



I. Name:

The name of our organization shall be PrideVA.

II. Purpose:

PrideVA advances diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility within VA; promotes awareness of issues affecting LGBTQ+ employees and Veterans; and provides mentorship, community, advocacy, and service opportunities for our members. We seek to achieve this mission through four avenues:

- a) **Strategic Partnership with VA:** We will be a strategic partner for VA in promoting awareness and understanding of issues affecting LGBTQ+ VA employees, contractors, volunteers, retirees. We will advocate for policies aimed at creating a workplace that is free from discrimination. We will coordinate with appropriate offices to create special events to further our core purpose.
- b) **Point of Contact and Resource:** We will be a point of contact and resource for employees, potential employees, contractors, volunteers, retirees, and Veterans regarding LGBTQ+ issues and activities at VA.
- c) **Mentorship and Professional Development:** We will foster relationships within our organization to promote mutual professional growth among our members and facilitate professional development.
- d) **Community and Service:** We will strive to create a national organization with chapters across the country and cooperate with other organizations that share our aims. We promote opportunities for community building through volunteerism.

III. Membership:

- a) Membership shall be available to all VA employees, contractors, and retired VA employees who enroll as members.
- b) An expressed desire to be included on PrideVA's listserv shall be sufficient to enroll as a member.

- c) For voting purposes under these bylaws, membership is defined as anyone who is listed on the official membership listserv.

IV. Board:

- a) The Board of PrideVA is made up of the following Officers, who have specific privileges and responsibilities:

1. The President: They shall be the primary representative of the organization; shall supervise the general business and affairs of the organization; and shall develop the agenda and preside at most meetings of the Board and of the general membership. The president will have the ability to appoint committees for special projects.
2. The Vice President: The Vice President is responsible for coordinating with VA and shall preside at meetings that the President is unable to attend.
3. The Secretary: The Secretary is responsible for distributing meeting agendas, keeping accurate minutes of all meetings, and distributing the minutes afterward.
4. The Treasurer: The Treasurer shall be in charge of managing any funding VA Pride may receive. They shall keep a clear and accurate record of PrideVA receipts and disbursements. They shall present an annual report on the financial status of PrideVA at the first regular meeting of the year.
5. The Communications Director: The Communications Director shall be responsible for distributing a regular newsletter to inform members of ongoing activities of PrideVA. They shall also oversee the maintenance of PrideVA's member list, email, website, as well as any other social media platforms. They shall coordinate with the President on developing press releases.
6. The Advocacy Director: The Advocacy Director shall be responsible for developing the organization's advocacy strategies on behalf of sexual orientation and gender identity minority employees. They shall also coordinate with other like-minded organizations within VA and the federal government. They shall also coordinate with VA's Special Emphasis Program.
7. The Mentorship Director: The Mentorship Director shall be responsible for creating, implementing, and continuing a mentorship program.

- b) One person may conduct the role of two Officers, except the President, if the need is required. For the purposes of Board voting, these individuals shall only have one vote, unless an additional vote is needed to break a tie. To break a Board vote tie, individuals will have one vote per role they serve on the Board.

- c) PrideVA aspires to have Officers from across VA to include VA Central Office, National Cemetery Administration, Veterans Benefits Administration, and Veterans Health Administration. We aspire to have the Officers reflect the diversity of VA.

V. Dues:

Dues and the amount to be collected shall only occur upon approval of the majority of the membership.

VI. Meetings:

- a) PrideVA will hold at minimum quarterly meetings during the year that shall be planned and organized by the President. The quarterly meetings must be conducted to some degree online so members across the country may participate.
- b) The Board shall meet once before each quarterly meeting.
- c) Officers shall meet as necessary, as requested by the President or two other Officers of the Board.
- d) Committees shall meet as necessary, as requested by the Committee Chairperson.

VII. Elections:

- a) Officers shall be elected biennially by a simple majority of members at the first quarterly meeting of the year. PrideVA's first election shall occur in January 2022.
- b) In the November before an election, the Board will designate by majority one non-Board individual who will serve as the Election Officer. The Election Officer may not run in the election they are presiding over. The Election Officer will request nominations for Officer positions. All PrideVA members who are current employees or contractors who plan to remain employed with VA for the entire term shall be eligible to run for any office. Individuals may nominate themselves or others, so long as that individual is willing to serve.
- c) In the December before an election, the Election Officer shall certify and announce the nominees for positions. The Election Officer will also distribute a method of the election. Voting shall be electronic and secret. The Election Officer shall provide requested reasonable accommodations for voting to ensure voting is available to all members.
- d) Voting shall be completed the day before the scheduled January meeting and the results shall be announced at the beginning of the January meeting by the Election Officer.
- e) In the event of a tie, a majority of the previous Board shall determine the winner of the election.
- f) Terms for officers shall be two years and begin on February 1.

VIII. Vacancies:

- a) Any officer may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Board. Any such resignation shall take effect at the date of the receipt of such notice or at any later time specified therein. If an Officer leaves a position before their term is completed, the Board will announce the

vacancy, within 30 days of the resignation, and shall solicit interest from the Membership in filling the role.

- b) Any vacancy caused by the death, resignation, removal, disqualification or otherwise, of any officer shall be filled by the Board, by a majority vote, within 60 days of the vacancy. In the event of a vacancy in any office other than that of the President, such vacancy may be filled temporarily by appointment by the President until such time as the Board shall fill the vacancy.
- c) If the President's position becomes vacant, the Vice President shall become the President. The Board will then decide, by a majority vote, to fill the vacancy of the Vice President.

IX. Committees:

- a) Any Member may recommend the creation of a Committee. A Committee shall be created with a Board majority vote.
- b) The Board will select a Committee Chairperson by majority vote.
- c) Committee Chairpersons will participate in regular meetings. The Chairperson shall update the Board on the progress of the committee every quarter.
- d) Committee Chairpersons may request Committee meetings.

X. Removal of an Officer

- a) Any Officer may be removed at any time. Any member may submit a Petition for Removal to remove an Officer. The Petition for Removal must detail the reasons for seeking removal and be submitted to the Board.
- b) If one third of the membership or a unanimous vote of the Board, except the Officer being removed, sign the Petition for Removal, the Officer's privileges and responsibilities are suspended until the end of a Removal Proceeding.
- c) Once one third of the membership or a unanimous vote of the Board, except the Officer being removed, sign the Petition for Removal, Removal Proceedings shall commence. The Officers not being removed shall appoint three non-Board members as the Removal Committee. The Removal Committee shall receive, develop, examine, and present evidence to the full membership for the purpose of holding a Removal Vote. The subject of removal shall be presented with this evidence and then be free to make a statement to the Removal Committee regarding their removal.
- d) Within one month of the commencement of the Removal Proceedings, the Removal Committee will organize a vote that shall present the original Petition for Removal, their individual findings and assessments, the subject of removal's statement, and the method for electronic voting.
- e) A simple majority vote of the entire general membership shall be required to remove an Officer.

- f) Once an Officer is removed, their position is vacant and filled accordingly.

XI. Removal of Membership:

- a) Members may be removed from PrideVA for violent or abusive behavior; willful misuse of any responsibilities or privileges of the organization; unauthorized appropriation of the organization's name, approved logos, and/or social media, web forums, mailing lists, etc.; illegal activity; or for other just cause that injure the purpose, integrity, or operations of the organization.
- b) Two Officers must move to remove a member. Once a member is subject to removal, the Board shall organize a special meeting where the member may present their case to the Board. The Board will then decide based on a unanimous vote on whether to remove the individual.
- c) Any member may be temporarily suspended from any PrideVA social media platform at the discretion of any one Officer. If a member has been suspended from a social media platform, the Board will decide at the next regular meeting whether to permanently remove that member or reinstate their social media privileges.

XII. Amendments to Bylaws

- a) Any Member may propose a Bylaw Amendment. Once a Bylaw Amendment has been signed by one Member and one Officer, the Bylaw Amendment is a Proposed Bylaw Amendment.
- b) A Proposed Bylaw Amendment shall be read and discussed at the next regular meeting. The Board will then create a voting method on which the Proposed Bylaw Amendment will be voted on within one month.
- c) Amendments to the Bylaws shall occur after approval of at least two-thirds of the members voting in the election or a unanimous vote by the Board and a simple majority vote of members voting in the election.

XIII. Chapter

PrideVA members may form local chapters. Members wishing to form a PrideVA chapter shall adopt bylaws in accordance with the principles reflected herein. All chapter bylaws must be approved by the Board.



**PETITION FOR REMOVAL
OF PrideVA BOARD MEMBER**

PETITIONER:

Name of Petitioner:

Member of PrideVA: yes__ no__ **Role at VA:** employee __ contractor __ volunteer__ retiree__

PETITION:

Position of Board Officer to be Removed: _____

Name of Board Officer to be Removed: _____

Reasons for Removal: *(Please provide a summary of the reasons why the PrideVA Board officer should be removed. The reasons for removal should be outlined with sufficient detail to allow the remaining Board Officers and members of PrideVA to vote on removal. Any evidence supporting the assertions below should be attached to this petition. Please continue statement on a second page if needed.)*

Signature of Petition: _____ **Date:** _____