

What do you think when you hear the term “bylaws?” Do you think “restrictive” “rules,” or “complicated?” If so, you’re not alone. The more familiar you are with unit, council or district bylaws, the more you’ll appreciate their contribution to running an organization smoothly.

PTA bylaws are designed to be as helpful as possible. **Did you know:**

- The **cover page** indicates the date your PTA was organized, the PTA’s legal name, and where it is located;
- The internal **signature page** indicates when bylaws were last adopted.
- Bylaws should be reviewed **annually** and updated at least every **five** years or whenever changes are needed.

**Article I** states the **name of the organization** as it was chartered. This is the **legal PTA name** and must appear on all legal documents such as minutes, tax filings, any communication to state PTA, etc.

**Article II** states the **purpose of the organization**. The board should review its PTA’s goals, programs, and activities to ensure alignment with the purposes of PTA.

**Article III** outlines the **basic policies of PTA**, including noncommercial, nonsectarian and nonpartisan policies. It states PTA cannot enter into memberships with other organizations – with exceptions. Article III also details what to do should the unit, council or district be dissolved.

**Article IV** details **membership**: per capita dues and how much goes where, remittance deadlines and other pertinent membership information.

**Article V** lists: **required officers, nominating committee requirements, qualifications for election/appointment, term restrictions, the election month, and how to give proper meeting notice**.

**Article VI** states where to find **duties of officers and chairmen** as stated in the CAPTA *Toolkit*. It also includes how to legally remove a perpetually absent officer or chair or one whose conduct is injurious to the organization. “Due process” is fully outlined and **must** be followed.

**Article VII** could be retitled “*Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Association Meetings but Didn’t Know Where to Look.*”

Article VII is entirely about association/general meetings: which meeting elections are held; **the required meeting quorum**; who can make motions, debate and vote; **the approval authority over budgets, programs and expenditures** (the association is the authority!); and requirements for calling special meetings – and there a few! Finally, this article discusses proxy voting, which is **never** allowed, and describes electronic meeting requirements (if permitted). Specific dates of meetings can be found in the **Standing Rules** (which always are attached to the bylaws).

**Article VIII** is full of information about the **executive board**: who is included on the board, what the board does, how the board approves payments, what committees it can create, financial review requirements, and how to fill board vacancies. Here is where you will find that members of the executive board may not serve as paid employees of or under contract to the association (conflict of interest), that proxy voting is **never** permitted, **the required meeting quorum**, and electronic meeting requirements (if permitted.).

**Article IX** covers **council PTA membership**. It states to which council you belong (if in council), and who represents the PTA at council meetings. Out-of- council PTAs strike this article and renumber the remaining articles.

**Article X** details the **charter procedure for all local PTAs** organized under the authority of California State PTA. The requirements of constituent organizations – *units in good standing* – are found here.

**Article XI** explains the **unit PTA’s relationship with National PTA and California State PTA** and that the bylaws may not conflict with either.

**Article XII** contains the **Articles of Organization**.

**Article XIII** states the **start and end of the fiscal year and various identification numbers** assigned to the PTA.

**Article XIV** states the **parliamentary authority** that is Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised. Parliamentary authority empowers PTAs in achieving proper meeting procedures and respecting every member’s opinion.

**Article XV** outlines the **bylaw amendment procedure**, including that bylaws must be reviewed by the California State PTA parliamentarian, and references which sections cannot be stricken or altered.

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**Standing Rules** are the procedural rules specific to **your** PTA, such as the specific titles of the vice presidents (if any), standing committees, expenditure authorization limits, and more. These rules may be amended at any association meeting with a majority vote with ten days’ notice, or a 2/3 vote with no notice (with the exception of \*\*\* marked items).

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