

# Los Angeles Astronomical Society, Inc

## By-Laws

### Article 1

#### Membership

- Section 1 Application for membership in the society will be granted upon payment of the first year's dues, and approval by a majority of the Board of Directors.
- Section 2 There shall be ten (10) classes of membership in the society: Regular, Senior, Youth, Life, Star, Ford, Honorary, Honorary Life, Honorary Star Life, and Student.
- Section 3 Regular: Those members who are at least eighteen (18) years of age and under sixty-five (65) years of age. They shall have all the rights and privileges conferred by these By-Laws, including the right to vote, hold office, and introduce legislation.
- Section 4 Senior: Those members who are sixty-five (65) years of age or older. They shall have the rights and privileges conferred by these By-Laws, including the right to vote, hold office, and introduce legislation, but not including the right to receive complimentary copies of the "Griffith Observer".
- Section 5 Youth: Those members who are under eighteen (18) years of age. They shall have the rights and privileges conferred by these By-Laws, except the right to vote, hold office, or introduce legislation.
- Section 6 Life: Those members who shall have made application and paid the Life membership fee. They shall have and retain for life the rights and privileges conferred by these By-Laws, including the right to vote, hold office, and introduce legislation, without the payment of annual dues, but not including the right to receive complimentary copies of the "Griffith Observer".
- Section 7 Star: Those Regular, Senior, Life, or Honorary Life members who shall have paid the Star Membership fee. They shall have the rights and privileges conferred upon Star members by these By-Laws in addition to the rights and privileges attributable to their Regular, Senior, Life, or Honorary Life memberships. Those members who shall have become Star members prior to May 1, 1970 shall be considered Charter Star Members.
- Section 8 Ford: Those Regular, Senior Life, or Honorary Life members who shall have been confirmed by the Ford Committee as qualified to operate the 18.5-inch telescope in the Clinton B. Ford Observatory and who have paid the Ford membership fee. They shall have the rights and privileges conferred by these By-Laws upon Ford members in addition to the rights and privileges attributable to their Regular, Senior,, Life, or Honorary Life memberships.
- Section 9 Honorary: Those persons of outstanding prominence in the field of astronomy or related fields who shall have been recommended by the Board of Directors and approved by a majority of the Board. They shall have the rights and privileges conferred by these By-Laws, except the rights to vote, hold office, introduce legislation, receive complimentary copies of the "Griffith Observer," or receive LAAS ID badges.
- Section 10 Honorary Life: Those Regular, Senior or Youth members who for outstanding services to the society, shall have been recommended by the Board of Directors and approved by a two-thirds (2/3) of the voting membership present at a regular business meeting. They shall have and retain for life the rights and privileges conferred by these By-Laws without the

payment of annual dues, but not including the right to receive complimentary copies of the "Griffith Observer".

- Section 11 Honorary Star Life: Those Star members who shall have made outstanding contributions expanding the facilities of the society for the advancement of observational astronomy and who shall have been recommended by the Star members, accepted by the Board of Directors, and approved by two thirds (2/3) of the voting membership present at a regular business meeting. They shall have and retain for life the rights and privileges conferred upon Star members by these By-Laws without the payment of annual dues or Star membership fees.
- Section 12 Student: Those persons who are over 17 and enrolled at least part-time in an accredited school such as a junior college, college, or university. The applicant must provide proof of enrollment such as a copy of a student ID card or class schedule. Student members are entitled to one LAAS ID badge and all rights and privileges conferred by these By-Laws except for the complimentary copy of the "Griffith Observer."
- Section 13 There exists a sub-category of Regular, Senior or Star memberships called Family. This sub-category adds a specific cost to the annual membership dues but permits all declared individuals residing within the same residence as the Head of Family (HOF) to be considered full members of the LAAS, with the exception that the family unit may not receive more than ONE copy of the LAAS monthly bulletin nor more than ONE complimentary copy of the "Griffith Observer," and may be charged for any LAAS ID badges requested beyond the first two badges.

## **Article 2**

### **Privileges**

- Section 1 Members in good standing shall have the use of the Society optical shop and library facilities. They shall be allowed to invite guests to the Society functions, and they shall have the right to attend all meetings of members and to speak at all such meetings. Except as otherwise indicated in the descriptions of the several categories of membership in these By-Laws, they shall receive a complimentary subscription to the "Griffith Observer" if and while that publication is then offering the society such subscriptions at substantially reduced rates, a membership card and a LAAS ID badge.
- Section 2 Star members in good standing, in addition to the above, shall be allowed the use of the Society observatory facilities. They shall be allowed to lease an observing pad on the observatory grounds and to have the exclusive use of that pad so long as they have paid the annual fee for its lease. They shall be allowed to invite guests to the observatory facilities.
- Section 3 Ford members in good standing shall be allowed the use of the Society's Clinton B. Ford Observatory in addition to their rights and privileges set forth in Section 1 of this Article 2.

## **Article 3**

### **Dues and Fees**

- Section 1 Annual dues for Regular, Youth, Family and Senior Memberships (65 years old or greater) shall be set by the Board of Directors. A Family Membership will be 133-1/3% of the dues the HOF would pay for a single membership without family. The Current Fees are listed in Appendix 1 and subject to change by the Board of Directors

Section 2 Annual Star Membership fees are a surcharge on top of annual dues and shall be set by the Board of Directors. A pad may be reserved by a Star Member for an additional fee. The Current Fees are listed in Appendix 1 and subject to change by the Board of Directors

Annual Ford Memberships dues will be set by the Board of Directors.

Life Memberships are a one-time payment and will be set by the Board of Directors. The current Fees are listed in Appendix 1 and subject to changes by the Board of Directors.

Section 3 Any member who shall be thirty (30) days delinquent on the payment of their dues and/or fees shall be sent a written notice to that effect. Any member who shall fail to remit their dues and/or fees within thirty (30) days after the date of said notice shall forfeit their membership, unless the Board of Directors extends their membership.

## **Article 4**

### **Duties of Officers**

Section 1 President: The President shall preside at all meetings of the Society and the Board of Directors. He/she shall see that all the laws of the Society are upheld. He/she shall be the official representative of the Society in all matters involving the public and other societies. He/she shall be a member EX OFFICIO of all committees except the Nominating committee, and shall appoint all committee chairpersons except the nominating committee and the Star committee. He/she shall give a State-of-the-Society Report at the annual meeting. He/she shall by approval of the Board of Directors, appoint a recording secretary and a historian.

Section 2 Vice-President: The Vice-President shall keep himself/herself aware of the state of the Society at all times in order that he/she may perform the duties and obligations of the President in his/her absence. He/she shall perform such other duties as the President may, from time to time, deem necessary.

Section 3 Secretary: The secretary shall maintain the minutes of all meetings of this Society and of the Board of Directors. He/she shall be custodian of the Society's records, except such as specifically assigned to others; these records shall be open to inspection by any member in good standing, upon reasonable request. He/she shall maintain a register of membership and notify all applicants for membership of their approval by the Board of Directors, and shall issue to each member a membership card upon payment of dues. He/she shall conduct the correspondence of this Society except when otherwise directed by the President.

Section 4 Treasurer: The Treasurer shall collect dues and fees, and all monies tendered to this Society. He/she shall act as conservator of all the Society's assets. He/she shall submit a budget for the following year to be approved by the Board of Directors (BOD). He/she shall file all government reports. He/she shall maintain a record of all financial transactions and this record shall be open to inspection by any member in good standing upon a reasonable request. He/she shall present a financial report to the general membership within ninety (90) days of the close of the fiscal year. He/she shall perform such other duties as directed by the BOD. All funds shall be disbursed upon approval of the BOD. Any disbursement over \$2000 USD requires the signature of two of the three officers, these being the President, the Secretary, and the Treasurer.

## **Article 5**

### **Board of Directors**

- Section 1 The board members and officers elected by the membership pursuant to Article 6 of these By-Laws shall constitute the Society’s Board of Directors, and each of them shall be a member of that Board.
- Section 2 The Board of Directors shall conduct the business of the society between regular meetings, approve all applications for membership, appoint a Nominating Committee, act as the Disciplinary Review Board, and perform such other duties as specified in the Constitution and By-Laws.
- Section 3 Board members are expected to attend all scheduled board meetings. Absences more than 3 per year shall be grounds for possible dismissal upon review of the Board.
- Section 4 In the absence of any regular Board member, the chairperson of the meeting shall select alternative Board members to fill the vacancies. The alternate members so selected shall perform all the duties of a regular Board member at the meeting.
- Section 5 Regular meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held at 8:00 p.m., local time, on the Wednesday next preceding the second Monday of each month, at the society’s observatory in Garvey Ranch Park, Monterey Park, California.
- Section 6 As required by circumstances, sensitive issues considered by the Board must be kept confidential. In those cases, all communications, verbal, written, or electronic relating to the issue(s) are considered Privileged and Confidential and are not to be shared with non-Board Members unless specifically authorized by the President. When sensitive issues are on the Agenda at Board Meetings, the Board will adjourn the normal meeting and convene in Executive Session. All non-Board members who may be attending the meeting will be asked to leave until the Executive Session is adjourned.
- All written or electronic communications that are designated Privileged and Confidential shall be clearly marked accordingly, either with “Confidential” clearly marked at the top of the document or with a watermark. If the communication is e-mail, the subject shall contain the word “Confidential.”
- Any electronic communication marked “Confidential” shall be sent directly to Board Members and shall not be redistributed, posted on any public or restricted forum, e-mail group or “bulletin board.”

## **Article 6**

### **Election of Officers and Board Members**

- Section 1 Election of Officers and Board Members shall be conducted by ballot at the regular meeting held in December of each year.
- Section 2 A Nominating committee consisting of three (3) Regular or Senior members in good standing, shall be appointed by the Board of Directors at the Board meeting held in September of each year. It shall be the duty of the committee to prepare a list of one (1) or more candidates for each office to be filled and to present this list to the Society at the regular meeting prior to the election.
- Section 3 Written notice of the election and nominations shall be sent to all members at least thirty (30) days prior to the election.
- Section 4 Nominations may be made by any voting members after the Nominating committee’s list has been made known at the general meeting.
- Section 5 Each officer shall be elected by written ballot, the order being the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and the Board of Directors.

- Section 6 Absentee ballots may be cast by mail. In order for these ballots to be counted, they must be received by the Secretary at least one (1) week prior to the election.
- Section 7 The candidate receiving a majority of the votes shall be declared elected. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes on the first ballot, a second vote shall be taken between the two candidates receiving the most votes. The candidate receiving a majority of the votes cast in that second vote shall be declared elected.
- Section 8 Special elections to fill vacancies may be held at any regular or special meeting, provided that written notice of the election shall be given at least thirty (30) days prior to the election. The Board of Directors shall serve as a Nominating committee and shall nominate one (1) or more candidates for the office to be filled. If only 1 candidate is nominated, no special election is needed.
- Section 9 No member shall be on the Board of Directors who has not met all of the following criteria:
1. Membership in Good Standing
  2. Regular, Senior, Family, or Life member for at least 1 year

## **Article 7**

### **Vacancies**

- Section 1 If a vacancy should occur in the office of the President, the Vice-President shall immediately become the President.
- Section 2 If the President shall become incapable of performing the duties and obligations of their office, the Vice-President shall assume those duties and obligations.
- Section 3 If any officer shall become incapable of performing the duties and obligations of their office for an extended period of time, the Board of Directors may declare the office vacant.
- Section 4 Vacancies occurring in the offices other than the President shall be filled by appointment of the President, with the approval of the Board of Directors, unless a special election is called for by The Board.

## **Article 8**

### **Committees**

- Section 1 Membership: It shall be the duty of the Membership committee to process all applications for membership and to present these applications to the Board of Directors for approval.
- Section 2 Program: It shall be the duty of the Program committee to schedule and organize special programs for the society, to screen all presentations by members and to work with the President in planning meetings and programs.
- Section 3 Observing: It shall be the duty of the observing committee to present to the general membership observational highlights for the month, to help organize and coordinate any special observing programs, and to work in conjunction with special interest groups within the society.
- Section 4 Facilities Committee: It shall be the duty of the Facilities Committee to regulate the operation, maintenance, and use of observing facilities.
- Section 5 Ad hoc: The Board of Directors will appoint committees as necessary to deal with specific issues as they arise.

## **Article 9**

# Conduct

- Section 1 All members shall conform to the rules of the Society when participating in Society affairs.
- Section 2 At all LAAS activities and locations, members and guests of members shall neither take nor participate in any action that endangers the safety, welfare, or well-being of any other person and shall treat everyone with common courtesy and respect.
- Section 3 The Los Angeles Astronomical Society, Inc. does not permit or allow sexual abuse or molestation to occur in any property or facilities owned or used by the Society or at any activity sponsored or related to it. In order to make this “zero tolerance” policy clear to all members, volunteers and guests, The Society has adopted mandatory procedures that members, volunteers, family members, board members, individuals, and victims must follow when they learn of or witness sexual abuse or molestation. Sexual abuse takes the form of inappropriate sexual conduct or interaction for the gratification of the actor. Sexual abuse includes sexual assault , exploitation, molestation, or injury. It does not include sexual harassment, which is another form of behavior prohibited by The Society.
- All staff members, officers, or directors who learn of sexual abuse being committed must immediately report it to the President. If the victim is an adult the abuse will be reported by his designee to the local police agency. Appropriate family members of the victim must be notified immediately of suspected child abuse.
- Section 4 No member shall use any equipment, facilities, tools, or supplies of the Society for other than Society purposes. Each member shall be personally responsible for Society property entrusted to his/her care, unless otherwise provided for by the Board of Directors.
- Section 5 Members or guests whose conduct violates the Code of Conduct or whose behavior is detrimental to the Society shall be subject to disciplinary action.
1. If a report of violation of the Code of Conduct or any detrimental conduct by a member or guest has been observed by or reported to any Member of the Board of Directors, the Board Member is expected to issue a warning to the offending person(s) and/or take other appropriate action including calling security (if at Griffith Observatory or similar venue) or the police.
  2. Any observed or reported detrimental conduct must also be reported to the President who will investigate to determine the validity of the report.
  3. As soon as practical but no longer than 45 days of being notified of detrimental conduct the President must submit the results of the investigation to the Board of Directors.
  4. The Board of Directors must vote to:
    - a. Close the matter if a warning has been issued and the warning considered to be sufficient.
    - b. Have the President issue a verbal or written warning that should the conduct persist, the Disciplinary Review Process outlined in Article 10 shall invoked.
    - c. Proceed directly to the Disciplinary Review process in Article 10.
  5. Sanctions include the following:
    - a. Censure
    - b. Suspension of privileges, not to exceed ninety (90) days
    - c. Revocation of membership for the current year.
    - d. Impeachment of officers
    - e. Permanent Revocation of membership

- f. Dismissal from the Board if a Board member
5. Other measures as deemed appropriate by the Board.

## **Article 10**

### **Disciplinary Review**

- Section 1 The Officers and Board of Directors shall hear all cases involving disciplinary action and shall be referred to as the Disciplinary Review Board. If an Officer or member of the Board is accused, he/she shall not be a member of the Disciplinary Review Board.
- Section 2 The Board of Directors shall determine the merits of the case. If the Board of Directors determines that the case has enough merit, they shall call the accused in for a review hearing.
- Section 3 A written notice to appear shall be sent to the accused at least thirty (30) days prior to the review hearing. The notice shall specify the charges against him/her. If the accused fails to appear in answer to this notice, he/she shall be considered guilty of the charges as specified.
- Section 4 Order of the Review Hearing:
1. The charges shall be read and all the evidence on hand shall be offered.
  2. The accused shall be allowed to present his/her defense and introduce witnesses on his/her behalf.
  3. Each side shall be allowed to cross-examine the other's witnesses and to introduce rebutting testimony.
  4. All persons, except the Review Board, shall retire from the hearing room. The entire Review Board shall then deliberate on the merits of the case. A majority vote of the Review Board shall be required to reach a verdict.
  5. If the verdict be not guilty, all specified charges shall be dropped.
  6. If the verdict be guilty, the Review Board shall determine the disciplinary action to be taken. Revocation of membership and impeachment of officers shall require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Review Board. In other cases, a simple majority vote shall be required.
  7. The accused shall be brought back into the hearing room and the verdict shall be read to him/her. A written notice shall be sent to the accused within thirty (30) days after the hearing.
- Section 5 In the event of a default judgment, the accused shall have the right to petition the Board of Directors for a hearing if he/she can show good cause why he/she did not appear in answer to the written notice. If the Board shall find the cause sufficient, a hearing shall be held no more than thirty (30) days after the date of the petition. If the Board shall find the cause not sufficient, the judgment shall stand.
- Section 6 In the event of revocation of membership, re-application for membership may be made no less than one (1) year after the effective date of the revocation.

## **Article 11**

### **Quorum**

Section 1 Ten percent of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum at any regular meeting of this Society. Seven (7) members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the Board of Directors.

## **Article 12**

### **Audit**

Section 1 At the end of the fiscal year the President, with the approval of the Board of Directors, may appoint an Auditing committee. It shall be the duty of this committee to audit the financial records of this Society.

Section 2 The audit report shall be published within thirty (30) days after it has been signed by the Auditing committee.

Section 3 The period from January 1 to December 31 shall constitute a fiscal year.

## **Article 13**

### **Amendments**

Section 1 The By-Laws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Society by a vote of two thirds (2/3) of the voting membership present, or at any meeting of the Board of Directors by two thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Directors, if a written notice of the subject matter and purpose of an amendment by the members shall be given to the voting membership at least thirty (30) days prior to voting.

Approved 8/7/2017



## Appendix 1: Current Dues (as of June 2019)

Regular	\$40
Youth	\$20
Family	\$55
Senior	\$30
Senior Family	\$40
Student	\$25
Star Surcharge	\$60
Star with Pad Surcharge	\$70
Charter Star Surcharge	\$30
Ford Membership	\$150
Life Membership	\$500

## Appendix 2: LAAS Code of Conduct

1. No harassment, emotional, verbal, bullying, or physical abuse (of any kind). Abusive, profane, unsafe, or illegal behavior may be grounds for exclusion from club events. We are guests at Griffith Observatory and at Garvey Ranch Park. These facilities belong to the citizens of Los Angeles and Monterey Park.
2. Use or possession of air guns, fireworks, and other hazardous devices and materials is prohibited at all times.
3. Drones are not allowed at any LAAS sponsored event unless specifically authorized in advance and in writing by a Board Member or officer specifically for documenting the event.
4. Do not throw objects, ride bicycles, play athletic games, or run in any telescope setup area, including at Griffith Observatory, the SKAS Lockwood property, Ford Observatory, and Garvey Ranch. Children must be supervised by a responsible adult/ guardian at all times.
5. Consumption of alcoholic beverages is prohibited at club events. An exception is made during the annual LAAS banquet.
6. Smoking (Tobacco, Cannabis, and Vaping) are prohibited at LAAS events as well as the use of any illegal drugs and narcotics.
7. Do not litter. Pick up after yourself. Take any trash you brought with you, or dispose of the trash in proper receptacles.
8. Playing musical instruments, radio, or music is allowed as long as it does not disturb others. If anyone objects, you must cease using noise producing equipment.
9. Pets must be on leash and with the owner at all times. Owners are responsible for the behavior of their pets. Clean up after your pet. Keep your pet away from other members' equipment, unless the members give permission.
10. When attending events at Griffith Observatory:
  - a. Follow visitor guidelines as posted on:  
<http://www.griffithobservatory.org/visiting/helpfulguidelines.html>
  - b. Griffith Observatory Staff may also ask any visitor at any time to stop any behavior which may damage the building or pose a threat to other guests or employees. Visitors who fail to behave appropriately may be directed to leave the building or grounds.
  - c. Follow all directions of Parking Staff; park only in specifically designated areas and display any parking passes or LAAS membership identification that may be required by Griffith Observatory. Failure to follow these instructions may result in the issuance of a City of Los Angeles Parking citation.
11. When attending events at the SKAS Lockwood property, please follow the guidelines in this Code of Conduct along with those in the Lockwood User Guide, especially regarding specifics for Dark Sky and Family Nights.
12. When attending events at Ford Observatory, please follow the guidelines in this Code of Conduct along with those in the Ford Observatory's training course and User Guide.
13. If attending a LAAS event, please follow health and safety regulations passed down by the government agency that has jurisdiction over the location where the LAAS event is being held.