

BYLAWS - PEOPLE FIRST OF ALABAMA

Proposed Revision - 8/11/2009

Bylaws Table of Content

Article	Title	Page
I	Mission	1
II	Membership	1
III	Board of Directors	2
IV	Officers	3
V	Election of Officers	6
VI	Advisors	7
VII	Meetings	9
VIII	Parliamentary Authority	9
IX	Amendment of Bylaws	10
X	Fiscal Year	10
XI	Dissolution	10

ARTICLE I. MISSION

Section 1. Mission Statement - People First of Alabama is a group of people with developmental disabilities living in Alabama and dedicated to making our dreams happen by having choices and control over our lives. This means having opportunities to make decisions and plans for ourselves instead of having others make them for us.

ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Members-at-large - Individuals residing in the State of Alabama, living in an area not served by an organized local chapter of People First of Alabama may join as members-at-large by making application. Members-at-large shall be entitled to all rights and privileges of membership in People First of Alabama.

Section 2. Chapters - Any member of a local People First Chapter in good standing is automatically a member of People First of Alabama

- A. Local Chapter. A local chapter in good standing is defined as a certified chapter which ; Has met the requirements to be certified, maintains a membership of at least five (5) individuals, Provides a membership list to People First of Alabama in writing within 60 days of annual meetings, and has not been suspended or expelled as described in section 5 .

- a. Certification of a local chapter. A local chapter of People First of Alabama is certified by the executive board Of People First of Alabama by meeting the following requirements;
- b. Identify by name at least ten (10) persons with cognitive, intellectual, and developmental disabilities, located in the State of Alabama not currently a member of any other chapter of People First of Alabama who wish to form a chapter and meet the following requirements;
- c. Complete 3 one (1) hour orientation workshops presented by representatives of People First of Alabama.
- d. Identify at least one person who commits to perform the duties of advisor in support of the group.
- e. Hold an election in which at least a president and vice president is elected following People First of Alabama Guidelines
- f. Apply to People First of Alabama for certification as a chapter according to the procedures defined by People First of Alabama.

Section 3 Conduct - Chapter members shall at all times conduct themselves in a way that reflects positively on persons with developmental disabilities, the Self Advocacy movement and People First of Alabama, consistent with the core values and published position statements of People First of Alabama.

Section 4. Speaking on behalf of People First - No chapter member shall make representation to any public official or body, or speak or act publicly in the name of People First of Alabama's without prior approval from the President, Executive Committee or Executive Director. All representations shall be consistent with core values and published position statements of People First of Alabama.

Section 5. Suspension - Any local chapter or member at large may be suspended or expelled from People First of Alabama for failing to meet the requirements in section 2 or by conduct in violation of requirements in section 3 or section 4 of this article, by a vote of two-thirds of Board of Directors.

A suspended member at large or local chapter may apply for reinstatement as soon as the cause for the suspension has been resolved. Removal of suspension requires a vote of two-thirds of Board of Directors.

ARTICLE III. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Membership - The Board of Directors shall be made up of the president of each local People First chapter in good standing as defined in Article II, of these bylaws

- A. Another officer of the local chapter may be selected to serve as director. By the elected president and the chapter advisor notifying People First of Alabama in writing of the selection.
- B. No member of the Board of Directors or their family may be an employee of People First of Alabama.

Section 2. Roles and Responsibilities Directors

- A. Serves as a role model/example for other members
- B Promotes our "Mission Statement"
- C Acts as spokesperson/representative for People First of Alabama with permission from the board
- D Encourages the growth of membership in People First of Alabama
- E Attends board training
- F Attend local chapter meetings, all state board meetings and participate on board committees.
- G Bring chapter concerns to the state board
- H Report state board meeting news back to their local chapter
- I Attend the annual state conference/meeting

Section 3. Authority - The Board of Directors shall have the power of People First of Alabama between the annual meetings of the organization unless otherwise specified in the Bylaws. The Board of Directors shall have and exercise all lawful powers necessary for the conduct of People First of Alabama's business and to carry out its purposes, including the right to employ an executive director and staff.

Section 4. Meetings - The Board of Directors shall meet at least quarterly at times and places as the Board of Directors may find convenient unless they shall vote to omit a specific meeting.

A. Quorum - For meetings of the Board of Directors, a quorum shall be a representation of a minimum of 33.33% of chapters in good standing as established in Section 1 of this article.

B. Votes - Each director/chapter shall have only one vote and none by proxy

Section 5. Decision By Poll - When a decision by the Board of Directors is needed and it is not practical to call a meeting of the Board, the President may direct a poll of the Board Members be taken, using electronic means, by the secretary or executive director. Replies must be received from three-fourths of the Board Members and three-fourths of those replying must vote yes for the proposal to carry

Section 4 Review - Any action of the Board of Directors may be reviewed at the succeeding Annual People First of Alabama meeting or at a special meeting called for the purpose

- Section 5 Attendance - The President may declare vacant the office of any board member or officer who has moved from the State of Alabama, or who has been absent from three consecutive meetings of the Board of Directors.
- Section 6. Filling Vacancies -In the event a board member vacates his/her board membership, the local chapter represented by said board member shall appoint his/her successor. In cases where said board member holds an office, the Executive Board shall appoint his/her successor, from those already on the board, except for the offices of President, which shall be filled by the Vice President, and Past president which shall remain vacant.

ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS

- Section 1. Executive Committee - Officers of People First of Alabama also know as the Executive Committee, shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Sergeant at Arms, and Past President. The Executive Committee shall exercise all powers of The Board of Directors between meetings of the Board.
- A. Records - All proceedings of the Executive Committee shall be reported to The Board of Directors at its regular meeting.
 - B. Meetings - The Executive Committee shall meet at such times as the committee may find necessary to properly transact the business of People First of Alabama. A meeting of the Executive Committee may be called by the President or by three officers.
 - C. Quorum - For meetings of the Executive Committee, a quorum shall be at least 51% of the members. Participation in meetings by electronic means is acceptable to meet these requirements.
- A. Requirements - Nominees for officers must be a member of the Board of Directors. The past president of People First is automatically appointed to the office of Past President at the time a new President is elected.
 - B. Term - Officers shall serve for a period of two (2) years beginning with their election at the Annual Meeting or until a successor is elected and installed. No person shall serve as an officer in the same office for more than two (2) consecutive two-year terms (4 years total).
 - C. No more than one officer may come from an individual chapter with the exception of the Past President.
- Section 2. Officer Duties - All officers will attend officer training, attend board meetings, and take the lead to encourage the growth of People First of Alabama membership. All officers are responsible for performing their duties with or without assistance or support. It is the officer's responsibility to arrange needed assistance or support and for arranging their replacement at meetings which they are unable to attend.

- A. The President shall preside over meetings of People First of Alabama, the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. He/She shall be the Chief Executive and shall have general supervision and direction of the affairs of People First of Alabama under the direction of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. Additionally the president shall;
1. Submit a written Annual progress report to the Annual Meeting of People First of Alabama.
 2. Holds regular executive committee meetings
 3. Give executive committee report to the board
 4. Guides other officers to make certain that officers work as a team
 5. Make sure other officers know and perform their duties
 7. Develop agenda for Board meetings
- B. The Vice President perform the duties of the president when the president is not available. The Vice President assists the president to do his/her job when requested by the president.
- C. The Secretary keeps written records of the all meetings and correspondence of the Board of Directors, and the Executive Committee of People First of Alabama. The Secretary substitutes for the Vice President if the president is not present at a meeting. Additionally the Secretary shall;
1. Maintain an accurate record of the membership of People First of Alabama and of the names and addresses of the president and advisor of each local chapter
 2. Make sure that timely notices of all meetings of People First of Alabama, the Board of Directors, and the Executive Committee are sent and shall ensure that all correspondence by the President is completed.
 3. Record attendance at meetings
 4. Write meeting minutes
 5. Present minutes of past meeting(s)
 6. Record votes and results
- D. The Treasurer - keeps of an accurate and complete account of all funds received and disbursed by People First of Alabama. Additionally the Treasurer ;
1. Gives verbal and written treasurer's report at board meetings
 2. Collects dues/monies from local chapters and all other sources
- E. The Sergeant at Arms - hosts all meetings of People First of Alabama, the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. Additionally the Sergeant at Arms;
1. Keeps order in meetings
 2. Sets up room and equipment for each meeting
 3. Greets all guests and members at each meeting

- F. Past President - Acts as an advisor to the president. In the absence of the president, the Past President may preside at meetings at the request of the Vice President.

ARTICLE V. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

All officers with the exception of Past President are nominated by a nomination committee, with additional nomination from the floor, and are elected by the membership at an annual business meeting. Only current members of the board of directors are eligible for election. The term of office is 2 years. Officers who, after being elected, cease to be members of the Board of Directors due to local chapter elections or changed chapter membership will serve the remainder of their term of office.

- Section 1. Nomination - The Nomination Committee shall convene no less than 90 days prior to the Annual Meeting and from the current list of local chapter representatives, select a slate of one or more eligible persons for each vacant office. Paid staff members of People First of Alabama are not eligible for any elective office or for the Nomination Committee. Nomination may be made from the floor at the time of the election. See Section 2
 - A. Nomination Committee - shall consist of four (4) board members, preferably from each region of the state (N, S, E, W), chosen or elected by the board and the immediate past president who shall serve as chairman. State Advisors will assist and advise the Nominating Committee.
 - B. Willingness to serve - The Nomination Committee shall secure from each nominee a statement including the following;
 - 1. That he/she will serve if elected.
 - 3. Signed by the nominee
 - 2. Signed statement from the chapter advisor that adequate supports are available to allow the person to fulfill his/her duties
 - C. Slate of candidates - The Nominating committee shall submit the slate of candidates to the Secretary at least sixty days prior to the Annual Meeting. The Secretary shall publish this slate in his/her notice of the Annual Meeting.
- Section 2. Election - The executive Committee will develop and publish a written procedure for conducting elections in compliance with requirements of this article.
 - A. The election of officers shall be held at a general meeting of the membership. The report of the Nominating Committee shall be read and nominations from the floor invited. Any person nominated from the floor must have indicated in writing, prior to the opening of nominations from the floor, his/her willingness to serve, endorsed by his/her chapter advisor indicating that he/she has supports available to fulfill the duties of the office if elected,.
 - A. Voting shall be by secret ballot for any position for which there is more than one candidate.

- B Each local chapter in good standing shall be entitled to one vote for each member. Voting strength shall be computed based on the most recent report on file with People First of Alabama prior to the opening of the Annual Meeting.
- C Quorum - shall consist of voting delegates representing, in person or by proxy, not less than 33.33 percent of possible votes based on voting strength computed on the most recent report on file with People First of Alabama prior to the opening of the Annual Meeting.
- D Votes required for election - The Chairperson of the Nominating Committee shall serve as head teller at the Annual Meeting and the President shall appoint two other tellers to serve with him/her. The tellers shall count the votes and give the count to the President, who shall announce the count. To be elected, a candidate must receive the majority of votes cast for that office. In case a candidate for a position does not receive a majority of the votes cast, a vote shall then be taken between the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes.
- E. Elected officers will be sworn in and take office at the end of the election and serve a two year term.

Section 3 Resignation and Removal - An officer can resign by writing a letter to the President. Officers can be removed for just cause. The Board of Directors will decide cause. The officer must be notified in writing of the action and given an opportunity to speak to the Board of Directors about the action before the action is final.

ARTICLE VI. ADVISORS

Section 1. People First of Alabama will appoint advisors to serve. Advisors are people that help self-advocates to speak up for themselves. Advisors are advocates who support the Self-Advocacy movement without pay. The advisor's role is one of support, they have no management role and have no vote at meetings.

Section 2 Qualifications - Advisors are people who have demonstrated a commitment to the self-advocacy movement and a willingness to support self advocates. Desirable qualifications include;

- 1 Valid Alabama Driver's licence, liability insurance and good driving record
- 2 Good communication skills
- 3 Good reading , writing and organizational skills.
- 4 Experience in the disability field (friends, family or professional)
- 5 Available for meetings
- 6 Flexible
- 7 Respect for membership as well as other people
- 8 Access to email on daily basis
- 9 Available by phone/ voice mail on daily basis

Section 3 Required Duties - The following are duties and responsibilities of all advisors

- Attend at least 2 board meetings each year
- Learn about People First and Self Advocacy
- Use people First Language
- Actively encourage members to speak up for themselves
- Encourage members to be independent
- Encourage members to speak up for themselves
- Give feedback to group when asked

Section 4 Additional Duties - From time to time advisors may be called upon to provide additional; supports such as;

- Help people arrange transportation
- Help members understanding responsibilities
- Teach members how to run the meeting
- Teach officer's duties
- Take minutes
- Assist members in setting goals
- Assist members in planning activities
- Assist members in raising money
- Give advice when asked and only when asked
- Assists the members to communicate by phone, email or writing
- Assists members in setting and maintaining a schedule of meetings and activities.
- Read and explaining written material to members if needed.
- Assists the members in pronouncing or spelling difficult words.
- Supports such as; typing, proofreading
- Documents or assists members to document, activities in writing
- Assists the members in preparing and making presentations.
- Some individuals may need physical support such as walking or entering buildings and vehicles.

Section 5 Selection of Advisors - At least 1 (one) and up to 5 advisors are Chosen by the board of Directors from throughout the state. Efforts are made to choose advisors from various geographic areas of the state. Advisors are chosen by the board of directors and invited to serve by the president.

ARTICLE VII. MEETINGS

Section 1 Annual Business Meeting - People First of Alabama will hold a business meeting open to all members

- A Business to be conducted
- 1 Hold election of officers if vacancies exist
 - 2 Consider changes to these bylaws
 - 3 Review actions of the State Coordinator and Board of Directors during the previous year

- B Scheduling - The annual meeting will be scheduled by the executive board and announcement of the time and place distributed to all chapters no less than 60 days prior to the scheduled meeting
- Section 2 Special meeting - a special meeting of the membership may be called by the president, 2 or more other officers, or 3 members of the board of directors.
- A Process to call a meeting - The persons wishing to call a special meeting will provide the secretary or state coordinator a written request signed by the required individuals above. This request must include the reason for the requested meeting.
 - B The special meeting will be scheduled by the secretary or state coordinator no more than 60 days from the date the completed request is received. The date time and place will be distributed to all chapters no less than 30 days prior to the scheduled meeting
- Section 3 Board of Directors meeting - A meeting of the board of directors, open to all members, will be conducted quarterly
- A The Secretary and state coordinator will schedule the quarterly meeting and notify all chapters 14 days prior to the meeting
 - B The following reports will be presented in writing at the quarterly meeting
 - 1 Financial Report - By the Treasurer and financial support person
 - 2 State Coordinator Report - By the State Coordinator
 - C The following reports can be delivered verbally if available at the quarterly board meeting;
 - 1 Committee reports
 - 2 Chapter Reports

ARTICLE VIII. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Section 1: People First will conduct Annual Meetings and quarterly board meetings according to Robert's Rules of Order with modification as needed to accommodate the unique requirements of the organization..

ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENT OF THE BYLAWS

Section 1 Board members or local chapters can suggest bylaw revisions to the board. The board will examine them and will recommend they be accepted, rejected or revised/changed. A two-thirds vote is required for additions or changes to the bylaws to be accepted for a vote by the membership.

Section 2. The People First of Alabama Bylaws can be changed or added to at the annual business meeting or a special meeting called for that purpose. The revisions, recommended for vote by the board of directors must be presented to chapters 6 weeks before the meeting where the vote will take place. A simple majority (50.1%) vote of the membership is required for additions or changes .

ARTICLE X. FISCAL YEAR

Section 1. The fiscal year of People First of Alabama will be from October 1 through September 30

ARTICLE XI. DISSOLUTION

Section 1 Upon dissolution/closing of People First of Alabama, after paying or making arrangements for the payment of all liabilities/bills of People First of Alabama, People First of Alabama would like for all assets/money or property to be given to a self-advocacy/advocacy organization within the state of Alabama.

President / Date

Secretary / Date