



Southeast Texas Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

By Laws

I. Name and Jurisdiction

The name of the organization is the Southeast Texas Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (SETXVOAD). SETXVOAD is the local counterpart to the Texas Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (TXVOAD). TXVOAD is the state counterpart to the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD). The Jurisdiction is Jefferson, Orange, Hardin, Jasper and Newton Counties.

II. Mission

SETXVOAD is a humanitarian association of independent voluntary organizations who may be active in all phases of disaster. Its mission is to foster efficient, streamlined service delivery to people affected by disaster, while eliminating unnecessary duplication of effort, through cooperation in the four phases of disaster: preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation.

III. Overview

SETXVOAD is not a competing or exclusionary organization. SETXVOAD is intended to be a network for organizations active in disaster. Each SETXVOAD member organization will maintain its own identity and independence while closely collaborating with other SETXVOAD member organizations, inter-faiths, and local, state or federal authorities.

SETXVOAD accomplishes its mission by adhering to the following principles:

Cooperation: Foster cooperation among SETXVOAD member organizations at all levels and in all phases of disaster.

Coordination: Coordinate the development of SETXVOAD policies and procedures, and, the implementation of services among SETXVOAD member organizations. SETXVOAD may also provide links to national and international disaster relief agencies and the TXVOAD.

Communication: Exchange and disseminate information among SETXVOAD member organizations and the public, as well as local, state and federal agencies, in conjunction with the individual SETXVOAD members.

Collaboration: We dedicate ourselves to work together to achieve specific goals and to undertake specific projects at disaster sites. We form partnerships during the disaster response.

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IV. Membership

A. Categories of Membership

1. Partner – Organizations, which meet all of the following criteria, are eligible for the Partner category of membership in the SETXVOAD. The Partner membership is the voting membership.
 - Organizations must qualify as not-for-profit under IRS Code 501(c)(3), with voluntary membership and constituencies.
 - Organizations must have a disaster response program and policy for commitment of resources to meet the needs of people affected by disaster without discrimination.
2. Associate – The Associate category of membership may be granted to organizations, government agencies, or businesses with disaster planning and operations responsibilities or capabilities that do not meet all of the criteria for Partner membership.
 - Organization must have a disaster response program and policy for commitment of resources to meet the needs of people affected by disaster without discrimination.
 - Organization need not be region-wide in scope.
3. Affiliate – For-profit organizations who want to improve their disaster preparedness or increase their support for community services during and after disasters.

B. Conditions of Membership

1. Meet the membership criteria of SETXVOAD
2. Agree with the mission of the SETXVOAD
3. Designate an authorized representative to attend SETXVOAD business and special meetings.

C. Membership Application Procedures

1. Organizations requesting membership will apply by submitting a completed application and copy of their 501(c)(3) award letter to the SETXVOAD describing their intended commitment to the SETXVOAD. Candidate organizations are encouraged to send a representative to attend SETXVOAD meetings while the application is pending.
2. The SETXVOAD Executive Committee (SEC) will determine category eligibility of the candidate organization using the SETXVOAD bylaws and will present the application for discussion at the next business meeting.
3. The Authorized Representatives of each Partner Organization will vote after the application is presented and discussed to extend or deny an offer of membership to the candidate organization.



D. Responsibilities of Membership

1. The leadership of each SETXVOAD member organization must be committed to sending knowledgeable and authoritative representatives to attend SETXVOAD meetings. Each SETXVOAD member organization shall designate one Authorized Representative by application to the SETXVOAD Executive Committee.
2. Each Authorized Representative must have access to the resources of his/her organization to serve the needs of disaster victims.
3. An Authorized Representative who misses three (3) consecutive meetings in a twelve month period shall receive a reminder call or email from the Secretary/Treasurer. The reminder call shall state the importance of each organization's participation and shall request a statement as to the intentions of the Authorized Representative as well as that of his/her organization to actively participate in the future. If no response is received after 30 days, a letter shall be sent to the leadership of the Authorized Representative's organization. If the organization or the Authorized Representative after 30 days fails to respond or accumulates two additional unexcused absences, the Secretary/Treasurer shall recommend a vote to reduce, or terminate the status of the organization.

E. Termination of Membership

Membership may be terminated by the following means:

1. SETXVOAD member organizations may voluntarily withdraw by submission of a letter of separation to the SETXVOAD Executive Committee.
2. Membership may be terminated at any time for any reason by a four-fifths vote. Consistent failure to meet the conditions and responsibilities of membership may lead to a vote of termination.

V. Meetings

The meetings of the SETXVOAD shall be guided by the current version Roberts *Rules of Order* except as otherwise provided for in these bylaws. SETXVOAD Business Meetings are open to the public.

A. Business Meetings

1. Business meetings will be held at least four (4) times a year on a schedule set by the SETXVOAD.
2. Written notice, including a meeting agenda, shall be sent to all members at least seven days prior to any business meeting.
3. The Partner Members have a voice for and votes for his/her organization at business meetings. Associate and Affiliate Members have a voice, when recognized by, and, at the discretion of the Chair, but may not vote. The intent is that there is a reasonable exchange of ideas.



B. Special Meetings

1. Any member of the SETXVOAD Executive Committee may call a special meeting when necessary. A special meeting may be called at the request of ten percent of the SETXVOAD Partners or Associates.
2. Written notice shall be sent to all members electronically, and/or by first class mail postmarked at least five days prior or, verbal notice given at least two days prior to any special meeting and shall specify the purpose of such a meeting.
3. No business other than that for which the special meeting was called may be considered except by unanimous consent of the entire voting membership of the SETXVOAD.

C. Emergency Meetings

1. Committee meetings may be attended only by committee members.
2. Technical advisors may attend committee meetings at the request of the chairperson.

VI. Officers

Nomination – Nominations must be made during a regular general meeting, or a special meeting, in November. This provides a two month nomination period prior to the officer election in January. The nominations are closed by a motion made by a Partner Member, seconded by a Partner Member and then nominations are closed by a quorum vote in the affirmative of Partner Members.

Election and Term – Election of officers will be conducted at the SETXVOAD annual meeting. Qualified candidates must be a representative of a Partner Member organization. To maintain continuity within the organization, the two vice presidents will rotate one office upward each year (i.e. the 1st VP will become President, the 2nd VP will become 1st VP and a new 2nd VP will be elected.) If circumstances warrant, a motion could be made that the President nor the VPs may remain in the same office for more than two successive years. The Secretary/Treasurer will be elected annually and may serve an unlimited number of terms. Final decision will be made at the annual meeting by voting members of the SETXVOAD. Their term of office begins at the conclusion of the election meeting which are conducted in January of each year.

The representative of any member organization of SETXVOAD may nominate officers. Nominations must be seconded to be accepted. No single agency will be allowed to hold more than one officer position. When an officer's position is vacated due to the inability of that person to continue to serve, the executive committee will recommend to membership, a new authorized representative to serve the unexpired term, depending on the vote from membership. The SETXVOAD Executive Committee shall consist of the following officers:



A. President

Function: presides at meetings, has an ex-officio seat on SETXVOAD committees, convenes meetings and provides leadership. Nominates committee members to be voted on by the SETXVOAD Executive Committee. The President, with the consent of the voting membership, may engage in external contracts. Serves as chairman of the Executive and Advisory Committees. The President or his/her representative occupies chair in the EOC for the SETXVOAD.

B. First Vice-President

Function: Acts on behalf of the President in the absence of or at the request of the President. The First Vice-President or his representative acts as 2nd occupant of chair in the EOC for the SETXVOAD. Serves as Chairman of Membership & Development Committee and as such will seek to encourage appropriate disaster response organizations to join and to actively participate in the activities of SETXVOAD.

C. Second Vice-President

Function: Acts on behalf of President in the absence or at the request of the President and First Vice-President. Serves as Chairman of Education & Special Events Committee and as such will develop and implement various plans to allow member organizations opportunities for learning to work together effectively and engage in the community in appropriate SETXVOAD events.

D. Secretary/Treasurer

Function: Maintains organizational records, keeps minutes of meetings, and provides administrative support. Prepares budget and keeps financial records of the organization.

VII. Standing Committees

The following Standing Committees will be appointed by the SETXVOAD Executive Committee. Committees shall be representative of the SETXVOAD member organizations.

- A. Advisory Committee: Representative of the three former executive members
- B. Membership & Development
- C. Training & Special Events



VII. Voting

- A. Each Partner organization is entitled to one vote.
- B. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted.
- C. Fifty percent + one members present at a meeting for which proper notice has been given shall constitute a quorum to do business.
- D. All voting except as otherwise provided for in these bylaws shall be a simple majority vote.
- E. All votes (formal or consensus reached) will be recorded in the meeting minutes.
- F. Voting by email or conference call will be allowed when necessary to facilitate business. Votes submitted by email will be announced to membership and recorded in meeting minutes as electronically submitted.

VIII. Finances

- A. SETXVOAD shall not be a fund raising organization. Sources of income shall include, but are not limited to, annual dues from partner organizations.
- B. In-kind donations to SETXVOAD will be accepted.

IX. Amendments

Amendments to these bylaws may be made by a two-thirds majority vote. Amendments must be moved and seconded at a properly noticed business or special meeting to be voted on at the following business meeting or via email or conference call as specified above.

Adopted 3/13/2007