



# Academy of Model Aeronautics

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Compulsory Bylaws for Clubs!

Recommended Guidelines ---

One of the requirements for becoming an AMA chartered club is to submit a set of bylaws along with your chartering application. This requirement became effective in 2002.

## **What's it all about? AMA requiring clubs to have Bylaws!**

Experience is a great teacher and in 2000/2001 the Academy has been involved in representing several clubs concerning some unique legal issues. Problems arise when club bylaws are poorly written or don't exist at all, leaving the club and AMA in a quandary. Sometimes, the problems stem from issues between club members and at other times between the club and outside groups. So, the AMA Executive Council (EC) believes it is important for clubs to have bylaws, which resulted in the development of a guideline.

The only reason to not issue a club charter will be if a club fails to submit their bylaws. No charter will be withheld based on the quality of these bylaws.

AMA, working with the Indiana Business College, will develop an intern project wherein the AMA recommended Bylaws will be evaluated. Club bylaws will then be reviewed.

Overall we expect to get a profile of how well clubs meet the guidelines. Clubs that receive a low rating will be contacted. We will outline the areas of concern and encourage the club to reevaluate and make changes.

This is all with the goal of putting the club in a better position to handle its own business and give AMA an easier way to represent clubs when and if the need should arise.

AMA is not attempting to tell clubs how to run their day-to-day operations. However, we are sharing our experiences and lessons learned in order that our clubs may operate more efficiently and effectively.

## **Bylaws - What are they?**

Merriam Webster's collegiate dictionary defines bylaw as "a rule adopted by an organization chiefly for the government of its members and the regulation of its officers."

Organizational bylaws usually deal with such items as name, purpose, membership, dues, officers and their duties, executive committee, safety matters, meeting place and time, order of business, and how to amend the bylaws. If the local AMA club has an issue unique to the local area this issue should be addressed within the bylaws. All bylaws should provide a way for them to be amended. Note that the Bylaws of the Academy of Model Aeronautics, Inc. can be found in the AMA Membership Manual and on the AMA website. Included are rules for amending the bylaws (Article XV).

The bylaws cannot include every item of concern. Some of these items can be dealt with on an as-needed basis in the regular meetings. If the club membership believes an item should be included in the bylaws then this should be accomplished according to the rules as stated in the bylaws.

## **Can our club use its existing Bylaws?**

Your existing Bylaws can still be used. However, clubs should review them and, if necessary, modify them to address the guidelines listed below. We do strongly suggest adding verbatim, Articles 3: Resignation, Termination, Disciplinary Action, Expulsion and Reinstatement of Membership; Article 9: Dissolution and Article 11: Grievance Procedure (Flight and Ground Safety Rules) along with the Grievance Form.

## **Recommended Guidelines for AMA Clubs!**

**(Examples are in italics)**

### **ARTICLE I: NAME**

- A. NAME  
*USA Model airplane club*
- B. LOCATION  
*Anywhere, USA*

### **ARTICLE II: PURPOSE**

*To further the sport of model aviation*

### **ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP**

- A. QUALIFICATIONS  
*AMA membership required*
- B. DUES  
*Dues are \$00.00 per year for open members, \$00.00 for youth and senior citizens.*
- C. RESIGNATION  
*Any member in good standing may resign his/her membership by giving written notice to the Club.*

D. TERMINATION

*If any member ceases to have the qualification necessary for membership in the AMA, his/her membership in the Club shall thereby terminate, subject to reinstatement upon restoration of eligibility.*

E. EXPULSION

*This section provides for enforcement of the Safety Rules that are related to flying activities or any other unacceptable behavior by an individual member or members. Any individual may be expelled from membership from the Club by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the membership if in the officers' determination, such individual willfully commits any act or omission which is a violation of any of the terms of these Bylaws, or the Rules of the AMA, or which is detrimental the Club, the AMA, or to model aviation.*

F. REINSTATEMENT

*A two-thirds vote of the membership is required for reinstatement to the club.*

**ARTICLE IV: OFFICERS**

A. OFFICERS

*President, Vice- President, Secretary, Treasurer*

B. TERM OF OFFICE

*Officers are elected annually*

C. DUTIES

*President shall preside at meetings, VP shall preside in the absence of the president, Secretary records minutes, and Treasurer handles club funds.*

D. APPOINTED OFFICERS

*Safety officer, Field Marshall, Committee Chairman, Program chairman.*

E. VACANCIES

*Officer vacancies are to be filled by vote of the remaining officers*

**ARTICLE V: MEETINGS**

A. REGULAR MEETINGS

B. SPECIAL MEETINGS

**ARTICLE VI: RECORD KEEPING**

*All records are passed on when new officers are elected.*

**ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES**

*Standing Committees, Special committees, committee membership.*

**ARTICLE VIII: NOMINATIONS, ELECTIONS, AND RECALL**

A. NOMINATIONS

*Nominations for officer position can be from the floor or by mail.*

B. ELECTION

*Elections are held at a regularly scheduled meeting*

**ARTICLE IX: MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**

A. ROBERT'S RULES

B. FISCAL YEAR

C. NEWSLETTER

D. CLUB LOGO

E. STANDING RULES

F. DISSOLUTION OF CLUB

*The duration of the club shall be perpetual. The club may be dissolved with the approval of two-thirds vote of the membership.*

**ARTICLE X: AMENDMENT OF THESE BYLAWS**

A. PROPOSED

B. APPROVAL

C. VOTING

**ARTICLE XI: GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

**(FLIGHT AND SAFETY RULES)**

*The grievance procedure provides a mechanism to enforce existing safety rules by providing a progressive disciplinary system when needed. Although most complaints can be resolved informally, if a complaint is serious or cannot be resolved informally, the matter should be referred to the Safety Committee for its consideration by means of a Grievance Form to be filled out and turned into the Safety Committee Chairman. At least one witness is required to sign the Grievance Form*

*The Safety officer/Committee shall use its judgment in carrying out action on the following:*

a. *A grievance form will be filled out and turned into the Safety Officer/Committee Chairman. At least one witness is required.*

b. **FIRST VIOLATION**

*Viewpoints of both complainants and accused will be considered. Complainant's name will be disclosed. A verbal reprimand will be given to the accused by the Safety Officer/Committee, and this will be recorded in the Club records.*

c. **SECOND VIOLATION**

*Complainant's name will be disclosed. The accused has the right to a written rebuttal, to be reviewed by the Club Safety Officer/Committee. If the Committee so decides, the flying privileges of the accused will be suspended for thirty (30) days. Written notice of this shall be issued and a copy published in the Club newsletter.*

d. **THIRD VIOLATION**

*Safety Officer/Committee will notify the accused in writing and the Club members via the Club newsletter that the Club will vote on the expulsion of the accused at the next meeting. Said expulsion will last for a one-year minimum. A member may be expelled from the Club only upon a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the membership present at the meeting. Voting will be by secret ballot at a regular monthly meeting. The expelled member may reapply for membership after the expiration of the expulsion time period.*

e. *The three actions will not be enforced unless they are accumulated within a two-year period of time.*

f. *Any member receiving a Grievance, who directs any retaliation action against the person filing said grievance, will be subject to immediate expulsion from the Club. This is to include threats, intimidation, physical harm, intentional equipment damage, or any other action deemed to be retaliatory by the Club Officers.*

\_\_\_\_\_ Club Grievance Form

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Nature of Violation:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Witness:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Witnesses (not required):**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_