



# MODEL CHAPTER BYLAWS

APPROVED BY THE NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
October 30, 2004

Legend: This model is to be used when developing or revising Chapter Bylaws. This model includes recommended language, **but is not restricted as long as it does not conflict** with the National Constitution of Blacks In Government or your Regional Council Bylaws.

**(DO NOT INCLUDE THIS PAGE )**

**NOTE:** The information in *bold italics* print is guidance only and is not to be included in the final document.

BY-LAWS  
OF  
*(Insert Name of Chapter)*  
OF  
Blacks In Government (BIG)

**ARTICLE I  
NAME**

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the (*Name of Chapter*) Chapter of Blacks In Government (BIG). It shall be referred to in these bylaws as (*Name of Chapter*) or the Chapter.

Section 2. The seal of the national organization shall be in the form of two concentric circles and shall bear the words "Blacks In Government" inscribed in the space between the inner and outer circle and/or the letters BIG inscribed in the space inside the inner circle.

**ARTICLE II  
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Section 1. To be an advocate of equal opportunity for Blacks in government.

Section 2. To eliminate practices of racism and racial discrimination against Blacks in government.

Section 3. To promote professionalism among Blacks in government.

Section 4. To develop and promote programs which will enhance ethnic pride and educational opportunities for Blacks in government.

Section 5. To establish a mechanism for gathering and disseminating information for Blacks in government.

Section 6. To provide a nonpartisan platform on major issues of local, regional and national significance that affect Blacks in government.

## **ARTICLE III ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

Section 1. The Chapter shall consist of individuals (***INSERT: from or employed or retired by and identify geographical location; or other unique characteristics to determine membership; i.e., employees of the city of ANYTOWN, or county employees of the Department of ABC, state employees of the Department of XYZ, federal employees working in Building X at XYZ Agency.***

**Section 2.** The Chapter shall consist of persons regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, religion, age, sex, political affiliation, marital status or handicapped condition who have met the membership requirements prescribed herein.

### **Section 3. OFFICERS**

- A. The Chapter's officers shall be elected by the regular members in good financial standing at a regular meeting. (***DESCRIBE ALL OFFICERS' DUTIES UNDER SECTION V. SECTION 2***)
- B. The elected officers shall include the President, (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup>) Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. (***IDENTIFY ALL ELECTED OFFICERS OF THE CHAPTER.***)
- C. The Executive Committee shall consist of the elected officers. (***LIST ALL ELECTED OFFICERS ( OPTIONAL: AND/OR STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS AS APPROPRIATE )***)

### **Section 4. REGIONAL COUNCIL**

- A. This Chapter shall belong to the Region (Insert Region Number) Council of Blacks In Government in accordance with the National Constitution.
- B. The representatives to the Regional Council shall consist of three (3) regular financial members elected from the Chapter.

### **Section 5. NATIONAL**

- A. This Chapter shall be a part of the national organization and participate in national assemblies in accordance with the National Constitution.
- B. This Chapter shall submit quarterly and periodic reports to the National Office in accordance with the National Constitution and other reports as requested.

## **ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1. Individual Membership.** Any person who is in accord with the philosophy, principles, policies, and objectives of this organization, and agrees to adhere to the same, may become a member of this organization with the consent of the Executive Committee and by paying the Annual National membership fee, provided he or she is qualified as stated herein.

**Section 2. Membership Categories.** There shall be three categories of individual membership: Regular, Associate, and Life. Other categories of membership may be established by the National Board of

Directors. Individual membership in the organization at the national level is a requirement for chapter membership.

A. Regular Membership.

(1) Any employee or retiree of the (*agency or department's name*) **the federal, state, or local government** who is in accord with the principles, policies, and objectives of the organization and who agrees to adhere to the same, may become a regular member of this organization by paying the applicable Annual Chapter membership fee.

(2) Regular members shall be accorded all privileges of membership.

(3) Any person who, at the time of being separated without prejudice from employment by the federal, state, or local government, was a regular member in good standing is eligible for regular membership in this organization.

(4) Any person who, at the time of being separated with prejudice from employment by the federal, state, or local government and such separation is grieved, and that person is a regular member in good standing, is eligible for continued regular membership in this organization until such grievance is resolved.

B. Associate Membership.

(1) Any person who is not eligible for regular membership and is in accord with the principles, policies, and objectives of the organization and who agrees to adhere to the same, may become an associate member of this organization by paying the applicable Annual Chapter membership fee.

(2) Such members shall be accorded all rights and privileges of membership except those of voting and holding elective offices.

C. Life Memberships.

Any person who is in accord with the principles, policies, and objectives of the organization and who agrees to adhere to the same, may become a life member of this organization at the National level with the consent of the National Board of Directors and by paying the life membership fee. Annual Chapter membership fees must be paid to retain chapter membership.

**ARTICLE V  
DUTIES OF OFFICERS, STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES AND  
APPOINTMENTS**

**Section 1. Executive Committee.** The elected officers and ***immediate past president*** shall constitute the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall implement the programs of the Chapter. The Executive Committee shall also transact routine business between meetings of the Chapter and act in emergency situations. All actions of the Executive Committee shall be ratified by the chapter at the meeting following the action taken.

**Section 2. Officers. (The officers' duties described here must mirror the officers identified in Article III, Section 3. Please note "Optional" means use as appropriate and if it does not apply, do not use).**

President. The President shall serve as Chair of the Executive Committee and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees except the nominating and election committees. In addition, the President shall guide the implementation of programs which have been approved by the membership; shall recommend to the membership changes in programs and procedures; shall present the Chapter's annual report; countersign with the Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer (in the absence of the Treasurer) checks drawn on the chapter's treasury; shall receive reports on activities of the various committees; and shall make appointments as necessary. Shall perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Committee or the Chapter.

Vice President. In the absence of the President or in the event of disability of the President, the Vice President shall perform all the duties and functions of the President. During such a period, the Vice President shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions placed upon the President; and shall perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Committee or the Chapter. ***This position shall become the Executive Vice President when either the 1st, 2nd, and/or 3rd Vice Presidents positions are filled.***

***(OR IDENTIFY INDIVIDUAL VICE PRESIDENTS AS INDICATED BELOW)***

1st, 2nd, 3rd Vice Presidents (***optional and must also be identified in Article III, Section 3***). The 1st, 2nd, 3rd Vice Presidents, in order of rank, shall perform all the duties and functions of the President in the event the President and Vice President are absent or incapacitated. During such a period, the Vice President shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions of that office.

Secretary. The Secretary shall maintain a record of the proceedings of the organization; shall produce such records upon request of any member in good standing; and shall read the minutes of the previous meeting at each Executive Committee and Chapter meeting. Shall perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Committee or the Chapter.

Corresponding Secretary (***optional and must also be identified in Article III, Section 3***). The Corresponding Secretary shall be responsible for the correspondence of the organization; notification of meetings; and perform the duties and functions of the Secretary during absence or incapacitation of the Secretary. Shall perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Committee or the Chapter.

Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be the chief financial officer of the organization; shall countersign with the President or Vice President all checks and requisitions for the disbursement of organization funds; shall provide financial statements as often as required, but at least quarterly, to the Executive Committee and Chapter members. The Treasurer's books shall be subjected to audit annually. Shall perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Committee or the Chapter.

Assistant Treasurer (***optional and must also be identified in Article III, Section 3***). The Assistant Treasurer shall maintain a record of all dues-paying members and submit notification of renewals when due; shall provide for collection of dues, and shall report on the status of paid-up memberships. In case of absence or disability of the Treasurer, the Assistant Treasurer shall perform all the duties of the Treasurer and shall perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Committee or the Chapter.

**Section 3. Standing Committees, Special Committees and Appointments:** The President may appoint all standing committee chairs, special positions, and special committees. The term of office for all appointed

positions and committees shall be concurrent with that of the appointing authorities, unless otherwise specified at the time of appointment. In no case will the term of an appointment extend beyond the term of the appointing authority.

A. Chairpersons of Standing Committees shall have the authority to establish subcommittees and make special appointments within their committee for the purpose of conducting committee business.

B. All standing committee members shall be selected from the general membership. The standing committees shall include but not be limited to: **(Add all the chapter committees)**

Finance  
Program and Planning  
Communication and Public Relations  
Membership  
AE/EEO

(1) **Finance.** The Finance committee shall be responsible for the financial accountability of the Chapter. This committee will be responsible for, but not be limited to, determining the cost of the Chapter's programs and reporting to the general membership the feasibility of implementing these programs.

(2) **Program and Planning Committee.** The Program and Planning Committee shall be responsible for development and implementation of the necessary programs and requirements to fulfill the purpose and objectives of the Chapter. This committee shall be responsible for training and assistance in those areas critical to the well being of Black government employees. All programs pursued by this committee must be approved by the Executive Committee and/or General Membership and certified feasible by the Finance Committee.

(3) **Communication and Public Relations.** The Communication and Public Relations Committee shall be responsible for the development and printing of all published documents of the Chapter; shall be responsible for all contacts with the media (TV, newspapers, etc.). The primary purpose of this committee is to assure public exposure of the chapter as approved by the Executive Committee and/or Membership. All public statements shall be in accordance with National policies.

(4) **Membership Committee.** The Membership Committee shall be responsible for developing and implementing programs for membership drives, receiving and screening applications, and any other functions deemed necessary by the Chapter or Executive Committee.

(5) **Affirmative Employment/Equal Employment Opportunity Committee.** The Affirmative Employment /EEO committee shall monitor and develop programs to address areas of concern of African American government employees including rates of hiring and firing; promotions; training; details; distribution of authority and responsibility; adverse actions; awards; merit pay; disciplinary actions; will also monitor all issues/matters referring to affirmative action and work assist in developing BIG's position on any legislation or regulation impacting on advancement and employment opportunities of African Americans in government.

C. Special Committees: Special committees may be established to perform specific functions as required. All special committee members shall be elected from the general membership. The special committees shall include but not be limited to:

Audit  
Nomination  
Election

(1) **Audit Committee.** This committee will perform audits required by law, or any other reason.

An audit must be conducted and results reported at the first Chapter meeting of each calendar year. This committee will have access to all financial records necessary to complete the audit. In the function of the Audit Committee, the size of the committee will be determined by the Chapter membership. No officers can be members of this committee when performing the audit functions.

(2) Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall be composed of **(insert number)** members from the general membership and elected by the general membership for the purpose of conducting annual Chapter elections. Prepare a slate of eligible candidates for presentation to the Chapter at the **(identify when)** meeting.

(3) Election Committee. The Election Committee shall be composed of **(insert number)** members from the general membership and elected by the general membership for the purpose of conducting annual Chapter elections; prepare an official ballot of eligible candidates for each office; conduct the actual election of officers in conjunction with the slate officers presented by the Nominating Committee. Present the election results to the membership and provide certification in writing of the results to the Chapter Secretary.

#### D. Appointments

(1) Parliamentarian (***optional***). The Parliamentarian shall be appointed by the President and shall give parliamentary opinions upon request.

(2) Historian (***optional***). The Historian shall be appointed by the President and shall keep a history of Chapter activities, events, and functions.

(3) Chaplain (***optional***). The Chaplain shall be appointed by the President and shall give invocation and/or benediction at chapter meetings, events and functions as requested by the President.

## ARTICLE VI MEETINGS AND QUORUMS

Section 1. In order to conduct Chapter business, the following will be necessary:

A. Regular meetings shall be held at a time and place determined by the Executive Committee or membership. (**Option: the time and place can be filled in.**)

B. Special meetings may be called by the President, a majority of the Executive Committee, or any **(insert number)** regular members by request to the President, by request to a majority of the Executive Committee or notification of all financial members, at least five (5) days prior to meeting date.

Section 2. A quorum of the regular assembly shall consist of **(identify number of members required and should include at least one officer)** regular members. A quorum must be present before any issue is voted upon.

Section 3. The Executive Committee meetings shall be held at least quarterly. The time and place of the meetings shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

Section 4. A quorum of the Executive Committee shall be a simple majority of its members.

## ARTICLE VII NOMINATION, ELECTIONS, TERMS OF OFFICES, AND VACANCIES

Section 1. Nominating and Election Committees. The Nominating Committee, consisting of \_\_\_\_ members, and the Election Committee, consisting of \_\_\_\_ members, shall be elected by the general membership at least 60 days prior to the election.

Section 2. Nominations. Nominations for Chapter officers may be submitted to the Nomination Committee at least three (3) weeks prior to the election or may be made from the floor at the general membership meeting held for the election of officers.

A. The nomination committee shall distribute a list of all known candidates for office(s) at least two (2) weeks prior to the election and will accept nominations from the floor.

B. The nomination committee shall present the slate of nominees for all positions to the general membership prior to the election.

Section 3. Elections. The election of officers shall be at the \_\_\_\_\_ meeting (***usually September through November***) of each year.

A. Any regular members in financial status with the Chapter and National shall be eligible to vote and hold any office.

B. Election of officers shall be by secret ballot.

C. Any candidate receiving a majority of votes, shall be declared the winner of said office.

D. The election committee will ensure that only regular members in good financial standing are provided a ballot, will collect and tally all votes, and report the election results to the general membership,

Section 4. Term of Office. All officers shall take office on January 1 of the year following their election. The term of office for all elected officers shall be two (2) years or until their successors are elected. ***In the case of a new chapter, the initial terms of officers shall be staggered for continuity.*** The office of President and Secretary shall be elected for terms beginning in the even year and the office of Vice President and Treasurer shall be elected for terms beginning in the odd year. ***(Note: If additional/optional chapter positions are to be filled in your particular chapter, these positions must be included also.)*** Officers elected initially off cycle shall serve for one year and are eligible to serve two (2) two-year terms or four (4) consecutive years. Officers shall serve no more than two (2) two-year terms or four (4) consecutive years in the same office. However they shall be eligible for election to all other offices. Each elected officer shall maintain files and records and shall deliver them to his/her successor upon vacating his/her office. ***(Note you have the option of electing one year terms for all officers, in which case the procedures for staggering the elections (2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> sentence) would not be included.)***

Section 5. Vacancies. Any office may be declared vacant, for cause, upon recommendation of the Executive Committee and/or a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the general membership at any legally held meeting. Vacancies shall be filled by a Special Election at a general membership meeting following the announcement of the vacancy and notification of the membership. Nominations may be made from the

floor and the election process will be conducted in accordance with Section 3, paragraph A, B, and C above.

Section 6. Each elected officer shall maintain files and records and shall deliver them to his/her successor upon vacating his/her office.

## **ARTICLE VIII DUES AND ASSESSMENTS**

Section 1. The fiscal year shall be from 1 January to 31 December inclusive.

Section 2. The Chapter dues shall be as set by the membership.

Section 3. The Regional dues shall be as set by the Regional Council.

Section 4. Finances of this Chapter are to be used solely for expenses involved in pursuing the goals and objectives of the organization.

Section 5. The Chapter accounts shall have the name of the President, Vice President (***if you have a 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President, identify which one will sign with the president***), and Treasurer registered, with the requirements that at least two (2) signatures shall be necessary for all disbursement activities.

Section 6. All financial liabilities incurred by this Chapter shall remain the responsibility of this Chapter. To insure this end, the Finance Committee shall have the responsibility of determining when additional assessments are necessary to cover the cost of Chapter business that exceeds the treasury.

Section 7. All financial reports shall be in writing and submitted to the Chapter membership for acceptance.

Section 8. The Chapter shall keep current, accurate, complete books and records of accounts, and minutes of the proceedings of its members. An annual audit will be performed to ascertain the accuracy and integrity of the books and records.

## **ARTICLE IX EXPULSIONS, TERMINATIONS, OR REMOVALS**

Shall be in accordance with Article X of the National Constitution.

## **ARTICLE X RULES OF PROCEDURE**

Rules of procedure as stated in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern the Chapter except as otherwise provided herein.

## **ARTICLE XI INCORPORATION**

Section 1. The National Organization of Blacks In Government (BIG) is incorporated as a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation under the appropriate laws of the District of Columbia.

Section 2. This Chapter is covered under the umbrella of the national organization. ***(NOTE: If you wish to also incorporate in your state, you must be recognized as a foreign corporation, and include language, such as:*** and is incorporated in the State of XYZ as a foreign corporation.)

## **ARTICLE XII LIMITATION OF LIABILITY**

Section 1. Fiscal Responsibility. No member of this Chapter shall have authority or power to impose or incur financial liability on the part of the Chapter without the express authority of the membership.

Section 2. Distribution of Assets and Properties. There shall be no general distribution of monetary property assets to members or officers of the Chapter, and all gains realized shall be devoted solely to the implementation of the objectives of the Chapter. No member or officer shall be personally liable to the creditors of the Chapter for an indebtedness of liability incurred pursuant to Article VIII, Section 6 of the bylaws and any and all creditors shall look only to the assets of the Chapter for payment.

Section 3. When, and if, this Chapter is voluntarily dissolved, funds remaining after the settlement of all liabilities shall become the property of the Regional Council. If no Regional Council exists, the funds become the property of the National organization. If there is no national organization, all funds and property shall be distributed to such tax-exempt nonprofit organizations as may be selected by the members. The assets of the Chapter shall in no event be distributed to any of its members or officers.

## **ARTICLE XIII AMENDMENTS**

These by-laws may be amended or altered by two-thirds (2/3)-majority vote of the regular members present at any regular or special meeting of the chapter.

The proposed amendments must be presented to the membership or to all members in writing 30 days in advance of any vote. Any amendment action upon shall become effective immediately provided the quorum requirements of Article VI are adhered to and after the approval of the National Board of Directors.

**ARTICLE XIV  
RATIFICATION**

These bylaws become effective upon ratification by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the regular members at a regular meeting provided the quorum requirements of Article VI are adhered to and are approved by the National Board of Directors.

RATIFIED AT \_\_\_\_\_ ON \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(TYPED NAME)*

PRESIDENT

Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(TYPED NAME)*

SECRETARY

Date

Reviewed (*At least One Regional Director*)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Regional Director/Date

**Approved (Final):**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, National Board of Directors, BIG

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date