

**CONSTITUTION AND BY LAWS OF
THE OWNER HANDLER ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, INC.**

ARTICLE I

NAME AND OBJECTIVES

The name of the Association shall be:

THE OWNER HANDLER ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, INC.

The main objectives of the Association shall be:

1. To encourage and promote the sport of owner training and handling of dogs.
2. To encourage and promote sportsmanship among the dog fancy.
3. To educate and communicate about the dog fancy.

ARTICLE II

CODE OF ETHICS

Preamble

I will uphold the Constitution of the Owner Handler Association of America, Inc., further my own and other exhibitors education in the sport, educate other exhibitors by example and offer help wherever possible.

I will always endeavor to conduct myself in an exemplary fashion being aware that my behavior is a direct reflection on my organization.

I will at all times defend my organization by meeting misrepresentation with facts and will make every effort to safeguard its good name.

Ownership

I will maintain the highest possible standards of cleanliness in the care of my dogs.

I will strive to keep my dogs in the best possible physical condition.

I will always keep in mind the safety of other dogs.

I will not jeopardize other dogs or exhibitors by showing an uncontrollably aggressive or sick animal.

I will not jeopardize the health of my own animals by any action such as bringing a bitch on the show grounds when due to whelp.

I will try at all times to keep my dog under control so that he may not annoy my neighbors nor contribute to the excess of unwanted dog population.

I will refuse to knowingly deal with dog wholesalers, retailers, and unethical breeders.

I will not deal with any buyer who I have reason to believe will not properly care for the puppy or dog he purchases.

I will always do my part to keep the grooming area and show grounds clean and observe all other exhibitors' rights.

I will display the most responsible and courteous behavior toward all people involved in the fancy as well as toward people who serve the fancy's needs I will always keep motel rooms clean when traveling with dogs and should soil or damage inadvertently occur, I will report it and assume all financial responsibility for damages

I will not use inhumane training methods.

I will conduct myself in an ethical manner if I choose to use the services of anyone dealing with the fancy I will strive to evaluate my own dogs and exhibit only those worthy of being shown and who have been properly trained and groomed.

I will not in an effort to set a good example for the novice exhibitor enter a dog which is below standard in an effort to control the number of points.

Sportsmanship

I will be courteous to judges and fellow exhibitors by showing good sportsmanship.

I will make every effort to stay for the Group showing if my dog should be chosen Best of Breed or Best of Variety.

I will acquaint myself with and adhere to all rules and regulations.

I will make an effort to be on time for my judging and remain in the ring until excused by the judge or steward.

I will wait at ringside if there is a possibility that my dog may be needed for further judging.

I will be selective in the shows I enter so that the safety and comfort of dogs and exhibitors will be protected.

To perpetuate the sport of showing dogs, I will encourage all show giving clubs to offer Junior Showmanship Classes.

I will wear appropriate attire in the ring to project the proper image of the owner handler and compliment the total picture of the dog and handler.

I will show my dog in a clean and well groomed condition.

I will make every effort to be on time when showing at a licensed competitive events. If this is not possible.

I will try to accomplish the changes with the least confusion and inconvenience to the officials and the exhibitors.

Membership

I will conduct myself in an orderly manner at all the OHA meetings.

I will consider the best interest of the Owner Handler Association of America, Inc., to be first and foremost above any personal considerations and will not engage in any conduct which will be injurious to the Association.

I will not use my membership in the Owner Handler Association of America, Inc., solely as a vehicle to further my personal interests.

I agree that only the Board of Governors of the Owner Handler Association of America, Inc., or its appointed representatives have the right to represent the Association in any and all issues.

Communications which contain any statement of policy of The Owner Handler Association of America, Inc., shall have been approved in writing in advance by the Board of Governors of the Owner Handler Association of America, Inc.

ARTICLE III

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 Regular

Membership is open to any person who subscribes to the purposes of this Association, agrees to abide by its constitution and by laws, is active in the sport of dogs and is in good standing with recognized Kennel Clubs.

There shall be three (3) types of membership: Regular Member, Junior Member, and Honorary Member.

Section 2 Junior Membership

All persons over eight (8) and under eighteen (18) years of age may apply for Junior Membership. Such members shall have all the privileges of membership but may not serve on the Board of Governors nor vote on any business nor in Association elections. At eighteen (18) years of age, Junior Members become eligible for Regular Membership.

Section 3 Honorary Membership

The Board of Governors may confer Honorary Membership in the Association by a three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote of the Governors present at a Board meeting. An Honorary Member shall have none of the obligations of membership but shall be entitled to all the privileges except those of making motions, voting and of holding office.

Section 4 Application for Membership

Each applicant for membership shall apply on a form approved by the Board of Governors, which shall provide that the applicant agrees to abide by the Association's Constitution, By Laws, and the Code of Ethics. One year's dues shall accompany the membership application. The Board may institute an initiation fee at its discretion.

Section 5 Election to Membership

All applications received shall be voted on by the Board of Governors at its next meeting. Affirmative votes by two-thirds (2/3) of the Governors present at a meeting of the Board shall be required to elect an applicant. If membership is denied an applicant, The Board is not obligated to disclose the reason for denial.

Section 6 Application Re-submission

Applications which have received an unfavorable vote by the Board may be re-submitted no less than one year from the date of the Board's decision.

ARTICLE IV

DUES

Dues shall be subject to change by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Board of Governors.

ARTICLE V

DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS

Section 1 Qualifications

To be eligible for nomination to the Board of Governors or serve on a nominating Committee, a member must have exhibited and/or handled a minimum of one (1) dog completing the title of Champion of Record, Field Trial champion, C.D. or T.D. and have at least two (2) years of active association with the sport of dogs, or not fulfilling the previous qualifications must have a minimum of five (5) years of association with the sport of dogs.

Section 2 Board of Governors

The Board shall be comprised of the President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, and Treasurer, all of whom shall be elected for one two year term, and six (6) Directors who will be elected for one four year term, half of which will be elected at each biennial meeting of the Association, except in the first election when half of the Board shall be elected for two (2) years and the other half for four (4) year terms.

Both Secretaries and the Treasurer may have assistants approved by the Board. Assistants may not vote at a Board of Governors meeting.

The Executive Committee shall be made up of the President, The Recording Secretary, The Treasurer and One (1) Board member to be chosen by the Board. The Executive Committee shall act only on emergencies and only when there is an unanimous vote of its members. Decisions made but not acted upon by the Executive Committee may be overruled at the next Board meeting.

Section 3 Officers

The Association's Officers, consisting of the President. First Vice President. Second Vice President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer shall serve in their respective capacities as follows:

The **PRESIDENT** shall preside at all meetings of the Association and shall have the duties and powers normally appurtenant to the office of President in addition to those particularly specified by these By Laws.

The **FIRST VICE PRESIDENT** shall have the powers and exercise the duties of the President in case of the absence, incapacity or death of the President.

The **SECOND VICE PRESIDENT** shall have the powers and exercise the duties of the President in case of the absence, incapacity or death of the President and the First Vice President. In addition, the Second Vice President shall perform the duties of Chapter Coordinator.

The **CORRESPONDING SECRETARY** shall have responsibility of the correspondence of the Association as directed by the Board or by the President. Copies of all outgoing correspondence shall be sent to the President at the time the original correspondence is sent. The Corresponding Secretary will notify the President of any correspondence within one week of receipt of that correspondence.

The **RECORDING SECRETARY** shall take minutes of all meetings of the Association and of the Board and shall be responsible for their distribution. An agenda shall be prepared by the President and the Recording Secretary and shall be enclosed with the meeting notice. The Recording Secretary shall be responsible for the preparation and distribution of ballots and shall notify officers and directors.

The **TREASURER** shall collect and receive all monies due or belonging to the Association and shall deposit these funds in the name of the Association in banks approved by the Board. The accounts shall be in the name of the Treasurer and the President for the purpose of withdrawal. Whenever practical, monies shall be deposited in an interest bearing account upon the approval of the Board. All checks over \$250 must be approved by the Executive Committee. All checks over \$1,000 shall require signatures of the President and the Treasurer. The books shall at all times be open for inspection by the Board. The Treasurer shall provide an itemized report of the Association's finances at every Board meeting. At the Association's Annual Meeting, the Treasurer shall render an account of all monies received and expended during the current fiscal year and all outstanding debts owned to the Association. The Treasurer shall be bonded, the premiums for which shall be paid by the Association. The annual Audit shall be conducted prior to the annual Meeting by a Committee of three (3) members chosen by the Board, only one of whom shall be a current Board Member.

Section 4 Resignations

Resignation of an Officer is an automatic resignation from the Board of Governors. Any member of the Board of Governors who misses three (3) consecutive meetings may be requested, at the discretion of the Board of Governors, to resign from the Board.

Section 5 Vacancies

Any vacancy occurring on the Board shall be filled as soon as practical for the unexpired term of office upon a majority vote of the remaining members of the Board.

Section 6 Term of Office

Members of the Board of Governors may hold office for a two year-term. No more than one (1) member of the same family, residing in the same household, may serve on the Board of Governors at the same time. Any member of the Board of Governors may be re-elected.

ARTICLE VI

COMMITTEES

Section 1

The Board shall appoint each year standing committees to advance the work of the Association. Such committees shall always be subject to the final authority of the Board. Special committees may also be appointed by the Board to aid it on particular projects. .

ARTICLE VII

MEETINGS

Section 1 Association Meetings

Meetings of the Association shall be held at a place, date, and hour designated by the Board of Governors. Written notice of a meeting shall be mailed to all members at least fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the date of the meeting. The quorum for these meetings shall be a minimum of fifteen (15) members other than members of the Board of Governors.

Section 2 Special Association Meetings

Special Association meetings may be called by the President or by a majority vote of the members of the Board who are present at a meeting, who vote by mail, or by the Recording Secretary upon receipt of a petition signed by fifteen (15) members of the Association who are in good standing. Such meetings shall be held at a place, date, and hour designated by the Board of Governors within sixty (60) days of the receipt of a petition. Written notice of such meeting shall be mailed by the Recording Secretary at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting. The notice of the meeting shall state the purpose of the meeting and no other Association business may be transacted. The quorum for such a meeting shall be the same as that of a regular Association meeting.

Section 3 Board Meeting

There shall be at least four (4) meetings of the Board of Governors each year. Written notice of each meeting shall be mailed by the Recording Secretary to each member of the Board at least fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the date of the meeting. The quorum for such a meeting shall be six (6) members of the Board. A meeting is defined as a gathering in person, by telephone, by mail or any other manner of general acceptance.

Section 4 Conduct of Business

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the Association in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the By Laws of the Association.

ARTICLE VIII

THE ASSOCIATION YEAR

Section 1

The Association's fiscal year shall begin on the first (1) day of November and end on the thirty-first (31) day of October.

ARTICLE IX

NOMINATIONS

Section 1

No person may be a candidate in an Association election who has not been nominated in accordance with these By Laws. A Nominating Committee shall be chosen by the Board of Governors before June 1. The Committee shall consist of five (5) members in good standing, no more than one of whom shall be a member of the current Board of Governors. The Board shall name a Chairman of the Committee.

Section 2

The Nominating Committee shall nominate from among the members of the Association in good standing one (1) candidate for each position on the Board of Governors. The Committee shall procure written acceptance and a short biography from each nominee. The committee shall then submit its slate of candidates and biographies to the Recording Secretary no later than August 17th. The Recording Secretary shall mail the slate and biographies to each member of the Association on or before September 1.

Section 3

Additional nominations may be made by written petition which must be signed by five (5) OHA members in good standing and accompanied by the candidate's written acceptance with a short biography signifying the nominee's willingness to be a candidate. This petition must be sent via express, certified or registered mail and received at the Recording Secretary's regular address on or before October 1. No person shall be a candidate for more than one office.

Section 4

If there is more than one candidate for any office, the Board of Governors shall pick two (2) members in good standing as Inspectors of Election to serve with the Recording Secretary in the validation of ballots.

ARTICLE X

BIENNIEL ELECTIONS

Section 1

If there is more than one (1) candidate for an office, the Recording Secretary shall mail, on or before November 1, a ballot to each member in good standing as of July 1, of the election year. The ballot shall have all of the nominees in alphabetical order together with biographical sketches. A **blank** envelope and a return envelope addressed to the Recording Secretary and marked "ballot" shall also be included. Each voter, after marking his ballot, **shall** seal it in the **blank** envelope and place it in the second envelope addressed to the Recording Secretary. The member must place his name and return address on the return envelope for validation of the ballot. Any ballot received without a return address will be invalid and will not be counted in the election process. Ballots, to be valid, must be postmarked no later than seven (7) days prior to the Annual Meeting.

Section 2

The Inspectors of Election shall check the returns against the July 31 list of members in good standing prior to opening the outer envelopes. To certify the eligibility of the voters, after validation, the sealed blank envelope shall be removed from the outer envelope and held by the Recording Secretary until the annual meeting. Blank envelopes will be opened at the Annual Meeting and the results of the voting shall be announced. Ballots shall be kept on file for a period of sixty (60) days during which time any contesting must be made.

Section 3

If there are no contested positions, no ballot will be sent. The Recording Secretary will cast one (1) vote electing the uncontested slate. Nominations cannot be made at the Annual Meeting nor in any manner other than as provided in Article IX Sections 1, 2, and 3.

Section 4

At the Annual meeting for the election of the Board of Governors, the vote shall be conducted by ballot. Ballots to be valid, must be received by the Recording Secretary before the opening of the meeting. Ballots shall be counted at the meeting by a Tabulating Committee of at least three (3) members chosen by the Chair. The nominees receiving the largest number of votes shall be elected. If any nominee, at the time of the meeting, is unable to serve for any reason, the nominee shall not be elected and the vacancy so created shall be filled by the new Board of Governors. The Officers and Directors take office immediately upon the conclusion of the meeting. Each retiring Officer shall turn over to his successor all properties and records relating to that office within thirty (30) days after the election.

ARTICLE XI

VOTING

Section 1

At regular meetings or special meetings of the Association, voting shall be limited to those members in good standing. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted. The Board of Governors may decide to submit other specific questions for decision of the members by written ballot cast by mail.

ARTICLE XII

CHAPTERS

Section 1

A chapter may be formed by any group of not less than fifteen (15) members in good standing with the Association. The territory covered by the proposed Chapter as well as its constitution must be approved by the Board of Governors. If, after approval, the number of members of a chapter is reduced to less than fifteen (15) members in good standing, the chapter may continue as a Chapter or may be dissolved at the discretion of the Board of Governors.

Section 2

CHAPTER REPRESENTATION

To enable each regional Chapter to be represented, one delegate and one alternate shall be elected by the Chapter to represent it at the National Board of Governors' meetings. The delegates are invited to attend National Board meetings and to listen to all discussion. Delegates will not be counted in the legal requirements for a quorum.

Section 3

A delegate attending a Board of Governors meeting may only discuss chapter business with written instructions from the Chapter which will be attached to the Recording Secretary's minutes of that meeting. The delegate reserves the right to table the subject after discussion by the Board in order to report to the Chapter.

Section 4

The Owner Handler Association of America, Inc. is not responsible for any expense of Chapter Delegates which may include costs incurred as part of telephone conference calls.

Section 5

The Chapter Coordinator shall act as liaison with the established Chapter and assist in the formation of new Chapters. In the event that a delegate cannot attend a National Board, the National Chapter Coordinator will represent the Chapter with the written request from the Chapter Delegate.

Section 6

A chapter must submit any proposed Constitutional changes to the Board of Governors, which has authority to disapprove or approve such changes. In the event of approval, the chapter must wait for written approval before implementing any changes.

Section 7

A Chapter must notify the Board of Governors immediately of any change of Officers during the fiscal year.

Section 8

At the end of each fiscal year, the Chapter must submit a summary business report, an up-to-date list of Officers and Board Members, and a complete list of general members to the Corresponding Secretary.

Section 9

An annual Chapter assessment may be established at the discretion of the National Board.

ARTICLE XIII**AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION AND BY LAWS****Section 1**

Any proposed amendments must be submitted in writing, signed by twenty five (25) members in good standing, and sent to the Recording Secretary.

Section 2

The Board of Governors will review all proposed amendments. Upon their approval, by at least two-thirds (2/3) of the Board, said proposed amendments will be submitted to the general membership for approval.

Section 3

The By Laws may be amended by an affirmative two-thirds (2/3) response of members voting. Voting shall be conducted by mail.

ARTICLE XIV**CHARGES AND BOARD HEARINGS****Section 1**

Any member may prefer charges against a member for alleged misconduct prejudicial to the best interest of the Association. Written charges with specifications must be filed in duplicate with the Recording Secretary together with a deposit of fifty (\$50.00) dollars which shall be forfeited if such charges are not sustained by the Board. The Recording Secretary shall promptly notify the Board which shall fix a date of hearing by the Board not less than three (3) weeks nor more than two (2) months thereafter. The Recording Secretary shall promptly send one (1) copy of the charges to the accused member by certified mail with a notice of the hearings and an assurance that the defendant may personally appear in his own defense and bring witnesses, if he/she wishes.

Section 2

Both complainant and defendant shall be treated with uniformity in all respects. In the event that either complainant, defendant or both, or their witnesses are unable to attend such a hearing any party will be allowed to present evidence by affidavit or by deposition or by interrogations in the same manner as can be done in a court of law. Should the charges be sustained after hearing all the evidence and testimony presented by the complainant and defendant (the Board may by a unanimous vote suspend the defendant from all privileges of the Association for not more than six (6) months from the date of the hearing. If it deems that penalty insufficient it may recommend expulsion in such cases. The suspension shall not restrict the defendant's right to appear before the Board at the ensuing meeting which considers the Board's recommendation. Immediately after the Board has reached a decision, its findings shall be put in written form and filed with the Recording Secretary. The

Recording Secretary shall notify the complainant and defendant of the Boards decision and penalty, if any.

ARTICLE XV

Section 1 DISCIPLINE

Any member who is suspended from the privileges of any recognized Dog Club shall automatically be suspended from the privileges of this Association for the same period of time. Reinstatement as a member of this Association shall be decided by unanimous vote of the Board of Governors.

ARTICLE XVI

TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 Resignation

Any member in good standing may resign from the Association upon written notice to the Recording Secretary, but no member may resign when in debt to the Association. Such debt is incurred as of the first day of the fiscal year.

Section 2 Lapsing .

A membership shall be considered as terminated if such member's dues remain unpaid sixty (60) days after the first day of the fiscal year. At the discretion of the Board, memberships maybe reinstated upon payment of dues.

Section 3 Expulsion

Expulsion of a member from the Association may be accomplished at the next Board meeting following a Board hearing and upon the Board's recommendations as provided in Article XIV, Section 2. The President shall read the charges. The defendant shall have the privilege of appearing in his own behalf and providing evidence at this meeting. The Board shall then vote by secret ballot on the proposed expulsion. A unanimous vote of those present and the meeting shall be necessary for expulsion. If expulsion is not so voted, the Board's suspension shall not stand.

ARTICLE XVII

DISSOLUTION

Section 1

The Association may be dissolved at any time by the written consent of not less than two-thirds (2/3) of the members. In the event of the dissolution of the Association whether voluntary or involuntary or operation of law, none of the property of the Association, nor any proceeds thereof, nor any assets of the Association shall be distributed to any members of the Association. After payment of debts of the Association, its property and assets shall be given to charitable organization for the benefit of dogs to be selected by the members by ballot.