

## **CHAPTER 6: CHANGES TO BRANCHES AND REGIONAL ASSEMBLIES**

### **50. INSTITUTION OF BRANCHES**

- A. A Branch may be created by resolution of the Board of Directors on its own or following a recommendation from the International Fraternal President or the Regional Council.
- B. A Branch will not be created with fewer than 500 voting and non-voting members combined, unless a recommendation to do so has been made to the Board of Directors by the International Fraternal President.
- C. When a Branch is formed, the Regional Council will recruit potential candidates for office from among Foresters members in the area, conduct nominations and elections or make appointments for officer positions, and instruct the officers in their duties.

### **51. BRANCH AND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY CHARTERS**

- A. When a new Branch or Regional Assembly is created, a charter will be issued to define the area or region of the new body and to officially recognize it within Foresters. A charter may be issued only by the International Assembly or the Board of Directors, acting when the International Assembly is not in session.
- B. Each Branch and Regional Assembly will select a name, to be approved by the Board of Directors on the recommendation of the International Fraternal President.
- C. The Board of Directors may assign a number to each Branch.

### **52. SATELLITES**

An existing Branch may authorize the establishment of a Satellite, operating under the Branch auspices and governance structure.

### **53. INSTITUTION OF REGIONAL ASSEMBLIES**

- A. A Regional Assembly may be created by resolution of the Board of Directors acting on its own or following a recommendation by the International Fraternal President.
- B. When a Regional Assembly is first formed, the International Fraternal President will designate one or more members of the International Assembly to recruit potential candidates for office from among Foresters members in the region, conduct nominations and elections for Regional Council offices, and instruct the officers in their duties.

### **54. CHANGES TO BRANCHES**

- A. Branches may be altered, closed or consolidated by the Board of Directors acting on its own or following the recommendation of the Branches themselves, the Regional Council, or the International Fraternal President. The process of altering, closing or consolidating one or more Branches must include special notice to all members of the affected Branches.
- B. For changes to Branches, a joint committee will be formed, made up of three members elected by each affected Branch, a member appointed by the Regional Council, and a regional fraternal staff member. The committee will choose a chairman or chairwoman from these members and establish the terms of the change.
- C. The terms of any changes recommended by the joint committee are subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.
- D. If two or more Branches are to be consolidated, the Board of Directors must approve the new name and issue a number to the consolidated Branch. The officers of the Branches that are giving up their names and numbers will deliver the charters and seals of their Branches to Foresters House, and deliver the books and property of the Branches to the consolidated Branch.
- E. The Branches that have been consolidated will transfer any funds they hold to the new Branch. The new Branch will be responsible for any debts incurred by the Branches from which it was formed.

## **55. CHANGES TO REGIONAL ASSEMBLIES**

- A. The boundaries of one or more Regional Assemblies may be changed by the Board of Directors acting on its own or following the recommendation of the Regional Councils themselves or the International Fraternal President. These changes include modifications to existing Regional Assembly boundaries, disputes over boundaries between two or more Regional Assemblies, and the consolidation of one or more Regional Assemblies. The process of modifying boundaries or consolidating Regional Assemblies must include special notice to the Branches of the affected Regional Assemblies.
- B. For changes to Regional Assembly boundaries, a joint committee will be formed, made up of two members elected by each affected Regional Council, fraternal staff members associated with each affected Regional Council, and the International Fraternal President or his or her representative. The committee will choose a chairman or chairwoman from these members and establish the terms of the change.
- C. The terms of boundary changes or consolidation established by the joint committee are subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.
- D. If two or more Regional Assemblies are to be consolidated, the Board of Directors must approve the new name of the consolidated Regional Assembly. The Regional Council officers of the Regional Assemblies that are giving up their names will deliver the charters and seals of their Regional Assemblies to Foresters House, and deliver the books and property of the Regional Assemblies to the consolidated Regional Assembly.
- E. The Regional Assemblies that have been consolidated will transfer any funds they hold to the Regional Council acting on behalf of the new Regional Assembly. The new Regional Assembly will be responsible for any debts incurred by the Regional Assemblies from which it was formed.

## **56. SUSPENSION, REVOCATION, AND REINSTATEMENT OF BRANCH CHARTERS**

- A. The International Assembly or the Board of Directors, acting when the International Assembly is not in session, may suspend or revoke the charter of any Branch if, in the best judgment of the International Assembly or the Board of Directors, the Branch is engaging in activity that is not consistent with the provisions of this Constitution.

- B. When a Branch's charter is suspended, its members will remain in good standing as long as they continue to pay their required fees and dues.
- C. If the cause of suspension is removed or settled to the satisfaction of the International Assembly or the Board of Directors within 90 days of the date of suspension, the Branch's charter will be reinstated.
- D. Five or more members of a suspended Branch may petition for the reinstatement of their Branch. If the Board of Directors decides to reinstate the Branch, the Branch will receive its original charter or, in the event that the charter was lost, a new charter, together with any effects or funds of the Branch that remain under the control of the Foresters.
- E. If the cause of suspension is not removed or settled, the Branch's charter may be revoked.
- F. No Branch charter will be suspended or revoked without the Branch being given written reasons for the suspension or revocation of the charter and a reasonable opportunity to defend itself and to participate in mediation, using procedures determined by the Board of Directors.
- G. After the Branch has had an opportunity to present its case to the Board of Directors, a decision will be made by the Board of Directors. This decision may be appealed to the International Assembly. The decision of the International Assembly will be final.

**57. SUSPENSION, REVOCATION, AND REINSTATEMENT OF REGIONAL ASSEMBLY CHARTERS**

- A. The International Assembly or the Board of Directors, acting when the International Assembly is not in session, may suspend or revoke the charter of a Regional Assembly if, in the best judgment of the International Assembly or the Board of Directors, the Regional Assembly or Regional Council is engaging in activity that is not consistent with the provisions of this Constitution.
- B. If the cause of suspension is removed or settled to the satisfaction of the International Assembly or the Board of Directors within 90 days of the date of suspension, the Regional Assembly's charter will be reinstated.
- C. When a Regional Assembly's charter has been suspended, five or more members of the suspended Regional Council or Regional Assembly may petition for the reinstatement of their Regional Assembly. If the Board of Directors decides to

reinstate the Regional Assembly, the Regional Assembly will receive its original charter or, in the event that the charter was lost, a new charter, together with any effects or funds of the Regional Assembly that remain under the control of Foresters.

- D. No Regional Assembly charter will be suspended or revoked without the Regional Council or Regional Assembly being given written reasons for the suspension or revocation of the charter and a reasonable opportunity to defend itself and to participate in mediation, using procedures determined by the Board of Directors.
- E. After the Regional Council or Regional Assembly has had an opportunity to present its case to the Board of Directors, the Board of Directors will make a decision. This decision may be appealed to the International Assembly. The decision of the International Assembly will be final.

## **58. DISSOLUTION OF BRANCHES**

- A. A Branch may be dissolved if a majority of its voting members present and participating in a vote at a special meeting called for this purpose vote to do so. A vote to dissolve a Branch must be preceded by a special notice to all members of the affected Branch.
- B. When a Branch is dissolved, the International Fraternal President receives title to all the Branch funds and property, to be held in trust for Foresters. The International Fraternal President may appoint a representative to take possession of these funds and property. If any officer of the Branch fails or refuses to surrender the funds and property, the International Fraternal President or his or her representative as authorized may take whatever action is necessary to take possession of them.
- C. When a Branch's charter is revoked, the members of that Branch will be transferred to another Branch or to a Branch-at-Large, at the discretion of the International Assembly or the Board of Directors, when the International Assembly is not in session.

## **59. DISSOLUTION OF REGIONAL ASSEMBLIES**

- A. A Regional Assembly may be dissolved if a majority of the delegates to a Regional Assembly vote to do so, according to the voting procedures described in section 47G. A vote to dissolve must be preceded by a special notice to all Branches in the affected Regional Assembly.

- B. When a Regional Assembly is dissolved, the International Fraternal President receives title to all the Regional Assembly's funds and property, to be held in trust for Foresters. The International Fraternal President may appoint a representative to take possession of these funds and property. If any officer of the Regional Council fails or refuses to surrender the funds and property, the International Fraternal President, or his or her representative as authorized, may take whatever action is necessary to take possession of them.
- C. Following a recommendation by the International Fraternal President to the Board of Directors, the Branches formerly under the jurisdiction of a dissolved Regional Assembly may be transferred to other Regional Assemblies.