

# MEMBERSHIP

## 2.0 MEMBERSHIP

This section deals with membership policies and procedures under the following topics:

- Categories of Membership
- Membership Policies
- Dues Policies
- Membership Procedures

## 2.1 CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP

Within the various categories of membership, some members are designated as International Members. The categories of membership are as follows:

- Active Member
- Associate Member
- Honorary Member
- Organizational Member

### **2.1.1 ACTIVE MEMBERS**

Active Members are deaf-blind USA citizens or permanent residents who have paid their dues (*bylaws*). They can make motions and vote, they can serve on committees, and they can hold office in AADB (*bylaws*).

### **2.1.2 ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**

Associate Members are not deaf-blind, and they are USA citizens or permanent residents who have paid their dues (*bylaws*). They may not vote, but they may serve on committees. They may serve on the Board as Secretary or Treasurer, but they may not hold any other office or Board position in AADB (*bylaws*).

### **2.1.3 HONORARY MEMBERS**

Honorary Member status shall be awarded to individuals who have done outstanding work in the field of deaf-blindness (*bylaws*). Honorary Membership is a lifetime membership. The Board may award Honorary Membership to deserving individuals at any time.

Honorary Members may not hold office but they may serve on committees (*bylaws*). Honorary Members who are deaf-blind may vote; Honorary Members who are not deaf-blind may not vote (*bylaws*). Honorary Members who wish to hold office may change to a status of Active Member or Associate Member for a period of time by paying the current dues for that period of time. The procedure for

awarding Honorary Membership is stated below in Section 2.4.1 on page 4.

### **2.1.4 ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS**

Organizational Members are nonprofit organizations that promote the betterment of Deaf-Blind people (*bylaws*). They must pay their dues (*bylaws*). They may not vote, and they may not hold any AADB offices (*bylaws*). For-profit businesses and organizations can become “AADB Supporters” and receive AADB publications for an annual payment of the same amount as is charged for dues for Organizational Members in accordance with the ***Table of Membership Dues*** provided in Appendix A, below at the end of this manual.

## **2.2 MEMBERSHIP POLICIES**

- All members shall receive the *DEAF-BLIND AMERICAN* publication and all other AADB mailings (*bylaws*).
- No one shall be denied membership in the Association because of age, sex, race, religion, national origin, or disability (*bylaws*).
- AADB keeps an updated database of members and SSPs, including:
  - ✓ communications preferences;
  - ✓ special needs of the deaf-blind members;

- ✓ communications skills of the SSPs.
- If a member is disruptive or abusive, AADB may remove membership privileges for this member for one year (*bylaws*). Section 2.4.2, below on page 5, provides the procedure for removal, from membership, of a disruptive or abusive member.

## **2.3 DUES POLICIES**

- Annual dues are as shown in the ***Table of Membership Dues*** that follows below in Appendix A. Honorary Members do not pay dues.
- Annual dues to renew membership are due on the anniversary month of joining AADB.
- If a member fails to pay their dues within one month of the due date, membership is terminated and the name of the lapsed member is removed from the membership mailing lists.

## **2.4 MEMBERSHIP PROCEDURES**

### ***2.4.1 Procedure for Awarding Honorary Membership***

- Members nominate individuals for Honorary Membership by submitting the person's name and the reasons for his or her nomination to the Chair of the Awards Committee. This may be done at any time.

- The Awards Committee will review the nomination and make recommendations to the Board.
- The Board will review the recommendation and may approve the nomination with a majority vote.
- The President shall send a letter to the nominee explaining that AADB has awarded an Honorary Membership to him or her.
- This decision will then be announced in the *DEAF-BLIND AMERICAN* and during the award presentations at the next conference.

#### ***2.4.2 Procedure for Removing Membership from Disruptive Members***

- Within 20 days of the alleged disruptive incident, the President will appoint a temporary Review Committee of three members to review the matter. The Review Committee may review the matter either at a meeting with the accused member or through written documents and correspondence.
- If the Review Committee considers the matter at a meeting, the accused member will be presented with evidence or testimony concerning the disruptive behavior, and will be allowed to respond and provide evidence or testimony from others if desired. The Review Committee will then adjourn for a private discussion and render its decision.

- If the Review Committee handles the review using written documents and correspondence, it will do the following:
  - The Review Committee will request an explanation from whoever has accused the member of being disruptive. The request must be made within 30 days of the incident or the matter will be dropped.
  - The explanation from the accuser may be accompanied by corroborating information or evidence from others, if appropriate. The accuser must submit the explanation and corroboration to the Committee within 30 days of the request or the matter will be dropped.
  - The Review Committee will present this accusation and corroboration to the accused member in a format appropriate for him or her. The accused member will have 30 days to respond, and may submit corroborating information or evidence provided by others, if desired.
  - The Review Committee will render its decision within 15 days of receiving the response of the accused member.
- Regardless of whether the Review Committee works through a meeting or through correspondence, it will review the accusation, the response, and corroborating information and decide whether to

suspend membership of the accused for up to one year and if so, how long the membership will be suspended. The Review Committee will announce its decision to the President, to the accused member, and the Home Office.

- If the membership of the accused is suspended, no dues are reimbursed for the remainder of the term of his or her membership. The suspended member may reapply for membership at the end of the term of the suspension.