

WASHINGTON STATE ANIMAL RESPONSE TEAM

POLICY NO. 1 BY-LAWS

Revision: AA

Adopted: June 4, 2025

Approved:

/s/ _____

Lynn Snow
WASART President

/s/ _____

Angela Sorkin
WASART Vice President



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1.0 NAME AND PURPOSE

1.1 Name

The name of the organization shall be WASHINGTON STATE ANIMAL RESPONSE TEAM (WASART), hereinafter occasionally called “The Organization.” It shall be a nonprofit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of Washington.

1.2 Purpose

WASART is a private, non-government organization dedicated to preparing, planning, responding, rescuing, recovering, and sheltering during animal emergencies (natural, human-made, or technological). It shall affiliate with state and local emergency management agencies using the Incident Command System (ICS) and establish a network of trained volunteers, veterinarians, government entities, and animal-related organizations for emergency response.

1.3 Objectives

- Convene stakeholders to address animal emergency issues
 - Collaborate with national and state partners on common goals
 - Develop training opportunities for safe, efficient emergency response
 - Form partnerships with animal-related and emergency response organizations
 - Participate in projects to advance WASART objectives
 - Ensure access to necessary equipment and resources
 - Educate the public on animal rescue matters
 - Communicate actions consistently to stakeholders
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2.0 MEMBERSHIP

2.1 Membership

Membership shall be open to persons 16+ interested in WASART objectives, with written parental or guardian consent required for those under 18. WASART shall not discriminate based on sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, or sexual orientation.

Members must adhere to WASART's Bylaws, policies, and applicable governmental laws. Membership requires payment of dues set by the Board of Directors, granting voting rights for Board officer elections.

There shall be 3 categories of members:

- Active Members: Eligible for deployment, meeting Board-established standards
- Auxiliary Members: Limited involvement, with voting rights
- Organizational Members: Government agencies, nonprofits, or animal welfare groups, with one vote per entity as determined by the Board

2.2 Revocation of Membership

The Board of Directors may revoke an individual's WASART membership, with or without cause, by a majority vote of all standing Board members whenever in their judgment the best interests of the organization will be served by such revocation, immediately upon notice to the member.

3.0 ORGANIZATION OF THE UNIT

3.1 Fiscal Year

WASART's fiscal year shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31.



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3.2 **Meetings**

- Meetings shall be guided by the Robert's Rules of Order format
- A Board quorum is defined as a *minimum of 5* voting members present
- A General Meeting quorum is defined as any voting members present
- Frequency: Board meets monthly. General Meetings are held in September (elections) and March
- Special meetings may be called by any member of the Board with majority agreement on time and place
- Voting: Simple majority rules unless otherwise specified

3.3 **Board of Directors**

The Washington State Animal Response Team shall be governed by a Board of Directors. The Board shall oversee the organization's strategic direction, ensure fiscal responsibility, and uphold its mission to provide emergency response and disaster preparedness for animals. Board members are expected to respect and adhere to the principles of organizational governance, fostering transparency, accountability, and ethical decision-making to maintain the integrity of WASART's operations.

The Board of Directors shall consist of the officers: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Training Director, and Public Information Officer (PIO). The Board of Directors shall also include up to eight Advising Specialists and the Chairs of the Standing Committees. No single member of the Board shall cast more than one vote on any single issue before the Board. All Board members shall attend a minimum of 50% of the scheduled WASART Board of Directors meetings in a calendar year and be current WASART members in good standing. All officers shall have been WASART members for a minimum of two years.



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3.4 Terms of Office

3.4.1 Officers

The officers, except the Public Information Officer (PIO) and the Treasurer, shall be elected for two-year terms. Elected officers shall not serve more than two consecutive terms. The PIO and Treasurer shall be appointed to the Board of Directors by a majority vote for two-year terms, which are renewable by mutual consent of the incumbents and majority Board vote.

The terms of the officers, with the exception of the PIO and Treasurer, shall be staggered. The terms of the President and Secretary shall expire in odd numbered years. The terms for Vice President and Training Director shall expire in even numbered years.

Any vacancy occurring among the Board officers shall be filled by an interim officer, appointed to the Board of Directors by a majority vote of Board members. The interim officer shall serve the remainder of the unexpired term.

3.4.2 Advising Specialists Terms

Advising Specialists shall be appointed to the Board of Directors by a majority vote of Board members. Advising Specialists' terms shall be by mutual consent of the Advising Specialist and the Board of Directors.

3.4.3 Committee Chair Terms

Chairs of the Standing Committees shall be appointed to the Board of Directors by a majority vote of Board members. Standing Committee Chair terms shall be by mutual consent of the Committee Chair and the Board of Directors.



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3.5 Officers' Duties

Additional details of Officer's duties are described in WASART Policy No. 2, *Administration Policy*.

3.5.1 President

The President is the principal executive officer of WASART and Chair of the Board. The President shall (a) supervise the business and affairs of the organization; (b) enforce all standards and policies as set forth in WASART By-Laws; and (c) appoint Committee Chairs with Board approval.

3.5.2 Vice President

During the President's absence, the Vice President shall have all of the President's power and duties. The Vice President, or their designee, shall serve as the default WASART delegate to partner organizations' meetings.

3.5.3 Secretary

The Secretary shall (a) be responsible for maintaining meeting records for all Board and General Meetings; and (b) ensure that all correspondence related to BOD decisions is archived.

3.5.4 Treasurer

The Treasurer shall (a) oversee all financial records of the organization; and (b) chair the Finance Committee.

3.5.5 Training Director

The Training Director shall (a) lead all WASART training efforts with the exception of TRT training; and (b) chair the Training Committee.



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3.5.6 Public Information Officer

The Public Information Officer (PIO) shall (a) manage public communications on behalf of WASART; and (b) chair the Public Relations Committee.

3.6 Standing Committees

Standing committee chairs shall (a) report to the Board; and (b) serve on the Finance Committee. Additional details of standing committee responsibilities are described in WASART Policy No. 2, *Administration Policy*.

WASART shall maintain the following standing committees to effectively conduct the organization's business:

3.6.1 Technology & Communications Committee

The committee shall develop procedures to standardize communications and technology.

3.6.2 Training Committee

The committee shall develop and implement WASART's Training Curriculum.

3.6.3 Merchandise Committee

The committee shall research and procure appropriate apparel and miscellaneous items for member use.

3.6.4 Public Relations Committee

The committee shall manage all public communications and media.

3.6.5 Membership Committee

The committee shall maintain member records.



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3.6.6 Supply Committee

The committee shall procure supplies outside other committees' budgets, maintain equipment and vehicles and storage, and update inventory lists.

3.6.7 Finance Committee

The committee shall meet at least twice annually to review finances and incorporate committee budgets.

3.6.8 Volunteer Management Committee

The committee shall oversee membership information, enrichment, recognition, and emergent volunteer training in disasters.

3.6.9 Technical Rescue Committee

The committee shall oversee all matters related to training, safety, effectiveness, and efficiency of WASART's Technical Rescue Team (TRT) per WASART's Operating Procedure No. 6.

3.6.10 Outreach Committee

The committee shall promote public awareness of WASART.

3.6.11 Fundraising Committee

The committee shall develop and execute fundraising strategies.

3.6.12 Credentials Committee

The committee shall track members' deployment eligibility records.



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3.6.13 Sheltering Committee

The committee shall plan and ensure WASART's readiness to operate emergency animal shelters.

3.7 Special Committees

The Board may establish ad hoc committees as it deems appropriate. Ad hoc committees shall have the duties and responsibilities as the Board designates. Ad hoc committee chairs are not entitled to vote on matters before the Board.

3.8 Advising Specialists

The Advising Specialists shall (a) advise the Board based on expertise; (b) participate in meetings; and (c) promote the organization.

3.9 Election of Officers

Each member in good standing is entitled to one vote for the election of Board of Directors officers. Members may vote in person or by proxy. The majority vote of members constituting a quorum shall determine the winner.

3.10 Removal from Board of Directors

Any Board of Directors member may be removed from office, with or without cause, by a majority vote of all standing Board members whenever in their judgment the best interests of the organization will be served by such removal, or for failure to appropriately perform their duties as outlined in the By-Laws. Cause for removal may include, but is not limited to:

- failure to meet 50% Board meeting attendance in a calendar year
- failure to remain a WASART member in good standing
- failure to meet requisite position requirements
- actions that may compromise WASART's reputation



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- a complaint validated by the Board of Directors
- failure to comply with WASART's Code of Conduct, By-Laws, and Policies

3.11 Resignation from Board of Directors

Resignation from the Board should be in writing and sent to the Secretary.

4.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

4.1 General Principles

A conflict of interest arises when a fiduciary (any Board member of the Washington State Animal Response Team) has a personal, financial, or professional interest that could compete with their duty to prioritize the Organization's interests. Undisclosed or unresolved conflicts breach the fiduciary obligation to act in the Organization's best interests and are detrimental to the Organization's integrity and mission.

4.2 Conflict of Interest

All conflicts of interest must be disclosed to the Board of Directors. After disclosure is made, the Board member with the conflicting interest must abstain from voting on matters related to the conflict of interest. Decisions related to conflicts of interest shall rest with the Board or a delegated committee.

Board members and their relatives shall receive no compensation beyond expenses incurred.

4.3 Recordkeeping

The basis for each decision subject to this Section shall be fully documented, including:

- the terms of the approved transaction and the date approved



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- the members of the decision-making body who were present during debate on the transaction and those who voted on it
 - the decision made by each individual who voted
 - the comparability data that was relied on by the decision-making body and how the data was obtained
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5.0 FUNDRAISING AND DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

WASART is a publicly-supported 501(c)(3) charitable organization, incorporated as a not-for-profit entity under the laws of the State of Washington. WASART shall raise funds to support its activities in accordance with Internal Revenue Code and Washington State law.

The Board of Directors shall oversee budget approval and disbursement of funds.

6.0 DISSOLUTION OF THE ORGANIZATION AND ASSETS

In the event the organization is dissolved, it shall be the responsibility of the Board of Directors to ensure that all assets remaining after the payment of its outstanding debts shall be distributed to the general treasury of the Progressive Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), of Lynnwood, Washington, or a similar nonprofit per 501(c)(3) rules. Alternatively, with the agreement of the Board, more than one organization with goals similar to WASART may be designated.

7.0 AMENDMENTS

The Board of Directors shall appoint a By-Laws Committee to review and revise these By-Laws as needed. By-Laws may be amended by a simple majority Board vote at a regular meeting with (7) days' prior notice. Board approved revisions shall be presented to the membership.



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CERTIFICATION

These By-Laws were approved at a meeting of the Board of Directors by a majority vote on June 4, 2025.

/s/ _____
Noah Bernays
Secretary

6/4/2025
Date



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REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Date	Description	Affected Sections
Original	8/9/2007	Initial release	All
A	2/6/2008	Not recorded	Not recorded
B	11/5/2008	Not recorded	Not recorded
C	11/4/2009	Not recorded	Not recorded
D	4/10/2010	Not recorded	Not recorded
E	4/6/2011	Not recorded	Not recorded
F	1/4/2012	Not recorded	Not recorded
G	4/4/2012	Reformatted; established "Auxiliary Member" classification	2.0; all sections revised for reformatting
H	12/22/12	Reformatted; minor corrections; deleted "support" membership category; provided for proxy voting; clarified that Advising Specialists need not be WASART members; specified that one individual may not occupy multiple Board positions simultaneously; allowed for multiple terms on BOD for Past Presidents; revised timing for officers' elections	1.3, 2.0, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6, 3.6.1, 3.6.2, 5.0; all sections revised for reformatting
J	5/1/13	Added minimum number of Board meetings per year, and provision for online meetings, added provision for Public	3.1, 6.1, added 6.5



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Relations Committee, minor corrections

K	8/7/13	Added PIO as a Board officer; changed responsibility for reporting members' training records; added publishing annual report to VP duties	3.2, 3.3.1, 3.5.1, 3.5.2, 6.1, 6.4, 6.5; added new 3.5.8, re-numbered old 3.5.8 to 3.5.9
L	10/2/13	Revised descriptions of officers' duties; created Finance Committee; deleted Member at Large; renamed Financial Review Committee to Internal Oversight Committee; created Volunteer Management Committee; modified Membership Committee; minor wording changes	1.3, 2.0, 3.3.1, 3.3.2, 3.5, 3.5.3, 3.5.4, 3.6.3, 5.0, 6.1, 6.2, deleted 3.5.5 and renumbered subsequent subsections; added new 6.6 & 6.7
M	11/5/14	Added Emergency Mgmt oversight of CARTs & RARTs; clarified that special BOD mtgs. may be called by any BOD member; limited distribution of AARs in criminal cases; added requirement for timely payment of bills; minor corrections & clarifications	1.3, 3.1, 3.5.1, 3.5.4, 3.6.2, 4.2



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N	3/2/16	Revised membership eligibility age; changed "Field Response" to "Animal Handling and Assessment"; added definition of fiscal year; revised Officers' attendance reqmt. & eliminated Advising Specialists' attendance reqmt.; revised Treasurer's reporting reqmts.; revised dates for annual P&L reporting and budget presentation; deleted pre-2013 election timing; made provision for compensating independent contractors; deleted budget presentation at General mtg; deleted reqmt. for Membership Chair to report training status to KCOEM	2.0, 3.3, 3.5, 3.6.4, 3.7.1, 4.1, 5.0, 6.4; added new Section 3.1 and renumbered all succeeding subparagraphs
O	9/7/16	Added reqmt. for officers to be current WASART members; allowed Treasurer's designee to chair Finance Committee	3.3, 3.6.4
P	10/5/16	Increased disbursement authority w/o co-signature to \$100.00	5.0
Q	12/6/17	Removed background check for Auxiliary members; changed Treasurer to appointed office; changed election of Training Director to even numbered years; re-established two-term limits for elected officers, with provision for additional, non-consecutive terms; removed contingency for compensating officers who are employees; added provision for Finance Committee Deputy Chair; minor wording changes and corrections	2.0, 3.4.1, 3.7.2, 4.1, 6.6



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R	11/7/18	Deleted Objectives 3 & 4; corrected course titles to new versions in Policy 3, Rev. J; changed due dates for committee budgets from Nov. to Oct.; removed prohibition of Finance Committee members other than Treasurer serving on the Internal Oversight Committee	1.3, 2.0, 3.6.5, 3.6.7, 6.2
S	1/2/19	Revised publication date of Annual Report	3.6.2
T	6/5/19	Revised membership age and changed schedule for counting election results; minor corrections and clarifications	2.0, 3.7.1
U	1/2/20	Changed general meetings to semi-annual; clarified selection of Past President	3.2, 3.4.1
V	6/2/21	Minor clarifications; changed and added names of deployment teams; added training privileges of Organization memberships; deleted limits on online Board meetings; clarified officer attendance requirement; changed date for appointment of By-Laws review committee; allowed for electronic dissemination of By-Laws revisions	1.2, 2.0, 3.2, 3.3, 8.0
W	10/6/21	Clarified members' coverage under WAC 118-04 and distribution of AARs; clarified members' voting at online meeting elections; minor corrections & clarifications	2.0, 3.2, 3.6.1, 3.7.1, 4.1; significant text changes shown in underlined italics



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X	4/6/22	Clarified Treasurer's responsibilities; made standing committee chairs members of Board; revised no. of general meetings; other minor corrections	3.2, 3.3, 3.6.4, 6.0 and all subparagraphs
Y	6/1/22	Deleted prohibition against any individual occupying more than one Board position	3.3
Z	11/2/22	Minor corrections & additions	1.2, 1.3, 3.6.4
AA	TBD	Major revision of By-Laws	All