

**BYLAWS
OF
LA RAZA LAWYERS ASSOCIATION-CENTRAL VALLEY CHAPTER**

ARTICLE I – NAME AND PURPOSE

SECTION A. The name of this organization shall be “LA RAZA LAWYERS ASSOCIATION, CENTRAL VALLEY CHAPTER” and will be referred by the acronym “LRLA.” LRLA’s business address shall be P.O. Box 748, Fresno, CA 93712.

SECTION B. The purpose of LRLA is to provide a forum for communication among attorneys interested in promoting the social and civic advancement of the Raza communities, the professional development of Raza attorneys, and mentoring our youth.

ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP

SECTION A. Membership will be opened to those who are interested and in agreement with the purpose of LRLA, as stated in these bylaws.

SECTION B. Active members are members who have paid their dues. There shall be two classes of active members: voting members, who have the right to vote; and honorary members, who do not have the right to vote.

SECTION C. The requirements for active LRLA membership are agreement with the purpose of this organization, payment of dues, and one of the following:

1. Membership in the California State Bar (“Cal. Bar”);
2. Graduation from an American Bar Association accredited law school or from a California law school;
3. Full time attendance at an American Bar Association accredited law school or from a California law school;
4. Full-time employment as a paralegal in a law office, legal services or legal aide, legal clinic or other provider of legal services, or some other relationship to the legal field.

SECTION D. Honorary members- Anyone can request to join as an honorary member or request to be reclassified as an honorary member upon payment of the appropriate dues and or charges.

SECTION E. Proxies- Each voting member shall have the right to do so either in person or by one or more agents authorized by written proxy, signed by the member, or filed with the Secretary. A proxy shall be deemed signed if the member’s name is placed on the proxy (whether by manual signature, typewriting, telegraphic transmission, or otherwise) by the member or the member’s attorney-in-fact.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP DUES

SECTION A. The annual dues of each active member shall be as follows:

1. First year practicing attorneys - \$0
2. Five (5) years or less since date of admission to practice - \$25.00
3. Students - \$20.00
4. Honorary members- \$25.00
5. All others - \$35.00

For purposes of determining membership dues for Cal. Bar members, the date of admission to the practice of law shall be used. The calendar year of the date of admission to practice shall be counted as a full year, regardless of the month in which an active member shall have been admitted to the Cal. Bar.

Article IV- MEETINGS

SECTION A. Regular monthly meetings shall be held the third Thursday of the month or as designated by the President. Election of officers and Executive Board members at large shall be held at the December meeting.

SECTION B. An Executive Committee meeting may be convened at any mutually agreed time by agreement of three or more Board Members. Meetings and Executive Board business may be conducted in person, by video or telephone conference, or through email.

SECTION C. Notice of the monthly general meeting will specify the place, the day and hour of the meeting.

SECTION D. Email shall be the preferred way of communicating with the membership. Notice shall be emailed or mailed through regular mail not less than five (5) days before the meeting. The President is encouraged to provide an agenda with the notice of meetings so members will know in advance what topics will be discussed at each noticed meeting.

SECTION E. The annual meeting shall be held in December and shall include the election of the LRLA's officers, Board members at large, the presentation of annual reports, and such other business as may properly come before the body under the regular order of business.

ARTICLE V – OFFICERS

SECTION A. The officers of this organization shall be President, President-Elect, Secretary and Treasurer. The four officers plus two additional persons elected from the membership and one whom the President may appoint will compromise the executive committee.

SECTION B. The officers and the two elected members of the executive committee shall be nominated by a nomination committee at the November meeting. The election may be by secret

ballot at the discretion of the President or a vote of the membership. A majority vote of those present at the December meeting shall be necessary to be elected.

SECTION C. If any elected position shall become vacant, the President shall at the earliest possible date thereafter, appoint a member in good standing to fill the position until the election of a successor. The member thus selected shall immediately enter upon her or his duties and shall hold office until the next regular election unless a petition signed by 25% of the membership demands that an election be held to fill vacancy for the remainder of the vacant term.

SECTION D. Duties of Officers:

1. **The President.** The President shall have such duties and powers as are usually exercised by such as officer. The President shall preside at all the meetings of the members and Executive Committee. (S)he shall have power to appoint all standing committees and all special committees and to designate the chair thereof and to fill vacancies therein, with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee. The President may authorize expenditures of up to \$300.00 for LRLA business with the approval of three other members of the Executive Board.

2. **President-Elect.** In the absence of the President, or in the event of his/her inability or refusal to act, the President-Elect shall perform the duties of the President, and when so acting shall have all the powers and be subject to all the restrictions upon the President. It also shall be the duty of the President-Elect to assist the local chapter in their organizational efforts and to keep it fully informed of State and National developments including acting as a liaison with the California La Raza Lawyers Association. The President-Elect shall serve in office for a term of one year, which shall immediately be followed by a one year term as President.

3. **The Secretary.** The Secretary shall keep an accurate record of the minutes of all LRLA meetings. He/she shall also keep a membership roster, containing a record of the Association's members and showing each member's name, address and class of membership. He/she shall promulgate or cause promulgated proper notices of all meetings of the Association. In the absence of the President and President-Elect, the Secretary shall take the chair, call the meeting to order and preside. On the appearance of the President or President-Elect, the Secretary shall also be responsible for certifying the results of membership votes as directed by the President.

4. **Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall be responsible for all financial business of this organization and shall present a yearly financial report to the membership at the December meeting. The treasurer shall be responsible for collecting dues.

5. The terms of the elected officers will be one year commencing January 1 each year and ending on December 31, of the same year. The President shall not serve more than two consecutive terms.

6. Membership votes may be conducted at a regular or special meeting, by email, or in any other manner that ensures a fair result.

SECTION E. Removal from Office:

Any wrongful act or omission committed willfully by an officer of LRLA shall constitute grounds for removal from office. Any member of the Executive Board or a petition signed by no fewer than 15 active members shall require a meeting to consider removal. A special committee shall be named by the highest ranking member of the Executive Board who is not the target of a motion for removal and said special committee shall be responsible for conducting a special meeting to consider removal. A vote by secret ballot of two thirds of the active membership shall be necessary for removal of any officer.

ARTICLE VI- COMMITTEES

The President or the Executive Committee may designate such standing and special committees as may be desirable to expedite the business of LRLA and promote its purposes. Except as otherwise provided, the President shall appoint all standing or special committees, designate the number of members and the Chairperson thereof, prescribe its duties and purposes, and in the event of the death, disqualification or resignation of any member of the committee, appoint a successor to fill the unexpired term.

ARTICLE VII- QUORUM

For any general meeting of LRLA, a quorum shall consist of 1/3 of the active members up to a maximum of 10 members.

ARTICLE VII- FINANCING AND ACCOUNTING

SECTION A. The fiscal year of the association shall begin on the first day of January.

SECTION B. Disbursement signatories. Any previously authorized check or disbursement of LRLA may be signed by the Treasurer.

ARTICLE IX- AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

SECTION A. Any active member is eligible to propose amendments to the Bylaws. Any proposed amendment shall be filed with the Secretary preferably by email, who then shall provide a copy to the other officers. The entire Article sought to be amended shall be presented, showing such Article as it will read if the proposed amendment is adopted.

SECTION B. The secretary shall provide notice of the proposed amendment at least two weeks (14) days before the meeting at which the amendment is to be voted on.

SECTION C. The affirmative vote of a majority of the members present at any general or special meeting held for the purpose of considering proposed amendments to the bylaws, at which quorum is present, shall be necessary for the adopting of an amendment. Unless

otherwise provided, an amendment shall become effective at the adjournment of the meeting at which the same is adopted.

ARTICLE X- MEMBERS' INSPECTION RIGHTS

SECTION A. Membership records. Any member may do either or both of the following for a purpose reasonably related to the member's interest as a member.

1. Obtain from the Secretary on written demand and tender of a reasonable charge, a list of names, addresses and voting rights of members who are entitled to vote for the election of officers as of the most recent date for which that list has been compiled, or as of the date, after the date of demand, specified by the member. The demand shall state the purpose for which the list is requested. The Secretary shall make this list available to the member on or before the later of ten (10) days after (1) the demand is received or (2) the date specified in the demand as the date as of which the list is to be completed.

2. If LRLA reasonably believes the information will be used for a purpose other than one reasonably related to a person's interest as a member, or if it provides a reasonable alternative under this Section, it may deny the member access to the membership roster.

3. Any inspection and copying under this section may be made in person or by the member's agent or attorney. The right of inspection includes the right to copy and make extracts.

SECTION B. Accounting records and minutes. On written demand to LRLA, any member may inspect, copy and make extracts of the accounting books and records and the minutes of the proceedings of the members, the Executive Board, and standing and special committees of the Executive Board at any reasonable time for a purpose reasonably related to the member's interest as a member. Any such inspection and copying may be made in person or by the member's agent or attorney.

ARTICLE XI- ENDORSEMENT OF JUDICIAL CANDIDATES

LRLA may endorse candidates for judicial office or appointment. The President shall appoint a Committee, currently known as the Endorsement Committee, consisting of three to five members. The Endorsement Committee shall interview and evaluate a candidate for judicial office or for appointment to the bench. The candidate shall also complete a questionnaire and provide a copy to the Endorsement Committee prior to their evaluation of candidate. The Endorsement Committee shall provide its recommendations to the general membership on whether to endorse.

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Policies and Procedures Governing Judicial Endorsements

POLICIES

I. Goals:

SECTION A. The principal goal of LRLA in endorsing candidates for judgeships is to promote the election or appointment of qualified judges to local, state, and federal courts. Consistent with that goal, LRLA also seeks to increase the number of diversity candidates, including Latinos, appointed to judgeships. LRLA endorses candidates who have demonstrate a commitment to equal treatment of all litigants and who have demonstrated involvement with, support of and responsiveness to Latino issues, needs and concerns.

II. Guidelines and Parameters:

SECTION A. The Endorsement Committee. The Endorsement Committee will primarily be responsible for assessing the qualifications of each candidate for judicial positions and recommending to the membership whether such candidates should receive the endorsement of the Association. The Endorsement Committee will be responsible for follow-up communication with the relevant agency making the judicial appointment, if relevant.

SECTION B. Criteria for Endorsement.

1. Qualifications. In deciding whether to endorse a judicial candidate, LRLA will consider the following factors, among other things:

- (a) The extent to which a candidate has demonstrated involvement with, support of and responsiveness to Latino issues, needs and concerns;
- (b) Litigation, adjudicative, and administrative or professional experience;
- (c) Demonstrated commitment to equal opportunity and equal justice under the law;
- (d) Scholarship, oral and written communication skills;
- (e) Integrity, character and common sense; and
- (f) Membership in and demonstrated support of local bar associations and community organizations, including, but not limited to, those related to the Latino community.

2. Statutory Criteria. LRLA will endorse only those candidates who have satisfied the statutory requirements for the position sought.

SECTION C. Rating Levels.

1. There will be no rating levels of candidates (e.g. qualified, very qualified, etc...). Rather, LRLA will endorse candidates who have demonstrated satisfaction of the criteria listed in B Section 1 and shall prepare a letter of endorsement support.

2. Generally, LRLA will take no position regarding a candidate if it chooses not to endorse that candidate; however, LRLA may oppose a candidate whom it believes should not be elected or appointed.

SECTION D. Number of Endorsements Per Position

The Association may endorse as many candidates who meet the criteria for any particular judgeship.

PROCEDURES

III. Procedure for Application:

Candidates seeking an endorsement must comply with the following procedures:

1. Inform either (i) the President or Executive Board of LRLA of his/her intent to request LRLA's endorsement. Upon notification of this request, the President or Executive Board will forward to the candidate a copy of these policies and procedures and a copy of the Endorsement Questionnaire and Application.

2. Forward the following information to the President or Executive Board:

- (a) Title of the position sought;
- (b) Any external deadlines relevant to the candidate's application;
- (c) Name, title, and address of the person or agency to whom endorsement letter should be sent;
- (d) Resume and other materials the candidate considers relevant to his/her qualifications; and
- (e) A completed Endorsement Questionnaire and Application.

IV. Procedure for Assessment:

1. Upon receipt of the above information, the Endorsement Committee will assess and conduct due diligence in establishing the candidate's qualifications based on the criteria set forth in B Section 1.

2. Upon completion of the assessment described above, the Endorsement Committee shall interview the candidate. The candidate shall make a presentation to the Association at a regularly scheduled meeting. The Endorsement Committee will then present its recommendation to the Association concerning the candidate's application, accompanied by any application materials the Endorsement Committee deems appropriate.

3. Following the candidate's presentation and the Endorsement Committee recommendation, LRLA will make an endorsement decision after discussion and vote by a majority of ALL PRESENT PAID MEMBERS (not a simple majority of the votes cast.)

V. Confidentiality:

All information and documents submitted by the applicant will be deemed NOT CONFIDENTIAL as part of the judicial evaluation process. LRLA may at any time during the judicial evaluation process, inquire and contact any individual and/or agency or organization that the applicant provides as reference(s) to the Endorsement Committee.

ARTICLE XII- PARLIAMENT AUTHORITY

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order revised shall be the parliamentary authority in all cases now covered by these Bylaws.

ARTICLE XII- DISSOLUTION

Upon the dissolution or the abandonment of LRLA, the property will not inure to the benefit of any private person except a fund, foundation, association or corporation organized and operated for a similar purpose. The determination whether the organization is organized consistent with this requirement shall be made by the current President and members of the Executive Board whose determination shall be final.