



BYLAWS

Article I – Name

The name of this organization shall be **K9 Search Midwest**, herein after referred to as **K9SM**.

Article II – Purpose

This corporation is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and scientific purposes as specified in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, including for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

The purpose of this corporation is:

- **to assist lawful Search and Rescue agencies in locating missing persons by providing trained handler/dog teams, field/base technicians and other resources;**
- **to provide immediate first aid to save lives; and**
- **to educate the public about search and rescue.**

Article III – Members.

Section 1. Eligibility for membership. Persons who are at least 18 years of age, have a valid driver's license, fully embrace the mission of K9SM, and who pass a criminal background check shall be eligible for membership.

Section 2. Classes of membership.

There shall be the following classes of members:

- A. **Active members.** Active members shall be those members who are certified or pursuing certification for support and /or canine handler activities. Active members shall pay dues and have voting rights.
- B. **Associate members.** Associate members shall be those members who wish to support K9SM through the use of their special skills, knowledge, or equipment, but are not pursuing certification. Associate members shall pay dues and have voting rights.
- C. **Candidate members.** Candidate members shall be those members who are seeking membership in K9SM but are within their 90-day probationary period. Candidate members shall pay no dues and shall have no voting rights.

Section 3. Active and Associate Members in good standing shall:

- A. submit required paperwork and forms to K9SM;
- B. attend seventy-five percent (75%) of K9SM trainings in any quarter if a canine handler;
- C. attend sixty-six percent (66%) of K9SM regular meetings in any quarter;
- D. attend fifty percent (50%) of K9SM trainings in any quarter;
- E. abide by the K9SM Membership Agreement.

Section 4. K9SM Membership Agreement. All active and associate members of K9SM shall:

- A. conduct themselves in a professional, polite, and responsible manner;
- B. receive permission from the operations officer before formally representing K9SM at any non-unit function;
- C. decline payment for services performed in connection with K9SM;
- D. keep confidential circumstances relating to search and rescue missions;
- E. decline interviews and direct reporters and journalists to the proper authorities except when acting as information officer;
- F. refrain from using alcohol while in uniform or while involved in search and rescue activities;

- G. refrain from carrying a firearm while in uniform except with written consent of the requesting search and rescue agency and the operations officer;
- H. refrain from wearing the uniform of K9SM to any search to which K9SM has not been officially activated; and
- I. abide by the policies and procedures set forth in the K9SM Bylaws, and the K9SM Member Handbook.

Section 5. Dues.

- A. New active members will be required to pay \$200.00 membership fee at time of approval.
- B. New associate members will be required to pay \$100.00 membership fee at the time of approval.
- C. Dues in the amount of \$50.00 per year is required by all active and associate members and shall be due by April 1 of each said year.

Section 6. Voting.

- A. Active and associate members in good standing shall be entitled to one vote at meetings.
- B. Proxy voting is allowed, if the both assigner and the proxy are active or associate members.

Section 7. Application for membership.

- A. Forms for membership application shall be provided by the president to the prospective member along with a copy of the bylaws. Upon submitting the completed forms and required fees to the secretary, the prospective member will be granted candidate member status. Candidate members shall then complete the process for becoming an active or associate member as described in the K9SM Member Handbook.
- B. An individual not approved for membership shall be notified by the president as to the reasons for the rejection.

Section 8. Leaves of absence.

- A. An active or associate member may request a leave of absence for a period of up to six months. During the leave, a member's voting privileges shall be suspended; they shall forfeit any official position they hold in K9SM; and they shall be considered unavailable for searches.
- B. Members shall submit a written request including the duration of the leave to the Secretary or verbally request a leave at a regular meeting. Members may request an extension of their leave for a period of up to six months by submitting a written request to the secretary. The general membership shall consider and act upon each request.
- C. Members returning from a leave of absence shall be reinstated pending a review and simple majority vote by all K9SM Officers.

Section 9. Disciplinary action.

- A. The board of directors shall have the right to suspend a member for cause. The operations officer shall have the right to suspend a member if it is believed that the member is a danger or liability to themselves or others. Members shall have 15 days after receiving written notice of the suspension to respond before action is taken by the board of directors. If the board of directors recommends termination of a membership, the issue shall be brought before the general membership for final determination.

Section 10. Membership termination.

- A. Membership and rights of membership shall terminate upon the occurrence of any of the following:
 - 1. voluntary resignation of the member;
 - 2. failure of the member to meet the qualifications for membership as set forth in the K9SM standards;
 - 3. misconduct of the member; or
 - 4. dissolution of K9SM.
- B. Membership termination shall not absolve a member from debt or dues owed to K9SM. All equipment and uniforms provided by K9SM will be returned to President or Secretary.

Article IV – Officers

Section 1. Officers. The elected officers of K9SM shall be a president, a vice-president, a secretary, a treasurer, an operations officer, and a training officer. When the active membership of K9SM is below ten, it is acceptable for more than one office to be held by a single member. Officers shall be active members.

A. President. The president shall:

1. preside over and conduct the meetings of the board and general membership;
2. act as the primary point of contact for matters regarding disciplinary action by the board of directors;
3. actively pursue relationship building with lawful Search and Rescue agencies;
4. be span-of-control lead for all officers
5. designate special committees and appoint the chair of those committees; and
6. perform any other duties as directed by the board of directors or by standing rule.

B. Vice President. The vice-president shall:

1. assume the duties of president in the absence of the president;
2. serve as assistant to the president;
3. assume the office of president in the event of resignation, disability, or death of the president;
4. act as a point of contact for prospective members, the public, and the media;
5. act as a point of contact for inter-unit communications;
6. be responsible for unit-owned equipment;
7. perform any other duties as directed by the board of directors or by standing rule.

C. Secretary. The secretary shall:

1. be responsible for keeping accurate minutes of meeting of the organization;
2. be responsible for sending notices of meetings, and letters of appointment to committees and appointed officers;
3. be responsible for maintaining all official records of K9SM;
4. shall have other duties as prescribed by the board of directors or by standing rule.

D. Treasurer. The treasurer shall:

1. be responsible for the collection of dues, and for receipt and deposit of financial
2. contributions and income into accounts at such banks and financial institutions as the board of directors shall direct;
3. shall keep accurate records of monies received and expended and make a financial
4. report at unit and board meetings;
5. be responsible for securing the services of a certified public accountant to conduct an audit of the organization's financial records at the end of the fiscal year; and
6. shall have other duties as prescribed by the board of directors or by standing rule.

E. Operations officer: The operations officer shall:

1. oversee field operations, mock searches, and parades;
2. oversee educational, promotional, and fundraising events;
3. shall have other duties as prescribed by the board of directors or by standing rule.

F. Training officer: The training officer shall:

1. develop and schedule training activities;
2. review member logs of training activities and search operations; and

3. shall have other duties as prescribed by the board of directors or by standing rule.

Section 2. Election of officers and terms of office.

- A. Officers shall be elected by ballot at the annual meeting. They shall take office at the adjournment of the meeting at which they are elected.
- B. Elected officers shall serve a term of one year or until their successors are elected. A simple majority vote shall elect.
- C. No member may serve more than three consecutive terms in the same office.
- D. Except for the office of president, vacancies in office shall be filled by the general membership for the remainder of the respective terms.

Article V – Meetings

Section 1. Regular meetings.

- A. Regular meetings shall be held on the first training Saturday every other even numbered month, except when otherwise scheduled.

Section 2. Annual meeting.

- A. The regular meeting in December shall be known as the annual meeting.
- B. Notice of the annual meeting shall be sent to members and directors at least 30 days prior to the date of the meeting. Notice of the meeting shall include an agenda.

Section 3. Special meetings.

- A. Special meetings of the membership may be called by the board of directors, provided that notice of such meetings shall be given to members at least 10 days prior to the date of the meeting.
- B. Notice shall include the specific business to be conducted at the meeting.

Section 4. Quorum.

- A. Membership meetings. The quorum for regular meetings and any special meeting of the membership shall be fifty percent (50%) of the total active membership, provided that at least two directors are present. The quorum for the annual meeting shall be fifty percent (50%) of the total active membership, provided that at least four directors are present.
- B. Board of directors meetings. A quorum for meetings of the board of directors shall be a majority of the directors then in office.

Section 5. Board of directors meetings.

- A. Board of directors meetings shall be held quarterly, at a time and place to be determined by the president. Board of directors meetings shall be closed to members and to the press.
- B. Members and nonmembers may be invited by the board of directors to appear for purposes of reports and receipt of other information, but shall not be entitled to remain in the meeting during the conduct of business.

Section 6. Special meetings of the board of directors.

- A. Special meetings of the board of directors may be called by the president or any three directors.
- B. Notice of the special meeting shall be sent to directors at least seven days prior to the date of the meeting.
- C. Attendance shall be limited as provided in Section 5 of this article.

Article VI – Board of Directors

Section 1. Composition.

- A. The board of directors shall consist of seven people except as follows:
 - 1. If the total active membership of K9SM is less than four people the number of nonmember directors shall be reduced to one less than the number of active member directors.
 - 2. At no time shall the total number of directors be less than three.
 - 3. Elections shall take place at the annual meeting.
- B. Nonmember directors.
 - 1. Three of the directors shall be nonmembers.
 - 2. Nonmember directors shall be elected rotating one per year with each director to serve three years or until their successor is elected.
 - 3. Nonmember directors may serve no more than five consecutive terms.
- C. Active member directors.
 - 1. Four of the directors shall be active members.
 - 2. The President shall be a director.
 - 3. The Treasurer shall be a director.
 - 4. The Secretary shall be a director.
 - 5. The general membership shall elect one active member to be a director. This member may not be an officer, unless there is no other willing and/or available member.
- D. Vacancies among directors shall be filled by the members for the remainder of the terms vacated.

Section 2. Responsibilities. The board of directors shall:

- A. make and review the long term goals of K9SM;
- B. review evaluations for mission ready status of the active membership; and
- C. review the business and charitable affairs of the corporation.

Article VII – Finance

Section 1. Checks and Debit Cards.

- A. Checks shall be signed by officer given signing authority.
- B. Those given the signing authority on the checking account may maintain debit cards, linked to the K9SM checking account, which they may use in the performance of their duties.

Article VIII – Committees

Committees may be established by the board of directors or by the membership as necessary.

Article IX – Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern K9SM in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the organization may adopt.

Article X – Amendments

Section 1. Amendments.

- A. These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the active members present at any duly called meeting, provided that written notice of the proposed amendment shall have been given to the membership at least 30 days prior to the meeting. The notices shall include the complete text of the proposed amendment.
- B. Amendments to these bylaws shall take effect at the adjournment of the meeting at which they are adopted unless otherwise provided.

Article XI – Dissolution

Upon dissolution of K9SM, its assets, if any, shall be distributed to a charitable organization in the United States that qualifies as exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code. This shall be in accordance with a plan of distribution approved by the membership. Any specific asset that has been loaned by an organization or individual to K9SM shall be returned to that organization or individual.