

**CONSTITUTION OF
AFT VERMONT**

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ARTICLE I NAME

This organization shall be known as American Federation of Teachers – Vermont, hereinafter noted as AFT Vermont.

ARTICLE II OBJECTIVES

The objectives of AFT Vermont are:

- 1) To obtain collective bargaining and representation rights for workers in Vermont.
- 2) To bring together all locals and their members to assist and support one another locally and nationally.
- 3) To maintain and improve employment standards for the members of our locals and thereby strengthen the institutions in which they work.
- 4) To support and strengthen our locals and improve the lives of their members and families
- 5) To give voice to workers’ legitimate professional, economic, and social aspirations in the institutions in which they work and in the legislature.
- 6) To promote democracy, human rights, and freedom in our union, our state, our nation, and throughout the world.

ARTICLE III CHARTERS

- 1) AFT Vermont shall maintain its charter in accordance with the AFT Constitution.

- 2) The local units of AFT Vermont shall each be granted a charter by the AFT.

ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP

- 1) **Membership Categories**
 - a) AFT Vermont will consist of locals chartered by the AFT or affiliated in conformity with the provisions of the AFT Constitution.
 - b) Active member-- Any person who is eligible for membership in an AFT Vermont local is eligible to be a member of AFT Vermont.
 - c) At Large member – Any employee residing outside the jurisdiction of an established local, who is otherwise eligible for membership under the AFT Vermont charter and AFT Constitution may be accepted as a member of the nearest local or as an at large member of AFT Vermont without voting rights, but with the right to participate in benefit programs such as insurance, travel, and discount buying services.
 - d) Retired. An active member who retires from his or his present position shall be admitted as an AFT and AFT Vermont retiree member with the right to participate in the benefit programs otherwise available to the general membership.
 - e) Associate member. The AFT Vermont Board of Directors may create categories of Associate members as appropriate. These Associate members may form chartered locals to the extent not prohibited by the AFT Constitution. Such local unions will have the rights and privileges of other AFT Vermont local unions. Per Capita payments for Associate members shall be set by the AFT Vermont Board of Directors.
- 2) **Dues**
 - a) Dues are set at the state convention as outlined in the By-Laws.
 - b) Membership shall be obtained only through a per capita payment by a local of the required dues amount for the category of membership.
- 3) **Non-discrimination Policy**

AFT Vermont will not discriminate with regard to race, creed, sex, sexual orientation, disability, social or economic status, or national origin as a condition of membership.

ARTICLE VI OFFICERS

- 1) **Composition**
 - a) The elected officers of AFT Vermont shall consist of the following: President, Two Vice-Presidents (one from an Education local and one from a Healthcare local), Secretary and Treasurer. These officers shall constitute the Executive Council and shall also be members of the Board of Directors.
 - b) The Board of Directors shall consist of the AFT Vermont Executive Council plus the President or designated ranking officer of each local affiliated with AFT Vermont.

- c) In the event that an elected officer of the AFT Vermont is also the ranking member of an affiliated local, he/she may serve in both capacities simultaneously, or the local may designate another elected officer to the Board of Directors. Each member of the Board of Directors is entitled to a single vote, even if filling dual roles.
- d) A candidate for an elective office must be a member of an affiliated local of the AFT Vermont. An incumbent officer will retain eligibility to run for office should the officer resign his or her employment from the original bargaining unit position.

2) Removal of Officers

- a) An officer may be subject to disciplinary action, to include a suspension or removal from office if found to be negligent in the performance of duties of the office or acting contrary to the objectives of the AFT Vermont or AFT, their contractual obligations, and/or the Constitution or By-Laws, or if found guilty of breaking any state or federal laws.
- b) Any AFT Vermont officer or member of the Board of Directors may prefer charges against another officer or member by notifying the Board of Directors in writing of the charges and of the provisions of the Constitution and By-Laws allegedly violated by the accused.
- c) Any officer against whom charges are made shall have the right to due process, including speedy written service of charges, and representation by counsel or any person of his/her own choosing.
- d) A timely investigation and hearing shall be conducted and decision rendered by the Board of Directors. Such decision may be appealed to the membership and a special membership meeting will be called according to the By-Laws.
- e) During such investigation and hearing, the officer shall be placed on administrative leave.

ARTICLE VII DUTIES OF OFFICERS

1) The President shall:

- a) Be the principal officer of AFT Vermont. It shall be his/her duty to administer all of the affairs of the AFT Vermont and to execute policies of the organization, as determined by the State Convention and the Board of Directors.
- b) Act as chief spokesperson for AFT Vermont.
- c) Represent the AFT Vermont at appropriate regional and national meetings and serve, when appropriate, as a delegate to the AFT National Convention.
- d) Be the presiding officer at the State Convention and meetings of the Executive Council.
- e) Call special meetings of the Executive Council as needed, or as directed by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.
- f) Supervise staff of AFT Vermont. Keep the Executive Council informed in a timely fashion of all the facts surrounding any disciplinary action involving staff. Make recommendations to the Board of Directors for the hiring or termination of AFT Vermont staff.
- g) Perform the evaluations of the AFT Vermont staff and submit for the approval of the Executive Council.
- h) Oversee legislative activities conducted on behalf of the AFT Vermont, including any officer, member, staff, and/or contracted lobbying arrangements, with the approval of the Board of Directors.
- i) Fulfill such other duties as his/her office requires and as are consistent with this Constitution.

- 2) **The Vice Presidents shall:**
 - a) Co-carry out the duties and responsibilities of the President during his/her absence.
 - b) Work with the President and staff to facilitate communication and activities between the national, regional and state AFT offices and the member locals.
 - c) Participate in lobbying activities at the state level on behalf of members.
 - d) Co-chair the Committee on Political Education (COPE) and prepare requests for solidarity fund grants and other political activity. If a Vice President would like to assign a designee to perform this function, the Board will adjust compensation accordingly.
 - e) Meet on a regular basis with the President, Board of Directors and staff to discuss and implement the policies and programs of the organization.
 - f) Serve when appropriate, along with the President, as spokespersons for the organization.

- 3) **The Secretary shall:**
 - a) Prepare and distribute the official minutes of the Executive Council and Board of Directors.
 - b) Keep records and make reports as required by the Board.
 - c) Maintain and distribute an accurate list of standing and special committees and committee members and the duration of their appointment;
 - d) Call for agenda items and issue notice of all executive council and board of directors meetings;
 - e) Prepare such documents and forms as needed for the elections committee.

- 4) **The Treasurer shall:**
 - a) Supervise the maintenance and distribution of all funds of AFT Vermont and keep accurate and current records of such funds.
 - b) Act as chair of the Budget Committee and recommend an annual budget to the Board of Directors.
 - c) Submit appropriate records for audit as required.
 - d) Make reports as required by the Executive Council and Board of Directors.
 - e) Engage the services of AFT Vermont staff, professional accountants, payroll services and/or tax consultants as deemed necessary to carry out his/her duties, with the approval of the Board of Directors.
 - f) Be bonded.

ARTICLE VIII EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

The Executive Council shall:

- a) Meet quarterly or at the call of the President or at the call of two (2) or more of its members.
- b) Assist the President as necessary to carry out the business of this organization.
- c) Oversee AFT Vermont staff personnel relations.
- d) In emergency conditions, act in place of the state convention and/or the Board of Directors.

- e) A quorum shall be defined as a majority of the Executive Council. In the absence of a quorum, business may be conducted that does not require a vote.

ARTICLE IX BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors shall:

- a) Meet at least quarterly or at the call of three (3) or more of its members.
- b) Elect a chairperson who will preside over meetings and establish meeting agendas.
- c) Serve as the governing body of the AFT Vermont, including general supervision of the affairs and property of the federation.
- d) Carry out policies and decisions of the state convention.
- e) Have authority to make rulings and adopt policies not covered by the Constitution and By-Laws but which are not inconsistent with the provisions of the Constitution or By-Laws.
- f) Have the power to authorize the expenditure, investment, management and use of the funds and property of the state federation
- g) Determine the expenses, allowances and fringe benefits which shall be provided to state federation members and staff
- h) Have the authority to assign additional duties and areas of responsibility for the officers of the AFT Vermont.
- i) Appoint a committee to investigate a local or the state convention where an election appears to have been conducted in violation of the local or state federation Constitution, the AFT Constitution, or applicable federal or state law.
- j) Appoint a committee to investigate a local whose conduct is not in harmony with the principles of AFT Vermont and/or the AFT and tends to bring the AFT Vermont and/or AFT in disrepute, or fails to maintain affiliation as mandated in the AFT Constitution.
- k) Form necessary committees, including nominating and credentials committees of the state convention, and establish their membership
- l) Appoint such other committees as it deems necessary.
- m) A quorum shall be defined as a majority of the Board of Directors. In the absence of a quorum, business may be conducted that does not require a vote.

ARTICLE X COMMITTEES

1) Standing committees shall be established and appointed by the Board of Directors and will include:

- a) Committee on Political Education (COPE)
- b) Defense Fund committee

2) Special committees may be established and appointed by the Board of Directors for special tasks as warranted. Special committees shall be limited to the activities necessary to accomplish the task for which they are created and upon completion of such task shall be discontinued.

ARTICLE XI NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION PROCEDURES

Officers of AFT Vermont shall be elected for two-year terms at the biennial state convention. Election procedures shall be in accordance with the Landrum-Griffin Act and outlined in the AFT Vermont By-Laws.

ARTICLE XII PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES

Meetings of all duly constituted bodies of this organization shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, revised.

ARTICLE XIII FISCAL YEAR, RECORDS, AND REPORTS

- 1) The fiscal year of this organization shall begin July 1st and end June 30th.
- 2) The Executive Council shall maintain all records and reports required by law.

ARTICLE XIV AMENDMENTS

- 1) An amendment to the Constitution may be proposed in the following manner:
 - a) Action of the Executive Council or Board of Directors.
 - b) By petition of two percent (2%) of the AFT Vermont total membership drawn from at least two (2) locals.
- 2) In order to be considered for adoption a proposed amendment shall be submitted in writing to the Board of Directors no less than thirty (30) days prior to the Board of Directors meeting at which the Board of Directors shall decide whether to submit the proposed change for a vote to the membership in each local or to present the proposed change at the state convention.
- 3) Two-thirds of those members voting shall be required for passage of the amendment.

ARTICLE XV AFFILIATIONS

This organization shall affiliate with the American Federation of Teachers and the AFL-CIO.

ARTICLE XVI AVAILABILITY OF THE CONSTITUTION

- 1) Three (3) copies of this Constitution and all subsequent amendments shall be submitted to the office of the Secretary-Treasurer of the American Federation of Teachers.
- 2) One (1) copy shall be sent to the similar office of each organization with which this organization is affiliated.
- 3) The Secretary shall make available, upon request, a copy to any member of the organization and shall post a copy on the AFT Vermont website.

Definitions

Officer. Any official elected at the AFT Vermont state convention or appointed to fill a vacancy in accordance with the Constitution.

Staff. Personnel hired by AFT Vermont.