

AMERICAN CONFERENCE OF CANTORS, INC.

**CONSTITUTION
AND BY-LAWS**

**American Conference of Cantors
1375 Remington Road, Suite M
Schaumburg, IL 60173-4844**

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I. NAME

This organization shall be known as the American Conference of Cantors, hereinafter referred to as the ACC.

ARTICLE II. AFFILIATION

The ACC is an independent professional clergy organization that works in association with the Union for Reform Judaism.

ARTICLE III. PURPOSE

The ACC supports its members in their sacred calling as emissaries for Judaism and for Jewish music. ACC leadership draws upon the energies and aspirations of its individual members, while responding to the expressed needs of the larger membership and the Reform movement. The Conference inspires its members to embrace a shared dynamic vision of the cantorate. This vision is realized through programs and initiatives that will ensure a strong and successful organization. Each such effort is conceived according to carefully determined goals and criteria. Through our members, we provide our communities with a compelling experience of text, music, learning, relationship to one another and connectedness to God. We establish our organization as a self-assured and securely funded entity, acting in full partnership with other representational bodies of the Reform movement and worldwide Jewry.

ARTICLE IV. STATUS

The ACC is organized exclusively for religious and charitable activities as provided in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by a corporation exempt from Federal Income Tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

ARTICLE V. MEMBERSHIP

All applications for membership shall be submitted to the Membership Committee for recommendation, and to the Board of Directors for final disposition. There shall be the following categories of membership: Regular Membership, Associate Membership, Student Membership, and Honorary Membership. All members of the ACC are bound by the governing documents of the Conference.

Section 1. Regular Membership. Regular Membership. Regular Membership may be secured by any ordained or certified Cantor, or a graduate of any cantorial college, seminary or school recognized by the Board of Directors of the ACC. A Regular Member in good standing of the American Conference of Cantors shall be entitled to

voting privileges, placement privileges, and participation in the ACC Retirement Plan and ACC Insurance Plans and in all of the organizational activities of the ACC. The Board of Directors may bestow the honor of Lifetime Membership on ACC members in good standing.

Section 2. Associate Membership. Associate Membership in the ACC shall be conferred upon candidates meeting the qualifications and criteria set forth by the Board of Directors. This category may be based on longevity of service, seminary cantorial ordination outside of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, and any other categories or qualifications deemed mandatory by the Board of Directors. Associate Members shall have no vote. Associate Members shall be entitled to participate in all activities of the ACC, including the ACC Retirement Plan and ACC Insurance Plans. Rules for participation by Associate Members in the placement process are contained in the placement guidelines of the Joint Cantorial Placement Commission.

Section 3. Student Membership. Student Membership is open to matriculated students of the Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music of the Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion. It shall entitle the member to participate in the general activities of the ACC other than voting and placement (with the sole exception of placement privileges for those students who are to be graduated within that current year). Students may not serve on any of the standing committees of the ACC except by special invitation from the President and upon advice and consent of the Board of Directors.

Section 4. Honorary Membership. Persons who have made outstanding contributions in the field of Jewish music may be elected as Honorary Members of the ACC by the Board of Directors. They shall have voice but no vote. Under no circumstances shall this honor be construed to bestow the title of Cantor to an honoree.

ARTICLE VI. GUILD OF TEMPLE MUSICIANS

The Guild of Temple Musicians is an affiliate of the ACC. The Guild of Temple Musicians, hereinafter referred to as the GTM, shall agree to adhere to all Constitutional regulations and By-Laws of the ACC.

ARTICLE VII. GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The legislative body of the ACC and its highest authority shall be the General Assembly, which generally convenes at a regular annual convention of the ACC, or at a special convention of the ACC. Only Regular Members in good standing shall have a right to vote at a meeting of the General Assembly.

ARTICLE VIII. MEETINGS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Section 1. Meetings. The General Assembly shall meet annually, at such time and place as the General Assembly or the Board of Directors may determine. Special meetings of the General Assembly may be called: (1) by the President; (2) by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Directors; or, (3) upon written request to the Board of Directors by 20 Regular Members in good standing.

Section 2. Telephonic and Electronic Meetings. Bona fide meetings of the General Assembly and of the Board of Directors may take place telephonically and/or by electronic media, and all business of the Conference may if necessary be conducted therein.

Section 3. Voting. Any Regular Member in good standing, as of 10 days before a meeting of the General Assembly, is entitled to one vote.

Section 4. Quorum. A quorum of the General Assembly shall consist of 15% of the number of Regular Members in good standing of the ACC. In the absence of a quorum, reports may be presented but no vote may take place. In the absence of a quorum, the President shall have the authority to deem a matter an emergency, and to bring the matter for final disposition before the Board of Directors.

Section 5.. Parliamentary Procedure. Except as otherwise provided herein, meetings of the General Assembly and the Board of Directors shall be conducted in accordance with parliamentary usage as set forth in the latest revised edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENTS

This Constitution and the By-Laws may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the General Assembly of the ACC by a two-thirds vote. Amendments are endorsed by a simple majority vote of the Board of Directors, and shall be submitted in writing to the voting membership no later than fifteen days in advance of the date of the call for such an action.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Composition. All Board of Directors members, being Regular Members in good standing, shall have the power to vote, with those exceptions noted in these By-Laws. The Board of Directors shall be constituted as follows:

a. Representatives

(i) Four Regional Representatives, each elected for a three-year term by a plurality vote of the Regular Members of the ACC in good standing within that region. The regions are: EAST (CT, DC, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VA, VT, WV), SOUTH(AL, AR, FL, GA, LA, MS, NC, OK, PR, SC, TN, TX, VI and Bahamas), CENTRAL (IA, IL, IN, KS, KY, Canada East of Winnipeg, MI, MN, MO, ND, NE, Western NY, OH, Western PA, SD and WI), and WEST (Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Western Texas, Washington, Wyoming, and the Canadian provinces of Alberta, British Columbia, and Saskatchewan).

(ii) Sixteen Representatives At Large, each elected for a three-year term by a plurality vote of Regular Members of the ACC in good standing.

(iii) Seven Officers (comprising the Executive Committee) – President, 4 Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer and a Secretary, each elected for a three-year term by a plurality vote of Regular Members of the ACC in good standing. Officers may not be nominated nor serve simultaneously as Representatives.

(iv) Past Presidents of the ACC. The immediate Past President of the ACC shall be a member of the Board of Directors with voice and vote during the administration immediately following their incumbency. All other Past Presidents of the ACC shall be non-voting ex-officio members of the Board of Directors.

(v) The president of the Guild of Temple Musicians (GTM) or due to the president's absence or ineligibility, the first vice president or other officer designated by the GTM. The GTM president has voice and vote.

(vi) The non-voting ex-officio members of the Board of Directors shall also consist of the following:

- (a) The President of the URJ
- (b) The Director of the Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music
- (c) A representative of the DFSSM Student Association

- (d) The chair of the DFSSM Alumni Association
- (e) The chair of the Joint Cantorial Placement Commission (JCPC);
- (f) The chair of the ACC Retirement Plan Trustees
- (g) The chair of the ACC Endowment Fund
- (h) The chair of the Transcontinental Music Publications Executive Committee

Section 2. Nomination Procedure.

- (a) Elections for representatives to the Board of Directors shall take place annually, such that one-third of the Board is elected each year. In the event of a change in the Constitution or Bylaws that alters the distribution of electable seats or length of term of service, the Board of Directors shall empower the Nominating Committee to adjust terms of office accordingly to effectuate an even distribution of electable seats each year.
- (b) A Slate of Nominations for Representatives shall be made by the Nominating Committee from among Regular Members in good standing. The date of circulation to the Membership shall be no later than four months prior to the start of the annual meeting of the General Assembly.
- (c) Additional nominations of eligible candidates may be made by petition of ten regular members to the Nominating Committee no later than two weeks after the date of circulation of the slate to the Membership.
- (d) Ballots shall be distributed no later than four weeks after the date of circulation of the slate.
- (e) Ballots shall be returned to the Nominating Committee with a postmark or date of electronic transmission that is no later than 30 days after the date of the distribution of the ballots.

Section 3. Meetings. The Board of Directors shall meet at least two times a year at such time and place as the President shall designate. Failure by a Board member to attend any two consecutive meetings may be grounds for removal from the Board by majority vote of the Board. Special meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held on the written request of six members thereof, or when the President shall so order. Nine members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum.

Section 4. Vacancies. A vacancy occurring in the Board of Directors mid-term shall be filled for the remainder of the term by the Presidential appointment with majority approval by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE II. OFFICERS

Section 1. Composition.

(a) President. The President is the Senior Governing Officer of the ACC. The President shall preside at meetings of the Board of Directors. Except as otherwise directed by

the General Assembly, the President shall preside at meetings of the General Assembly and shall have the power to designate others to preside over such meetings from time to time. The President shall appoint the various committees of the Board of Directors, appoint the chairs of such committees, and may replace any such chair in consultation with the Executive Committee.

(b) Vice-Presidents. The Vice-Presidents of the ACC shall perform such duties as may be prescribed from time to time by the President of the ACC, in consultation with the Executive Committee.

(c) Treasurer. The Treasurer shall oversee and safeguard the financial resources of the ACC to ensure its fiscal health and strength. Additional duties may be prescribed from time to time by the President of the ACC, in consultation with the Executive Committee.

(d) Secretary. The Secretary will be designated to record and share the minutes of all open meetings of the Board of Directors and the General Assembly with the members of the ACC. Additional duties may be prescribed from time to time by the President of the ACC, in consultation with the Executive Committee.

Section 2. Terms of Office. Each Officer shall be elected for a term of three years. The President may not serve more than two consecutive terms.

Section 3. Nomination Procedure.

(a) Nominations for Executive Officers shall be made by the Nominating Committee from among incumbent officers or members of the Board of Directors. The date of circulation to the membership shall be no later than seven months prior to the start of the annual meeting of the General Assembly. Other nominations of eligible candidates may be made by petition by ten Regular Members to the Nominating Committee within two weeks of the distribution of the slate. There shall be a separate vote for each office.

(b) Ballots shall be distributed no later than four weeks after the date of circulation of the slate.

(c) Ballots shall be returned to the Nominating Committee with a postmark or date of electronic transmission that is no later than 30 days after the date of the distribution of the ballots.

Section 4. Presidential Vacancy. In case the Presidency should become vacant, a new President shall be elected from among the ACC officers by a majority vote of such officers. The new President shall serve for the remainder of the term of the former President. The Board of Directors shall choose by a majority vote from among the

Board's regular membership a successor for the unexpired term of the office vacated by the new President.

ARTICLE III. FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year shall begin on the first day of August of each year and end on the thirty-first day of July of the following year. A statement showing budgeted and actual income and expenditures shall be presented at the meeting of the General Assembly during each annual convention.

ARTICLE IV. FINANCIAL EXAMINATION

The financial records of the ACC are compiled and reviewed by a Certified Public Accountant annually. Audits shall occur from time to time and no less frequently than every five years by an auditor chosen and funded by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE V. BUDGET

The President shall appoint a Budget Committee chaired by the Treasurer consisting of no fewer than three members of the Board of Directors, exclusive of the ex-officio members of such Committee. At each annual convention of the ACC, the Budget Committee shall submit to the General Assembly for its action a comprehensive and detailed budget for the next fiscal year. The budget and any additional monetary appropriations shall require the affirmative vote of the majority of the members of the General Assembly present and voting at the meeting. The budget may be amended from time to time by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members of the Board of Directors present and voting at a duly constituted meeting thereof. Per ACC Constitution Article VIII, Section 2, that vote may occur electronically.

ARTICLE VI. DUES

Section 1. Authority to Set Dues. Annual Dues for all members of the ACC shall be set by the Board of Directors from time to time and approved at a meeting of the General Assembly. Lifetime and Honorary Members shall not be required to pay annual membership dues.

Section 2. Dues Payable Date. Annual Dues shall be paid to the ACC no later than October 31 of the current year.

ARTICLE VII. SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

Section 1. Authority to Suspend for Nonpayment. The Board of Directors may, upon notification by certified mail to the member's last known address, suspend any member who has not paid dues by December 31 of the current fiscal year. Any member so suspended may be reinstated after payment of all dues plus a reinstatement fee.

Section 2. Procedure for Suspension for Ethics and Other Violations. The President shall appoint a Committee on Ethics and Appeals consisting of no less than three members of the Board of Directors, exclusive of the ex-officio members of such Committee. When members of the ACC are charged with a violation of the ACC Code of Ethics or JCPC Placement Procedures or of other regulatory guidelines adopted by the ACC, or misconduct which would render them unworthy of membership, the Committee on Ethics and Appeals shall make a thorough investigation of these charges in accordance with the Code of Ethics (Part II, Article IV), and shall have disciplinary powers short of suspension or expulsion. In those instances where, in the view of the Committee on Ethics and Appeals, suspension or expulsion is called for, the matter will be referred to the Board of Directors for a hearing of these charges. Members thus charged shall have full opportunity to defend themselves before the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall have discretion to dismiss the charge or levy appropriate penalties, including suspension or expulsion, of the member charged.

Section 3. Procedure for Expulsion. In the instances where, in the view of the Board of Directors, expulsion is called for, the matter shall be referred to the ACC at its next meeting of the General Assembly after due notice to the membership, in accordance with the Code of Ethics (Part II, Article IV). Appropriate steps for *t'shuvah* shall be determined at the time of expulsion and presented to the membership of the ACC at the aforementioned meeting of the General Assembly. Members thus charged shall have full opportunity to defend themselves before the ACC membership, in accordance with the parliamentary authority adopted by the ACC. The session at which such a trial shall be heard shall be an executive session.

Section 4. Two-thirds Vote Required for Expulsion. No expulsion shall be valid except by at least a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members of the ACC duly registered to vote and present at the session and with a quorum present.

Section 5. Notice of Expulsion. Notice of the expulsion of a member shall be sent to every member of the ACC by the Secretary.

Section 6. Readmittance. A Cantor previously expelled from the ACC may be readmitted to the membership upon application and approval of two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VIII. BANK DEPOSITS

All banks of deposit for ACC funds shall be named by the Board of Directors. Checks, drafts, and other instruments for the withdrawal of funds shall bear such signature or signatures as may be determined from time to time by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE IX. PLACEMENT

All cantorial placement shall be conducted only through the Joint Cantorial Placement Commission according to the policies and procedures as outlined and published by the Committee.

ARTICLE X. SUPPORT FOR MEMBER CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENTS

Guidelines for contractual agreements, negotiations, and conciliation are contained in the ACC/URJ document entitled *Guidelines for Cantorial-Congregational Relationships*.

ARTICLE XI. DISSOLUTION

In the event of dissolution, the dissolution shall be accomplished in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law, but in no event shall the remaining assets and property of the Corporation be distributed to any member, officer, director, or private individual. They shall be distributed only to such organizations as shall qualify under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as amended.

Amended: New York, July 2003

Amended: New Orleans, March 2005

Amended: San Francisco, July 2008

Amended: Chicago, June 2009

Edited (for Ordination) July 2013

Amended: Jerusalem, July 2014

Name updated for the Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music, January 2017

Updated for ACC Retirement Plan and ACC Insurance Plans, May 2017

Updated to change NCPCR to NCCCR, August 2020

Updated to include non-binary language of "they, them, theirs," August 2020

Amended and updated by Zoom Plenary Meeting on June 9, 2025