

*To form a club, a meeting is usually called by the group of people interested in forming the club. They meet and discuss the proposed bylaws. As a minimum, they should agree on a Name, place of organization and club address. The areas **bolded** below are usually required for a club to function. Once the organizers are in agreement, the organizing document or Bylaws are adopted, and an election can take place. The founding members are usually included in the resolution forming the club.*

The importance of the Club Assumption of Risk and Waiver of Liability Form cannot be over emphasized. It is your first line of defense for the Club, its Officers, and its Members in case of an accident. The USOA Assumption of Risk and Waiver of Liability Form is a good example to adopt.

UNDERWATER SOCIETY OF AMERICA: CLUB SAMPLE BYLAWS

Article I: Organization

1.0 The name of the club is _____, a non-profit recreational underwater sports organization located in

city/state

1.1 The club's principal office/location shall be set by the Executive Committee. The office may be associated with the President or Secretary, but a more permanent PO Box is desirable for continuity.

1.2 The purposes of the club include but are not limited to the following:

1.2.1 To provide opportunities for recruitment of new members, education, competition, diving, advancement, safety and improvement in all aspects of underwater sports. This is to be done through regular play, pool rental, meetings, seminars, clinics, publications, scheduled dives and other programs or activities.

1.2.3 To provide opportunities for participation in local, regional, national and international underwater sports. This includes, but is not limited to, clinics, seminars or competitions.

1.3 Restrictions: All policies and activities of the club shall be consistent with the rules and regulations of the following:

1.3.1 The National Governing Board for Underwater Sports, Underwater Society of America (USOA);

1.3.2 The World Underwater Federation (CMAS);

1.3.3 Applicable national, state and local rules;

1.3.3 Applicable tax regulations are to be observed. This includes the requirements of a club organized as a not for profit. The Club may not be organized for the benefit of any member(s). This does not prevent the reimbursement of necessary Member expenses for the Club.

Article II: Membership

2.0 Membership in the club is available to all persons who are interested in underwater environment and/or underwater sports. The Club shall not discriminate in any way on the basis of age, color, creed, national origin, sex, race, religion or sexual orientation.

2.1 There are 3 classifications of membership: regular, associate, and honorary

2.1.1 Regular members are those divers/players who participate in the underwater sport and/or dive activities of the club. They shall pay the Club Dues, and complete the Club *Assumption of Risk and Waiver of Liability Form*

2.1.1.1 Minor persons may join as regular members upon written approval of parent/guardian. Minors are defined by the Law of the club state but are generally under the age of 18. Their Club *Assumption of Risk and Waiver of Liability Form* shall be signed by their parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s).

2.1.2 Associate memberships are granted to non-divers and/or non-players who are family and/or household member of a regular member.

2.1.3 Honorary membership may be granted to individual(s) who have distinguished themselves in service to the club and/or sport. Honorary membership is recommended by the Executive Committee and approved by the Membership.

2.2 Joining the club requires completion of the club membership application including but not limited to name, address, phone, email, emergency contact and underwater experience.

2.3 All members of any classification, including friends and observers, must annually sign the Club *Assumption of Risk and Waiver of Liability Form*.

2.4 Members must abide by any/all underwater sport national and world safety standards and regulations.

2.4.1 If diving using compressed gas, the Member must be certified by a national or international certifying agency for the gas used.

2.4.2 If participating in underwater sports, participants must wear appropriate ear, hand and mouth protection, divided mask faceplate (underwater hockey only), no sharp objects and other applicable rules for the sport.

Article III: Dues

3.1 Club dues are recommended by the Executive Committee and approved by the membership.

3.2 Dues are based upon the calendar year of 1 January through 31 December.

3.3 Dues may be pro-rated for new members throughout the year.

3.4 Honorary members pay no dues for membership. Other benefits of honorary membership such as payment of Council or USOA dues shall be decided by the Executive Committee and approved by the membership.

3.5 Annual dues shall include membership in the parent council, if any.

3.6 Any member wishing to compete in local, regional, national or international events or competitions must join the Underwater Society of America and sign Underwater Society of America *Assumption of Risk and Waiver of Liability Form*.

3.7 Membership must be current at time of competition. This includes completion and signature(s) on all required paperwork.

Article IV: Governing Body

4.1 The elected officers of the Club shall be a president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. These officers constitute the Executive Committee and perform the duties prescribed by these bylaws.

4.2 Officers may be removed from office by 2/3 vote of the membership at a meeting called for that purpose.

4.3 Unless excused, elected officers are expected to attend regularly scheduled meetings.

Article V Meetings

5.1 An annual meeting shall be set by the Executive Committee and approved by the membership.

5.2 Regular meetings are held as set by the Executive Committee and approved by the membership.

5.3 Special meetings may be called by the Executive Committee or 10% of the membership. Due notice shall be given to all members of record.

5.4 Each Regular dues paying member has one vote. No proxies are allowed.

5.5 Parliamentary authority, *Robert's Rules of Order*, is to be applied in any instance or situation not covered in these Bylaws.

5.6 A quorum shall consist of at least 1 elected officer and 10% of the membership.

Article VI Elections

6.1 Elections are to be held at the annual meeting.

6.2 Only members in good order may be nominated and vote.

6.3 Any one individual may not hold more than one office.

6.4 Balloting may be done by USPS, email, in person or via online survey during a specified time frame or at a regularly scheduled meeting called for the purpose.

6.5 Term for any seat in office is two years.

6.6 Elections are staggered and held yearly: president & treasure elected for the even year; vice president and secretary for the odd year

Article VII Duties of Officers

7.1 Duties for any and all elected officers are as follows:

7.2 President will preside at all meetings. The president shall exercise general supervision over the affairs of the club and assure the affairs of the club are conducted in accordance with the Bylaws. The President votes only in case of a tie. The President, with approval of the Executive Committee, fills any/all vacancies in elected and appointed positions.

7.3 The Vice President shall perform the duties of the president, if absent or incapacitated. The vice president succeeds the president in event of a vacancy. Duties may be assigned in addition to the aforementioned.

7.4 The Secretary shall keep accurate records of the Club, its meetings and Membership. This includes but not limited to formal minutes of all meetings.

7.5 The Treasurer shall account for all Club moneys. This includes, but not limited to collect and receipt of all funds including pool use fees, trip deposits and so forth; deposit all funds into the Club bank account; pay any and all bills including pool rental; make financial reports at each meeting and a yearly annual report.

Article VIII Amendment of Bylaws

The Club bylaws may be amended by a 2/3 vote at any regular Club meeting when thirty (30) day notice of such amendment(s) has been made by mail, email or similar delivery system to all members.

Article IX Dissolution

9.0 The Club shall cease to exist upon a 3/4-majority vote of the membership at a specially held meeting called for the purpose of dissolution.

9.1 After all outstanding bills are paid, any extra funds in the treasury shall be donated to a 501(c)(3)3 charity whose purposes are similar to the former Club.