

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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on behalf of the Board of Directors
and especially the Constitution Committee,
would like to extend our sincere gratitude to:

David Rodriguez

former AGIF National Commander,

for his generous donation to the

American GI Forum of the United States,

towards the expense of printing the governing documents
of the organization.

BYLAWS

OF THE AMERICAN GI FORUM OF THE UNITED STATES

Founded: March 26, 1948



“Education is our Freedom and Freedom Should be Everybody’s Business”

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BYLAWS

American GI Forum of the United States

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BYLAWS
of the
American GI Forum of the United States (AGIF-US)

ARTICLE 1: OFFICIAL PRAYER

The official Prayer of the AGIF-US, the States, Locals, Regions, Districts, and At-Large Chapters (AGIF Organizations) is the Prayer of St. Frances of Assisi. This prayer shall be recited at the beginning and ending of every meeting of the AGIF-US and the AGIF Chapters.

Prayer of St. Frances of Assisi

LORD, Make me an instrument of Thy Peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love.

Where there is injury, pardon.

Where there is doubt, faith.

Where there is despair, hope.

Where there is darkness, light.

Where there is sadness, joy.

Oh, DIVINE MASTER, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood and as to understand, to be loved as to love, for it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to ETERNAL LIFE. Amen.

ARTICLE 2: PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America shall be recited by all members of the AGIF-US and AGIF Organization(s). It shall be recited at every meeting of AGIF-US and AGIF Organization(s) after the Official Prayer.

Pledge of Allegiance

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all."

ARTICLE 3: ACTIVE MEMBERS – DEFINITION

In order to be considered an active member and eligible to vote in any AGIF Organization(s), all members must pay their dues as provided in the Bylaws and other dues and/or assessments that may be levied through appropriate action of the National Conference, as well as pay such local and state dues and/or assessments as may be imposed by their respective AGIF Organization(s), and then shall take the Oath of Members.

ARTICLE 4: MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING

In order to be considered a member in good standing a member must have paid his/her membership dues, and any other assessments as required by the AGIF-US and AGIF Organization(s). They must have promptly returned any AGIF properties or materials upon leaving elected office, appointed office or the general membership. Further, a member considered to be in good standing will abide by the Oath of Membership, will conduct himself or herself with respectful behavior at all AGIF meetings and all AGIF sponsored functions.

Members who are in violation of this section may be removed from the premises and/or will receive a warning letter advising that continued violations will lead to suspension of member privileges with specific time limits, up to and including permanent suspension, as determined by the local AGIF Commander and ratified by a majority vote of the local AGIF membership.

Veterans must display a copy of their DD214 or Veteran's Administration Identification Card to their Chapter Commander or Vice Commander to verify their veteran status and a log must be kept by the Chapter Secretary (See Appendix M. Veteran's DD214 Log)

Qualifications for members of all groups of the AGIF-US are found in the AGIF-US Constitution Article 5. Section 2.

Due to the fact that Youth Members are not of legal age, at no time are they to be involved in any legal action that pertains to the AGIF at any level.

ARTICLE 5: OTHER MEMBERS - HONORARY

At the discretion of a Local, State, National Commander, or a committee; an honorary membership may be issued. Any person or persons who have been of extraordinary service to the AGIF mission or who has rendered outstanding service to the community where he or she resides or who has skills or knowledge in a specific field, such as in education, human or civil rights, science or the arts, may be elected to an honorary membership in the AGIF-US or AGIF Organization(s) by a simple majority vote (50% plus one) of those present. Honorary members will not be required to pay dues, nor will they be entitled to the rights, privileges, and benefits available to regular members. They shall not have a right to vote. A suitable certificate will be issued to honor the occasion by the AGIF Organization(s) making the award. All "Honorary Memberships" are for a one-year period only and must be renewed each year by the appointing AGIF Organization(s).

ARTICLE 6: MEMBERSHIP DENIED OR SUSPENDED

Any person who is, or has been, a member of any communist, fascist, or other organization or conspiracy that advocates the overthrow, or the serious undermining of the Government of the United States shall not be eligible for membership in AGIF-US or AGIF Organization(s). To help enforce this requirement, an Oath shall be required by the Officers of AGIF-US or any person who solicits membership in AGIF-US or any AGIF Organization(s).

If a member becomes a party to a lawsuit against the AGIF-US or any other AGIF Organization(s), their membership will be automatically suspended by their local AGIF Organization until resolution of the litigation. After resolution of the lawsuit the National Board of Directors will decide whether the member will be reinstated. This process applies to Lifetime Members who are party to a lawsuit.

Admission to the AGIF-US or any AGIF Organization is a matter within the complete and exclusive purview of AGIF-US. The AGIF-US has the right to select its members. Membership in an association or organization is not a constitutional right, but simply a privilege. It is a privilege which may be

given or withheld. The AGIF-US and AGIF Organizations have the right to refuse membership, to members who do not follow the tenets of the AGIF-US. This applies to all forms of membership, including Lifetime members.

New member applicants must be approved or denied membership by a simple majority vote (50% plus one) of those present at the local AGIF Chapter meeting. A new member can be denied membership by the local AGIF Chapter/Organization within the first year of membership by a simple majority vote (50% plus one).

When charges are brought against a member, reference the Policies, Practices, and Procedures Manual for the information for the process. All other membership charges are referenced in the Policies, Practices, and Procedures Manual (PP&PM.) (Follow PP&PM, Section 11: Suspension, Removal from Office, or Expulsions Procedures.)

ARTICLE 7: OATH OF MEMBERS

All members of this AGIF-Organization(s), active and/or honorary, shall take the following Oath when they join the American GI Forum; such Oath once taken does not ever have to be retaken unless a member is reinstated.

OATH OF MEMBERS

"I do solemnly promise and swear that I will uphold the Constitution and honor the Flag of the United States of America and of my State, that I will abide by the Constitution and Bylaws of the American GI Forum-US and that I will neither wrong nor harm, in any way, shape or form the same, nor a member thereof, SO HELP ME GOD."

ARTICLE 8: DUES

- A. The members of all, AGIF Organization(s) shall pay no less in the way of dues than the National Conference may decide, but they may pay more. In accordance with whatever amount of the total dues the state and local AGIF Organization(s) shall retain any amount in excess of the national and state dues by the local Chapter.
- B. **Lifetime Memberships** – All those members wishing to become lifetime members shall pay any amount which the National Board may alone determine, but no less than \$250 dollars. On such payment the member

involved shall have no further obligation to pay dues to the AGIF-US. However, lifetime members will be required to pay yearly state and local AGIF Chapter dues. A Lifetime membership card will be issued at the time of becoming a lifetime member. Any additional lifetime membership cards will be assessed a fee.

Lifetime membership does not exempt a member from paying their state and/or local dues to maintain active membership in their AGIF Organization(s) in their locality. They shall not be allowed to vote in any local, state, or national organization meeting, unless they have paid whatever local or state dues and/or assessments may be ordinarily imposed on its members. Lifetime Members shall be suspended if they do not pay their state and local membership dues and they will not be allowed to vote.

All members in good standing shall have a voice at all AGIF Organization(s) gatherings as recognized by the Commander or Chairwoman.

- C. **Other Dues** – All active members shall pay AGIF Organization(s) dues as may be imposed by their respective AGIF Organization(s). The National Conference shall decide by a 2/3 vote of the delegates present and voting the amount of national dues to be paid to the AGIF-US by members of all AGIF Organization(s).

All members including Lifetime members must pay all their local, state and national dues 30 days prior to any AGIF State or National Conference in order to be a delegate for their State and to vote in an AGIF State or National Conference.

ARTICLE 9: NATIONAL AND OTHER CONFERENCES OR AGIF GATHERINGS

- A. **Composition** – The National Conference of the AGIF-US shall be composed of the national officers, plus the delegates from the state AGIF Organization(s) and At-Large organizations. The Conference shall be referred to as the National Conference.

B. Quorum –

The quorum required for all AGIF-US Board meetings shall be a simple majority of members present and voting (50% plus one) of elected officers to the National Board plus the State Commander, State Chairwoman, State Youth Chair of each State, and one representative from each At-Large AGIF Organization to legally transact business.

The quorum required for the National Conference shall be a simple majority of members present and voting (50% plus one) of elected officers, State Commanders, State Chairwomen, State Youth Chairs, and Local Chapter delegates based on Article 9. D. 2. that have paid Conference Registrations.

The quorum required for AGIF State Board meetings shall be a simple majority of members present and voting (50% plus one) of elected officers to the State Board plus Local Commander, Local Chairwoman, Local Youth Chair of each Local Chapter to legally transact business. All members shall be in good standing.

In addition, at the State Conference, Local Chapters have the same voting strength as described for National Conferences.

The quorum for AGIF Chapter meetings is three officers and at least five (5) members in good standing to legally transact business.

C. MEETINGS – The National Conference shall meet at least once each year at a site specified by the National Board of Directors. In order for the AGIF-US to remain solvent; the National Executive Board shall host and stage the Mid-Year and Annual Conferences.

D. VOTING AT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

1. At the AGIF-US annual National Conference, each AGIF Organization(s) shall be entitled to three (3) votes, one each corresponding to the States' Commander, the States' Chairwoman, and the States' Youth Chair. All above officers must be on the assembly floor in order to be eligible to cast their vote and shall have paid their

Conference registration fee. Proxy voting is not allowed. (Reference: Article 9.D. 10.)

2. Additionally, each AGIF Chapter(s), from all AGIF Organization(s) shall be entitled to six (6) votes for the first eight (8) through ten (10) currently paid members in good standing, and one (1) additional vote for each additional five (5) members in good standing. All youth delegates shall receive training by their local AGIF Chapter, using the materials provided by AGIF-US, for youth trainings prior to any State or National Conference. The Conference registration fee shall have been paid in full to vote. Proxy voting is not allowed.
3. Subject to Quorum requirements, voting strength at AGIF Chapter(s) meetings shall be based simply on one vote for each member present on the floor. Proxy voting is not allowed.

The cut-off date for receipt of memberships by the National Office to determine the voting strength of any AGIF Organization(s), at the National Conference of any other conference or meeting shall be thirty (30) days prior to the opening date of any Conference or meeting. Any membership application or application for Charter received after the cut-off date will not be counted in determining voting strength of any particular AGIF Organization(s). After the cut-off date, the National Membership Committee shall compile and mail out a report of the potential voting strength of all AGIF Organization(s).

4. Youth Delegates

At all times during the AGIF-US and AGIF Organization(s) Conferences, all youth will be supervised by a youth advisor of each State/Chapter that has a Youth Group. Due to liability issues at the Conference, no youth will be alone at any time. All youth will be sitting together at the General Sessions during voting. Their voting strength will be determined by the Bylaws, Article 9., D., 2. This is the same voting strength determination used for the Forum, Women, and Youth, and all members present. All youth must fill out a registration form and pay the registration fee, if one is charged.

5. Roll Call Vote

A Roll Call Vote at the National Conference shall be held for motions, after a motion is made, seconded, and passed for a Roll Call Vote.

6. Voting

Paper Ballot Vote shall be taken for the election of National AGIF Officers with opportunity for electronic voting using existing applications.

7. Vote and Elections Results—Unless otherwise specified in the Bylaws, a simple majority vote of members present (50% plus one) shall be required to determine any motion which is voted on at any AGIF Organization(s) gathering. Only members of chapters, which have paid their charter renewal and membership dues shall be eligible to vote.

Candidates for office shall not be members of the Election Committee. In all elections held in any AGIF Organization(s), the winning candidate must carry the election by a simple majority vote of members present (50% plus one). In some instances, the election process may require a run-off between the two candidates with the highest votes. In any event, the Elections Committee Chair shall tabulate and record the votes with the help of his/her committee. The Elections Committee Chair shall announce the ultimate winner without giving numbers. However, if any candidate or their representative calls for announcement of vote number results, they shall be orally given to the assembly, or privately given to the candidate, whatever the candidate or their representative may request. If any candidate calls for a canvassing of the votes, they shall be canvassed before him/her immediately and in the most expeditious manner.

8. AGIF Organization(s) Delegation—A delegation for the purpose of the voting process, except for voting at the local chapter level, is defined as follows:

The AGIF Organization(s) delegation to any AGIF Organization(s) Conference shall consist of the Commander, Chairwoman, and Youth Chair or their designee as documented by electronic or hard copy communication on official letterhead. Numeric representation and voting

strength shall follow the rules in, Article 9., D. Voting at National Conference, 1 through 6.

9. All Forum Members shall wear an AGIF Hat (when hats are not available to purchase, pins may be used) when addressing the chair or assembly. Women and youth shall either wear a hat or pin when addressing the chair or assembly.

In keeping with the voting procedures at the AGIF National Conference level, such matters being fundamental, voting procedures and/or vote representation at all AGIF State Conferences, AGIF State Board of Directors Meetings, as well as AGIF Organization(s) meetings, the same rules on voting representation and procedures shall apply, as stated in, Article 9., D. Voting at National Conference, 1 through 6.

10. **Delegations for State AGIF Gatherings** – Delegations to State AGIF, Regional or Board Conferences or meetings shall consist of the chapter members including At-Large Chapter delegations from within a contiguous geographic area including Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico.

11. VIRTUAL MEETINGS

Virtual meeting shall be held to conduct business when in person meetings cannot be held due to public health restrictions, long distance, inclement weather or for convenience or necessity. Virtual meetings are acceptable when called by an AGIF Commander or AGIF Chairwoman. Notification of the virtual meeting must be sent out ten (10) days prior to the meeting, at a date and time convenient to all participants. All participants must be seen visually in an appropriate environment so that roll call can be taken, when speaking, and when voting. Acceptable programs are Zoom, Skype, Duo, Face Time, and any other program that makes it possible for all participants to be heard and seen.

E. POWERS

The powers of the National Conference are stated in Article 2. A., B. and C. of the AGIF-US Constitution.

F. EXPENSE-PROGRESS CHANGES BELOW ALL OTHER

The National Conference Committee shall prepare a proposed Conference budget within 180 days of the National Conference. In the event a profit is made at the National Conference, \$3,000 will be allocated to the Educational Achievement Scholarship Account or in an amount lower depending on available funds as determined by the National Board.

In the event a profit is made on staging the National Conference, after deduction of the funds allocated to the Educational Achievement Scholarship Account there shall be a division of the proceeds as follows: seventy percent (70%) for the National/AGIF-US, twenty-five percent (25%) will go to the National AGIF Women's Treasury and five percent (5%) will go to the National Youth Treasury. The National Youth Treasury shall be administered by the appointed youth advisor. This five percent (5%) will be paid to the youth treasury whether or not youth officers are elected at that Conference.

The AGIF-US may contract with an independent Conference Coordinator to help solicit funds and sponsorships for the Mid-Year and National Conferences with approval of the National Board. The cost of the Conference Coordinator shall be paid by the AGIF-US. The Conference Coordinator will be responsible for detailed record keeping, His/her expense shall be paid by the National Treasurer after conference financial obligations are paid. Reference Policies, Practices, and Procedures Manual (Sec. 6 Contracted Positions).

The AGIF-US National Conference Committee shall submit to the National Board, within 45 days after the conference, a complete written and oral financial report with itemized receipts, expenditures, and bank statements; along with a complete accounting of all funds and sponsorships received. This financial report shall be given to the assembly as follows: Mid-Year at the National Conference of the same year and National Conference at the Mid-Year of the following Year.

ARTICLE 10: NATIONAL BOARD of DIRECTORS

- A. Composition** – The AGIF National Board of Directors (a/k/a the National Board) shall be composed of the elected national officers as named, plus the State Commander, State Chairwoman, and State Youth

Chair of each State AGIF Organization(s), or their duly designated representative in descending order of office and one representative from each At-Large AGIF Organization(s).

Any designated representative must provide written or electronic (e-mail) documentation from their State Commander, State Chairwoman or State Youth Chair. The designated representative shall meet the requirements for the position they are representing. If the position the representative is filling requires being a veteran, the representative must be a veteran; if the position the representative is filling requires a woman, the representative must be a woman; and if the position the representative is filling requires a youth, the representative must be a youth.

- B. Elections Voting Procedure** – Each National AGIF officer shall have one (1) vote. Each AGIF State Commander, AGIF State Chairwoman and AGIF State Youth Chair or their duly designated representative, shall have respectively one (1) vote and each At-Large AGIF Organization(s) shall have one (1) vote. Any designated representative must provide written or electronic (e-mail) documentation from their State Commander or State Chairwoman or State Youth Chair. The designated representative must meet the requirements for the position they are representing. (See Article 9. D. 1 through 2.)

C. Meetings of the National Board of Directors

The National Board shall meet at least once each year between National Conferences at a place designated at the previous meeting of the Board or by a National Conference. The National Board may also meet during the National Conference and at such other times and places as may be designated by the National Commander with the consent of a majority of the national officers and with a ten (10) day notice to all members of the Board. Virtual meetings may be scheduled as needed.

ARTICLE 11: STATE and LOCAL (REGIONAL/DISTRICT) BOARD of DIRECTORS

Each AGIF Organization(s) shall have their own Board of Directors consisting of their officers and any other appointed AGIF officer. They shall call such body their Board of Directors or Executive Board. No AGIF Organization referred to in this section is organized to include members from more than ONE state.

ARTICLE 12: NATIONAL OFFICERS – ELECTED

All elected positions shall be elected by the delegates present at the National Conference. All AGIF Organization(s) shall follow the same election procedures in the Policies Practices, and Procedures Manual.

A. Designation – The National Officers/Executive Board of This Organization shall be as follows:

1. National Commander
2. National Vice-Commander
3. National Secretary
4. National Treasurer
5. National Sergeant at Arms
6. Previous National Commander – Ex-officio (Non-Voting)
7. National Chairwoman
8. National Vice-Chairwoman
9. National Women's Recording Secretary
10. National Women's Treasurer
11. National Women's Sergeant at Arms
12. Previous National Chairwoman – Ex-officio (Non-Voting)
13. National Youth Chair

B. TERM OF OFFICE

The term of office of all officers of the AGIF-US shall be for a one-year term. All national officers shall be elected at the National Conference and all AGIF State Officers at their respective conferences. The choices of all AGIF-US and AGIF State Officers, whether GI Forum, GI Forum Women or GI Forum Youth entities, shall be elected by all the qualified delegates

of the entire respective Conference, although each of the three named entities shall have their own set of officers. There shall be Youth from at least two (2) different States present at the National Conference for National Youth Officers to be elected.

The AGIF-US Forum shall fill all Executive positions with Veterans. At the AGIF State or AGIF Local Organization, the Commander and Vice-Commander positions must be held by Veterans. If there is an open Board position and no Veteran is available to fill that position, then a non-Veteran may be elected to the position only at AGIF State or Local Organization(s) by a simple majority vote (50% plus one) of those in attendance.

A female Veteran AGIF member shall be free to join and serve in any capacity in either a GI Forum's Chapter or a GI Forum Women's Chapter and shall be free to serve in any officer position at the AGIF-US and AGIF Organization(s).

All officers shall be administered the Oath of Office and shall take office immediately following their election. The National Appointed Positions may also take their office as soon as they are appointed by the National, State, Local, Regional, District or At-Large Commander or Chairwoman.

Oath of Office

"I, (give name) do solemnly promise and swear that I will uphold the Constitution and respect the flag of the United States of America and of my State. I will abide by the Constitution and Bylaws of the American GI Forum of which I am (give position); my conduct and thoughts shall be for the betterment and advancement of said (give your Organization) and the people it serves. I will serve to the best of my ability and will strive for cooperation with all officers, members, and committees of said (give your Organization) and I will adhere always to such end and uphold the same to the utmost, SO HELP ME GOD"

C. QUALIFICATIONS, POWERS AND DUTIES, LINE OF SUCCESSION

The qualification powers and duties of the AGIF National Officers and equivalent positions for State Organizations and Local Chapters shall be

as follows and their line of succession shall be in the numerical order which is set forth below. The AGIF State Organization(s) elected positions shall serve a one (1) year term. Local AGIF Organization(s) elected positions shall serve a one (1) year term. Any Officer who misses three (3) meetings shall be removed from office by the presiding Commander.

1. National Commander/State Commander/Local Chapter Commander

Commander Qualifications

The Commander shall be a Veteran and a U.S. Citizen. He/she must be twenty-one (21) years of age or older and must not be on active full-time military service. In addition, he/she shall be a member in good standing in the American GI Forum for a minimum of five years next preceding his/her election, provided that if he/she has held a state office or a national office in the American GI Forum for at least two (2) years, the five-year requirement shall be reduced to three (3) years. Local Commander must have served as another local officer for two (2) years. The National Commander shall not hold more than one position on the National Board. (He/she shall not be National Commander and State Commander during the same term.)

Commander Duties

- a. The Commander shall be the presiding officer and official spokesperson of the AGIF for the organization that elected him/her.
- b. Shall be the official representative of the AGIF-US or AGIF Organization(s) for government functions for the area he/she is elected to serve.
- c. Shall acquire funds from Corporate America and AGIF Organizations.
- d. Preside at Conferences and Board Meetings.
- e. Appoint all standing, interim, and conference committees and all members, as well as the Chairpersons
- f. Shall appoint Conference Committees with the advice of the Chairwoman, and shall appoint all members to the Conference Committee.
- g. Shall ensure that youth members are not involved in legal actions either for against the AGIF or its members.

- h. Shall exercise such powers and perform such other duties and functions as normally fall within the scope of such office as specified in these Bylaws.
- i. As fundraising is a part of his/her elected duties, it will be considered a conflict of interest to receive compensation for fundraising.
- j. Any officer or member they appoint to act on their behalf at any official meeting shall also be a Veteran. It is the responsibility of the Commander to notify the host who will be representing him/her at this meeting.
- k. Shall work with the Treasurer to assure that all needed business insurances are purchased and up-to-date.

Commander Line of Succession

The Vice-Commander will succeed to any vacancy in the office of the Commander for the unexpired term. In the event the Vice-Commander is unable to serve or after assuming the office ceases to continue in his office, for whatever reason, then such ensuing vacancy shall be filled by the next officer in the line of succession, as listed in these Bylaws.

2. National/State /Local Vice-Commander

The Vice-Commander shall meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the Commander.

- a. He/she shall assist the Commander in every way he/she is called to do so.
- b. Shall perform the duties and function of the Commander in the absence or illness of the Commander or at the request of the current Commander.
- c. Shall exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions as normally fall within the scope of their office, as listed in these Bylaws.
- d. Any vacancy in this office shall be filled by the next officer in the numerical line of succession.

3. National Secretary/State Secretary/ Local Chapter Secretary

The Secretary shall meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the Commander.

- a. The duties of the Secretary shall be to take and keep the minutes or have such minutes done under their supervision of the National Board meetings and National Conference and any other lesser conferences called by the National Commander.
- b. Shall ensure that the minutes of all sessions of the National Board and National Conferences are recorded and printed so that such minutes are submitted to the appropriate office for State or Local Chapter and to the Board Members for final approval.
- c. Shall track all resolutions passed by the Conferences and shall report at the National Board meetings and Conferences the follow-up actions taken and needed for said resolutions working with the chair of the Resolutions Committee.
- d. Shall read Minutes for approval at the next meeting.
- e. In the event a vacancy occurs in such position and the National Conference is not in session, the Commander shall appoint an interim Secretary to serve until the next Conference or Local Chapter election, at which time one can be elected.

4. National/State/Local Chapter Treasurer

The Treasurer shall meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the National Commander. The Treasurer preferably should have accounting experience and provide general accounting reports.

- a. Shall work with the National Office Manager to ensure that all books and records are kept subject to an annual review/audit.
- b. Shall ensure that an annual budget is prepared.
- c. Shall prepare a 990-Tax Form and file it per the IRS instructions.
- d. Shall be required that he/she be bonded.
- e. Shall be the chair of the National Finance Committee.
- f. Shall serve on the Conference Committee.
- g. Shall be the chair of the Conference Credentials Committee.
- h. Shall keep a log of the bonding insurance and errors and omissions insurance policies. Also work with Commander to assure that all necessary business insurances, including event insurance, are purchased and up-to-date.
- i. Shall process all Charter fees, dues and transmittals submitted by the Chapters. Membership cards shall be sent to the Chapters within forty-five (45) days of January 31st.

- j. In the event a vacancy occurs in such position and the Conference is not in session, the Commander will appoint an Interim Treasurer to serve until the next Conference or Local Chapter election, at which time one can be elected.
- k. Shall process all Charter fees, dues, and transmittals submitted by the Chapters. Membership cards must be sent to the Chapters within forty-five (45) days of January 31st.

5. National/State/Local Chapter Sergeant at Arms

The Sergeant at Arms only at the National Level must meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the National Commander.

- a. Shall maintain order and enforce any floor rules under the direction of the Commander or the presiding officer at all Board meetings and at all Conferences.
- b. At the directions of the National Commander, he/she shall have the power to deputize other persons to help maintain order and enforce floor rules.
- c. In the event a vacancy occurs in such position and the Conference is not in session, the Commander shall appoint an Interim Sergeant at Arms to serve until the next Conference or Local Chapter election, at which time one can be elected.

6. National/State/Local Chapter Chairwoman

The Chairwoman shall be a US Citizen. She shall be 21 years of age or older and must not be on active full-time military service. In addition, she shall be a member in good standing in the American GI Forum Women for a minimum of five (5) years preceding her election, provided she has held a state office or a national office in the AGIF Organization(s) for at least two (2) years, the five-year requirement shall be reduced to three (3) years. She shall also meet the five-year or three-year membership requirement set forth for the National Commander. The National Chairwoman will be elected for a one year term.

Chairwoman Duties

- a. She will be the presiding officer, official spokesperson, and official representative of the AGIF Women in the locality for which she is elected.
- b. Shall support the Commander as the official representative of the AGIF-US, for government functions and acquire funds from corporate America and AGIF-US Organization(s).
- c. Her power, functions and duties will be the same in relation to the American GI Forum Women AGIF-US Organization(s) as are those of the Commander to the entire AGIF-US, except that she will serve under the direction of the Conference and the Board.
- d. Shall exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions as normally fall within the scope of such office.
- e. Any issue or conflict arising between her, and the National Commander shall be resolved by the National Board or by the National Conference by proper motion or resolution.

Chairwoman Succession

The Vice-Chairwoman shall succeed to any vacancy in the office of the Chairwoman for the unexpired term. In the event the Vice-Chairwoman is unable to serve or after assuming the office ceases to continue in her position, for whatever reason, then such ensuing vacancy shall be filled by the next officer in the line of succession.

7. National/State/Local Chapter Vice-Chairwoman

She shall meet the same qualifications as the Chairwoman and be subject to the same conditions as the National Chairwoman.

- a. Shall assist the National Chairwoman in every manner in which she is called to do so.
- b. Shall perform the duties and functions of the National Chairwoman in the absence or illness of the Chairwoman or at the request of the Chairwoman.
- c. Shall exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions as normally fall within the scope of her position.
- d. Any vacancy in this office shall be filled by the next officer in the numerical line of succession.

8. National/State/Local Chapter Women's Secretary

She shall meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the Chairwoman. She shall be subject to the five year or three-year membership requirement.

- a. Her duties will be to record the minutes of all sessions of the Women's meetings; copies of the minutes shall be sent to the Women's Board thirty (30) days after the meetings.
- b. All minutes shall be read for approval at the next meeting. In the event a vacancy occurs in such position and the Conference is not in session, the Chairwoman shall appoint an Interim Secretary to serve until the next Conference or Local Chapter election, at which time one can be elected.

9. National/State/Local Chapter/Women's Treasurer

She shall meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the Chairwoman. She shall be subject to the five-year or three-year membership requirement.

- a. Shall be the custodian and the one responsible for all funds of the women's fundraising projects and the Educational Achievement Scholarship account.
- b. Shall be responsible for disbursement of expenses and payment of said programs.
- c. Shall submit to an annual review/audit of the books.
- d. Shall be required to be bonded.
- e. She shall transfer to her successor in office, or anyone designated by the Chairwoman, all monies, securities, vouchers, ledger, receipts or any financial records or properties of the GI Forum Women in her possession or under her control, immediately upon change of administration.
- f. Shall explain to her successor the recordkeeping methods used.
- g. In the event a vacancy occurs in such position and the Conference is not in session, the Chairwoman shall appoint an Interim Treasurer to serve until the next Conference or Local Chapter election, at which time one can be elected.

10. National/State/Local Chapter Women's Sergeant of Arms

The Women's Sergeant at Arms must meet the same qualifications as the Chairwoman and be subject to the same conditions as the Chairwoman except for term requirement.

- a. Shall maintain order and enforce any floor rules under the direction of the Chairwoman or presiding officer at all Women's meetings.
- b. Shall serve at the will of the Chairwoman.
- c. Shall have the power to deputize other persons to help maintain order and enforce floor rules, at the direction of the Chairwoman.

11. National/State/Local Chapter Youth Chair

The National Youth Chair, whether male or female, must fulfill the qualifications of Article 5, C. GI Forum Youth Chapter, of the Constitution. He/she shall be a U.S. Citizen and between the ages of 17 and 21 and must have been a member for two (2) years in good standing.

- a. He/she shall attend all Board meetings. If the Youth Chair is unable to attend a Board meeting, succession of Youth officers shall be followed until one is found that can attend.
- b. The powers, functions and duties of this office shall be the same in relation to the Commander to the entire organization, except that the person filling this office is subject to the supervision of the Commander, the Chairwoman and the Youth Advisor.
- c. Any issue or conflict arising between him/her and the Commander shall be resolved by the National Board, but until such matter is resolved, such officer shall abide by the supervision of the Commander, Chairwoman, and Youth Advisor.
- d. Vacancy in this office shall be filled by the Vice-Youth Chair for the unexpired term.

12. National/State/Local Chapter Youth Vice Chair

He/she shall meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the Youth Chair.

- a. He/she shall assist the National Youth Chair in every manner in which they are called to do so.
- b. Shall perform the duties and functions of the National Youth Chair in the absence or illness of the latter or at the request of the National Youth Chair.

- c. Shall exercise such other powers and perform such other duties and functions as normally fall within the scope of their office.
- d. Any vacancy in this office shall be filled by the next officer in the numerical line of succession.

13. National/State/Local Chapter Youth Secretary

He/she shall meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the Youth Chair.

- a. He/she shall record the minutes of all sessions of the Youth meetings.
- b. Shall print and submit the minutes to the Chair and other officers within thirty (30) days of any meeting.
- c. In the event a vacancy occurs in such position and the Conference is not in session, the Youth Chair with the guidance of the Youth Advisor shall appoint an Interim Secretary to serve until the next Conference or Local Chapter election, at which time one can be elected.

14. National/State/Local Chapter Youth Treasurer

He/she shall meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the Youth Chair.

- a. He/she shall be the custodian and the one responsible for all national youth fundraising projects.
- b. He/she shall be under the supervision of the Youth Advisor and Women's Treasurer.
- c. In the event a vacancy occurs in such position and the Conference is not in session, the Youth Chair with the guidance of the Youth Advisor and Women's Treasurer shall appoint an Interim Treasurer to serve until the next Conference or Local Chapter election, at which time one can be elected.

15. National/State/Local Chapter Youth Sergeant of Arms – The Youth Sergeant at Arms must meet the same qualifications and be subject to the same conditions as the Youth Chair.

- a. Shall maintain order and enforce any floor rules under the direction of the Youth Chair or presiding officer at all Youth meetings.

- b. At the direction of the Youth Advisor and Youth Chair, shall have the power to deputize other persons to help maintain order and enforce floor rules.

D. NATIONAL/STATE/LOCAL CHAPTER OFFICERS -APPOINTED

1. National Chaplain

The National Chaplain shall be appointed by the National Commander and must meet their same qualifications. The Chaplain shall be a member in good standing. The Chaplain shall not be subject to the five and three (5 and 3) year State and Local office requirement. The Chaplain shall serve at the will of the Commander. If possible, the Chaplain should be a duly ordained Minister or Priest. The Chaplain shall render the Official Prayer Invocation and Benediction at the Conference and Board meetings when present. The Chaplain shall also look after the spiritual welfare and guidance of AGIF-US and of the officers and members.

2. National/State/Local Chapter Parliamentarian

Parliamentarian shall be appointed by the Commander and must meet their same qualifications. The Parliamentarian shall be a member in good standing, and shall not be subject to the five and three (5 and 3) year State and Local office requirement. The Parliamentarian shall be the person in charge of keeping parliamentary order in all meetings of the AGIF and of the Board. It would be advisable that the Parliamentarian be a lawyer. This person's rulings on any parliamentary law and procedure issue arising during business of AGIF shall govern unless and until they are overruled by a 2/3 vote of the members present and voting whichever way a vote is taken in accordance with these Bylaws. The Parliamentarian shall serve at the will of the Commander. The Parliamentarian shall have a voice and vote at all gatherings of the AGIF, AGIF gatherings in their own State, their own Regional/District AGIF level gatherings and in their own Chapter.

3. National/State/Local Chapter Legal Advisor

The Legal Advisor shall be appointed by the Commander as soon as practical following election of the Commander. The Legal Advisor must meet the same qualifications as the Commander and shall be a member in good standing. Legal Advisors shall not be subject to the

five and three (5 and 3) year State and Local office requirement. The position shall be filled by a lawyer in good standing with their State Bar Association and shall serve at the will of the Commander.

- a. The Legal Advisor may attend all meetings of the AGIF, the Board and all AGIF Organization(s) and Board of Directors meetings of AGIF gatherings in any state where the AGIF may have an AGIF Organization(s).
- b. Shall counsel the AGIF-US on all legal transactions.
- c. Any litigation concerning the AGIF-US and/or AGIF Organizations will be reviewed by the National Board for jurisdiction and representation of legal counsel.
- d. The Legal Advisor will advise the National Commander on issues involving State Organizations and Local Chapters and participate in selecting legal counsel in the state where any litigation is filed.
- e. The Legal Advisor shall have a voice and a vote at the Conference and in all AGIF gatherings of their own AGIF Organization(s) except during a closed session of the National Board.

4. National/State/Local Chapter Women's Chaplain

The National Women's Chaplain shall be appointed by the Chairwoman and must meet the same qualifications as the Chairwoman and be subject to the same conditions as the Chairwoman with the exception of term requirement. She shall also look after the spiritual welfare and guidance of the members during the women's meetings. The National Women's Chaplain shall serve at the will of the Chairwoman. She shall fill in for the Forum Chaplain as needed.

5. National/State/Local Chapter Women's Parliamentarian

The National Women's Parliamentarian shall be appointed by the Chairwoman and must meet the same qualifications as the Chairwoman and be subject to the same conditions as the National Chairwoman with the exception of term requirement.

- a. She shall be in charge of keeping parliamentary order in all the women's meetings of the AGIF. Her rulings on any parliamentary law and procedure issue arising in the course of business of the Women's meetings shall govern unless and until they are overruled by a 2/3 vote

of the members present and voting; however, a vote is taken in accordance with this Bylaws.

- b. The Women's Parliamentarian shall serve at the will of the Chairwoman.

6. National/State/Local Chapter Youth Chaplain

The Youth Chaplain shall be appointed by the Youth Chair and must meet the same qualifications as the Youth Chair and be subject to the same conditions as the Youth Chair with the exception of the term requirement.

- a. They shall also look after the spiritual welfare and guidance of the members during the youth meetings.
- b. The Youth Chaplain shall serve at the will of the Youth Advisor and Youth Chair.

7. National/State/Local Chapter Youth Parliamentarian

The Youth Parliamentarian shall be appointed by the Youth Chair with approval of the Youth advisor and must meet the same qualifications as the Youth Chair and be subject to the same conditions as the Youth Chair with the exception of the term requirement.

- a. He/she shall be in charge of keeping parliamentary order in all the youth meetings of the AGIF.
- b. His/her rulings on any parliamentary law and procedure issue arising in the course of business of the Youth meetings shall govern unless and until they are overruled by a 2/3 vote of the members present and voting.
- c. The National Youth Parliamentarian shall serve at the will of the Youth Advisor and Youth Chair.

8. National/State/Local Chapter Youth Advisor

The Youth Advisor shall be selected by the Youth Chair in agreement with the Commander and Chairwoman.

- a. He/she shall serve or have served as a local, state or national officer and be familiar with the AGIF-US Constitution.
- b. He/she shall advise the Youth Chair, their officers and members on issues pertaining to the youth.
- c. He/she shall inform the Commander and Chairwoman of any concerns or changes pertaining to the Youth.
- d. He/she shall serve at the will of the National Youth Chair.

- e. Shall be responsible for all Youth funds.
- f. Shall have quarterly Virtual meetings with the youth of the various states that have youth chapters.

ARTICLE 13: COMMITTEES AND BOARDS

The Board may establish committees, for a limited purpose, abolish committees, change personnel within a committee and determine the jurisdiction of committees, subject to the provisions of this Article and guided by the direction of the National Conference.

A. National Advisory Committee – An AGIF National Advisory Committee, composed of all past National Commanders, National Chairwomen, and National Youth Chairs is hereby created. Its main function shall be to counsel and guide incoming AGIF-US Officers in order that fundamental AGIF-US policies and objectives are continued. The National Commander and other national officers shall seek the counsel of such Committee whenever basic policy decisions affecting the entire AGIF-US Organization(s) are to be made without time being available for submitting such issues to the National Board or the National Conference. This Committee; however, shall have no veto or voting powers.

B. National Board Membership

The National Commander has the right to appoint AGIF-US members in good standing to the following organizations listed below. The appointed members will participate at all National, State, and Local gatherings by providing a report to our membership about the appointed organization. If the members in the following committees fail to provide a report, they will be automatically removed from the organization to which they have been appointed.

1. SER Jobs for Progress National, Inc. - allowed five (5) members, AGIF members must apply to SER and are selected by SER.
2. VA Veterans Committee in Washington D.C. - allowed two (2) per organization.
3. Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility (HACR) – National Commander and National Chairwoman - allowed two (2).

4. National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA) – National Commander and National Chairwoman – allowed two (2).
5. National Veterans Outreach Program (NVOP) – the NVOP Board will select the members.

To avoid any apparent partiality, obligation or conflict of interest, any member employed by the AGIF, NVOP, SER or any similar or successor organization, shall not be eligible to vote for the AGIF National Commander, the National Chairwoman, and the National Youth Chair.

ARTICLE 14: NATIONAL OFFICE

The AGIF National Office of the AGIF-US shall be located at a site selected by the National Board. All financial, administrative and other records of the AGIF-US shall be kept at such office and shall be in the care of an AGIF member to be entitled as National Executive Officer, as the National Board may choose, and they shall be bonded at the cost of the AGIF-US. Mailing lists and other confidential material and records of the AGIF Organization(s) will not be released to any person or entity except by authorization of the National Board. The National Board alone shall appropriate such monies as are necessary for the proper administration of such office, keeping in mind personnel salaries, subject to submission of an annual accounting and budget.

ARTICLE 15: NATIONAL PUBLICATION

The National Board and/or the National Conference shall have the authority to provide for an electronic publication of all official newsletters for the AGIF-US.

ARTICLE 16: FINANCES

A. Calendar – The calendar year of the AGIF-US and AGIF organizations shall be established as the calendar year from January 1st to December 31st of each year. (Coincide with the annual elections to assist with the transition when there is a newly elected Treasurer)

B. Annual Operating Budget – With the recommendation of the Finance Committee, the National Board shall adopt an annual operating budget.

C. Accounting Procedures – Bank Signature Cards – The National Treasurer and the National Executive Officer or the Commander's designee shall utilize accounting procedures and fiscal procedures in preparation of financial statements and financial reports that conform to generally accepted accounting principles as recommended by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. It shall be required that in all AGIF-US banks or financial bank accounts at any AGIF level, at least two (2) signatures shall be required on all documents used to pay, withdraw funds or debit AGIF-US accounts. The signatures shall include the Treasurer and Commander or Vice-Commander; and officers must not be related. The above applies to all AGIF Organization(s).

D. Annual Audit – The financial accounts of the AGIF-US shall have an annual audit by a certified public accountant who shall give a report to the National Board. *Reference Public Law 105-231, 36 USC app. 5910. Sec.11. Audit of Financial Transactions.*

The financial accounts of AGIF Organizations, whose gross income is more than \$50,000 shall have their accounts reviewed by a certified public accountant who shall give a report to their AGIF Organization and to the AGIF State Board.

AGIF Organizations whose gross income is less than \$50,000 shall have a financial review annually by a Finance Committee with at least one non-member that has accounting experience, who shall give a report to their AGIF Organization and to the AGIF State Board.

The AGIF-US and all AGIF Organization(s) will keep receipts for all purchases and expenditures for a five (5) year period, or as required by law.

E. Annual Report of Activities – State Organization(s) shall submit an electronic report outlining the activities of the state including information from all Local Chapters during the preceding fiscal year to the National Office annually.

F. National Budget – The National Treasurer/ National Office or the Commander's designee shall present a proposed budget at the Mid-Year

- B. If the AGIF Organization fails to meet obligations imposed by the Constitution, Bylaws, and the AGIF Policies, Practices, and Procedures Manual; or ceases to function for six (6) months as an AGIF Chapter, or voluntarily ceases to function as an organization by refusing to pay dues or upon an order by the AGIF-US to surrender its Charter for good and sufficient cause; immediate steps shall be taken for revocation, suspension, or cancellation of the Charter.
- C. When an AGIF Chapter ceases to exist or is dissolved by its own accord or due to any good or sufficient cause; the AGIF-US shall revoke the Charter of the AGIF Chapter. On the revocation of an AGIF Charter by the AGIF-US, the AGIF Chapter may request reinstatement of their Charter within sixty (60) days, then the laws of the State where the AGIF Organization is situated shall apply as to disposition of organizational real estate and financial assets.
- D. The National and/or State Executive Board in which the AGIF Chapter is situated is authorized and will be empowered to take possession, custody and control of the Charter, all records, property, and assets of the organization that was obtained while the AGIF Chapter was operating under the name of the American GI Forum, including the use of its 501(c)(4) status.
- E. It will be the responsibility of the National and/or State Executive Board whether to seek disposition of the assets of the defunct AGIF Organization.

ARTICLE 19: GENERAL PROVISIONS

A. BASIC DOCUMENT

AGIF Constitution, Bylaws, and Policies, Practices, and Procedures Manual, adopted at the AGIF-US level, shall be the laws governing, all State AGIF Organization(s), At-Large AGIF Organization(s) and all Local, District/Regional AGIF Organization(s.)

B. NEPOTISM CLAUSE

No national officer, member of the National Board of Directors or member of a AGIF Organization shall vote or participate verbally in any manner in

the naming or selection of any officer who is related to them within the third degree by blood or marriage to a position for pay or compensation in AGIF-US nor shall such person vote or participate verbally in any manner on any issue affecting such a position.

If any officer or member in a National, State, or local AGIF Organization(s) is related within the third degree by blood or marriage, they shall recuse themselves from the decision-making process because of personal interest or unfairness. This is to avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety.

A Veteran and spouse or significant other shall not both be elected as Commander and Chairwoman on the Board of Directors. A Veteran shall not sit as Commander on both National and State Board of Directors simultaneously.

C. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The American GI Forum officers and board members are entrusted to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest occurs when a board member allows personal gain either or indirect to influence their judgment or action in the fulfillment of their duties and responsibilities.

A board member or officer's conduct shall be fair, impartial, and impersonal. A board member or officer shall act in a manner that is above reproach and always in the best interest of the AGIF-US. A board member or officer who believes there may be a conflict of interest shall disclose the situation to the Chair of the Ethics Committee who will take appropriate action to ensure the AGIF-US's best interests are protected. The situation shall be reported to the AGIF-US board for final determination. Nepotism is considered a Conflict of Interest. (Reference: Appendix E)

ARTICLE 20: RULES OF PROCEDURE

The Constitution, Bylaws and Policies, Practices, and Procedures Manual are the governing documents and shall serve as the rules of procedures at all meetings of AGIF-US and AGIF Organization(s.)

ARTICLE 21: POLITICAL ENDORSEMENT PROHIBITED

- A.** While This Organization seeks the participation of all citizens as individuals in political affairs, it is forbidden of all officers and members of AGIF-US and of all AGIF Organization(s) at every level to use the name "American GI Forum," or any other derivative or abbreviation of the same, for the support of any candidate for public office or political party.
- B.** Letterheads, emblems, hats, shirts, pins, and other insignia or material identified with the AGIF-US or AGIF Organizations shall not be used by any member or by any AGIF Organization(s) when participating in political events as individuals. Members of the AGIF-US will do their utmost not to be Identified politically as officers or members of AGIF-US. Do not take pictures with political candidates while wearing any of the above listed items, when they are campaigning for elections.

ARTICLE 22: POWERS OF STATE AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

A. BYLAWS AND POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

All State, Local AGIF Organization(s) and At-Large AGIF Organization(s) shall adopt and follow the Constitution; Bylaws; and Policies, Practices, and Procedures Manual of AGIF-US as their own Governing Documents. **Nothing shall conflict expressly or in substance with the provisions of the AGIF-US Constitution, AGIF-US Bylaws, AGIF-US Policies Practices, and Procedures Manual, and Appendices.**

B. FUNDRAISING

AGIF Organization(s) shall have the power to raise money by dues, projects and by other lawful means for their own purposes and to set up their own procedures for contests and other fundraising functions within their jurisdiction and activities. Accounting procedures must be implemented including receipts for all expenditures and records of all income earned and donations received. Complete reports must be presented to the Chapter membership and State Board.

C. LOCAL ELECTIONS

All Local AGIF Chapters shall elect their officers no later than the month of January of each year and notify their respective state officers of the names, addresses, zip code, phone numbers, and email address of each member and newly elected officers. The State Office will notify the National Office of the newly elected officers contact information by January 31st. All records that include members' personal information shall be kept confidential and shall not be released to the public or any other member.

D. STATE ELECTIONS

All State AGIF Chapters shall elect their officers at least thirty (30) days prior to the AGIF State Conference and notify the National Office of the names, addresses, zip codes, phone numbers, and email address of the elected officers. At least two-thirds of the chapters must be in attendance to hold elections. (Example: 3 chapters in state; at least 2 chapters must be in attendance.) State Officers shall keep members personal information confidential.

E. BOOKS AND RECORDS OF ACCOUNT

AGIF-US and each AGIF Organization(s) shall keep correct and complete books and records of account and minutes of any proceeding of their organization involving any of its members, the Board of Directors or any committee having authority under the Board of Directors.

F. RIGHT TO INSPECT BOOKS AND RECORDS

All books and records of the corporation may be inspected by any member in good standing, having the right to vote in any proceeding of the corporation, or by any agent or attorney of such member, for any proper purpose at any reasonable time.

The right to inspect books shall follow these guidelines:

1. A member in good standing can only review books and records concerning their own chapter.
2. The member cannot be involved in any litigation involving the AGIF-US or AGIF Organization.

National Conference of anticipated income and expenses for the AGIF-US for the fiscal year.

ARTICLE 17: THE INTERRELATIONSHIP OF AGIF ORGANIZATION(S) – NONPROFIT CORPORATE REQUIREMENTS – PROPERTY TITLES

Every AGIF Organization(s) beneath the AGIF-US level shall be affiliated with AGIF Organization(s) and AGIF Chapters beneath the State level shall be affiliated of their respective State AGIF Organization(s) as well. All shall be subject to follow the Constitution, the Bylaws, and the Policies, Practices, and Procedures Manual. The relationship of all AGIF Organization(s) shall be exclusively to help pursue the Purpose clauses of the Constitution and all AGIF Organization(s) shall be autonomous and shall be individually responsible for any civil liability or criminal penalty incurred by them.

The AGIF National, State, At-Large and Washington, D.C Chapter, shall be required to operate under a non-profit corporate entity and all AGIF Organization(s) at any level engaged in the operation of or which shall operate a hall for a meeting and/or recreational purposes (such as bingos, dances, social programs, and sports) or which shall operate a bar providing beverages and/or food shall immediately have to achieve non-profit corporate status, or they shall not operate under the AGIF name. No operation under the AGIF name shall exist for the personal monetary gain of AGIF members.

All AGIF Organization(s) shall file an IRS 990 tax form as determined by IRS criteria (post card form under \$50,000 annually) each year and shall report to their state the local chapter name and Employer Identification Number (EIN). See Glossary for definitions of 501 (c)(4) and 501 (c)(3).

ARTICLE 18: TITLE TO AGIF PROPERTY

- A. The National and/or State Executive Board, after notice and hearing, may cancel, suspend or revoke the Charter of an AGIF organization for any good and sufficient cause.

The AGIF State Board of Directors must adopt the Text in principle by simple majority vote of members present (50% plus one) of their voting membership.

Next, the AGIF State Board of Directors shall send the results of their State vote to the chair of the Constitution Committee within twenty (20) days. The Chair of the Constitution Committee will forward the Text and the State Vote results to the committee and to each member of the AGIF National Board of Directors at least thirty (30) days before a meeting called by the National Commander. The members of the National Board shall consider and debate the Text and vote on adoption or rejection in part or in whole. Adoption must carry by two-third (2/3) vote of Board.

Finally, the Text shall be presented to the ensuing AGIF National Conference, which shall consider the Text. Upon approval of the Text by a two-third (2/3) vote of said National Conference, the National Commander shall pronounce the Text as approved in final form.

ARTICLE 25: ENACTING AND REPEALING PROVISION

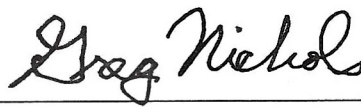
When these Bylaws of the AGIF-US are approved by the National Conference, they shall supersede past Bylaws approved by the National Board of Directors or National Conference or AGIF-US and AGIF Organization(s).

All previous existing Bylaws are null and void upon approval of these Bylaws.

ADOPTED by the AGIF-US on this 27th day of July 2022 at the National Conference gathered in Colorado Springs, Colorado.



Luis Vazquez-Contes
AGIF-US National Commander



Greg Nichols
AGIF-US National Secretary

AGIF-US GLOSSARY

1. **501 (C) (3)** – Organizations organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, testing for public safety, literary, educational, or other specified purposes that meet certain other requirements are tax exempt under Internal Revenue Code Section 501 (c) (3.)
2. **501 (C) (4)** – Internal Revenue Code section 501 (c) (4) provides for exemption under social welfare organizations. An IRC 501 (c) (4) a veterans' organization must be organized as a not-for-profit organization and operated exclusively for social welfare purposes. Its primary activities must promote the common good and general welfare of the people of the community. Social welfare activities do not include social, political or business activities. The net earnings of an IRC 501 (c) (4) organization may not be used for private purposes or to benefit private individuals (inurement).
3. **5 Years/3 Years Qualification for Commanders and Chairwomen** – For a Veteran to qualify to be Commander at any level of the AGIF-US or AGIF Organization(s) this person must have been a member in good standing for a minimum of five (5) years preceding the election. If the person has held a State Office or a National Office in the AGIF-US for at least two (2) years, the five (5) year requirement shall be reduced to three (3) years.
4. **AGIF/GI Forum** - shall refer to the American GI Forum in a general sense.
5. **AGIF-US/AGIF National Organization** - shall refer more specifically to the national organization, American GI Forum of the United States.
6. **AGIF-(name of State) Organization (such as California)** – shall reference to the particular statewide AGIF Organizations named in the Bylaws.
7. **AGIF Chapters** – shall have reference to all AGIF Local Chapters, including At-Large Chapters, Regional, District, and also shall reference to a particular Chapter, whether GI Forum, GI Forum Women, or GI Forum Youth, when so named.

person that has a close relationship with the organization or is able to exercise significant control over the organization.

16. **Issue** – shall reference controversy or matter in dispute which would ordinarily be settled by a vote taken or by agreement. It shall not reference an election of a candidate for AGIF office.
17. **Limited Constitutional Democracy** – any central government in which that government's powers over the people are limited by a written or otherwise agreed to constitution or overriding rule of law.
18. **Local AGIF Organizations or Local** - shall have reference to all the various or particular AGIF Chapters or At-Large Chapters, in the various cities or communities, as well as to any District or Regional, if any, or to particular AGIF groups, depending on contextual use.
19. **National Board**- shall consist of elected AGIF National Officers, as well as all State GI Forum Commanders, State GI Forum Chairwomen, and State GI Forum Youth Chairs.
20. **National Executive Board** – shall consist of elected AGIF National GI Forum Officers, National GI Forum Women Officers and the National GI Forum Youth Chair.
21. **National Executive Director or Executive Director** – shall have reference to the AGIF National Executive Director or to anyone with a similar title or position.
22. **National Office** – Shall have reference to the designated headquarters of the AGIF-US, wherever it is located.
23. **PP&PM** – Policies, Practices, and Procedures Manual.
24. **Present and Voting** – shall have reference to votes actually cast by whatever number of delegates or members are physically present on the floor and qualified to vote under the rules set out in the Bylaws, and whatever rules are in effect at any AGIF Conference, meeting or gathering, provided such rules are not in conflict with the Bylaws. No proxy voting allowed.

32. This Organization – shall refer to the American GI Forum of the United States.

33. Virtual Meetings – a meeting held using an electronic program such as Zoom, Skype, Duo, or Face Time which allows the participants to see and hear each other and makes it possible to do a roll call of participants. A virtual meeting is a legal meeting where participants are allowed to vote.

the naming or selection of any officer who is related to them within the third degree by blood or marriage to a position for pay or compensation in AGIF-US nor shall such person vote or participate verbally in any manner on any issue affecting such a position.

If any officer or member in a National, State, or local AGIF Organization(s) is related within the third degree by blood or marriage, they shall recuse themselves from the decision-making process because of personal interest or unfairness. This is to avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety.

A Veteran and spouse or significant other shall not both be elected as Commander and Chairwoman on the Board of Directors. A Veteran shall not sit as Commander on both National and State Board of Directors simultaneously.

C. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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- B.** Letterheads, emblems, hats, shirts, pins, and other insignia or material identified with the AGIF-US or AGIF Organizations shall not be used by any member or by any AGIF Organization(s) when participating in political events as individuals. Members of the AGIF-US will do their utmost not to be Identified politically as officers or members of AGIF-US. Do not take pictures with political candidates while wearing any of the above listed items, when they are campaigning for elections.

ARTICLE 22: POWERS OF STATE AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

A. BYLAWS AND POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

All State, Local AGIF Organization(s) and At-Large AGIF Organization(s) shall adopt and follow the Constitution; Bylaws; and Policies, Practices, and Procedures Manual of AGIF-US as their own Governing Documents. **Nothing shall conflict expressly or in substance with the provisions of the AGIF-US Constitution, AGIF-US Bylaws, AGIF-US Policies Practices, and Procedures Manual, and Appendices.**

B. FUNDRAISING

AGIF Organization(s) shall have the power to raise money by dues, projects and by other lawful means for their own purposes and to set up their own procedures for contests and other fundraising functions within their jurisdiction and activities. Accounting procedures must be implemented including receipts for all expenditures and records of all income earned and donations received. Complete reports must be presented to the Chapter membership and State Board.

C. LOCAL ELECTIONS

All Local AGIF Chapters shall elect their officers no later than the month of January of each year and notify their respective state officers of the names, addresses, zip code, phone numbers, and email address of each member and newly elected officers. The State Office will notify the National Office of the newly elected officers contact information by January 31st. All records that include members' personal information shall be kept confidential and shall not be released to the public or any other member.

D. STATE ELECTIONS

All State AGIF Chapters shall elect their officers at least thirty (30) days prior to the AGIF State Conference and notify the National Office of the names, addresses, zip codes, phone numbers, and email address of the elected officers. At least two-thirds of the chapters must be in attendance to hold elections. (Example: 3 chapters in state; at least 2 chapters must be in attendance.) State Officers shall keep members personal information confidential.

E. BOOKS AND RECORDS OF ACCOUNT

AGIF-US and each AGIF Organization(s) shall keep correct and complete books and records of account and minutes of any proceeding of their organization involving any of its members, the Board of Directors or any committee having authority under the Board of Directors.

F. RIGHT TO INSPECT BOOKS AND RECORDS

All books and records of the corporation may be inspected by any member in good standing, having the right to vote in any proceeding of the corporation, or by any agent or attorney of such member, for any proper purpose at any reasonable time.

The right to inspect books shall follow these guidelines:

1. A member in good standing can only review books and records concerning their own chapter.
2. The member cannot be involved in any litigation involving the AGIF-US or AGIF Organization.

3. The member shall provide a 2-week notice to the AGIF Secretary, who will notify the Board.
4. The member shall indicate in their notice as to what records they are interested in reviewing.
5. The member shall pay a reasonable administrative fee for review of records.
6. No copies or photographs shall be made by the member unless there is a court order requiring the production of records.
7. An AGIF officer and member of the organization shall be always present during the requested review.
8. No records older than five (5) years may be reviewed.

G. APPLICATION OF STATE LAW

This section may not be construed to contravene any applicable State law.

ARTICLE 23: BYLAWS

The Bylaws shall be revised as needed by a Constitution Committee appointed by the National Commander and National Chairwoman with approval by the National Board. The Bylaws shall be reviewed annually by the committee appointed above.

ARTICLE 24: REVISION PROCEDURE SECTION

These Bylaws shall be reviewed by the Constitution Committee on an annual basis, and they will be responsible for minor revisions. Any proposed minor revisions will be submitted and reviewed at the Mid-Year Conference by the National Board.

Proposed additions/revisions to these Bylaws, must first be submitted to the National Legal Advisor, the National Parliamentarian and the National Commander. The three (3) named officers shall decide whether the proposed Text is in proper form. They shall be free to suggest and/or aid in re-writing, if necessary.

Within thirty (30) days the Text shall be sent to the Chair of the Constitution Committee who will send the Text to all legally chartered chapters within State Organizations of the AGIF – US and At-Large Chapters for their review.

The AGIF State Board of Directors must adopt the Text in principle by simple majority vote of members present (50% plus one) of their voting membership.

Next, the AGIF State Board of Directors shall send the results of their State vote to the chair of the Constitution Committee within twenty (20) days. The Chair of the Constitution Committee will forward the Text and the State Vote results to the committee and to each member of the AGIF National Board of Directors at least thirty (30) days before a meeting called by the National Commander. The members of the National Board shall consider and debate the Text and vote on adoption or rejection in part or in whole. Adoption must carry by two-third (2/3) vote of Board.

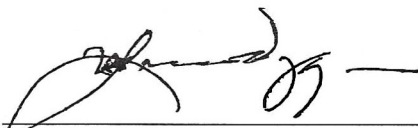
Finally, the Text shall be presented to the ensuing AGIF National Conference, which shall consider the Text. Upon approval of the Text by a two-third (2/3) vote of said National Conference, the National Commander shall pronounce the Text as approved in final form.

ARTICLE 25: ENACTING AND REPEALING PROVISION


When these Bylaws of the AGIF-US are approved by the National Conference, they shall supersede past Bylaws approved by the National Board of Directors or National Conference or AGIF-US and AGIF Organization(s).

All previous existing Bylaws are null and void upon approval of these Bylaws.

ADOPTED by the AGIF-US on this 27th day of July 2022 at the National Conference gathered in Colorado Springs, Colorado.



Luis Vazquez-Contes
AGIF-US National Commander



Greg Nichols
AGIF-US National Secretary

Prepared by the Constitution Committee Members on this date May 25, 2022.

Leona Flores, Chairperson - Michigan

Angel Zuniga, Vice-Chairperson - Texas

Barbara Olivas, Committee Member – Kansas

Deb Galvan, Committee Member – Nebraska

Dolores M. Martinez, Committee Member – Colorado

Ernesto Hernandez, Committee Member - Washington, D.C.

Fernando Rodriguez, Committee Member - Wisconsin

AGIF-US GLOSSARY

1. **501 (C) (3)** – Organizations organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, testing for public safety, literary, educational, or other specified purposes that meet certain other requirements are tax exempt under Internal Revenue Code Section 501 (c) (3.)
2. **501 (C) (4)** – Internal Revenue Code section 501 (c) (4) provides for exemption under social welfare organizations. An IRC 501 (c) (4) a veterans' organization must be organized as a not-for-profit organization and operated exclusively for social welfare purposes. Its primary activities must promote the common good and general welfare of the people of the community. Social welfare activities do not include social, political or business activities. The net earnings of an IRC 501 (c) (4) organization may not be used for private purposes or to benefit private individuals (inurement).
3. **5 Years/3 Years Qualification for Commanders and Chairwomen** – For a Veteran to qualify to be Commander at any level of the AGIF-US or AGIF Organization(s) this person must have been a member in good standing for a minimum of five (5) years preceding the election. If the person has held a State Office or a National Office in the AGIF-US for at least two (2) years, the five (5) year requirement shall be reduced to three (3) years.
4. **AGIF/GI Forum** - shall refer to the American GI Forum in a general sense.
5. **AGIF-US/AGIF National Organization** - shall refer more specifically to the national organization, American GI Forum of the United States.
6. **AGIF-(name of State) Organization (such as California)** – shall reference to the particular statewide AGIF Organizations named in the Bylaws.
7. **AGIF Chapters** – shall have reference to all AGIF Local Chapters, including At-Large Chapters, Regional, District, and also shall reference to a particular Chapter, whether GI Forum, GI Forum Women, or GI Forum Youth, when so named.

8. **AGIF National Conference or National Conference** – shall have reference to what has been known as the **National Convention**. Because the gathering offers an opportunity to members of the AGIF from all Organization levels for an exchange of ideas on veterans, social, educational and economic issues; for workshops which include Youth Leadership; for dialogue oral and written; for floor debate; and for the practical use of parliamentary law procedures. The gathering can be referred to as The AGIF National Training and Educational Conference; however, the gathering may be referred to as simply, the National Conference.
9. **AGIF Organization(s)** – shall have reference to all AGIF local Chapters and State Organization(s), At-Large Chapters, and Regional and District Organization of the GI Forum, GI Forum Women, or GI Forum Youth.
10. **At-Large AGIF Organizations** – shall have reference to individual charters within a state, which does not have the required number of three (3) of Local GI Forum chartered chapters.
11. **Benefit or Inurement** – prohibits the use of income or assets of a tax-exempt Organization to directly or indirectly unduly benefit an individual or other person that has a close relationship with the organization or is able to exercise significant control over the organization.
12. **Chapter Board of Directors or Local Chapter Board** - shall consist of all AGIF elected officers of any local level chapter.
13. **Good Standing** – This refers to the status of a member within the AGIF-US or AGIF Organization who has paid their dues and who abides by the purpose of the organization abiding by the Constitution, Bylaws, and Policies, Practices, and Procedures Manual.
14. **Governing Documents** – The Governing Documents for the AGIF-US and AGIF Organization(s) are the AGIF-US Constitution; AGIF-US Bylaws; and Policies, Practices, and Procedures Manual.
15. **Inurement or Benefit** – prohibits the use of income or assets of a tax-exempt organization to directly or indirectly unduly benefit an individual or other

person that has a close relationship with the organization or is able to exercise significant control over the organization.

16. **Issue** – shall reference controversy or matter in dispute which would ordinarily be settled by a vote taken or by agreement. It shall not reference an election of a candidate for AGIF office.
17. **Limited Constitutional Democracy** – any central government in which that government's powers over the people are limited by a written or otherwise agreed to constitution or overriding rule of law.
18. **Local AGIF Organizations or Local** - shall have reference to all the various or particular AGIF Chapters or At-Large Chapters, in the various cities or communities, as well as to any District or Regional, if any, or to particular AGIF groups, depending on contextual use.
19. **National Board**- shall consist of elected AGIF National Officers, as well as all State GI Forum Commanders, State GI Forum Chairwomen, and State GI Forum Youth Chairs.
20. **National Executive Board** – shall consist of elected AGIF National GI Forum Officers, National GI Forum Women Officers and the National GI Forum Youth Chair.
21. **National Executive Director or Executive Director** – shall have reference to the AGIF National Executive Director or to anyone with a similar title or position.
22. **National Office** – Shall have reference to the designated headquarters of the AGIF-US, wherever it is located.
23. **PP&PM** – Policies, Practices, and Procedures Manual.
24. **Present and Voting** – shall have reference to votes actually cast by whatever number of delegates or members are physically present on the floor and qualified to vote under the rules set out in the Bylaws, and whatever rules are in effect at any AGIF Conference, meeting or gathering, provided such rules are not in conflict with the Bylaws. No proxy voting allowed.

- 25. Quorum** – The quorum required for all AGIF-US meetings shall be a majority of elected officers to the National Board to legally transact business (Simple majority of Executive Board (50% plus 1) of elected State Officers.) All in the meeting shall be in good standing.

The quorum required for AGIF State meetings shall be the majority of elected officers to the State Board to legally transact business. (State Officers and the 50% plus one of the Chapter officers – (chapter commanders, chapter chairwomen, and chapter youth chairs for all chapters in the State.) All members in the meeting shall be in good standing.

The quorum for AGIF Local, Regional, District, and At-Large Chapters' meetings is three (3) officers and five (5) members in good standing at the meeting to legally conduct business.

- 26. Recuse** – to withdraw from the decision-making process because of personal interests or unfairness
- 27. State AGIF Organization(s)** – shall have reference to all, or any particular State AGIF Organization, when so named.
- 28. State Board of Directors or State Board** – shall consist of all AGIF elected state level officers, as well as Local Commanders, Local Chairwomen, and Local Youth Chairs.
- 29. Suspended** – Officially prohibits (someone) from holding their usual post or carrying on their usual role for a particular length of time. For example, two officers were suspended from the AGIF-US pending the outcome of the investigation.
- 30. Tenet** – the principles and purposes of the AGIF Organization held in common by members of the organization.
- 31. Third Degree of Relationship** – The following persons are relatives within the third degree of relationship: great-grandparent, grandparent, parent, uncle, aunt, brother, sister, child, grandchild, great-grandchild, nephew, or niece.

32. This Organization – shall refer to the American GI Forum of the United States.

33. Virtual Meetings – a meeting held using an electronic program such as Zoom, Skype, Duo, or Face Time which allows the participants to see and hear each other and makes it possible to do a roll call of participants. A virtual meeting is a legal meeting where participants are allowed to vote.