

ARTICLE 4 – AFFILIATION

Section 1. Definition: The Association is a cooperative fellowship of Southern Baptist churches that are in harmony with and are cooperating with the purposes and practices of the church, as set forth in Holy Scripture, and the purposes and practices of the Association, as set forth in the *Constitution* and *Bylaws* of the Association. The Association, when assembled as an independent and autonomous body, consists of representatives duly elected by cooperating member churches in accordance with the *Constitution* and *Bylaws* of the Association.

Section 2. Recognition of Churches: Churches desiring affiliation with the Association shall follow the petitioning process appropriate to their desired level of affiliation as specified in the *Bylaws*.

Section 3. Affiliate Categories

Churches may affiliate with the Association as: (1) Ministry Partners; (2) Honorary Members; (3) Associate Members; or, (4) Full Members.

- A. **Ministry Partners:** Non-member churches, or other entities, which, by virtue of interest and function, choose to support the mission and priorities of the Association may be recognized as holding Ministry Partner status with the Association. Ministry Partners shall have no voting privileges and cannot hold office.
- B. **Honorary Membership:** Churches of like order and practice desiring membership in the Association will be recognized as holding Honorary Membership status in the Association. Churches seeking affiliation must do so in compliance with the process and practice established in the *Bylaws*. Honorary members may attend and participate in meetings and social functions of the association, but shall not be granted voting privileges and shall not be eligible for nomination or election to any offices listed in the *Constitution* and *Bylaws* of the Association.
- C. **Associate Membership:** Associate members must meet all the qualifications for membership as stated in the *Bylaws* and Section 4 below. Associate members may attend and participate in meetings and social functions of the association, but shall not be granted voting privileges and shall not be eligible for nomination or election to any offices listed in the *Constitution* and *Bylaws* of the Association.
- D. **Full Membership:** Churches fulfilling all the qualifications and responsibilities of membership in Sections 4 and 5 below and as established in the *Bylaws* shall be recognized as holding Full Membership status in the Association. Full members shall enjoy all benefits and responsibilities of the Association and shall be granted voting privileges and shall be eligible to be nominated for and to be elected to any of the elected offices listed within the *Constitution*, *Bylaws* and *Administrative Manual* of the Association.

Section 4. Qualifications for Full and Associate Membership:

- A. Churches shall be duly constituted, independent bodies, which are scriptural in belief and practice.
- B. Churches shall have doctrines and practices that agree with the most recently adopted Baptist Faith and Message statement of the Southern Baptist Convention and shall be officially aligned with no other denomination.

- C. Churches shall not knowingly take action to affirm, approve, or endorse immorality, adultery, or homosexual behavior, or any other such behavior that is perversion of sexual expression according to biblical standards.
- D. Churches shall embrace and support the purpose statement of the Association.
- E. Churches shall be encouraged to affiliate with a Southern Baptist State Convention.

Section 5. Responsibilities of Full Membership:

Full Member churches of the Association will be responsible to support the cooperative work of the Association. A full member church will:

- A. Keep the Association updated on its annual status by submitting the Annual Church Profile.
- B. Contribute monthly, quarterly, or annually a percentage (3% recommended) of undesignated receipts to the work of the Association.
- C. Send representatives to Executive Board and annual meetings of the Association.

Section 6. Removal of Membership: The Association reserves the right to withdraw membership or affiliation from any church or mission that ceases to be in conformity with the doctrine, policy and practice of the Association, as expressed in the current *Baptist Faith and Message*, this *Constitution* and the *Bylaws*. Such action is to be taken with care and concern for both the Association and the church. Procedures for removal and reinstatement are as specified in the *Bylaws*.