

**BYLAWS OF THE
RHODE ISLAND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION, INC.**

ARTICLE I **NAME**

- Section 1: The organization shall be called the Rhode Island Occupational Therapy Association, Inc., and hereinafter shall be referred to as RIOTA.
- Section 2: It shall be affiliated with the American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc., hereinafter referred to as AOTA, in compliance with the rules and regulations set forth in the Affiliation Principles for AOTA and State Associations (AOTA Bylaws, 2017: Article X, Section 3).

ARTICLE II **OBJECTIVES**

- The function and powers of RIOTA shall be to:
- A. Act as an advocate for the profession of occupational therapy.
 - B. Improve and advance the education and collaboration of occupational therapy practitioners.
 - C. Promote research in the profession of occupational therapy.
 - D. Encourage high standards of practice.
 - E. Engage in other professional and community activities to further the dissemination of knowledge of the practice of occupational therapy.
 - F. Cooperate with other individuals or groups concerned with health-related issues.
 - G. Increase consumer awareness of application of occupational therapy practice in the community and the scope of occupational therapy practice to assist an individual to achieve life pursuits.

ARTICLE III **MEMBERSHIP**

- Section 1: Membership classifications and qualifications:
- A. Licensed occupational therapist;
 - B. Licensed occupational therapy assistants;
 - C. Student occupational therapists/occupational therapy assistants;
 - D. Retired occupational therapy practitioners or inactive occupational therapy practitioners.
 - E. Associate member: one who is interested in promoting occupational therapy and is not eligible for membership in the above classifications.
- Section 2: Rights and privileges of members:
- A. Active or retired/inactive occupational therapists or occupational therapy assistants:
 - 1. May attend and participate in all regular and called meetings of RIOTA;
 - 2. May vote on all issues pertaining to RIOTA;
 - 3. May hold any office;
 - 4. May chair or serve on committees subject to the qualification established by the chair of the committee with Board oversight
 - 5. Will receive regular membership communications of RIOTA.
 - B. Student occupational therapists or occupational therapy assistants:
 - 1. May attend and participate in all regular and called meetings of RIOTA;
 - 2. May NOT vote on all issues pertaining to RIOTA;

3. Are NOT eligible to hold an office;
4. May serve on committees subject to the qualification established by the chair of the committee with Board oversight
5. Will receive regular membership communication of RIOTA.

C. Associate members

1. May attend and participate in all regular and called meetings of RIOTA;
2. Will have no voice or vote in any capacity regarding the elections or business of RIOTA;
3. Is NOT eligible to hold office;
4. May serve on committees subject to the qualification established by the chair of the committee with Board oversight
5. Will receive all mailings of RIOTA.

Section 3: Good standing: A member is in good standing provided that person has:

1. Obtained initial certification form the National Board of the Certified Occupational Therapists (NBCOT);
2. A current state license, if employed as an OT practitioner;
3. Paid current RIOTA dues.

Note: members in Section 1: category C, D and E are exempt from 1 and 2

ARTICLE IV

OFFICERS

Section 1: Officers: The officers of RIOTA shall be President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Educational Resource Coordinator, Development Chair, and Communications Chair.

Section 2: Election: The officers of RIOTA shall be elected by the voting membership by email or mail ballot according to Article X, Section 2A.

Section 3: Eligibility for office: eligibility to hold office has been stated in Article III, Section 2.

Section 4: Term of office: All officers shall be elected for a two (2) year term and may not serve more than two (2) consecutive terms. President, Treasurer, and Communication chair shall be elected in odd number years. Vice-President, Secretary, Educational Resource coordinator shall be elected in even number years.

Section 5: Vacancies in office: The President, with consent of the Board, shall appoint a replacement to complete the term of office in the event of any vacancy except the office of the president. In that case, the Vice-President shall automatically assume the position for the remainder of the term, if such is less than one (1) year, otherwise a special election shall be held. In the event there are no candidates, the Board is empowered to put forth a plan for interim management of the association.

Section 6: Duties of the voting officers: In addition to the rights and duties provided elsewhere in the bylaws, or as custom or parliamentary usage may require, the officers have the rights and duties respectively assigned to them in the succeeding sections of this article—see Standard Operating Procedures. Each officer serves as a voting member of the Board of RIOTA.

Each officer is required to attend each Board meeting. If an absence is necessary, a report including updates and agenda-related items must be submitted in advance of the meeting to the president,

Section 7: Removal

A member of the Executive Board may be removed with cause by vote of a majority of the officers of the Corporation then in office. An Executive Board member may be removed only after reasonable notice and opportunity to be heard. This may include removal due to non-participation as stated in Article IV: Section 6 and Article VIII

Section 8: Resignation

Members of the Executive Board may resign by delivering written resignation:

- (a) to any officer of the Corporation; or
- (b) to any Executive Board member

Such resignation shall be effective upon receipt unless specified to be effective at some other time; and acceptance thereof shall not be necessary to make it effective unless it so states.

Section 9: Duties of Officers

A. President shall:

- A. Schedule meetings/request room and invite Board members;
- B. Prepare agenda and conduct Board meetings and annual retreat;
- C. Act as a liaison between RIOTA and AOTA;
- D. Represent RIOTA at annual AOTA conference;
- E. Review RIOTA annual reports, synthesizing for report to membership at the end of each year
- F. Have the power to sign all written obligations of RIOTA and shall have the general powers of supervision and active management usually vested in that office;
- G. Assist in transition to new president, serving as a mentor and guide as needed;
- H. Additional duties as required.

B. Vice-President shall:

- A. Assist the president in the discharge of duties and shall discharge the duties of the president if and when the president is absent, or in the event of a vacancy of that office, fill the unexpired term (if less than a year);
- B. Preside, as appropriate, as parliamentarian over general meetings. Provide oversight and support as needed during committee meetings;
- C. Submit annual report by June 30 to the president of any activity of ad hoc or other committee requiring oversight

C. Secretary shall:

- A. Send annually to the AOTA staff liaison to the Affiliated State Association Presidents (ASAP) within thirty (30) days after the election of officers a complete roster of current RIOTA officers, committee chairs and representatives. As changes occur, updates must be sent;

- B. File with AOTA staff liaison to the Affiliated State Association Presidents (ASAP) a copy of the bylaws of RIOTA at the time of its adoption, and any amendments to the bylaws within thirty (30) days after they are adopted;
- C. Be responsible for recording the minutes of the meetings of RIOTA and the Board. Final version of the minutes are to be kept by the Secretary, presented to Board by email within seven (7) days for review prior to discussion and approval vote at the subsequent Board meeting, and archived with the historian documents;
- D. Collect and submit committee annual report to president by June 30;
- E. Be responsible for sending routine correspondence and other communications RIOTA as directed by the Board;
- F. Serve as the RIOTA historian, preserving and maintaining organizational history

Section 11: Treasurer shall:

- A. Have charge of all monies of RIOTA and coordinate budget planning with Board and committee chairs;
- B. Pay all bills upon the authorization of the president, with the exception of those bills above or outside the budget allotment which shall be paid upon the authorization of the executive Board;
- C. Maintain a ledger of all expenditures and receipts and shall give a written report of the same at each Board meeting; if unable to attend Board meeting a report will be forwarded to the Secretary for the Board meeting;
- D. Complete an annual budget report (ending June 30th) to be presented to the membership and published on the RIOTA website;
- F. Complete annual corporation filing with the Secretary of State and any required tax forms including 501c3 documents.

Section 12: Voting Committee Chairs:

- A. Education Resource Chair: Plan and implement educational opportunities for general membership meetings in Fall and Spring; and other educational opportunities as determined by the Board; coordinate scheduling of Pediatrics, Adult, and Mental Health Special Interest Group events and ensure delivery of contact hours to attendees;
- B. Communications Committee Chair: Oversee internal and external communication; provide oversight and support for website, membership communication (and liaison with membership chair), and social media chairs;
- C. Advocacy Chair: Oversee matters related to legislation (and liaison with legislative chair), reimbursement, and advocacy opportunities for RIOTA and occupational therapy practitioners.

Section 13: Non-voting Committee Chairs

- A. Pediatrics Special Interest Group Chair: Coordinate and implement special interest section (SIS) programming for pediatrics meetings and events; coordinate all speakers and presentations; develop and submit annual report of special interest group activities to the Secretary by June 30.
- B. Adult Special Interest Group Chair: Coordinate and implement special interest section programming for adult SIS meetings and events; coordinate all speakers and presentations; develop and submit annual report of special interest group activities to the Secretary by June 30.
- C. Mental Health Special Interest Group Chair: Coordinate and implement special interest section programming for mental health SIS meetings and events; develop and submit annual report of special interest group activities to the Secretary by June 30.
- D. Website Editor: Manage and update website with current RIOTA information; including events, special notices and summary of events annually.

- E. Membership Committee Chair: Oversee membership and retention and manage online membership lists and distribution of information. Annual report of membership activity due to the Secretary by June 30.

ARTICLE VI: THE BOARD

- Section 1: Name: The Executive Body of RIOTA shall be called the Board.
- Section 2: Members: Voting—elected officers and elected voting chairs (Educational Resource Chair, Communications Committee Chair, and Communications Chair).
- Section 3: Meetings: Regular meetings of the Board shall be held as the President shall direct or when requested by a majority of the Board members. There shall be a minimum of four (4) Board meetings a year. A majority of the voting members shall constitute a quorum. Special meetings may be held as needed to review and/or revise the Long Range Plan, Standard Operating Procedures and Bylaws.
- Section 4: The duties and authority of the Board shall be to:
 - A. Insure that the objectives of RIOTA are being met;
 - B. Manage the affairs of RIOTA between meetings;
 - C. Approve appointments made by the president;
 - D. Authorize the treasurer to pay bills that are outside or above the budget allotment;
 - E. Set the time for meetings of RIOTA;
 - F. Make recommendations to the membership on national affairs and state policy, amendment(s) to the bylaws, the budget, membership dues or special assessments;
 - G. Review and authorize requests for proposals (RFPs) as well as review and vote on subsequent RFP applicants.

ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES

- Section 1: The Board shall have the power to create committees. Recommendations for chairs may be made by the general membership or the Board. Committee chairs are appointed by the president with the approval of the Board and shall serve for the president's term. All members are encouraged to serve on committees.
- Section 2: Ad hoc committees are approved by the Board. These committees are responsible for presenting reports to the Board at regular intervals and upon completion of their activities.

ARTICLE VIII: MEETINGS

- Section 1: RIOTA shall conduct one annual business meeting in the fall and one general membership meeting in the spring.
- Section 2: The meetings shall be held at a time and place designated by the Board.
- Section 3: Special meetings may be called by the president or by three (3) members of the Board. The call for a special meeting must state the business to be transacted and no other business may be transacted.
- Section 5: All meetings shall be governed by the simplified parliamentary procedure unless otherwise specified. Details can be found here: <http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore->

Section 6: Contact hours for RIOTA meetings will be recorded by the Education Resource Chair.

ARTICLE IX: THE QUORUM

Voting procedures and quorum shall be outlined in the Standard Operating Procedures and shall be available for member review.

ARTICLE X: NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

- Section 1: A. The Board shall recruit and appoint a Nominating Committee Chair who shall be a registered occupational therapist or a certified occupational therapy assistant and a member of RIOTA.
- B. The Nominating Committee Chair shall serve one (1) year and may only serve two (2) consecutive terms.
- Section 2: A. The Nominating Committee shall present a slate of qualified candidates and email ballots to members by May 1st, to be returned within fourteen (14) days to the Nominating Committee Chair.
- B. The results of the ballot will be announced at the next Board meeting, at the annual membership meeting, and will be published in the RIOTA website and social media.

ARTICLE XI: DUES AND ASSESSMENTS

- Section 1: The fiscal year of RIOTA shall be July 1st through June 30th.
- Section 2: The annual membership dues shall be determined by the Board.
- Section 3: Dues shall be payable annually on members' renewal date. Renewal reminders are sent electronically. Accommodations are made for those without email. If membership is not renewed, member will no longer receive regular correspondence other than meeting reminders or renewal notice. Dues may be accepted throughout the fiscal year.
- Section 4: In case of emergency, assessments shall be recommended by the Board and present to the membership.

ARTICLE XII: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFPs)

- Section 1: RFPs will be drafted and presented to the Board for vote and approval before soliciting potential applicant proposals. RFPs will be drafted for any services RIOTA is seeking.
- Section 2: Services estimated to cost RIOTA a figure determined in the Standard Operating Procedures require vote by the Board based on majority or president's approval.
- Section 3: Services estimated to cost RIOTA \$500 or more require at least three RFP applications, which will be reviewed, voted on, and awarded by the Board based on majority.

ARTICLE XIII: ETHICS AND DISCIPLINE

- Section 1: The members of RIOTA shall abide by the current licensure laws of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations and in accordance with AOTA standards and ethics.
- Section 2: Advertising by occupational therapy practitioners under their professional title shall be in accordance with propriety and precedent in medically associated professions.
- Section 3: Membership in RIOTA may be suspended at any time by a majority of the Board for malpractice or misconduct in accordance with the Rhode Island licensure laws and the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT).
- Section 4: A member may be discharged of his or her duties as a member, including his or her duties as a member of a committee, if: the member’s occupational therapy practitioner license has been revoked due to disciplinary action or if the member’s dues are in arrears 90 days after payment is due. **Members can appeal this decision, in writing, to the Board which may reinstate membership through majority vote.**

ARTICLE XIV: AMENDMENTS or MODIFICATIONS TO RIOTA BYLAWS

- Section 1: Email ballot: These Bylaws shall be amended or revised by the voting members of RIOTA through individual email/mail ballots.
- Section 2: Ballot: The Board shall forward proposed changes and a ballot to the voting members thirty (30) days prior to the deadline stated on the ballot. By-law changes shall be determined by the majority of the mail votes received from voting members in good standing by the stated deadline.
- Section 3: Results: Members will be emailed results of vote, and bylaws, as they stand after vote, will be posted on website with date of amendment.

ARTICLE XV: DISSOLUTION CLAUSE

In the event this corporation shall be dissolved for any reason, any remaining assets shall be distributed for purposes within the scope of the Internal Revenue Code Section 501 (c) (6) or any amendment thereto, and in accordance with the corporate statutes of the State of Rhode Island.

Revisions:

- Adopted February 26, 1979
- Amended September 1982
- Amended June 1988

Amended	July 1995
Amended	July 2003
Amended	March 2005
Amended	June 2005
Amended	March 2006
Amended	November 2009
Amended	April 2015
Amended	October 2020