

FLORIDA OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION, INC.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I Name, Publication and Objectives

Section 1 Name

The organization shall be called the Florida Occupational Therapy Association, Inc. (FOTA)

Section 2 Publication

The official publications of the Association shall be newsletters and electronic media.

Section 3 Objectives

The objectives of the Association shall be: 1) To promote the utilization of occupational therapy. 2) To advance the standards of education and training in the field. 3) To promote research. 4) To protect the Association in the state legislative process. 5) To engage in any other activity advantageous to the profession, its members and to the delivery of healthcare. 6) To “foster communication and collaboration” (p. 23)¹ with the American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc. (AOTA).

Section 4 Affiliated Agreement

The Association operates under the affiliate agreement with AOTA.

ARTICLE II Membership

Section 1 Membership Classes

The membership of the Association shall be divided into three categories: 1) Occupational Therapists who shall hereinafter be referred to as OTs, 2) Occupational Therapy Assistants hereinafter referred to as OTAs, and 3) Occupational Therapy Students.

Section 2 Qualifications

- a. To be eligible for Category 1 membership (OT) the individual must be currently licensed or eligible to be licensed in the state of Florida.
- b. To be eligible for Category 2 membership (OTA) the individual must be currently licensed or eligible to be licensed in the state of Florida.
- c. To be eligible for Category 3 membership (Student) the individual shall be enrolled in an entry-level occupational therapy educational program that is

¹ American Occupational Therapy Association. (2013). The official bylaws of the America Occupational Therapy Association, Inc. Bethesda, MD: Author. Retrieved from <http://www.aota.org/~media/Corporate/Files/AboutAOTA/OfficialDocs/2013%20Bylaws.ashx>

accredited, approved, or pending approval or accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) and that is located in the United States, or in a state, commonwealth, district, or territory of the United States.

Section 3 Rights of Members

- a. OTs shall have the right to attend and participate in all regular and special meetings of the Association; to vote on all issues pertaining to this Association; to hold office; to chair and serve on all committees subject to the qualifications set by these Bylaws for the particular office or committee.
- b. OTAs have all the rights and privileges of OTs.
- c. Occupational therapy students shall have the right to attend, participate, and vote in all meetings of the Association. They may serve as invited members of committees subject to the qualifications set forth in these Bylaws.

Section 4 Membership Eligibility

The Membership Committee may investigate and determine the eligibility and membership classification of all members.

Section 5 Good Standing

A member is in good standing if 1) annual membership dues have been paid, and 2) qualifications have been met.

**ARTICLE III
Officers**

Section 1 Officers and Eligibility

- a. The officers of this Association shall be the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.
- b. The officers shall be either OTs or OTAs in good standing with AOTA and FOTA for a year prior to nomination.

Section 2 Elections and Terms of Office

- a. Nominees shall be voted into office by electronic or nonelectronic ballots of voting members and seated on July 1.
- b. The President, Vice President and Secretary shall serve for terms of two years and shall not hold the office for more than two consecutive terms.
- c. The Treasurer shall serve for a term of three years and shall not hold the office for more than two consecutive terms.
- d. No individual may hold more than one simultaneous voting position on the Board

Section 3 Duties of Officers

- a. The President shall:
 - 1. Be responsible for guiding and conducting the activities of the Association.
 - 2. Preside at all meetings of the Association and Board.
 - 3. Prepare the Association's annual report.
 - 4. Until elections can be conducted, have the power to appoint acting officers, with the approval of the Board, should vacancies occur.
 - 5. Have the power to sign checks and all written obligations of the Association.

6. Appoint standing committee coordinators, with the approval of the Board, and provide them with outlines of their duties. Serve as ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee.
 7. When feasible, attend the annual conference of the AOTA and the meeting of the Affiliated State Association Presidents.
 8. Conduct the correspondence of the FOTA except as otherwise provided.
- b. The President-Elect shall:
1. Shall prepare for duties of the President.
 2. Assume office in the absence of the President.
 3. Perform duties as designated by the President.
- c. The Vice President shall:
1. In the absence of the President-Elect, discharge the duties of the President in case of absence or during a vacancy in the office of President.
 2. Be chairperson of the Educational Committee
 3. Provide oversight for the work of the Conference Convener and Sanctioning Chair.
 4. Discharge other duties as designated by the President.
- d. The Secretary shall:
1. Keep the records of the Association and the minutes of its meetings, including minutes of the Board and Annual Business Meeting.
 2. Discharge the duties of the President in the absence of the President and Vice President.
 3. Be responsible to members of the Board for notification of meetings.
- e. The Treasurer shall:
1. Be custodian of the funds for this Association.
 2. Be empowered to sign checks and other financial obligations of the Association.
 3. Oversee the payment of all the Association's bills and obligations as directed by the Board of this Association.
 4. Submit a financial statement at regular meetings of the Board and this Association.
 5. Submit the Association's accounts to the Board for auditing and present the report at the Annual Business Meeting and/or prior to the termination of the office.
 6. Prepare the annual budget for the Association.
 7. Discharge other duties as designated by the President or Board.

ARTICLE IV Executive Board

Section 1 Composition

- a. Voting members shall be the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Standing Committee Coordinators.
- b. Non-voting members shall be the Past President, President-Elect, Regional Representatives, and student organization representatives who are individuals from occupational therapy educational programs.

Section 2 Authority

The Board shall conduct the affairs of the Association between membership meetings, carry out the membership's aims and decisions and report regularly to the membership the actions taken at each meeting. The Board is empowered to make such expenditures within the available resources as may be required to complete or execute the policies and functions of the Association. It has power by majority vote to disqualify officers, committee chairs or members of its own body for repeated failure to perform the duties of their office. In time of state or national emergency, it has the power to take any action that is necessary to carry on the essential functions of the Association for the period of the emergency only.

Section 3 **Meetings**

The Board shall meet prior to the meetings of the general membership in order to consider business relevant to the membership. All Board members are expected to attend meetings and to participate in the online business of the Association. Censorship or removal from the Board may result if a Board member fails to attend meetings or participate in online voting. Meetings may be called by the President and/or at the request of the majority of the Board. Meetings may be held by electronic means, including but not limited to, email or other Internet communications systems, telephone, or videoconferences. The Secretary shall be responsible for notifying the Board members about meetings.

Section 4 **Quorum**

Fifty percent of the voting members plus one voting member, including at least two officers of the Association, shall constitute a quorum.

Section 5 **Resignations**

Elected or appointed members to the Board shall submit a written resignation to the President.

Section 6 **Censure or Removal**

The Board, by a majority vote, shall have the power to censure or remove an elected or appointed member.

Section 7 **Vacancies**

The Board, by a majority vote, shall have the power to fill any vacancy for the remainder of the term.

Section 8 **Organizational Advisor**

The Representative from AOTA's Representative Assembly (Assembly) shall serve as an invited speaker at Board meetings, to inform the Board of information received, and actions approved, by the Assembly. Communication may also be accomplished at CE events, regional meetings, postings on the Association's website, or other electronic/non-electronic means.

ARTICLE V
Committees

Section 1 **Creation of Committees and Appointments**

The Board shall have the power to create such standing and special committees as it may deem advisable. The President will appoint the standing committee coordinators. These individuals in turn will appoint chairs for their respective committees. The Nominating Committee will be an exception as described in Article VIII of these Bylaws.

Section 2 **Standing Committees**

The standing committees of this Association are led by Coordinators who must be licensed OTs or OTAs. The following committees are standing committees of the Board.

- a. Government Affairs
The purpose is to be involved in legislative action pertaining to the practice of occupational therapy in Florida, to represent the Association's interests to legislators and communicate issues and actions to the membership.
- b. Member Concerns
The purpose is to coordinate member services committees including, but not limited to Bylaws, Policies, and Procedures (BPPC), Membership, Nominations, and Recognitions.
- c. Practice
The purpose is to represent clinical practice, to provide the members resources in specialty clinical areas, and provide clinical support for conference planning.
- d. Conference Convener
The purpose is to be responsible for the coordination and monitoring of the FOTA Annual Conference.
- e. Regional Representatives
The purpose is to facilitate communication between regional FOTA members and the Board and respond to member inquiries when appropriate.

Section 3 **Terms of Office**

The terms of office of the standing committee coordinators, committee chairs, and members of all committees will coincide with the term of office of the President.

Section 4 **Reports**

The Coordinators of all standing committees shall make an annual report to the membership at the Annual Business Meeting as requested by the President; a written copy of such reports is to be filed with the Secretary. Interim reports shall be made at each Board meeting as required.

ARTICLE VI
Meetings of the Association

Section 1 **Number of Meetings**

There shall be at least one Annual Business Meeting of the Association held each year in compliance with the affiliate agreement.

Section 2 **Special Meetings**

Special Meetings of the membership may be called by the President, or by three members of the Board, or by twenty voting members of the Association. The President shall notify members of such special meetings and must state business to be transacted. No other business shall be transacted that is not stated in the notice.

Section 3 **Quorum**

A quorum shall be a minimum of 20 voting members.

**ARTICLE VII
Voting**

Section 1 The voting members of the Association shall be OTs, OTAs, and students in good standing with the Association.

Section 2 Voting for elective positions shall be by individual ballot either electronic or non-electronic. Election shall be the majority of the votes cast.

**ARTICLE VIII
Nomination and Elections**

Section 1 Officers and the President-Elect shall be elected by individual ballot of the Association's membership.

Section 2 The Nominating Committee shall be composed of a minimum of three members.

Section 3 The Nominating Committee shall be responsible for the preparation of the slate for the election of candidates for FOTA. At least one qualified individual shall be nominated for each office, their consent and acquaintance with the duties of the office having been assured in advance.

**ARTICLE IX
Dues and Assessments**

Section 1 Dues for each category of membership shall be approved by the Board. The Board will seek membership input prior to any change in the dues for a period of thirty days.

Section 2 To provide for any changing conditions or increased needs, the Association at any meeting, by a majority vote, may levy special assessments on the membership, provided that written notice of such proposed action has been sent to each member at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting.

Section 3 Any member who is in arrears for dues shall be dropped automatically from membership in the Association. The member can be reinstated by paying dues as determined by the Board.

**ARTICLE X
Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of the Association shall be from the first day of July of each year, through the last day of June of the following year.

**ARTICLE XI
Amendments**

- Section 1** The Bylaws may be amended by a vote of the membership either electronic or nonelectronic, provided that the Board has approved the proposed amendment(s). The membership shall have thirty days prior notice prior to voting.
- Section 2** Those changes required by the AOTA shall be incorporated into this document by the BPPC with the approval of the Board. The membership must be notified of such changes.

**ARTICLE XIII
Parliamentary Authority**

The rules contained in *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the Association in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not consistent with these Bylaws.