



National Black Law Students Association SOUTHERN REGION CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this association shall be the Southern Region Black Law Students Association, (SRBLSA) a duly registered regional organization under the National Black Law Students Association (NBLSA)

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The purpose of SRBLSA shall be to utilize the collective resources of the member sub-regions and chapters to:

1. Articulate and promote the educational, professional, political, and social needs and goals of black law students;
2. Foster and encourage professional competence;
3. Improve the relationship between black law students, black attorneys, and the American legal structure;
4. Instill in the black attorney and law student a greater awareness and commitment to the needs of the black community;
5. Influence the legal community by bringing about meaningful legal and political change that addresses the needs and concerns of the black community;
6. Adopt and implement policies of economic independence;
7. Encourage black law students to pursue careers in the judiciary; and,
8. Do all things necessary and appropriate to accomplish these purposes.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1

Membership shall be comprised of local chapters of the Black Law Students Association in the Southern Region: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, **Virgin Islands** and Puerto Rico.

SECTION 2

The rules governing membership are as follows:

- a) Chapter Membership: Chapter membership within the Southern Region shall consist of:
 - (1) Any American law school whose petition is approved by the National Executive Board for admittance within the Southern Region as outlined in Article III, Section 1; or

- (2) Any law student within the Southern Region as outlined in Article III, Section 1, whose petition is approved by the National Executive Board for admittance; and, (3) Those who have fulfilled their financial obligations of membership.
- b) Active Membership: Active membership in SRBLSA shall consist of all chapters that have:
- (1) Fulfilled the chapter's financial obligations for that fiscal year;
 - (2) Submitted the necessary paperwork to determine the number of affiliated members in the chapter; and
 - (3) Are located within the Southern Region as outlined in Article III Section 1.
- c) Inactive Membership: An Inactive Member shall consist of any person who does not meet any of the requirements for active membership as prescribed in Article III, Section (b) of this document.

SECTION 3

Nondiscrimination Clause: SRBLSA will not discriminate against an individual or group on the basis of sex, race, sexual orientation, religion, ethnic group, age, disability, national origin, or country of abode.

SECTION 4

Rights of Membership: Only law students in active chapters shall have the right to serve as a delegate, hold regional office, and compete in all SRBLSA sponsored competitions, and shall generally be entitled to all the rights and privileges of SRBLSA and NBLSA as defined herein.

ARTICLE IV – ADMINISTRATION

SECTION 1

Only members of active chapters of SRBLSA are eligible to hold executive office within the region.

SECTION 2

The Regional Executive Board will consist of the following officers elected by the Chamber of Delegates:

- Regional Chair
- Regional Vice-Chair
- Regional Treasurer
- Regional Director of Communications
- Regional Attorney General
- Regional Director of the **Constance Baker Mottley Mock Trial Competition**
- Regional Director of the **Thurgood Marshall Moot Court Competition**,
- Regional Director of Programming

The aforementioned officers shall be elected by a majority of the voting delegates at the Regional Convention. The Regional Elections Committee shall coordinate such election. The Regional Executive Board will also include the Sub-Regional Directors who shall be elected by the Conclave of their respective Sub-Region. The Regional Executive Board will also include the Editor-in-Chief of the Law Journal, who is selected by the out-going Regional Board.

The Regional Executive Board may also consist of the following appointed members:

- Regional Convention Coordinator

- Regional Director of Alumni Affairs
- Regional Director of Community Service
- Regional Director(s) of Corporate Relations
- Regional Director of the College/Pre-Law Student Division
- Regional Director of Membership
- Regional Historian
- Regional Director of Career and Professional Development
- Regional Membership Coordinator
- Regional Parliamentarian
- Regional Public Relations Specialist
- Regional Recording Secretary

As stated explicitly in the Bylaws of the Southern Region of the National Black Law Students Association, Article IV, each appointed member shall be appointed by either the Regional Chair, the Regional Vice-Chair, or the concurrence of the Regional Chair and the Vice-Chair with proper approval or consent from the Pentarchy. The Regional Chair, upon approval by the Regional Executive Board, can create any other appointed positions as necessary for the execution of SRBLSA's objectives. Please review Article IV of the Bylaws of the Southern Region of the National Black Law Students Association for further guidance with appointments.

SECTION 3

These officers shall perform duties as prescribed by the Regional Bylaws and by the parliamentary authority adopted by SRBLSA.

SECTION 4

The Regional Executive Board will:

- a) Have general power to administer any and all programs, business projects, and matters pertaining to or concerning SRBLSA;
- b) Determine all questions of policy and procedure, and shall administer the affairs of SRBLSA under the Constitution and Bylaws of SRBLSA;
- c) Be subject to the orders of the membership; none of its acts can conflict with decisions made by the vote of the general assembly of SRBLSA chapters or the goals and objectives of SRBLSA;
- d) Make recommendations to the general assembly of SRBLSA chapters;
- e) Create staff positions and committees as necessary to carry out the business of SRBLSA;
- f) Make decisions at a duly called meeting at which there is quorum;
- g) Have the power to discipline any officer pursuant to Article XI of this Constitution;
- h) Set the date, location, and agenda of the annual SRBLSA Regional Convention;
- i) Coordinate all nationally mandated activities within the Southern Region;
- j) Serve as liaisons between its chapters and the National Executive Board and shall carry out the objectives of NBLSA.

SECTION 5

Board Approval: The Regional Executive Board defines board approval as an affirmative, simple majority vote.

SECTION 6

Succession of Officers: If the Regional Chair is unable to complete a term of office, the Regional Vice-Chair will automatically become Regional Chair for the remainder of the term. If the Regional Vice-Chair is unable to fulfill this duty, the acting President Pro Temp will then assume the position. If any other Regional Officer is unable to complete a term of office the Regional Chair will appoint a replacement, subject to the approval of the Regional Executive Board, to serve the remainder of the term.

SECTION 7

Fiduciary Duty: Elected officers retain a fiduciary duty to the Constitution and Bylaws of SRBLSA and then to the membership thereof.

SECTION 8

Terms of Office: The Regional Executive Board will hold office for a term of one (1) year, to begin on **April 1 and end on March 31** of the following year. No person may hold more than one (1) executive office at the same time.

ARTICLE V – MEETINGS

SECTION 1

Regional Executive Board Meetings:

- a) In addition to the Regional Convention, the Regional Executive Board shall conduct a minimum of four (4) annual business meetings.
- b) Officers are required to attend or send a representative to every Southern Regional Executive Board meeting. Officers who do not attend shall show good cause for their absence. Good cause will be determined by a simple majority vote of the Regional Executive Board or will be approved by the Regional Chair.
- c) Minutes of the meetings of the Regional Executive Board shall be made available, upon request, to the National Executive Board, any local chapter, or any local chapter member.

SECTION 2

Regional Convention:

- a) The Regional Executive Board shall convene a meeting each Spring, which shall be known as the Southern Region Black Law Students Association Regional Convention (“SRBLSA Regional Convention”).
- b) Each chapter in attendance at the SRBLSA Regional Convention shall register and remit registration fees for each chapter delegate attending the SRBLSA Regional Convention. The amount of the registration fee and the rules governing payment are to be submitted by the SRBLSA Regional Convention Coordinator and proposed to the Regional Executive Board for approval.

ARTICLE VI – COMMITTEES

SECTION 1

The Standing Committees of SRBLSA are:

- a) Rules Committee

- b) Convention Committee
- d) Elections & Credentials Committee
- e) Alumni Committee
- f) Honors and Awards

SECTION 2

The Regional Chair, upon approval by the Regional Executive Board, can create any other committee necessary for the execution of SRBLSA's objectives. The Regional Executive Board may delegate such appointive powers as necessary to facilitate both the organization and the operation of any necessary committees

ARTICLE VII – COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL CONSTITUTION

SECTION 1

Any provision of the NBLSA Constitution and Bylaws, any action of the National Executive Board collectively or individually, and any measure adopted by the National Convention Assembly will supersede any governing document, rule, policy, practice, or procedure passed by SRBLSA.

SECTION 2

Any provision of the SRBLSA Constitution and Bylaws, any action of the Regional Executive Board collectively and individually, and any measure adopted by the Regional Convention Assembly will supersede any governing document, rule, policy, practice, or procedure passed by any local chapter of SRBLSA.

ARTICLE VIII – FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

SECTION 1

Dues: The assessment of regional membership dues shall be carried out by the National Executive Board pursuant to Article IX of the NBLSA Constitution. Payment of dues shall be a prerequisite obligation of active membership and the rights incident thereto.

SECTION 2

Bank Account: SRBLSA shall have a dual signature bank account that shall require the signature of both the Regional Chair and the Regional Treasurer before any disbursement of funds is initiated.

SECTION 3

Competitions Entry Fee: The Regional Treasurer may remit up to fifty percent (50%) of regional competition entry fees collected from each chapter for the costs of administration of the regional competitions.

SECTION 4

Final Report: A final full disclosure of all funds received and disbursed within any given fiscal year, including those received and disbursed at the SRBLSA Regional Convention, shall be disseminated by the Regional Executive Board to all chapters prior to the first regularly scheduled Regional Executive Board meeting of the newly elected officers.

SECTION 5

Financial Report: The Regional Executive Board shall make a financial report of the funds in the SRBLSA Regional Treasury to the General Assembly at the SRBLSA Regional Convention. The financial records of SRBLSA shall be submitted annually to a certified public accountant for audit immediately after the first regularly scheduled Regional Executive Board meeting. This inspection report shall be completed within the first sixty (60) days of the new fiscal year and submitted to the NBLSA Treasurer.

ARTICLE IX – FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of SRBLSA is to extend from May 1 of the present year to April 30 of the following year.

ARTICLE X – VOTING

SECTION 1

Each chapter should be represented at the Regional Convention in accordance with the number of members in the chapter. Under no circumstances will a chapter's number of votes be less than one (1) or more than five (5). A chapter's votes are determined as follows:

- a) Chapters with ten (10) members or less will have one (1) vote;
- b) Chapters with more than ten (10), but less than twenty-five (25) members will have two (2) votes;
- c) Chapters with twenty-five (25), but less than fifty (50) members will have three (3) votes;
- d) Chapters with fifty (50), but less than seventy-five (75) members will have four (4) votes;
- e) Chapters with seventy-five (75) or more members will have five (5) votes.

SECTION 2

Proxy: Each chapter giving its proxy shall comply with the following provisions:

- a) The chapter shall be in good financial standing with SRBLSA.
- b) The chapter shall be registered for the SRBLSA Regional Convention.
- c) The chapter shall present a written proxy, prior to the day of elections, to be certified by the Regional Recording Secretary.

ARTICLE XI – DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS

SECTION 1

SRBLSA is empowered to enforce its rules and to require that its members and officers refrain from conduct injurious to SRBLSA or its purposes. The Regional Executive Board will have the power to sanction its members, staff persons and committee members.

SECTION 2

Regional Executive Board Member Removal:

- a) A Regional Executive Board member may be expelled, suspended, or otherwise removed from office after due process and by an affirmative vote of no less than two-thirds (2/3) of the Regional Executive Board. The presiding officer at the meeting will require a secret ballot vote for any proposed adverse action.

- b) Notice of any adverse action will be given to the board member in writing. Any officer initiating such an action or the object of such an action shall make a presentation verbally or in writing on his or her behalf and/or select an advocate and witnesses.
- c) The subject of such adverse action has the right to appeal the decision to the next board in the hierarchy. If the member appeals to the National Executive Board, the decision of the National Executive Board is final.
- d) The Regional Executive Board shall report all disciplinary measures to the General Assembly at the Regional Convention; disciplinary measures are subject to review by the General Assembly.
- e) Any officer may resign at any time. Resignation shall be in writing and given to the Regional Chair.

ARTICLE XII – PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

SRBLSA is empowered to establish its rules of order through the adoption of some form of parliamentary authority. The Regional Parliamentarian, appointed by the Regional Chair and approved by the Regional Executive Board, will:

- a) Be responsible for carrying out the parliamentary authority; and,
- b) Serve as a resource on parliamentary procedure.

ARTICLE XIII – MANDATORY PROJECTS

The following projects are mandatory:

- a) The Annual Regional **Thurgood Marshall Moot Court Competition,**
- b) The Annual Regional **Constance Baker Mottley Mock Trial Competition,**
- c) The Annual SRBLSA Regional Convention,
- d) The Annual Regional Convention Community Service Project,
- e) The Annual Regional Job Fair, and
- f) The Sub-Regional Academic Retreats.

ARTICLE XIV – BYLAWS

SECTION 1

The Bylaws of SRBLSA shall be approved by:

- a) Simple majority vote of the delegates attending the Plenary Sessions at the Annual SRBLSA Regional Convention; or, in extenuating circumstances,
- b) A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Regional Executive Board, subject to review by the active membership of SRBLSA. The Regional Executive Board shall publicize the need to make the change and create an amendment to the Bylaws prior to acting; results of the Board's actions shall be publicized.

SECTION 2

The Regional Executive Board has the authority to make grammatical, non-substantive changes to the SRBLSA Constitution and Bylaws.

ARTICLE XV – AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1

The SRBLSA Constitution shall be adopted by a simple majority vote of the General Assembly at the SRBLSA Regional Convention.

SECTION 2

Amendments to this Constitution and/or Bylaws may be proposed by:

- a) A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Regional Executive Board; or
- b) A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Regional Constitution and Bylaws Committee; or
- c) A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the delegates at a Regional Convention.

SECTION 3

Proposed amendments shall be submitted in written form to the Regional Constitution and Bylaws Committee who will then present the proposed amendments to the Regional Executive Board for review. The proposal shall be clearly stated and justified.

SECTION 4

Constitutional amendments shall be passed at the SRBLSA Regional Convention Plenary Session(s) upon receiving a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the General Assembly.

ARTICLE XVI – RATIFICATION

Unless an alternative date is specified therein, the Constitution, Bylaws, and any passed amendments of SRBLSA become effective immediately upon ratification. Ratification will occur upon two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the delegates present in person or by proxy at the SRBLSA Regional Convention.