

BY LAWS OF THE MILITARY LAW AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS SECTION  
OF THE  
NEW JERSEY STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

**Article I**

*Name and Purpose*

Section 1. This Section of the New Jersey State Bar Association shall be known as the Military Law and Veterans' Affairs Section of the New Jersey State Bar Association

The purpose of the Military Law and Veterans Affairs Section is to protect and enhance the legal rights of military personnel and Veterans of the Armed Services of the United States and their families, thereby justly recognizing them for their collective efforts and sacrifices on behalf of our national defense, and promoting a more effective military in defense of our nation, its principles and foreign policy, specifically by addressing the goals enumerated in Section 2, among other goals and purposes which from time to time may be identified.

Section 2. The purpose of this Section shall be:

- (a) To study and exchange information and expand the breadth of knowledge with respect to the rights of military personnel, veterans of the United States Armed Forces and their families;
- (b) To take appropriate action, when called for, to assist in the protection of those rights;
- (c) To examine, understand, and address the legal issues in military and civil law affecting our military personnel, veterans and their families before, during and after deployment;
- (d) To keep abreast of key federal and state legislative developments affecting our military personnel, veterans and their families and to promote awareness of their status;
- (e) To inform members of the New Jersey Bar of significant issues which they may confront in their practice related to military personnel, veterans and their families, including but not limited to, family law, employment law, and consumer and financial protection. And, as applicable, and with due regard for the interest of military personnel, veterans and their families involved in those issues, to suggest changes in the law and to develop such changes;
- (f) To develop and promulgate educational media for military personnel, veterans and their families, and to promote better communication pre-, during and post-deployment, to assure an informed, supported and valued military force who remain an integrated component of civil society;

- (g) To plan, conduct and finance an annual public interest symposium dealing with topics and issues of interest to military personnel, veterans and their families, the Bar, and to citizens of the State of New Jersey;
- (h) To promote and engage in *pro bono* legal counseling and representation of military personnel, veterans and their families;
- (i) To report periodically to the New Jersey State Bar Association Board of Trustees, its recommendations for action by the Association's Board of Trustees.

Page 1 of 5

## **Article II**

### *Membership*

Membership in this Section shall consist of all members of the Association who shall signify their desire in writing to become members of this Section.

## **Article III**

### *Officers*

Section 1. The elected officers of this Section shall be a Chair, Chair-Elect, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Immediate Past-Chair. These officers shall constitute the Board of Directors of the Section, subject to the Section Bylaws and the direction of the Board of Trustees of the New Jersey State Bar Association.

Section 2. Each officer shall be elected in a manner as hereinafter set forth, and shall hold office for a term beginning at the close of the Annual Meeting at which elected, and continuing thereafter until the close of the following year's Annual Meeting, or until his or her respective successor shall have been elected. At the expiration of the term of the Chair, the Chair-Elect shall automatically become Chair, and the Chair shall become the Immediate Past-Chair.

Section 3. Vacancy. The Chair-Elect shall act as Chair during any vacancy in the office of Chair for any reason. The Board of Directors shall, by resolution adopted by a majority of the entire Board, fill any permanent vacancy in any office for any reason. An officer so elected by the Board shall hold office for the remaining unexpired term so filled and until a successor shall have been elected.

Section 4. No Chair of this Section may succeed himself or herself for a period of at least two years from the expiration of his or her term.

## **Article IV**

### *Nomination and Election of Officers*

Section 1. Election of officers shall be held at each Annual Meeting of this Section. Nominations shall be presented by a Nominating Committee consisting of the Chair and four members of the Section appointed by the Chair, but not any other Directors. Notice of the nominations shall be communicated to the members, together with the announcement of the Annual Meeting date at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Other nominations may be made by petition of at least 15 members of the Section, submitted to the Secretary not later than 15 days prior to the Annual Meeting, at which the election is scheduled to be held.

Section 2. Elections shall be by written ballot in the event that more than one nomination be made for any office. The Immediate Past-Chair is not elected.

Page 2 of 5

## **Article V**

### *Duties of Officers*

Section 1. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Section and shall formulate and present at such meeting of the New Jersey State Bar Association a report of the work of the Section for the year then past, and shall further perform such other duties and acts as usually pertain to such office.

Section 2. In the event of the absence, death, resignation or disability of the Chair, the Chair Elect shall perform such duties and functions of the position of Chair.

Section 3. The Vice-Chair may be assigned duties by the Chair in the areas of legislative analysis and comment, program coordination, newsletter and other communication responsibilities, respectively, and/or such other duties as the Chair may designate.

Section 4. The Secretary shall be the custodian of all books, papers, documents and other records which are the property of the Section, with responsibility for keeping accurate records of enrollment, attendance, and of all moneys appropriated and expended for use of the Section.

Section 5. The Immediate Past-Chair shall be available for advice and guidance on all policies and procedures of the Section. The Immediate Past-Chair shall also perform such duties and functions as may be delegated by the Chair.

## **Article VI**

### *Membership Meetings*

Section 1: The Section shall meet regularly, no less frequently than six (6) times annually, at such times and places as the Chair shall determine, in consultation with the Members.

Section 2: Special meetings may be held at such times and places as the Chair may deem desirable or, at any time, upon the request of any five (5) members of the Section submitted to the Secretary. There shall be at least seven (7) days' written notice of special meetings, which shall contain a short statement as to the purpose of the meeting.

Section 3: Eight (8) members of the Section, present at any regular or special meeting, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. A majority vote of the members present shall bind the Section membership.

### *Annual Meeting*

The Annual Meeting of the Membership of the Section shall be held at the time and in the same city as the Annual Meeting of the New Jersey State Bar Association. The aforesaid Annual Meeting of the Membership of the Section shall be held at the time and place designated by the Association Secretary in the notice of such Annual Meeting with such program or order of business as may be fixed by the Chair.

Page 3 of 5

## **Article VII**

### *Amendments*

Section 1. The Bylaws may be amended at any meeting of this Section by a majority vote of the Section, but such amendments shall not take effect until they have been approved by the Board of Trustees of the New Jersey State Bar Association.

Section 2. The Secretary of the Section shall provide written notice of any proposed Bylaw amendments to the members of the Section by regular first-class mail at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting of the Section at which such amendments will be voted upon. The vote may be conducted either by proxy or actual attendance.

## **Article VIII**

### *Committees*

The Chair shall have the authority to appoint Committees of the Section to study and act upon matters of concern to the Section. The Chair shall also have the authority to dissolve Committees of the Section. The Chair shall also have the authority to appoint and remove the Chairs of the various Committees.

Standing Committees may include, but not be limited to the following named Committees, whose work shall be described as set forth below:

- (a) Committee on Military Law Practice shall study and report on current issues affecting active duty, guard, reserve, and transitioning military personnel, veterans and their families.
- (b) Committee on Civil Practice shall investigate, study and report upon the issues and problems related to military personnel, veterans and their families in the civilian sector and as may arise in Federal State and Municipal Courts, particularly as they relate to family law, debtor-creditor law, and mental health law and other issues.
- (c) Committee on Veterans Affairs shall identify and attempt to resolve legal problems and issues affecting military personnel, veterans and their families.
- (d) Committee on Legislation, whose Chair shall act as the Legislative Coordinator, shall review legislation, policy and regulations, and make recommendations for Committee action. This Committee shall also work with other Committees to develop legislative reforms in the law where necessary.

- (e) Committee on *Pro Bono* Legal Counseling and Representation shall identify the needs of military personnel, veterans and their families so as to engage in and promote *pro bono* legal counseling and representation; shall solicit practicing and retired attorneys and judges to participate in providing legal assistance, such persons solicited subject to approval by the Committee; and shall report those efforts to the Secretary of the Section to be recorded as may be appropriate.

Page 4 of 5

- (f) Committee on Communications and Public Affairs shall (1) promote awareness about the work of and the issues of concern to the Section among the membership of the Judiciary, the Bar, public and private sector employers, and the general public; (2) seek support for the legal welfare of active duty, guard, reserve military personnel, veterans and their families; (3) develop and disseminate a training manual and educational media in any effective and appropriate format, promoting better understanding of the rights, and sources of assistance for U.S. Military Personnel, Veterans and their families; and (4) assist the Secretary of the Section to plan, fund and present an annual legal symposium of information and issues related to military personnel, veterans and their families, open to the public, without charge.

## **Section XI**

### *Authority*

This section shall be organized and conducted in all respects subject to the Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws of the New Jersey State Bar Association.

