are strongly encouraged to participate or attend at least one yearly fund raising event where the proceeds are donated to such a charity.

SECTION 2: All members should conduct themselves in accordance with the bylaws of the Widows Sons of NJ, the laws of the land, and in the conduct of a Mason

SECTION 3: The 'Board' as appropriate and all subordinate chapters shall not engage in political, religious or any activities that promote separation rather than unity, or cause controversy in the chapter or within the Widows Sons Masonic Riders Association. It is the duty of the Chapter President to cease any activity within his chapter that may cause disagreement or controversy inside the Chapter or within the Widows Sons Masonic Riders Association.

SECTION 4: It shall further be an object of this organization to legally receive, manage, invest, expend or otherwise use the funds and property of this organization to achieve the objectives set forth in this constitution and for such additional purposes and objects not inconsistent therewith as will further the interests of this organization, and its members directly or indirectly. No individual member will receive any compensation for the performance of any and all duties related to any office or position. Individuals will be reimbursed for expenses related to the benefit and operation of the organization if approved by its members and issued by an authorized treasurer.

Article III – Membership

SECTION 1: Membership shall be open to any man pursuant to the following conditions:

- **Active Member:** Any Master Mason who is in good standing, from a lodge recognized by the Grand Lodge of the Most Ancient and Honorable Society of Free and Accepted Masons for the State of New Jersey is eligible for consideration. Any Widows Sons member may not be a member of any 1% MC or 1% support MC while a Widows Son member. Active members shall have full voting rights and be able to hold office within the organization. Active members will be allowed to wear the full Widow logo and attached rockers as prescribed by the Association. Active membership is subject to vote of active members at a stated meeting.

- Probationary Member: Every new member shall be a under a probationary period determined by the individual chapter, consisting of at least three months but not more than one year. They are permitted to wear all patches, but must also wear a special “PROBATION” patch on the front of their vest touching their name. This is not a hazing period; it is a time to determine that each new member is a good fit for that Chapter.
- Individuals, who are Entered Apprentice or are Fellowcraft, may be allowed to become a probationary Widows Sons member. They are not allowed to wear official front and rear square and compass patches, top rocker or Widows Sons center patch until completion of his Master Mason degree. The EA and FC patches are to be worn in place of the square and compass on the right chest until completion of his Master Mason degree. The individual will be responsible for payment of active member dues and will be bound by all sections of these by-laws, except he will not have a vote in Chapter business, and may not be an elected officer. He may also be excluded from any chapter meeting or function at the request of any active member if approved by the Chapter officers present. Widows Sons who are not Master Masons and have been unable to complete their Master Mason degree within 1 year due to their Lodge being unable to advance them in a timely manner, must provide their Chapter with a written explanation signed by their Lodge Secretary and Worshipful Master or he will be removed from the Chapter rolls.
- Masonic or Non Masonic nonmember Supporter: Any person who wishes to support a Chapter of the Widows Sons Masonic Riding Association is allowed to buy and wear Association approved support merchandise. Not eligible to wear the Widows patch. No voting rights, nor eligibility to hold office.

SECTION 2: A life member is an awarded position given to a Widows Sons member for service above and beyond. Life membership is decided by a majority vote by the “Board”. Life members are the only members whom, should they choose to retire their membership from the Widows Sons of New Jersey, may retain their patches and vest. Patches/vest will only be removed from a life member should he fail to act in accordance with these by-laws. This will be determined by a vote of the “Board”. Elected State Board members are automatically made Life members.

SECTION 3: “ORIGINAL” member’s patch is issued to the first 24 members of the state. Additional awards/patches may be developed in the future should the “Board” see fit.

SECTION 4: To form new Chapter petitioners must apply in writing to the State Board. Petition to include Chapter name, names of chapter officers, Lodge affiliations, and charter fees. Charter fees are \$100.00. Name must be approved by State Board. Chapter must have at least 5 members to hold the offices of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasure, Sergeant of Arms, and Guardian of Membership. (Secretary and Treasure may be combined if necessary).

Article IV - Officers

Section 1: The elected Officers of the “Board” are the President, Vice President,

Secretary, Treasurer, Sergeant of Arms, and 2 Guardians of Membership. All officers must be voted in at the regular meeting in February even if he is staying in the same position he held the previous year.

Chaplain and Road Captain are appointed by the discretion of the Board President.

Section 2: The elected officers of all chapters are President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Sergeant of Arms, and Guardian of Membership. All 6 have equal vote. Chaplain and Road Captain are appointed by the discretion of the chapter President. A member may only be an Elected officer in 1 chapter at a time, although he may serve as an appointed officer in another chapter.

SECTION 3: The President of the Widows Sons Masonic Riders Association of New Jersey's "Board" is the President of the Widows Sons Riders organization of New Jersey. The "Board" as appropriate shall enforce all provisions of the Constitution and bylaws.

SECTION 4: The Chapter President has full authority for his Chapter, and must obey and govern accordingly in accordance with these bylaws. He reports directly to the "Board" President. The Chapter President shall make all stated State Board meetings, unless in cases of emergent circumstances, and should make as many as possible of the monthly conference phone calls.

SECTION 5: The Vice-President, in absence of the President, shall preside and perform all duties pertaining to the office of the President, and render such assistance as may be required in his absence the duties will default to the Chapter Secretary. The Chapter Vice President shall make all stated State Board meetings, unless in cases of emergent circumstances, and should make as many as possible of the monthly conference phone calls.

SECTION 6: The Secretary shall keep current records of the proceedings of the club and shall keep a separate account and register for each member of the club. He shall conduct all association correspondence under the direction of the President. He shall issue all notices when directed. He shall receive all monies paid into the club and shall record the amounts in the monthly financial record which shall become part of the minutes of each meeting and pay them over to the Treasurer, taking his receipt thereof. The Secretary shall take over the duties of the President in the absence of the Vice President. He shall present an annual report at the annual meeting. The chapter Secretaries shall send a report to the State Secretary quarterly on the events of his chapter.

SECTION 7: The Treasurer shall have charge of the funds of the association and shall keep regular and accurate accounts of all monies received by him. He shall pay them out by the order of the President and with the consent of the Board. He shall keep them in deposit in a bank in the name of the association and shall render a detailed report of the receipts and duly established disbursements at the annual meeting and at other times as requested by the President or by majority vote of the members present at any stated meeting. The Treasurer shall take over the duties of the President in the absence of the President, Vice President and Secretary.

SECTION 8: The Chaplain will be responsible for leading prayer at appropriate times during chapter activities. Prayers will remain non- denominational, regardless of any individual's personal faith or preference.

SECTION 9: The Sergeant of Arms is responsible for aiding the President and Vice President as directed. He shall ensure that the by-laws are respected, members conduct themselves in a masonic manor, and that the intensions of the Organization are carried out in the best interest of the membership.

SECTION 10: The Guardian of Membership shall be responsible for accommodating visiting brethren, superintending the membership during meetings, and assisting the Sergeant of Arms in the performance of his duties. Also it will be their duty to aid in the startup of new chapters.

SECTION 11: The Road Captain is responsible for leading all group rides. Every member or guest (members will be responsible for the conduct of their invited guests) will follow the rules, route and riding order as outlined by the Road Captain. Individuals whose actions threaten the safety of the others in the group will be required to depart from the group. If any individual is determined by the group to be a danger or impairs the ability of the others to enjoy riding, the President may exclude the rider from further group activities. Every rider must comply with any and all directives issued by President and Road Captain when there is any threat of harm or injury to any member or guest.

SECTION 12: A Chapter may decide to combine the tasks of the Secretary/Treasurer if they take a majority vote for the combination of the position prior to each election. In the case of one person holding the Treasurer/Secretary position, the Chapter President becomes the second check signer and is also responsible for auditing the books.

SECTION 13: The President, Board or Chapter, may appoint at his discretion, a Communications Officer and or a Social Media Officer. Both will work directly with the President and Secretary. These are to be a support position and not a voted in Board position. These positions do not give voting privileges in Board matters.

He may also appoint any committees that may be required to assist in the management or operations of the organization including finances, fundraising, event planning, and bylaws.

Article V – Meetings

SECTION 1: Chapters will have the right to schedule their own meetings to fit their purposes. It is suggested that Chapters have a minimum of 6 meetings per year (scheduled group rides will qualify as a meeting).

SECTION 2: Members are encouraged to wear their patch or Widows Sons visible apparel to all Widows Sons meetings, functions and events, unless otherwise decided by their officers before event. Vest will always be worn on the outside visible except in extreme circumstances.

SECTION 3: The Board members will be required to meet on a Sunday in February, June, and November to conduct association business. An emergency meeting of the

Board can be called by the President or Vice President at any time. All members of the Board will receive timely notice of the meeting (when possible). This meeting may be conducted by conference call if required.

Section 4: There will be monthly communication conference calls. During these calls there will be no business done as these calls are for information only. These calls are open to all members.

Article VI – Elections

SECTION 1: Each Chapter will hold an election of officers in January of each year by a vote of active members present at a stated meeting. Officers assume their elected positions immediately following the election results. Any active member may vote via phone, if necessary. Such phone calls must be witnessed by at least 2 chapter members. Each and every active member shall have equal voting rights within his respective chapter. No member shall hold two elected Chapter offices.

SECTION 2: Elections for the “Board” will take place annually during the Annual Communication of the Widows Sons, to be held during the February meeting of the “Board”. All nominations for positions must be submitted to the State Secretary in writing, no less than 14 days prior. Elected positions of the Board are: State President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Sergeant-at-Arms and Guardian of Membership. No member shall hold two elected Board offices.

SECTION 3: Any Active Member may nominate another for an elected position on the Board. However, voting will only be cast by the current Board Members, Chapter Presidents, Vice Presidents and Past Chapter Presidents. Each member gets one vote, regardless of any office he may hold or have held.

SECTION 4: If current officer plans on stepping down he shall notify the State Secretary no less than 60 days prior to the annual elections.

SECTION 5: Every eligible candidate for State President must have held an elected Board position, as well as completed a full term as a Chapter President. The Board may make an exception by unanimous ballot, to be voted upon at the Annual Communication.

Article VII – Motorcycles

SECTION 1: All full active members should own and operate a (for street use) motorcycle capable of safe highway speeds.

SECTION 2: Any member operating an unsafe motorcycle or operating in an unsafe manner may be excluded from group rides for the safety of other riders. This will be determined by any officer present. For legality, safety concerns and enjoyment of riding, all Widows Sons members and their riding spouses and girlfriends will ride staggered and not side by side unless in Parade formation. High speed reckless riding will not be tolerated.

Section 3: Any member who has fallen on hard times and has to dispose of his motorcycle may apply for a waiver to his chapter so he can keep his membership until he

can get back on his feet and acquire another motorcycle. The officers of his chapter make this decision. If chapter can't resolve issue the chapter President shall be responsible to notify State Board.

Article VIII – Logos

Section 1: The chapter Secretaries will order logo's (patch) for their new members exclusively from the Widows Sons of New Jersey authorized vendors. The oval Widows Sons logo patch, rockers, "original" patch, officers patches, and any affiliate Widows Sons related patches and pins will always remain the property of the Widows Sons of New Jersey and will be returned to the association upon demand. Patches must be returned within 90 days of demand. If not returned the Board will file Masonic charges against the brother in accordance with GRAND LODGE BY-LAWS. In the case that he is no longer a mason civil proceedings will be initiated. Any charges needed to be filed will be at the discretion of the STATE BOARD ONLY.

SECTION 2: The full back set (patch) will consist of the chapter name black edged rocker, arched above the center oval state approved "Widow" or "Wings" Widows Sons patch and directly below the oval patch will be Masonic Riders Assn. black edged rocker. Both rockers MUST be sewn on up against the center oval patch. We are not a 3 patch club. Only the Grand Chapter will use the terms "Grand Chapter". No other patch or insignia is to be worn on the back of the vest. The "Board" will provide mandatory patch location photos with complete patch sets.

SECTION 3: Side "Original" black edged rockers are placed on left side above pocket, angled upwards towards back with center of rocker in center of side. Member will only have ORIGINAL patch if he is one of the first 24 members in the state regardless of chapter. If a group of brothers apply at the same time and the number goes over 24, the chapter president will decide if "Original" status applies to all of those prospective members. The amount can only go over 24 once and then that "Original" count will stand for the state of New Jersey.

SECTION 4: Parade Dress defined as: Widows Sons vest, black or brown shoes or boots (not dress shoes) Long dark color pants or blue jeans, no shorts, no tank tops.

SECTION 5: Formal dress to be worn for formal lodge presentations is defined as: Widows Sons vest over a collard white shirt, tie, black slacks, and lodge aprons. In New Jersey, the apron must always be worn as the outmost garment. The Widows Sons vest may only be worn with the permission of the Worshipful Master.

SECTION 6: At no time may a member wear vulgar or offensive clothing while wearing their Widows Sons vest.

Section 7: While a member may be a member of more than 1 chapter he must always wear the rocker of his Mother Chapter.

Article IX – Finances

SECTION 1: Annual Dues: Every member shall pay annual dues in the amount of \$25.00 to their respective Widows Sons Chapter by January 31. Each chapter will deliver an

assessment of \$15.00 per member to the Board at the February State Gathering. There will be no late fee should a member have good cause for late payment. The Chapter President of that member will approve members cause.

SECTION 2: New Chapter Charter fee is \$100

SECTION 3: New Members- Initial membership fees to the Board are \$15.00 per man, plus the cost of the required back patches. To his Chapter, he will pay his dues for that year. If the new member joins after September 15th of his first year, this includes their dues for the next calendar year.

SECTION 4: The “Board” as appropriate shall approve the disbursement of all funds from the account of the Widows Sons Riders Association of New Jersey. At both the individual chapter level, and the “Board” level, funds may only be drawn after a majority vote of the said body. With due and timely notice, a special meeting may be called for such purpose. E-mail or conference call is acceptable.

SECTION 5: If A Chapter fails to pay the yearly dues assessment to the State Board, at the February “annual” meeting they will have a 4-week period to correct the problem. It will be up to the Chapter Officers to ensure that the required funds are forwarded to the State Secretary / Treasurer for proper documentation and processing.

A: If the situation is not taken care of with in the 4-week time period given, the State Secretary will E-Mail all members of the chapter in question, to both inform the members of the problem and advise them of the next steps. The steps could be an official reprimand, impeachment from office, (for an officer), or expulsion of person or Chapter. See Article 10 Section 5.

Article X - Charges and Disputes

SECTION 1: It is the intent of these by-laws to keep peace and harmony between all members and chapters. In the event there is a dispute between members or chapters all parties involved will be directed to meet and resolve the dispute to the benefit of the Widows Sons of New Jersey in general. Depending on the nature and extent of the dispute, a meeting may be called at the option of the President of the “Board” and the final resolution of the “Board” will be binding on all parties involved. This meeting is to take place at the chapter level first, then if not resolved it will be then taken up by the State Board..

SECTION 2: Any member who disregards or disobeys a direct order by Chapter President, or State President to cease and desist, such activity will have his membership in the Widows Sons subject to termination pending a review of all facts by the officers of his Chapter. The facts will be presented by the Chapter President, in writing, to all members of the board within 30 days of the violation. Any action will require a majority vote of the all of the board members present at a stated meeting. The charged member will be permitted to address the membership at the meeting but will not vote on the outcome. A full record of the proceedings will be kept by the chapter secretary in the chapter's records. All terminations of membership require a majority vote of the Board.

SECTION 3: A board member may be voted out by a majority vote of the all of other Board members for any reason deemed, including a vote of no confidence. In such an

event, the Board member will be given due and timely notice of the vote, and will be permitted to offer his rebuttal. The open Board positions will be filled by majority vote of the remaining Board officers.

SECTION 4: A Chapter Officer may be voted out by a majority vote of the Board members for any reason deemed, including a vote of no confidence. In such an event, the Chapter officer will be given due and timely notice of the vote, and if he should decide, will be permitted to offer his rebuttal. In the event of his removal, the open Chapter position will be temporarily filled by a decision of the Board. An election will be held by the chapter at their next regular meeting, which will be presided over by their most senior Officer.

SECTION 5: In the event that a member, a Chapter officer, and or an entire Chapter fails to follow the by-laws or Constitution of the Widows Sons of New Jersey, the Failure may open the member, officer, and or Chapter, to disciplinary action. Said actions from the Board may include an official Reprimand, Impeachment of an Officer thru A vote of No Confidence (refer Article X Section 4) or expulsion (refer Article X Section 2)

A: if charges against a member, Officer, or Charter are severe enough to jeopardize the interest of the State Board and or of the Grand Lodge of New Jersey the Board may suspend the person or group pending a hearing.

B: Failure to do any necessary actions as deemed appropriate by the Board in a time frame put forth by the Board could bring on other Masonic actions and may also include civil legal actions if warranted.

C: If a chapter is requested to turn over its Charter all WS of NJ owned property must also be turned in, including all patches, books, minutes, papers, and funds.

Article XI – Property

SECTION 1: The Widows Sons Riders Association of New Jersey State Board as appropriate has the authority to suspend or revoke any Chapters charter. In the event the Chapter is suspended, trustee, or revoked, all of its funds, books, paper, and other properties shall be forwarded to the Secretary of the Widows Sons Riders Association New Jersey Board, who shall hold them for reorganization. The funds will be held in the New Jersey Widows Sons treasury. If no reorganization occurs within a period of (1) year, such funds and property shall be transferred to the New Jersey Widows Sons as appropriate.

Section 2: If in the event of the folding and disbanding of the New Jersey Widows Sons Riding Association, all funds and real property shall be transferred to the GRAND LODGE OF NEW JERSEY.

Article XII - General Conditions

SECTION 1: The New Jersey 'Board' as appropriate reserves the right in the event of an emergency not addressed by the current Bylaws as written and contained herein, to

institute a temporary solution that will stand until the next official communication.

- A. At the next communication the stated solution shall be brought before the membership for discussion, a motion made and voted on if approved for permanent institution.
- B. If a Bylaw change is necessary, the proposed change shall be handed off to the Bylaws committee for said a bylaw change. (This recommendation cannot be of any body or manner that goes against the precepts of the fraternity or constitutes unmasonic conduct against a member or members or chapter going outside due process)
- C. Notice of all amendments or changes will be provided to all members within 14 days via postal mail, email, or telephone
- D. An emergency is anything that could be considered time sensitive to the board.

SECTION 2: New legislation and amendments may be proposed by any member. If successfully passing a majority vote of his chapter, they will then be submitted to the State Secretary, no less than two weeks prior to the Annual Communication. They must be distributed by the State Secretary, or his representative, no less than one week prior to the Annual Communication. Proposed legislation must pass by a majority vote of all active members present at the Annual Communication. Each member gets one vote, regardless of any office he may hold.

SECTION 3: Affiliated Chapters may not amend these by-laws for their use. No change will be permitted that materially changes the intent or purpose of these by- laws. Any changes will be solely at the discretion of the New Jersey 'Board' as appropriate.

Article XIII – Female Riders

SECTION 1: Spouses and girlfriends have the option of wearing a vest that has a Widows Sons lady patch on the back. There are no mandatory patches that must be on the vest.

ARTICLE XIV – Emergency Fund

Section 1: The Board shall hold at least 1 fundraiser each year to keep the fund solvent. All net profits will go directly to said fund.

Section 2: The State Board shall be required to submit \$5.00 per member each year as a continuing source of income for said fund.

Section 3: The fund will be administered by the Elected STATE BOARD. Their decision will be final.

Section 4: To apply for a benefit from this fund the Chapter Presidents shall apply in writing to the Board and explain why money is needed. There is no set amount that can be given to someone in need as all instances are different.

ARTICLE XV – Widows and Orphans Fund

Section 1: The State Board shall be required to submit \$5.00 per member each year as a continuing source of income for said fund.

Section 2: The fund will be administered by the Elected STATE BOARD.

Section 3: To apply for a benefit from this fund the Chapter Presidents shall apply in writing to the Board and explain why money is needed. There is no set amount that can be given to someone in need as all instances are different.

Have fun, be safe and always remember -We are all Freemasons and Brothers in the Wind.

Adopted June 26, 2010

Ratified June 1, 2011

Amended November 27, 2011

Amended February 5th, 2012

Attested by: Mike Ohr Jr Secretary

Amended February 18, 2018

Attested by David "dB" Buckwalter – Secretary 2018

Amended August 13, 2020

Attested by David "dB" Buckwalter – Secretary 2020