

AMERICAN ORGANIZATION FOR BODYWORK THERAPIES OF ASIA

A Not-For-Profit Corporation



Rules, Guidelines and Procedures

**Adopted as a Companion to
the Bylaws of The Organization
As Amended 1/1/11**

**Revision Date:
9/1/12**

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Article 1: Organization Name, Office, and Purpose

As presented in the Bylaws

Article 2: Definitions

As presented in the Bylaws

Article 3: Membership

Section 1: Categories of Membership

- A. The eleven (11) categories of membership are: Student, Allied, Associate, Certified Practitioner, Registered Instructor, Certified Instructor, COSP, Retired, Honorary, Supporting, and Affiliate.
 1. The Education Committee, with the approval of the Board of Directors, shall determine the educational requirements for the following categories of membership: Student, Allied, Associate, Certified Practitioner, Registered Instructor, and Certified Instructor.
 2. The Board of Directors shall determine the requirements for the following categories of membership: COSP, Retired, Honorary, Supporting, and Affiliate.
- B. The requirements for membership will be presented in the application packets for each category of membership, as approved by the Board of Directors.

Section 2: Title Designations

- A. Use of the AOBTA name or logo for promotional purposes is reserved for the following membership levels: COSP, Associate, Certified Practitioner, Registered Instructor, and Certified Instructor.
- B. AOBTA members must accurately present their level of AOBTA membership to the public. Misrepresentation of one's membership status is a grievable offense.
- C. AOBTA members may not present themselves as representing the Organization unless the Board of Directors has given them permission to do so.

Section 3: Policy for Inactive Membership Files

- A. The application and renewal files of members who go Inactive will be stored at the National Office for one (1) year after the Inactive date. After that time, they will be digitally scanned and stored.

Section 4: Policy for Reactivation of Membership

- A. Membership may be reactivated at any time.
 1. If the National Office had destroyed the Inactive original file (before it began digitally scanning them), then membership may be reactivated by re-applying for membership under a new application.
 2. If the National Office has the Inactive file stored (either hard-copy or digitally), then the member may be reactivated under the same membership level as when he/she went Inactive.

Article 4: Dues

- A. Annual dues in the Organization shall be:

1. Student.....\$25
 2. Allied.....\$50
 3. Associate.....\$75
 4. Certified Practitioner.....\$100
 5. Registered Instructor.....\$125
 6. Certified Instructor.....\$150
 7. COSP (20 or less students)...\$200..(21+students)...\$300
 8. Retired.....\$25
 9. Honorary.....No dues
 10. Supporting.....Donation of \$25 or more
 11. Affiliate.....No dues
- B. The Board of Directors shall determine the application fees for each level of membership and fees will be stated in each Application packet.
- C. Associate, Certified Practitioners, Registered Instructors, and Certified Instructors have the option of paying a one-time Lifetime membership fee of \$1,500.
- D. Billing
1. COSP billing includes a mandatory Annual Report. COSP dues will be processed only after the Annual Report is received.
 2. Certified Instructors billing includes a voluntary Annual Report.
- E. Delinquent Dues
1. First notice of dues is emailed (or hard copy if indicated) 60 days prior to the renewal date.
 2. Second notice of dues is emailed and mailed 30 days prior to the renewal date.
 3. Third notice of dues is mailed out 30 days after the renewal date.
 4. Anyone who does not respond within 90 days after the renewal date is place on Inactive status.
 5. Inactive members who wish to reactivate there membership may do so with a \$30 reactivation fee in addition to the full annual membership dues. The membership renewal date will remain the same as the original date.

Article 5: National Transcript

- A. The Education Committee has created a National Transcript in order to monitor the successful completion of the curriculum and requirements necessary for membership.
- B. The Education Committee shall serve as the arbitrator in the case of a dispute between Instructors and/or Students concerning matters of curriculum and training.

Article 6: National Board of Directors

Section 1: Responsibilities of the Board of Directors

- A. The duties of the Board of Directors shall include, but not be limited to:
 1. Contracting on behalf of the Organization, entering into legal agreements, creating committees, approving of chairpersons of committees, approving and maintaining the budget of the Organization, and approving the

- appointing and the removing of agents and employees of the Organization.
2. Considering motions for amendments to the Bylaws, determining the adherence of those proposed amendments to the purpose of the Organization, determining the valid and timely submission of the proposed amendment, and forwarding them to the Elections Committee to be placed on the voting ballot.
 3. Having the discretion of amending the Rules, Guidelines, and Procedures as described in the Bylaws.
 4. Informing the Congress of Representatives of any amendment(s) to the Rules, Guidelines, and Procedures within 30 days after the approval of the amendment(s).
 5. Possessing other such powers and authority as is necessary for the functioning of the Organization within the limits of the Bylaws.
 6. Adhering to any budgetary requirements concerning the activities of the Organization.
 7. Maintaining accurate and complete files of all activities connected with the Organization and passing these files onto their successor within 30 days of leaving that office.

Section 2: Structure and Responsibilities of the Board of Directors

A. Offices of the Board of Directors

1. President
 - a. Shall preside at and prepare the agenda for all general business meetings, all meetings of the Board of Directors, and approve the agenda for the National Membership Meeting during the National Convention. The President shall be the ex-officio member of all Committees of the Organization but shall not have a vote except to break a tie vote.
 - b. Shall approve all expenditures in the excess of \$500.00.
 - c. Shall be responsible for adhering to the Board of Directors' budget requirements and limitations.
 - d. Shall appoint or hire, with the approval of the Board of Directors, the Secretary to the Board.
 - e. Shall present a report of the activities of the Organization during the National Membership Meeting.
 - f. Shall conduct the day to day business affairs of the Organization in cooperation with the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors and preside over the smooth functioning of the administrative office.
 - g. Shall appoint representatives for special projects.
 - h. Shall represent the Organization before other groups or agencies.
 - i. Shall have other such responsibilities and powers as are necessary for the supervision and functioning of the Organization as directed by the Board of Directors within the scope of the Bylaws of the Organization.
2. Vice-President

- a. Shall preside over meetings in the absence of the President, and replace the President in the event of her/his inability to function in office, for the duration of the unexpired term or until a successor is elected.
 - b. Shall serve as ex-officio member of various committees listed below and shall oversee various committees of The Organization, but shall not have a vote in the matters of those committees except to break a tie vote.
 - c. Shall act as Chairperson for the State Chapter Committee and oversee the functioning of the Congress of Representatives.
 - d. Shall run State Representative Elections in coordination with the Elections Committee.
 - e. Shall act as Chairperson for the Awards Committee.
 - f. Shall collect and cast proxy votes on behalf of absentee Voting members at the National Membership Meeting.
 - g. Shall serve on the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.
 - h. Shall Carry out Organization business between board meetings.
 - i. Shall have such other responsibilities and powers as directed by the Board of Directors within the scope of the Bylaws of The Organization.
3. Treasurer/Secretary
- a. Shall be responsible for the following:
 - 1) Financial planning and budget allocation.
 - 2) Supervision of the general funds of the Organization, as shall be appropriate for the proper functioning of the Organization, in conjunction with the Executive Committee.
 - 3) Have all expenditures in excess of \$500.00 approved by the President.
 - 4) Communicate regularly with the administrative office staff to manage the daily financial affairs of keeping the office and the Organization running and stable.
 - 5) Serve as the Chairperson of the Finance Committee.
 - 6) Prepare annual financial reports for the Board of Directors, with the assistance of a CPA as needed.
 - 7) Having tax forms filed in a timely fashion, with the assistance of a CPA as needed.
 - b. Shall be bonded for an amount to be determined by the Board of Directors.
 - c. Shall make arrangements for board meetings in conjunction with the President and the Director of Events.
 - d. Shall participate in the planning of the National Convention in conjunction with the Director of Events and the Convention Committee.
 - e. Shall serve on the Executive Committee.
 - f. Shall carry out Organization business between board meetings.

- g. Shall have such other responsibilities and powers as directed by the Board of Directors within the scope of the Bylaws of the Organization.
4. Director of Education
- a. Shall be an AOBTA Certified Instructor
 - b. Shall chair the Education Committee (consisting of the State Chapter Education Chairs and Certified Instructors), which is responsible for the following:
 - 1) Establishing the contents of required curricula.
 - 2) Defining requirements for certification of practitioners and instructors.
 - 3) Establishing standards for accreditation of programs and schools.
 - 4) Establishing standards for the recognition of new Forms.
 - 5) Overseeing the educational content of public education programs.
 - 6) Supervising the National Transcript.
 - 7) Establishing policy for continuing education requirements.
 - c. Shall oversee any AOBTA educational offerings including the National Convention, Regional Workshops, and State Chapter educational programs.
 - d. Shall oversee the development of COSP, in cooperation with the Director of COSP.
 - e. Shall co-Chair meetings of COSP.
 - f. Shall co-chair the CI Interview Committee meeting, with the Chairperson of that committee, at the National Convention.
 - g. Shall serve as a member of the ABT Forms Committee.
 - h. Shall oversee and support the State Chapter Education Chairs.
 - i. Shall carry out Organization business between board meetings.
 - j. Shall have such other responsibilities and powers as directed by the Board of Directors within the scope of the Bylaws of the Organization.
5. Director of Membership
- a. Shall chair the Membership Committee, consisting of the State Chapter Membership Chairs, State Representatives, and others; which is responsible for the following:
 - 1) Overseeing the membership application process that ensures that all members are qualified for their respective level of membership as defined by the Education Committee.
 - 2) Development of membership recruitment and retention strategies.
 - 3) Conducting regular membership surveys to assess the needs and concerns of the membership.
 - 4) Updating the membership application packets, the Welcome Packets, and membership informational materials.

- b. Shall oversee the membership data collection and reporting at the National Office.
 - c. Shall prepare the agenda and chair the National Membership Meeting during the National Convention.
 - d. Shall serve as a member of the ABT Forms Committee.
 - e. Shall oversee and support the State Chapter Membership Chairs.
 - f. Shall oversee the online Membership Database.
 - g. Shall be an available contact for members and potential members.
 - h. Shall carry out Organization business between board meetings.
 - i. Shall have such other responsibilities and powers as directed by the Board of Directors within the scope of the Bylaws of the Organization.
6. Director of Member Services
- a. Shall Chair the Member Services Committee.
 - b. Shall oversee the creation and maintenance of membership benefits (such as insurance, discounts, resources, etc.).
 - c. Shall coordinate the development and provision of benefits and services that require the involvement of other board members or committees.
 - d. Shall carry out organization business between board meetings.
 - e. Shall have other such responsibilities and powers as directed by the Board of Directors within the scope of the Bylaws of the Organization.
7. Director of Communications
- a. Shall Chair the Communications Committee consisting of the editors of state chapter and regional newsletters, Editor-in-Chief of *Pulse*, the chair of the PR Committee and the editors of the Monthly Email Updates and social networking site material.
 - b. Shall oversee the AOBTA Monthly Email Updates.
 - c. Shall oversee the AOBTA Pulse newsletter.
 - d. Shall promote AOBTA and ABT presence on social networking sites.
 - e. Shall oversee the Proofing Committee.
 - f. Shall identify opportunities to increase the quality and quantity of communication, where appropriate, both within and outside of the Organization.
 - g. Shall carry out Organization business between board meetings.
 - h. Shall have other such responsibilities and powers as directed by the Board of Directors within the scope of the Bylaws of the Organization.
8. Director of Events
- a. Shall Chair the Events Committee.
 - b. Shall Chair the Convention Committee, but is not required to be the Convention Coordinator.
 - c. Shall assist in the planning of board meetings.
 - d. Shall assist in the planning of Regional Workshops.

- e. Shall identify opportunities for cooperative events with other organizations.
 - f. Shall serve as a resource for members that are planning events and explore the possibilities for AOBTA to support those events.
 - g. Shall identify educational, networking, and promotional events that are either being offered by our members or will be of interest to our members. Inform members about these events and coordinate an events calendar on the AOBTA website.
 - h. Shall identify opportunities for our practitioners and instructors to present or promote at events.
 - i. Shall carry out Organization business between board meetings.
 - j. Shall have other such responsibilities and powers as directed by the Board of Directors within the scope of the Bylaws of the Organization.
9. Director of the Council of Schools and Programs (COSP)
- a. Shall be an AOBTA Registered or Certified Instructor, preferably with COSP school or program experience.
 - b. Shall Chair the COSP Committee and Co-chair meetings of COSP with the Director of Education.
 - c. Shall oversee the COSP schools and programs to ensure that they meet and maintain the AOBTA guidelines for training, clinical practice, and ethical standards.
 - d. Shall recruit new COSP members from existing independent ABT schools and programs, and from ABT programs within schools of Oriental Medicine, Acupuncture, bodywork, massage, or movement therapy.
 - e. Shall review all new COSP applicants, guide them through the application process, and advise them on program adjustments that will enable them to meet COSP requirements.
 - f. Shall foster consistent communication with COSP members.
 - g. Shall support the development of Instructor and Teaching Assistant training within COSP schools.
 - h. Shall encourage COSP members to offer CEU programs.
 - i. Shall encourage lapsed COSP members to update their membership.
 - j. Shall encourage COSP members to promote AOBTA membership to their students and instructors.
 - k. Shall direct school and program based grievances to the Ethics Committee, when appropriate.
 - l. Shall carry out Organization business between board meetings.
 - m. Shall have other such responsibilities and powers as directed by the board of directors within the scope of the Bylaws of the Organization.
10. Legislative Director

- a. Shall chair the Legislative Committee, consisting of the State Chapter Legislative Chairs and others, which is responsible for the following:
 - 1) Establishing communication with legislative agencies.
 - 2) Remaining informed of any legislative activity that may impact the Asian Bodywork Therapy profession and report such activity to the Board of Directors.
 - 3) Establishing relationships with the legislative branches of massage, bodywork, and Oriental Medicine organizations and agencies.
- b. Shall oversee and support the State Representatives and State Chapter Legislative Chairs in their function of monitoring and engaging in legislative activities.
- c. Shall serve as a resource to the Board of Directors and the Organization in regards to the legislation of the Asian Bodywork Therapy profession.
- d. Shall carry out Organization business between board meetings.
- e. Shall have such other responsibilities and powers as directed by the Board of Directors within the scope of the Bylaws of the Organization.

11. Member-at-Large

- a. Shall serve as the AOBTA members' direct contact with the Board of Directors. Any member may contact the Member-at-Large at any time and ask that the Member-at-Large convey their thoughts, concerns, or questions to the Board of Directors.
- b. Shall serve on the Membership Committee and assist the Director of Membership in responding to communications from the members.
- c. Shall serve on the State Chapter Committee and assist the Vice President in oversight of the Congress of Representatives.
- d. Shall prepare reports on the board meetings to be published in AOBTA Pulse.
- e. Shall carry out Organization business between board meetings.
- f. Shall have such other responsibilities and powers as directed by the Board of Directors within the scope of the Bylaws of the Organization.

- B. The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors shall include the President, Vice-President, Treasurer/Secretary, Director of Education, and Director of Membership.

Section 3: Election of the Board of Directors

- A. The Board of Directors shall set the criteria for candidacy for each office.
- B. The Elections Committee, with the approval of the Board of Directors, shall be responsible for establishing the Elections Procedure for the Board of Directors. The Elections Procedure shall be strictly honored.

Section 4: Indemnification of the Board of Directors

- A. The Secretary/Treasurer, with the approval of the Executive Committee, shall insure the indemnification of the Board of Directors from liability connected with carrying out their duties and responsibilities in accordance with the Bylaws and Rules, Guidelines, and Procedures.

Article 7: Committees and Task Forces

Section 1: Committees

- A. Committees shall be established and disbanded by the Board of Directors to insure the functioning of the Organization.
- B. The following committees and their Board of Directors' liaisons have been established:
 - 1. Executive (Chaired by the President and includes the Vice-President, Treasurer/Secretary, Director of Education, and Director of Membership)
 - 2. Finance (Chaired by Treasurer/Secretary)
 - 3. Education (Chaired by Director of Education)
 - 4. Membership (Chaired by Director of Membership)
 - 5. Member Services (Chaired by the Director of Member Services)
 - 6. Communications (Chaired by the Director of Communications)
 - 7. Legislation (Chaired by the Legislative Director)
 - 8. Awards (Chaired by the Vice-President)
 - 9. Bylaws (Liaison is the President)
 - 10. Certified Instructor Interview (Liaison is the Director of Education)
 - 11. Convention (Liaisons are the Director of Events, the Director of Education, and the Treasurer/Secretary)
 - 12. COSP (Chaired by the Director of COSP)
 - 13. Elections (Liaisons are the President, Vice-President, Director of COSP, and the Member-at-Large)
 - 14. Events (Chaired by the Director of Events)
 - 15. Ethics (Liaison is the President)
 - 16. Forms (Liaisons are the Director of Education and the Director of Membership)
 - 17. Peer Review (Liaisons are the Director of Education and the Director of Membership)
 - 18. Proofing (Liaison is the Director of Communication)
 - 19. Pulse (Liaison is the Director of Communication)
 - 20. Registered Instructor (Liaison is the Director of Education)
 - 21. Research (Liaison is the Director of Education)
 - 22. State Chapter Committee (Chaired by the Vice-President)
- C. Each committee, with the approval of the Board of Directors, shall define its responsibilities, policies, procedures, and guidelines.

Section 2: Task Forces

- A. Task forces shall be established and disbanded by the Board of Directors as needed for the functioning of the Organization.

- B. Task Forces shall be assigned specific and limited responsibilities by the Board of Directors.

Article 8: Congress of Representatives

Section 1: Purpose and Composition of the Congress of Representatives

- A. In accordance with the Bylaws, State Representative nominees must be Voting members in good standing, with no grievances pending against him or her at the time of nomination.
- B. Each state shall be allotted 1 State Representative per 25 Voting members in that state.
- C. State Chapter Officers serve as State Representatives for their state and shall attend meetings of the Congress of Representatives as such. When voting in the Congress of Representatives, the State Chapter Officers will be allotted 1 vote per 25 Voting members in their state. When a State Chapter has more than 125 members, then additional State Representatives will be elected in that state to fulfill the allotted number of representatives to the Congress of Representatives.
- D. The Congress of Representatives shall be co-chaired by the Vice President, the Director of Membership, and the Member-at-Large, who shall serve as the direct contacts to the National Board of Directors for the State Representatives.

Section 2: Responsibilities of the Congress of Representatives

As presented in the Bylaws

Section 3: Responsibilities of a State Representative

- A. Present the concerns of their state membership to the Board of Directors.
- B. Attend and Represent their state membership at National Membership Meetings and at Meetings of the Congress of Representatives.
- C. Maintain contact with their State Legislature, when appropriate, and remain informed of legislative issues pertinent to the profession of Asian Bodywork Therapy.
- D. Promote AOBTA membership in their state.
- E. Maintain regular contact with their state membership.
- F. Organize one annual meeting of the members in their state.

Section 4: Election of State Representatives

- A. Election of the State Representatives shall be conducted by the Elections Committee and overseen by the Vice-President.
- B. State Representatives in the Eastern and Western Regions shall be elected in odd years. State Representatives in the Central Region shall be elected in even years.

Article 9: Council of Schools and Programs

Section 1: COSP Purpose and Composition

- A. A COSP member is a school or program providing professional training which meets AOBTA's eligibility criteria and has been accepted for membership to COSP.

- B. A COSP member is evaluated on a regular basis to determine ongoing compliance with the AOBTA eligibility criteria.
- C. A COSP member must operate legally within their residing state(s), complying with all state educational and business laws.
- D. A COSP member supports the AOBTA Vision and Mission Statements in the training of Asian Bodywork Therapists and encourages students to participate in the development of the profession and the professional community.

Section 2: COSP Membership Eligibility Criteria

- A. COSP applicants that are *schools* must offer an ABT training program which ensures that their graduates satisfy the complete AOBTA requirements for the Certified Practitioner membership level status. Where necessary, all State approvals and requirements must be met.
- B. COSP applicants that are *programs* must offer ABT training that satisfies, at a minimum, the required ABT Core Curriculum as outlined in Section 3 of this Article. Students in these programs may complete the remaining Additional Curriculum requirements at community colleges, approved on-line courses, and/or other programs.
- C. COSP Candidacy is recognized upon the acceptance of a COSP Application, whereupon:
 - 1. The school or program will be listed in AOBTA publications and website as a COSP Candidate.
 - 2. The school or program will have up to one year to complete their application process.
 - 3. The school or program may request a one-year extension, requiring an additional application fee, if the application process is not completed within a year.

Section 3: AOBTA Asian Bodywork Therapy Curriculum Requirements

- A. A minimum 500 Hour Curriculum is the ABT professional standard which qualifies the graduate to apply for the AOBTA Certified Practitioner level of membership and to take the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM) Diplomate in Asian Bodywork Therapy national certification examination.
 - 1. The ABT Core Curriculum consists of the following:
 - a.) 160 hours of progressive training in a recognized ABT Form, from beginning through advanced levels for professional practice.
 - b.) 100 hours of Oriental Medical Theory.
 - c.) 70 hours of ABT student clinic in their trained ABT Form, supervised by a qualified instructor.
 - 2. Additional Curriculum consists of the following:
 - a.) 100 hours of Western Anatomy and Physiology.
 - b.) 70 hours of electives that must include the following:
 - 1) CPR and first aid.
 - 2) Business/Practice Basics

- 3) Ethics and Local/State/National legislation relating to the practice of a bodywork profession.
- 4) A selection of relevant electives that may also include Western medical training, Qigong, Tai Chi, or any form of martial art, as well as introductory classes in other ABT Forms.

Section 4: COSP Guidelines and Expectations

- A. COSP members are evaluated annually by a Certified Instructor. This can be done by a Certified Instructor that owns the school or program, by a Certified Instructor that teaches at the school or program, or by arrangement with a Certified Instructor that is not associated with the school or program.
 1. The evaluating Certified Instructor shall be identified in advance as part of the application process.
 2. When the evaluating Certified Instructor is not associated with the school or program, a minimum of two site visits per year is required.
 3. A written agreement between the School or Program and the Certified Instructor, concerning the Certified Instructor's consulting fees and expenses, shall be part of the application process and the annual evaluation.
- B. COSP members will provide students with information about AOBTA membership and the NCCAOM Diplomate in Asian Bodywork Therapy national certification examination.
- C. COSP members ensure that students receive clear and detailed transcripts, itemizing their training according to the AOBTA 500 Hour Curriculum requirements. A transcript template, which is also approved by the NCCAOM, is available from the AOBTA National Office or from the AOBTA COSP Director.
- D. COSP members are encouraged to offer Teacher Assistance (TA) and AOBTA Registered and/or Certified Instructor training as an extension of their programs. The Director of Education and the COSP Director can assist in creating these programs.
- E. COSP members notify the AOBTA National Office and the COSP Director in the event of a change in school ownership and/or curriculum change.
- F. COSP members suspected to be in violation of the AOBTA Bylaws, RGP's, Code of Ethics, or the Criteria for membership may be subject to a hearing by the AOBTA Ethics Committee. After a Grievance Procedure, the COSP member may have their membership revoked if found to be in violation and unwilling to correct the violation.
- G. COSP members that fail to submit their annual evaluation, report, and membership dues in a timely fashion may have their membership revoked.
- H. COSP members that experience a change in ownership, curriculum, or faculty, resulting in an ABT training program that no longer meets the AOBTA/COSP requirements shall immediately notify the AOBTA National Office, the COSP Director, and the Director of Education of that change, upon which time:
 1. The COSP member and/or AOBTA will have the option to discontinue their membership.
 2. Or, the COSP member will have one year to bring its program into compliance and submit an evaluation and report for review.

3. If the COSP member does not submit an evaluation and report within one year, their membership shall be revoked.
- I. COSP members are required to file all records and student transcripts in a safe and accessible place – in accordance with privacy laws set by the state’s board of education. The COSP member is required to inform the AOBTA National Office, COSP Director, Director of Education, and past and current students that transcripts may be requested at a reasonable cost to cover administration and mailing, and provide current contact information for making such requests.

Section 5: COSP Code of Ethics

- A. All COSP members (including faculty, administrators, and instructors) abide by the AOBTA Code of Ethics (listed in RGP Article XIX) and the following COSP Code of Ethics:
 1. COSP members provide students with accurate information regarding local, state, and national legislation pertaining to the practice of the Asian Bodywork Therapy profession.
 2. COSP members present their ABT training program accurately and honestly.
 3. COSP members educate their students about the requirements for AOBTA membership and the NCCAOM national certification examination.
 4. COSP members honor copyright laws – in both their teaching materials and in student assignments.
 5. COSP members provide a safe and respectful teaching and clinic environment.
 6. COSP members provide student clinic experiences designed to maximize the abilities of the students to assess, treat, and chart.
 7. COSP members ensure that their student clinics are appropriately supervised to ensure accuracy and safety of assessment and treatment and to ensure appropriate privacy according to HIPAA requirements.
 8. COSP members ensure that the teaching and clinic environment is free of prejudice, racism, sexism, ageism, homophobia, sexual harassment or any other type of discrimination or abuse.

Article 10: Meetings

Section 1: Meetings of the Organization

- A. Any member of AOBTA may apply to address a meeting of the Organization.
 1. The request to address a meeting of a committee shall be made to the committee chairperson.
 2. The request to address a Board of Directors meeting shall be made to the President.
 3. The request to address a Congress of Representatives meeting shall be made to the Vice-President.
- B. The address shall pertain to an issue of concern to the Organization or its members.
- C. The request to address a meeting shall be made at least fourteen (14) days in advance of the meeting, indicating who will speak, the issue the speaker intends to address, and how much time the speaker is asking for on the meeting agenda.

- D. Any member making a request to address a meeting will be notified of the date and time they may address the meeting, and how much time they will be allotted on the agenda.

Section 2: Meetings of the Board of Directors

- A. A quorum shall consist of seven members of the Board of Directors. No binding decisions can be made without a quorum of the Board of Directors.
- B. The Board of Directors shall meet a minimum of twice each calendar year (in-person or conference call meetings).
 - 1. When a National Convention of the Organization is scheduled for the year, the Board will meet at the convention and at another time that year at the discretion of the Board.
 - 2. For in-person meetings, the President shall notify all Board members as to the date and place of the meeting at least sixty (60) days in advance of the meeting.
 - 3. Additional conference call meetings may be called by the President with thirty (30) days' notice.
 - 4. Emergency meetings may be called with less than thirty (30) days' notice with the approval of a quorum of Board members.
 - 5. Notification of meetings can be by mail, electronically, and/or phone call.
- C. Voting by the Board of Directors may be done in-person, by phone, electronically, or mail – whichever is most appropriate to the situation.
- D. No Board meetings shall be held without the President or Vice-President or their designated representative in attendance.
- E. Executive Sessions (closed meetings of the Board of Directors in which the attendees of the meeting are determined by the Board). The Board of Directors, by order of the President, or by a Board majority vote, may convene an Executive Session for the following purposes: disciplinary actions and/or grievance hearings; personnel decisions; personal interviews; confidential negotiations or mediation; review of membership qualifications; or matters in which public discussion may damage the Organization or the well-being of individuals. Matters viewed by the Board under Executive Session may not be disclosed outside the Board meeting for any reason unless so agreed upon by the Board.

Section 3: Meetings of the Congress of Representatives

- A. A quorum shall consist of sixty percent (60%) of the currently elected or appointed State Representatives.
- B. The Congress of Representatives will meet in person at the National Convention of the Organization.
- C. Additional meetings (in-person or conference call) may be called by the Vice-President, by the Board of Directors, or by ten percent (10%) of the total body of Representatives.
- D. Notification as to date, place, and time shall be made to each Representative at least sixty (60) days prior to any scheduled in-person meeting. Additional

conference call meetings may be called by the Vice President with thirty (30) days' notice. Notification may be made by mail, email, and/or phone call.

- E. A meeting may be called with less than sixty (60) days' notice with the approval of a majority of the Representatives.
- F. Voting by the Congress of Representatives may be done in-person, by phone, by email, or by mail – whichever is most appropriate to the situation.

Section 4: Meetings of the Council of Schools and Programs (COSP)

- A. A quorum shall consist of sixty percent (60%) of the Council members.
- B. The Council of Schools and Programs will meet at the National Convention of the Organization.
- C. Additional meetings may be called by the Director of COSP, the Director of Education, the Board of Directors, or by ten percent (10%) of the total body of the Council.
- D. Notification as to the date, place, and time of the in-person meeting must be made to each COSP member at least sixty (60) days prior to the scheduled meeting. Additional conference call meetings may be called by the Director of COSP with thirty (30) days' notice.
- E. A meeting may be called with less than sixty (60) days' notice with the approval of the majority of COSP members.
- F. Voting by COSP members may be done in-person, by phone, by email, or by mail – whichever is the most appropriate to the situation.

Section 5: National Membership Meeting at the National Convention

As presented in the Bylaws.

Article 11: Rules of Order

- A. A quorum shall consist of seven members of the Board of Directors and is required for decision making.
- B. The decision making process for the Board of Directors shall be as follows:
 - 1. Seeking consensus, a vote is taken by the President.
 - 2. If not consensus, dissenting views will be heard.
 - 3. Having heard dissenting views, a vote will be taken by the President.
 - 4. Simple majority of one carries the vote.

Article 12: Voting and Elections

Section 1: The Elections Committee Structure and Responsibilities

- A. The Elections Committee Chairperson shall be appointed by the Board of Directors. The Chairperson will recruit at least two (2) other Voting members to serve on the Elections Committee. Members of the Elections Committee may not serve on the committee if they are running for a position within the Organization.
- B. The Elections Committee shall create, with the approval of the Board of Directors, the elections procedures for the Organization and shall oversee the annual elections.

Section 2: Rules Regarding Voting and Elections

- A. As prescribed by the Bylaws, only Voting members may vote.
- B. All voting by the membership shall be decided by a simple majority of the members voting, except that amendments to the Bylaws require a 2/3's majority of the members voting.
- C. Election voting for the Board of Directors shall be by a mailed ballot.
- D. Voting for amendments to the Bylaws may, at the discretion of the Board of Directors, be done by either a mailed ballot or at the National Membership Meeting held during the National Convention.
- E. The Board of Directors may approve a call for a vote to take place at the National Membership Meeting held during the National Convention.
 - 1. Any Voting member who is unable to attend the National Membership Meeting and who wishes to vote on any matter to be voted on at that meeting shall be afforded the opportunity to do so by Absentee Ballot not later than fourteen days prior to the National Membership Meeting. The absentee ballots shall be sent by mail to the Vice-President of the Organization who shall cast those votes on behalf of the absentee Voting members at the meeting.
 - 2. Voting at the National Membership Meeting shall be by a show of hands or by voice. If no clear determination can be made of the outcome of the vote by show of hands or by voice, then a written ballot shall be taken.

Article 13: General Provisions

As presented in the Bylaws.

Article 14: Amendments to the Bylaws and the Rules, Guidelines, and Procedures

As presented in the Bylaws

Article 15: Code of Ethics

- A. The AOBTA Code of Ethics
 - 1. Social/Ecological Concern: AOBTA members recognize their intrinsic involvement in the total community of life on the planet earth.
 - 2. Professional Conduct: AOBTA members conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner, perform only those services for which they are qualified, and represent their education, certification, professional affiliations, and other qualifications honestly. They do not in any way profess to practice medicine or psychotherapy, unless licensed by their state or county to do so.
 - 3. Health History and Referrals: AOBTA members keep accurate client records, including profiles of the body/mind health history. They discuss any problem areas that may contraindicate use of Asian Bodywork Therapy techniques, and refer clients to appropriate medical or psychological professionals when indicated.
 - 4. Professional Appearance: AOBTA members pay close attention to cleanliness and professional appearance of self and clothing, of linens and equipment, and of the office environment in general. They endeavor to

- provide a relaxing atmosphere, giving attention to reasonable scheduling and clarity about fees.
5. Communication and Confidentiality: AOBTA members maintain clear and honest communication with their clients, and keep all client information, whether medical or personal, strictly confidential. They clearly disclose techniques used, appropriately identifying each in the scope of their professional practice.
 6. Intention and Trust: AOBTA members are encouraged to establish and maintain trust in the client relationship and to establish clear boundaries and an atmosphere of safety.
 7. Respect of Clients: AOBTA members respect the client's physical/emotional state, and do not abuse clients through actions, words, or silence, nor take advantage of the therapeutic relationship. They in no way participate in sexual activity with a client. They consider the client's comfort zone for touch and for degree of pressure, and honor the client's requests as much as possible within the personal, professional, and ethical limits. They acknowledge the inherent worth and individuality of each person and therefore do not unjustly discriminate against clients or colleagues.
 8. Professional Integrity: AOBTA members present Asian Bodywork Therapy in a professional and compassionate manner, representing themselves and their practice accurately and ethically. They do not give fraudulent information, nor misrepresent AOBTA or themselves to students or clients, nor act in a manner derogatory to the nature and positive intention of the AOBTA. They conduct their business honestly.
 9. Professional Courtesy: AOBTA members respect the standards set by the various AOBTA Forms, and they respect service mark, trademark, and copyright laws. Professional courtesy includes respecting all ethical professionals in speech, writing, or otherwise, and communicating clearly with others.
 10. Professional Excellence: AOBTA members strive for professional excellence through regular assessment of personal and professional strengths and weaknesses, and by continued education and training.

Article 16: Ethics Committee and the Grievance Procedure

Section 1: Purpose

- A. The Ethics Committee is responsible for addressing matters of professional Ethics and Grievances within the Organization. The Grievance procedure set forth herein will be followed when a grievance is filed against a member of the Organization.
- B. The objective of this Grievance Procedure is to protect the public, the AOBTA Membership, the reputation of the Asian Bodywork Therapy profession, and the Organization.

Section 2: Duties and Limitations

- A. The Ethics Committee, consisting of seven Active Members, provides a service to the Organization and its Membership by establishing and administering a procedure for responding to grievances presented against a Member from within the Membership or by a member of the General Public. The Committee is empowered by the Board of Directors to receive, process, investigate, review, mediate and/or render a decision regarding a grievance filed against a Member. The Committee also has the responsibility to impose disciplinary measures when the nature of the grievance deems it appropriate and necessary.
- B. Grievances against a Member shall be based on violations of the standards established in The Organization's Bylaws, RGPs (Rules, Guidelines, and Procedures), Code of Ethics, and published policies.
- C. The filing of a Grievance with the Committee does not substitute for, bar, or in any way prohibit, any person from pursuing any remedy he or she may have in an appropriate Court of Law.
- D. Any Member who contemplates filing a Grievance is first encouraged to attempt to settle his or her dispute directly with the party involved prior to filing a formal Grievance. A member may ask for the assistance of his or her State Representative or State Chapter Officer in the attempt to settle a dispute. However, this step is not required prior to filing a grievance.
- E. In the event that there is an action, either civil or criminal, in a Court of Law which involves incident(s) or allegation(s) upon which a grievance has been initiated, the processing of the grievance by the Committee shall be stayed until a final decision is rendered by the Court, including any appeals, unless the Court orders otherwise. Any grievance filed before or during the filing of such an action in Court, provided it complies with all filing and time requirements set forth in these Rules, Guidelines and Procedures, shall be processed in the normal manner upon conclusion of the Court action. Any decision rendered by a Court in such an action shall not be conclusive or binding on the Organization, unless the Organization is a party thereto.

Section 3: Committee Membership and Meetings

- A. The Chairperson shall be appointed by the Board of Directors. A Vice-Chairperson and five additional Active Members shall be appointed by the Chairperson with the Board's approval. In the event the Chairperson is unwilling or unable to perform, or the position becomes vacant, the Vice-Chairperson shall function as the Chairperson until the Board of Directors appoints a new Chairperson.
- B. There are no term limits for members of the Committee. Every three years, based on the Chairperson's date of appointment, the entire Committee will be presented to and reconfirmed by the Board of Directors. If a vacancy arises on the Committee for any reason, the Committee Chairperson will appoint a new Committee member to be approved by the Board of Directors.
- C. The Ethics Committee will meet in person during the Organization's National Convention, as needed, for the purpose of conducting Committee business. If a member of the committee can't participate in the annual meeting, they may be

able to participate via conference call. In addition, the Committee shall meet, as needed, via the communication option of its choice.

Section 4: Duties of Ethics Committee Chairperson

A. The Chairperson shall:

1. Receive and review a filed Grievance to determine completeness of documentation.
2. Make a preliminary determination regarding the Grievance, along with the Vice chairperson, in accordance with Section 8-A of this Article.
3. Oversee that the Grievance Procedure is followed as set forth in this Article or appoint a Committee member to oversee the Grievance Procedure if it is necessary for the Chairperson to recuse her/himself from the proceedings.
4. Coordinate the functions of the Committee, which may include:
 - a. Establishing timelines for the functions of the Committee.
 - b. Distributing copies of documents to Committee members.
 - c. Mailing of proper notifications.
 - d. Receiving and tabulating decision ballots.
 - e. Announcing results in accordance with Sections 8-D and 9-D in this Article, as appropriate.
5. Provide copies of all documents and completed files to the National Office.
6. Be responsible for bi-annual reporting to the Board of Directors concerning all activities of the Committee, including the nature of allegations and status of pending Grievances. The Chairperson shall immediately report to the Board of Directors any grievance that involves a National Board Member, State Chapter Board Member, or any grievance under Section 8-F, paragraph 1-a.
7. Serve as the contact person for inquiries and or comments regarding grievances.
8. Based on the following conditions remove any Committee member from the Ethics Committee, and appoint a replacement member, subject to approval by the Board of Directors:
 - a. If a member violates the Confidentiality Provisions outlined in Section 6 of this article.
 - b. If a member fails to diligently perform his or her duties in accordance to Section 5 of this Article.
 - c. If a member fails to notify the Chairperson of any actual or potential conflict of interest in a particular matter, of which the member is or should be aware.
9. Convene a meeting of the Committee at some time during The Organization's National Convention, as needed.
10. Call for additional meetings, as needed.
11. Meet with the Board of Directors for the purpose of presenting any decisions made by the Committee at a time set by the President.
12. Be responsible for preparing an annual budget, if funds are needed for the operation of the Committee, which will be subject to review and approval by the Board of Directors.

13. Be responsible for disqualifying any Committee member from participating in a particular grievance procedure in instances where the Chairperson believes a relationship exists between the Committee member and the Grievant or Respondent, the nature of which may cause the Committee member to be unable to render an impartial decision, or may create the appearance that the Committee member may be unable to render an impartial decision.

Section 5: Duties of Committee Members

A. All Committee Members shall:

1. Be familiar with the Grievance Procedure and agree to the expectations placed on a member of this Committee as set forth in this article of the Rules, Guidelines, and Procedures.
2. Respect the Confidentiality provisions outlined in Section 6 of this Article.
3. If chosen to participate in a Grievance Proceeding, will do so in a timely and responsible manner.
4. Remove himself or herself from any Grievance Proceeding in the event that he or she believes that he or she may be unable to render an impartial decision, or in instances in which it may appear that he or she may be unable to render an impartial decision, by notifying the Chairperson immediately. Such instances may include, but shall not be limited to, relationships that may exist between the Committee Member and the Grievant or Respondent such as teacher/student, business associate, etc.
5. Immediately notify the Chairperson in the event that he or she, inadvertently or otherwise, violates any provision in this Article, including without limit the Confidentiality provision outlined in Section 6.
6. Notify the Chairperson of any actual or potential conflict of interest in a particular matter.

Section 6: Confidentiality

- ### **A. All information regarding any and all Grievances, including all documents, preliminary messages, informal complaints and inquiries, investigative information, negotiations, determinations, and/or findings will be held as strictly confidential by all members of the Ethics Committee, and all members of the Board of Directors when they have been provided with or come to know any such information, except under the following circumstances:**
- A. Periodic reporting of all pending grievances to the AOBTA Board of Directors, including names of the Grievant and Respondent and the status of the Grievance Proceeding, with the understanding by the Board that such information is strictly confidential.
 - B. Any authorized contact with persons identified by either the Grievant or Respondent as having knowledge of facts surrounding the alleged violation, and from whom statements have been obtained. Information may be revealed to such persons only to the extent reasonably necessary and for proper purposes in further of resolution of the matter.

- C. The Ethics Committee reserves the right to consult legal counsel during a Grievance Proceeding.
- D. During the annual election process for the National Board of Directors, no member with a Grievance pending against him or her may be nominated for a position. When the Election Committee Chairperson contacts the Ethics Committee Chairperson to review the list of nominees, the Ethics Chairperson will confirm if a nominee is eligible for nomination.
- E. To the extent required to comply with the law or any order, ruling or decree issued by a judicial or governmental authority of competent jurisdiction.
- B. Committee members may not discuss any Grievance with the Grievant, Respondent, any persons with knowledge, or any other Member or non-member of The Organization, without the written authorization by the Committee Chairperson (or designee) to do so. All communications with members of media and press shall be exclusively by the Chairperson (or designee).
- C. Any Grievant, Respondent, or other Member, who has knowledge that a Committee member has violated the Confidentiality Provisions of these Rules, Guidelines and Procedures, shall immediately notify the Committee Chairperson of the alleged violation, and steps may be taken to remove and replace that Committee Member.
- D. Any violation of the Confidentiality provisions within this Section by an officer or director of The Organization shall be reported to the Ethics Committee chairperson.

Section 7: Basis for Filing a Grievance

- A. Any person who believes that he or she has suffered as the result of an AOBTA Member's violation of the Organization's standards of conduct as articulated in its Bylaws, RGPs (Rules, Guidelines and Procedures), Code of Ethics, or published policies, or who believes that a member has used AOBTA membership for fraudulent purposes or engaged in professional misconduct, has the right to initiate a Grievance Procedure, pursuant to and in accordance with Section 8 of this Article. A person filing a grievance shall be referred to as the "Grievant." The Member against which the grievance is filed shall be referred to as the "Respondent."
- B. Any person who believes that he or she has suffered as the result of an AOBTA Organizational Body's (e.g. Board of Directors, Committee, National Office) or Officer's violation of the Organization's standards of conduct as articulated in its Bylaws, RGPs (Rules, Guidelines, and Procedures), Code of Ethics, or published policies, or who believes that an Organizational Body or Officer has engaged in professional misconduct, has the right to initiate a Grievance Procedure, pursuant to and in accordance with Section 8 of this Article.
- C. The Organization, at the request of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors (acting as the Grievant), may initiate a Grievance Procedure in such instances that complaints, sufficient in number or severity, are received concerning a particular Member without a grievance procedure being initiated by another person, or in instances where the Executive Committee has reasonable knowledge, information and/or belief that a member has violated the

Organization's standards of conduct in his or her relationship with the Organization.

Section 8: Grievance Procedures

- A. Initiating a Procedure, Initial Actions, and Filings
1. The Grievance Procedure is initiated by filing a Notice of Grievance, which can be obtained upon request from the Chairperson of the Ethics Committee.
 - a. If any member of the Board of Directors, Ethics Committee, or any other position of leadership within the Organization, receives a complaint related to a member of the Organization that arguably meets the basis for filing a Grievance as outlined in Section 7-A above, then the person who received the Complaint shall notify the complainant of the availability of the Grievance Procedures, and shall provide to the complainant the name and contact information of the Ethics Committee Chairperson to allow the complainant to follow up if desirable.
 2. The Notice of Grievance form shall be completed by the Grievant and returned to the Chairperson, along with notarized statements of any third persons and supporting documentation in accordance with the instructions under subsection B below.
 3. If it is determined that the Notice of Grievance is incomplete, then the Grievant will be sent a Notification of Incompleteness Letter detailing the incompleteness.
 - a. The Grievant then has the opportunity to cure and resubmit a completed Notice of Grievance within thirty (30) days after receipt of the letter.
 - b. If after thirty (60) days of the Grievant's receipt of the letter a complete Notice of Grievance has not been submitted, then the Grievant will be notified that the Grievance is Dismissed within seven (7) days after the submission deadline.
 4. Within two (2) weeks after receiving a complete Notice of Grievance, the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Committee will render a decision of Dismissal or Continuance of the Grievance process.
 - a. If either the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson is unavailable, disqualifies her/himself or is reasonably requested to be disqualified by the Grievant, then the Chairperson will appoint another Committee member, based on seniority within the Committee, as a replacement.
 5. If the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson (or their designees) determine that the Notice of Grievance fails to meet the criteria listed in Section 7 of this Article, then the Grievance will be declared Dismissed and a Dismissal letter will be sent to the Grievant in a timely manner with reason(s) for the dismissal.
 - a. Frivolous filings may result in action including seeking reasonable costs incurred in responding to the frivolous filing, including attorney's fees.
 6. If a decision of Continuance is rendered, the Chairperson shall notify the Respondent to the Grievance within seven (7) days of the decision, by

Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested, that the Grievance has been filed and shall provide the Respondent with the Respondent Form.

- a. Within thirty (30) days of Respondent's receipt of the Grievance Notification, the Respondent must submit to the Chairperson of the Ethics Committee a written statement, on a form specifically provided for this purpose, along with notarized statements of third persons and supporting documentation in accordance with the instructions provided in heading B of this Section.

- (1) A Respondent's refusal to respond to the Grievance Notification within thirty (30) days will result in a default judgment based upon the facts and information the Committee has available to it.

- (a) The Committee will provide notice of pending default judgment to the Respondent with an offer of seven (7) days, after receipt of notice, to cure their lack of response.

- (b) If no cure is submitted by the Respondent within seven (7) days of receipt of notice of pending default judgment, the Committee will render a default judgment. This judgment will be considered final.

- (c) If, within three (3) months of receipt of notice of pending default, the Respondent provides a meritorious defense for not responding to the Grievance Notification, the Grievance process may be reinstated. If a default judgment has already been rendered, then the default judgment will be vacated and the Grievance procedure will continue.

- (d) If, after three (3) months of receipt of notice of pending default judgment, the Respondent has not provided a cure and has not provided a meritorious defense for not responding to the Grievance Notification, the default judgment will be considered final with no option for reinstatement of the Grievance procedure or appeal.

- (2) If the Respondent was not able to respond to the Grievance Notification due to the fact that they did not have access to mail for more than thirty (30) days (as in the case of extended travel or an incapacitating condition), then Respondent may respond within thirty (30) days of receipt of the notification provided that Respondent can provide proof of travel or incapacitation. If a default judgment has already been rendered, then the default will be vacated and the Grievance process will continue.

7. No grievance shall be retained or acted upon at the state level, unless otherwise mandated by local law. Any informal complaint or grievance of any sort presented to State Chapter Officers or State Representatives shall be directed to the Chairperson of the Ethics Committee.

B. Submission of Supporting Statements and Documents

1. Both the Grievant and Respondent will be responsible for obtaining and providing notarized statements from any third persons with direct knowledge

- of facts concerning the grievance, indicating that such statement is given for the purpose of testimony before the Ethics Committee. All originals of statements from third persons must be submitted along with the Notice of Grievance Form or Respondent Form described above.
2. All documents and information relevant to the dispute must be submitted to the Committee along with the Notice of Grievance Form or Respondent Form described above.
 - a. Both the Grievant and Respondent will provide a notarized statement that they have provided all known documentation and information related to the dispute.
 - b. In addition to notarized statements from third persons with direct knowledge of facts concerning the grievance, both the Grievant and Respondent may provide a list of witnesses or other people with relevant knowledge of the dispute.
 3. The Committee shall not consider documents, information or statements that are not submitted along with the Notice of Grievance Form or Respondent Form, unless the documents, information or statements were not reasonably available or within the knowledge of the submitting party during the period of time allowed for submission of same.
 - a. The Committee may grant a written request by the Grievant or Respondent to have additional time to provide materials if the Grievant or Respondent is able to show good cause for the request. This request does not extend the due date for the Notice of Grievance or Respondent Forms, but allows specific documents or information to be submitted after the due date.
 4. The Grievant or Respondent, along with the submission of the Notice of Grievance or Respondent Forms, may submit a written request for mediation that provides an explanation as to why mediation may be an appropriate action.
 5. Both the Grievant and Respondent shall understand that all information submitted by the Grievant shall be provided to the Respondent. Before providing it to the Respondent, the Committee may choose to summarize information or withhold names if necessary to protect confidentiality.
- C. Assignment of Committee Members to Process the Grievance (the “Grievance Team”)
1. Both the Grievant and Respondent will be provided with the names of all persons serving on the Ethics Committee and shall have the opportunity to Request the Disqualification of any Committee member or members from participating in the Grievance Procedure on the basis of:
 - a. A perceived inability of the Committee member to render an impartial decision.
 - b. A perceived conflict of interest, or apparent conflict of interest, between the Grievant, Respondent, and/or Committee member.
 2. At the time of filing the Notice of Grievance Form or the Respondent Form, both the Grievant and Respondent shall be responsible for notifying the

Committee Chairperson, in writing, of any basis for disqualifying a Committee member from participating in a particular Grievance Procedure.

- a. This written notice will include the name of the Committee Member and a brief statement of the reason for the Request for Disqualification in accordance with paragraph C-1 above.
 - b. The Committee Chairperson will determine the legitimacy and appropriateness of each Request for Disqualification and will either grant or deny the request.
 - c. Once the Request(s) for Disqualification have been processed or if no Request for Disqualification is received with either the Notice of Grievance Form or Respondent Form, the Committee Chairperson shall assign Committee members to the Grievance Team, and such assignments shall be final, unless a conflict or basis of disqualification, which was not reasonably know-able at the time, becomes apparent during the grievance process.
3. The Chairperson, upon receipt of the completed Notice of Grievance Form and the Respondent Form, will choose a Grievance Team consisting of five (5) Committee members, to include either the Committee Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson (unless disqualified). This Grievance Team will then assume the responsibility for the Grievance Procedure.
- a. Three (3) of the five (5) Grievance Team members shall constitute a quorum.
4. In the event that the number of Committee members disqualified from participating in a particular Grievance Procedure render it impossible to obtain five (5) members from within the Committee to constitute the Grievance Team, the Chairperson shall appoint (with Executive Committee approval) an appropriate number of ad hoc Committee members to complete the five-member Grievance Team.
- D. Initial Determination of Grievance Team
1. Within ten (10) days after selecting the Grievance Team members, the Chairperson shall forward the complete Grievance file to the Grievance Team.
 2. Within thirty (30) days after receiving the Grievance file, the Grievance Team will deliberate via teleconference and make one of the following determinations:
 - a. Dismissal of the Grievance as failing to present a grievance that meets the criteria stated in Section 7 of this Article.
 - b. Mediation of the Grievance to resolve the conflict in situations where the Grievance Team believes such action would be appropriate, prior to rendering a final dismissal or other decision.
 - c. Continuance of the Grievance Procedure before rendering a decision.
 3. If the Grievance Team makes an Initial Determination of Dismissal or Mediation, the Grievance Team will notify the Committee Chairperson (if the Chairperson is not a member of the Grievance Team) of the decision. The Committee Chairperson will report the Initial Determination to the Grievant

and Respondent by Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested, within five (5) days after being notified.

a. Dismissal: This decision is considered final and any appeal against this decision must be made to the Board of Directors, in accordance with Section 10 of this Article.

b. Mediation: This decision carries the expectation that both the Grievant and Respondent will cooperate with a Mediation process. Within ten (10) days after receiving a notification of Recommendation of Mediation, both the Grievant and the Respondent will notify the Committee Chairperson of their intent to cooperate with the Mediation process.

(1) If either the Grievant or the Respondent notifies the Committee Chairperson of their intent to refuse to participate in Mediation, then the Grievance Team will make a determination of either Dismissal or Continuance.

4. If the Grievance Team makes an Initial Determination of Continuance, the Grievance Procedure will continue as provided in Section F of this Article.

E. Mediation

1. If the Grievance Team determines, in its sole discretion, that an attempt at Mediation to resolve the conflict is appropriate, and if the Grievant and Respondent notify the Grievance Team that they intend to participate in the Mediation process, the Chairperson shall appoint a member of the Grievance Team to be the Mediator in that situation.

a. At the time of determination of Mediation, the Grievance Team will create a Timeline for the Mediation process.

b. Both the Grievant and the Respondent are expected to participate, in good faith, in the Mediation process. If the Respondent does not participate in good faith, s/he may be found to be in violation of AOBTA standards and the Grievance Team's final decision may take this into consideration.

c. Possible circumstances that might warrant a Recommendation of Mediation may include, but are not limited to: unintentional improper touch (minimal); improper draping; poor communication; treatment outside the Asian Bodywork Therapist's scope of practice; disputes involving the "rights" to a client or client-base; inter-chapter disputes; dereliction of AOBTA officer's duties; abuse of AOBTA officer's position.

2. If the appointed Mediator determines that efforts to resolve the conflict have been successful, the Mediator shall advise the Chairperson of such and an Acceptance of Mediation Form shall be mailed to the Grievant and Respondent in a timely fashion, via Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested.

a. The Grievant and Respondent will have ten (10) days after receipt to return the signed form to the Chairperson.

b. Upon receipt of both forms, the Chairperson will declare the Grievance Procedure closed.

- c. If one or both parties have failed to return the Acceptance of Mediation Form within ten (10) days, then the Chairperson shall instruct the Grievance Team to continue the Grievance Procedure.
 - 3. If the appointed Mediator determines that reasonable efforts of all participants to resolve the conflict have failed, the Mediator shall notify the Chairperson of such, and the Chairperson shall instruct the Grievance Team to render a decision under Subparagraph D(2)(a) (dismissal for failure to meet the criteria in Section 7), or (c) (continue the Grievance Procedure).
- F. Continuance of the Grievance Procedure
 - 1. A Determination of Continuance of the Grievance Procedure shall be made by the Grievance Team when the Team is unable to make a decision based on the materials available to it, has determined that attempts at Mediation would be inappropriate due to the circumstances of the situation, when an attempt at Mediation has failed, or prior to any decision finding there has been a violation as alleged.
 - a. Possible circumstances that may warrant a Continuance of the Grievance Procedure include, but are not limited to: criminal sexual conviction; improper touch; physical injury to client; suspension or revocation of state or local license, national or local certification, or permit to conduct an Asian Bodywork Practice; deliberate attempt to practice outside of scope of practice or level of training; multiple complaints concerning a member; deliberate actions by Officers that are knowingly detrimental to The Organization; attempt to defraud; theft of client or student list or database; deliberate malicious action that is detrimental to the Organization.
 - b. A Determination of Continuance of Grievance Procedure carries with it the possibility of disciplinary action or expulsion from the Organization.
 - 2. The Grievance Team shall conduct deliberations via teleconference that shall be presided over by either the Chairperson or the Vice-Chairperson (or designee if both have been disqualified).
 - a. If the Grievance Team determines that additional information is necessary to render a determination, they may request additional information or interview the Grievant, Respondent, and/or any person who may have first hand knowledge of the official complaint via telephone, mail, or in person.
 - b. Due to the lack of security on the internet, at no time shall email be used to transmit confidential information or to discuss details of any grievance.
 - c. The Grievance Team will provide the Respondent an opportunity to be heard before a final decision that may result in suspension or expulsion.
 - (1) The Respondent may accept or decline this opportunity.
 - (2) If the Respondent accepts the opportunity to be heard, arrangements will be made with the Respondent to participate in a conference call and/or to provide a written statement to

demonstrate they did not violate AOBTA standards or regulations.

- (3) A conference call will include the members of the Grievance Team, will be pre-set for a specific amount of time, and will be recorded.

Section 9: Decisions

- A. Once the Grievance Team has completed its investigation and deliberation, the Team shall, within twenty (20) days, submit a written report of its findings and conclusions to the Committee Chairperson. In reaching its decision, the Grievance Team may consider all reliable information that it gathered or received during the Grievance Process. The Grievance Team is not limited to the allegations by the Grievant in the Notice of Grievance; it may consider Respondent's conduct in light of the mission and purpose of the Organization as a whole.
- B. In the event that the Grievance Team, after deliberating upon the Grievance, finds that a violation of the AOBTA standards of conduct has occurred, it shall include in its written report (1) its specific findings as to the Respondent's wrongdoing(s), (2) all AOBTA provision(s) or standard(s) that have been violated, and (3) any disciplinary measures it deems appropriate.
 1. Possible disciplinary measures may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Reprimand.
 - b. Probation with conditions on membership for a specified time.
 - c. Suspension of membership with or without conditions of time.
 - (1) Suspension carries with it the prohibition of holding or running for any Organization office, voting, use of AOBTA name and/or logos, and removal from all the Organization's referral lists, including the website directory.
 - d. Expulsion from the Organization.
 - (1) Expulsion may be imposed, without limitation, when the violation brings disrepute to the Organization and clearly impugns the objectives of the Organization.
 - (2) A decision of Expulsion from the Organization must be a unanimous decision by all members of the Grievance Team.
 - e. Removal from office for any Officer determined to have violated AOBTA standards.
- C. The Ethics Committee Chairperson shall send a copy of the Grievance Team's written report of the final decision (and the disciplinary action decision, if applicable) to The Organization's Executive Committee after the deadline for appeal has passed.
 1. The Executive Committee will endorse the report, making it an official action of The Organization.
- D. The Ethics Committee Chairperson shall send the written report of its decision to the Grievant and Respondent by Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested, within seven (7) days of it being final.

1. If the Respondent has not been found to be in violation of AOBTA standards, there is no further notification to other parties, with the exception of The Organization's Executive Committee as noted above in Section C.
 2. If the Respondent has been found to be in violation of AOBTA standards, then the AOBTA Board of Directors and the State Chapter President (if applicable) shall also be notified, in writing, of the decision by Regular Mail, after the deadline for appeal has passed.
 3. Upon completion of the Grievance Procedure, including any appeals, the Grievance Team and the Board of Directors shall determine what if any notification is required to protect The Organization, its members, and/or the public.
 4. If the Respondent has been found to be in violation of AOBTA standards per a Default Judgment, included in the notification will be acknowledgment of the possibility that the judgment may be vacated per Section 8-A, paragraph 6-a(1) of this Article.
- E. If the Respondent has been found to be in violation of the AOBTA standards and disciplinary action has been imposed, a follow-up file will be created and a member of the Grievance Team shall be appointed as monitor.
- F. Included in the written notification of the Grievance Team's decision will be information regarding the right of the Grievant and Respondent to appeal the decision of the Team. They shall be provided with copies of the Sections of the RGPs (Rules, Guidelines, and Procedures) that pertain to the filing of an appeal.

Section 10: Appeal

- A. The final decision and/or imposed disciplinary action of a Grievance Procedure may be appealed by either a Grievant or Respondent ("Appellant") to the Board of Directors by mailing a written Notice of Intent to Appeal to the President of the Organization.
1. This written notice of intent to appeal must be received by the President of the Organization within ten (10) days after the Appellant's receipt of the written notice of the Grievance Team's final decision. The Appellant shall also send notice of the appeal to the Chairperson of the Ethics Committee, at the same time.
 2. Appellant must submit all documentation supporting the appeal, if any, to the President of the Organization within thirty (30) days after the Appellant's receipt of the written notice of the Grievance Team's decision.
 3. The Ethics Committee Chair or Team Leader shall forward the entire file for the matter to the President of the Organization.
- B. Grounds for an appeal are material errors or omissions made during the Grievance Procedure, based on the information presented during the Grievance Procedure, and based on guidelines provided in this Article, and which have a substantial effect on the final decision.

- C. The enforcement of disciplinary action imposed on the Respondent shall be stayed upon the timely receipt of Appellant's intent to appeal, pending the decision by the Board of Directors.
- D. The Board of Directors shall make every attempt to make a decision regarding the appeal in a timely manner, but in no event later than sixty (60) days after receiving the Appellant's appeal documentation. The Board of Directors may receive additional information and evidence, as it deems appropriate. The Board of Directors may uphold the decision of the Grievance Team, including any imposed disciplinary action; or it may decide to refer the matter back to the Grievance Team for reconsideration, along with the Board's opinions and recommendations – in which case, the Team and the Board will collaborate to reach a final decision within thirty (30) days of receiving the Board's opinions and recommendations.
- E. In the case of an appeal, the Board of Directors shall have the full and final appellate authority to make the final decision.
- F. The Board of Directors shall comply with all confidentiality provisions in Section 6.

Section 11: Limitation of Actions

- A. Any grievance filed against an Officer or Member under this Article must be brought within one (1) year of the occurrence of the incident(s) cited in the grievance.
- B. Per RGP Article XIII, Section 4, grievances filed against COSP schools made by member students, graduates, faculty or former faculty members must be brought within seven (7) years of the occurrence of the incident(s).
- C. There is no statute of limitations for the filing of grievances that pertain to physical/sexual abuse or assault.

Article 17: State Chapters

Section 1: Starting a State Chapter

AOBTA Voting members who wish to start an AOBTA State Chapter shall complete the following:

- A. Notify the National Vice-President and the State Representative(s) of the intention to establish a State Chapter.
- B. Contact AOBTA Headquarters for the most updated membership list of the State and a State Chapter Packet.
- C. The State Chapter Packet contains:
 1. Instructions and guidelines regarding initial procedures
 2. Instructions and guidelines regarding annual requirements
 3. Sample newsletters, meeting agenda, survey, financial report, incorporation papers, federal forms, State Chapter Charter
 4. Copies of the Bylaws and RGPs regarding State Chapters
 5. Application for State Chapter Charter
 6. Incorporation checklist
 7. Annual reports checklist

- D. At the first meeting, the members in attendance will create an agenda, keep minutes, and make a record of attending members. They will send a copy of the agenda, minutes, and attendance to the AOBTA National Office, the National President and Vice-President. If there is no email access, then they will send three (3) hard copies to the National Office for distribution to the above-mentioned officers.
- E. If a majority of AOBTA members attending the first meeting agree to establish a State Chapter, they will schedule at least four meetings over a period of not less than one year. For each of these meetings, they will create an agenda, keep minutes, and take attendance. They will send a copy of the agenda, minutes, and attendance to the AOBTA National Office, the National President and Vice-President. If there is no email access, they will send three (3) hard copies to the National Office for distribution to the above-mentioned officers.

Section 2: State Chapter Application Process

- A. The State Chapter application will require that certain criteria be met:
 - 1. A history of at least four (4) regular State Meetings, in not less than one year, substantiated by minutes.
 - 2. Five (5) voting members of the AOBTA who are able and willing to be officers and who commit to attend meetings and perform officers' functions of the State Chapter.
 - a.) An AOBTA voting member is an Associate Member, a Certified Practitioner, Registered Instructor, Certified Instructor, or Retired Member.
 - 3. Ability to meet the State Chapter Guidelines outlined in Section 4.
 - 4. Submission of the State Chapter Charter Application to the Chair of the State Representative/Chapter Committee.
- B. If the criteria have been met, the Chair of the State Representative/Chapter Committee will designate one committee member to interview the State Chapter Charter Applicant.
- C. The designated committee member will present a report to the State Representative/Chapter Committee on the interview with the State Chapter Charter Applicant. The Committee will decide by consensus if the state group is ready. If so, they will present them as a State Chapter Charter Candidate to the Board of Directors. If the Board of Directors approves, they will be awarded a State Chapter Charter at the national meeting.

Section 3: State Chapter Charter and Local Incorporation

- A. The State Chapter Charter is to be awarded at the National Membership Meeting during the National Convention.
- B. The new AOBTA State Chapter completes the process by obtaining incorporation as a not-for-profit organization, (State and Federal), beginning this process within 90 days of Charter award and completing within one year. The Chapter name shall be AOBTA [state]. The State Chapter will comply with all legal requirements at all times.
- C. The State Chapter complies with these legal requirements in a way satisfactory to the national AOBTA Counsel.

Section 4: State Chapter Guidelines

- A. There shall only be one (1) State Chapter in any state unless otherwise determined by the National Board of Directors.
 - 1. A State Chapter may have Branches. A Branch must abide by all Bylaws.
 - 2. Two (2) or more adjacent states may form a Joint Chapter.
- B. If a chapter is out of compliance for the year, as an alternative to terminating that Chapter's Charter, the State Representative/Chapter Committee may notify them that National is willing to assist where possible to bring them back to standards in the next year. (See Section 13.)
 - 1. A joint letter from the National Board and the State Chapter Board will notify all members of the involved Chapter that the Chapter is in rebuilding status for that year. After which time, if the Chapter is unsuccessful it must legally dissolve.

Section 5: Bylaws

In the event that State Chapters require additional bylaws, they may be adopted in addition to the National Bylaws, but shall not conflict with the National Bylaws.

Section 6: Governance

- A. State Chapters shall be governed by a State Chapter Board of five (5) Officers: President; Legislative Chairperson; Education Chairperson; Membership Chairperson; Secretary-Treasurer.
- B. Decisions shall be reached by consensus whenever possible.
- C. Students may have a vote on any issue that pertains to the local business of the chapter. However, students may not vote on any National AOBTA issues.
- D. All grievance matters involving a State Chapter member shall be referred to the National Ethics Committee and shall be resolved in accordance with the Grievance Procedures of the Organization.

Section 7: Terms of Office

- A. The President shall be elected every even year, for a term of two years or until a successor is elected, not to exceed two (2) consecutive elected terms in office.
- B. The Education Chair and Secretary-Treasurer shall be elected every odd year, for a term of two years or until a successor is elected, not to exceed two (2) consecutive elected terms in office.
- C. The Membership Chair shall be elected every even year, for a term of two years or until a successor is elected, not to exceed two (2) consecutive elected terms in office.
- D. The Legislative Chair shall be elected every even year, for a term of two years or until a successor is elected.

Section 8: Meetings

- A. State Chapters shall hold a minimum of two (2) board meetings and two (2) member meetings annually, for the mutual benefit of its members and to discuss business pertaining to the profession of Asian Bodywork and the AOBTA.

- B. The time and place of State Chapter meetings shall be established by consensus of the Chapter Board.
- C. All state members shall be notified of meetings in a timely manner by mail, email, and/or phone call.
- D. For each meeting, an agenda will be created, minutes will be kept, and attendance shall be taken. No later than thirty (30) days from the date of the meeting, the Secretary-Treasurer shall send the meeting agenda, minutes, and attendance to the AOBTA National Office, National President and Vice-President. If no email access, then send three (3) hard copies to the National Office for distribution to the above-mentioned officers.
- E. Failure to hold the minimum board and member meetings will bring the State Chapter out of compliance. (See Section 11, Paragraph D.)

Section 9: Elections

- A. The National Vice-President shall oversee the election of the State Chapter Officers.
- B. A candidate for election as an AOBTA State Chapter Officer must meet these criteria:
 - 1. Must be a voting member of the AOBTA in good standing
 - 2. Able to attend the State Chapter Meetings
 - 3. Committed to performing the officer's functions
- C. State Chapter election of officers will take place every year to accommodate rotation of officers in two (2) year office terms. Elections will be held in March or April.
- D. Within fifteen (15) days after an election, the State Chapter Secretary-Treasurer shall notify the AOBTA National Office by sending the results to the AOBTA National Office, the National President and Vice-President. If there is no email access, three (3) hard copies will be sent to the National Office for distribution to the abovementioned officers.

Section 10: State Chapter Officer Duties

- A. All State Chapter officers serve as State Representatives for their state and shall attend all meetings of the Congress of Representatives as such. At Congress of Rep meetings, the State Chapter officers will be allotted one vote per 25 voting members in their state.
- B. Additional State Reps in a State Chapter will assist the State Chapter officers with their duties, per the request of the officers.
- C. President
 - 1. The President shall be concerned with outreach from the State Chapter to AOBTA National and other organizations.
 - 2. The President shall coordinate all aspects of communication between the State Chapter and the National Organization.
 - 3. The President shall coordinate all aspects of communication between the State Chapter and local, state, or regional affairs.
 - 4. The President shall set the meeting agenda and/or approve an agenda decided upon by group process.

5. The President shall oversee the completion and forwarding (via mail or e-mail, as detailed below) of the required annual End-Of-Year Report, consisting of:
 - a) The synopsis of any member surveys prepared by the Membership Chair, submitted to the AOBTA National Office, National President and Vice-President. A copy is to be retained by the State Chapter Secretary-Treasurer.
 - b) Any announcements, notifications, flyers, etc. sent out to the state members and minutes of all board and membership meetings prepared and/or gathered by the Secretary/Treasurer; submitted to the AOBTA National Office, National President and Vice-President. A copy is to be retained by the State Chapter Secretary-Treasurer.
 - c) An up-to-date list of all state members and their contact information prepared by the Membership Chair; submitted to the AOBTA National Office, National President and Vice-President. A copy is to be retained by the State Chapter Secretary-Treasurer.
 - d) The year-end financial statement prepared by the Secretary-Treasurer; submitted to the AOBTA National Office, National Treasurer/Secretary, President, and Vice-President. A copy is to be retained by the State Chapter Secretary-Treasurer.
 6. The President is responsible for the oversight of the State Chapter Officers in fulfilling their responsibilities and for attending the State Chapter meetings. The President may recommend the replacement of an officer to the State Chapter Board of Directors. See National Bylaws regarding this procedure.
- D. Legislative Chairperson
1. The Legislative Chairperson shall be concerned with legislation and regulation that may affect the practice of Asian Bodywork Therapy in the state or in regions of the state.
 2. The Legislative Chairperson shall establish communication with the State Legislature in order to be informed of any legislative action involving bodywork, massage, or Chinese Medicine and report findings to the State Chapter Board.
 3. The Legislative Chairperson shall communicate directly with the National Legislative Director and serve on the National Law & Legislation Committee.
- E. Education Chairperson
1. The Education Chairperson shall assess the continuing education needs of the state membership and shall organize educational opportunities to address those needs.
 2. The Education Chairperson shall be responsible for staying current with the educational materials and policies of the national Organization.
 3. The Education Chair is responsible for reporting all State Chapter educational activities to the National Director of Education.
 4. The Education Chair will communicate directly with the National Director of Education and will serve on the National Education Committee.
- F. Membership Chairperson

1. The Membership Chairperson shall be concerned with recruiting and retaining members.
 2. The Membership Chairperson shall complete an annual survey of the state membership that will serve as an evaluation of the State Chapter and the National Organization, and will assess their professional wants, needs, and concerns. The results of this survey shall be shared with the State Chapter officers, the state members, and the National Board of Directors.
 3. The Membership Chairperson will communicate directly with the National Director of Membership and Director of Member Services and will serve on the National Membership Committee.
- G. Secretary-Treasurer
1. The Secretary-Treasurer shall be concerned with the financial stability of the State Chapter and shall be responsible for meeting announcements, meeting minutes, and reporting those minutes to the state membership and to the National Organization.
 2. The Secretary-Treasurer shall also be responsible for the following:
 - a.) Submitting Chapter and board meeting announcements, agendas, minutes, and attendance records to the National Office, the National President and Vice-President. If there is no email access, three (3) hard copies shall be sent to the National Office for distribution to the above-mentioned officers.
 - b.) Forwarding a list of names and all contact information for all the State Chapter Officers within fifteen (15) days after an election to the National Office, the National President and Vice-President. If there is no email access, three (3) hard copies shall be sent to the National Office for distribution to the above-mentioned officers.
 3. The Secretary-Treasurer shall organize the financial records of the Chapter and submit a year-end financial statement to the State Chapter President for submission to the National Office, National President, National Vice President and National Secretary/Treasurer by January 31. If there is no email access, three (3) hard copies shall be sent to the National Office for distribution to the above-mentioned officers.
 4. The Secretary-Treasurer shall maintain copies of all reports and meeting minutes until the end of term of office and pass them on to the successor.
 5. The Secretary-Treasurer shall communicate directly with the National Treasurer/Secretary and serve on the National Finance Committee.

Section 11: Finances

- A. State Chapters shall be responsible for annually submitting copies of all financial records to the AOBTA National Office, National President, Vice-President, and Treasurer/Secretary. If there is no email access, four (4) hard copies shall be sent to the National Office for distribution to the above-mentioned officers.
- B. State Chapters shall be empowered to raise funds for the purpose of furthering the goals of the Chapter and the Organization.
- C. The National Organization shall remit to each State Chapter the sum of \$10.00 from each State Chapter's Voting members' dues paid to the National

Organization. The amount shall accrue for a period of twelve (12) months prior to the presentation of the Charter to any new State Chapter. This amount shall be paid, all or in part, by March 31 of each calendar year to the State Chapter in accordance with the number of active State Chapter members on the first day of the preceding December, pending receipt of the State Chapter annual reports. If paid in part, regular payments will be made on the remaining balance until all is paid.

- D. The annual financial remission to the State Chapter will be withheld in the event that reporting requirements are not met by the stated deadlines or if the State Chapter has not been in compliance. A Chapter may appeal the withholding with a written request to the State Representative/Chapter Committee stating the reason for the delay and a submission of required reports within 30 days of the unmet deadline. A separate appeal must be made for every report not submitted in a timely manner. The appeal will be reviewed by the State Chapter committee by April 1st. If the appeal is accepted, the Chapter will receive a minimum of 50% of the original available stipend.

Section 12: State Chapters and the State Chapter Committee

- A. The State Chapter Committee is chaired by the National Vice-President.
- B. The State Chapter Committee is responsible for the following:
 - 1. Receiving the State Chapter Charter application
 - 2. Screening the Applicant to determine if they have met the criteria.
 - 3. Deciding if the State Chapter Applicant is ready to start a viable Chapter.
 - 4. Presents the State Chapter candidate to the Board of Directors for consideration.
 - 5. Awards the Chapter Charter at the National Membership Meeting during the National Convention.
 - 6. Supports the Chapter with their incorporation, and with the process of conforming to the laws regarding the operation of a not-for-profit organization within the state.
 - 7. Mediates problems within and between Chapters.

Section 13: Termination of State Chapter

- A. AOBTA National may terminate the charter of any State Chapter in the event of any of the following:
 - 1. Conduct of the State Chapter that constitutes a felony.
 - 2. Conduct of any officer of a State Chapter that constitutes a felony.
 - 3. Failure of a State Chapter, upon demand by the AOBTA National Board of Directors, to expel any officer who engages in conduct constituting a felony.
 - 4. Failure of the State Chapter to follow the Rules, Guidelines and Procedures (RGPs) of the American Organization for Bodywork Therapies of Asia (including the submission of any documentation or paperwork required by the RGPs), which such failure is not cured within 30 days.
 - 5. Failure of the State Chapter to comply with any code, law or regulation of the Chapter's state, in which such failure is not cured within 30 days.
 - 6. A Request from a State Chapter to terminate their charter.

- a.) This shall happen only after the State Chapter President has sent a letter by postal or email to each voting member of the Chapter explaining the situation prompting the need for closure and requesting a response from each member for their input.
 - b.) If the membership response is not sufficient to maintain the Chapter's viability, then the Chapter's membership and National Board of Directors shall be notified by either the national Vice-President or State Chapter President of the intent to terminate their charter.
- B. Upon determination or acceptance of a State Chapter to terminate their charter:
 - 1. Notification of the State Chapter's financial status shall be made to the national Treasurer/Secretary and steps to transfer any State Chapter funds to AOBTA's National Treasury will be arranged.
 - 2. All State Chapter files and equipment shall be sent to the national office.
 - 3. All State Chapter officers shall tender their resignation to the National Office, National President and Vice-President.
 - 4. State Representatives (1 per 25 Voting members) shall be selected to maintain effective communication with National Organization.
- C. A State Chapter may appeal to the National Board of Directors the termination of its charter, provided that a State Chapter's attempt to come into compliance after notice that its charter has been terminated shall not be a defense to any termination of the charter.
 - 1. Appeals must be received by the National President no later than ten (10) days of the State Chapter officers' receiving notice that the charter is terminated.
 - 2. The National Board of Directors shall make every attempt to decide such appeal within thirty (30) days of its filing with the Board, and shall have full and final appellate decision-making authority.
- D. Upon termination of its charter, a State Chapter shall immediately cease presenting itself as an AOBTA-sponsored organization and shall take all necessary steps to dissolve itself legally in its state of incorporation.
 - 1. If the State Chapter files an appeal, then this action shall be delayed until a final decision is made that supports terminating the charter.
- E. After waiting ten (10) days, in case of an appeal, upon termination of a State Chapter's charter, the National Board of Directors will notify the members in that state of their State Chapter's termination.
- F. Nothing in this section shall prevent a terminated charter from seeking reinstatement at any time after its termination.

Article 18: Criteria for Asian Bodywork Therapy Forms

- A. The Form must have its foundation in Chinese Medicine.
- B. The Form must have a program of instruction that meets the professional level membership requirements of the AOBTA curriculum.
- C. The Form must have clearly defined theories and techniques of treatment that, although founded in Chinese Medicine Theory, are unique and distinguish it from other Forms of Asian Bodywork Therapy.
- D. The Form must have origin of lineage or textual, canonical knowledge.

- E. The Form must have at least 20 graduates, which include practitioners and instructors of said Form, who are professional level AOBTA members.
- F. The Form must have a written definition.