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1927

## By-laws and rules of professional conduct of the American Institute of Accountants as amended September, 1927

American Institute of Accountants

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**BY-LAWS**  
AND  
RULES of PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT  
OF THE  
**American Institute of Accountants**

As Amended September, 1927

135 CEDAR STREET, NEW YORK

(Feb. 1928.)

**BY-LAWS**  
**OF THE**  
**American Institute of Accountants**

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**ARTICLE I**

**NAME AND PURPOSES**

**SECTION 1.** The name of this organization shall be the American Institute of Accountants. Its objects shall be to unite the accountancy profession of the United States; to promote and maintain high professional and moral standards; to safeguard the interests of public accountants; to advance the science of accountancy; to develop and improve accountancy education; to provide for the examination of candidates for membership; and to encourage cordial intercourse among accountants practising in the United States of America.

**ARTICLE II**

**MEMBERSHIP**

**SECTION 1.** The Institute shall consist of members and associates.

**SEC. 2.** Members shall be:

(a) Fellows of the American Association of Public Accountants at September 19, 1916, admitted to membership prior to November 1, 1916.

(b) Persons who shall qualify for examination and election as provided in section 4 of this article and shall be recommended by the board of examiners after examination and shall be elected by the council.

**SEC. 3.** Associates shall be:

(a) Associate members of the American Association of Public Accountants at September 19, 1916, admitted as associates prior to November 1, 1916.

(b) Persons who shall qualify for examination and election as provided in section 5 of this article and shall be recommended by the board of examiners after examination and shall be elected by the council.

**SEC. 4.** The following persons, provided that they shall be not less than twenty-one years of age, may qualify for examination and election as members of the Institute:

(a) Associates in practice who shall have been in practice on their own account or in the employ of a practising public accountant for five years next preceding the date of application.

(b) Accountants in practice who shall present evidence of preliminary education satisfactory to the board of examiners and shall have been in practice on their own account or in the employ of a practising public accountant for not less than five years next preceding the date of application, including at least one year of practice in the United States of America.

(c) Accountants in practice who shall present evidence of preliminary education satisfactory to the board of examiners and shall have been in practice on their own account or in the employ of a practising public accountant for not less than ten years, one year of which shall have next preceded the date of application, and at least one year of which shall have been in the United States of America.

(d) Accountants in possession of certified public accountant certificates of acceptable standard, who shall have been engaged in accountancy instruction, in schools recognized by the board of examiners, for a period of not less than five years next preceding the date of application.

SEC. 5. The following persons may qualify for examination and election as associates of the Institute, provided that they shall be not less than twenty-one years of age and shall present evidence of preliminary education satisfactory to the board of examiners:

(a) Accountants who shall have been in practice on their own account or in the employ of a practising public accountant for not less than four years. Applicants may receive credit for two years' public practice if they are in possession of certified public accountant certificates of acceptable standard or if they are graduates of accounting schools recognized by the board of examiners, but no applicant shall be admitted to examination or recommended for election who shall have had less than two years of actual public practice, at least one year of which shall have been in the United States of America.

(b) Accountants in possession of accountants' certificates issued under the laws of foreign governments and accepted by unanimous action of the board of examiners, who shall have been in practice on their own account or in the employ of a practising public accountant for not less than two years, at least one year of which shall have been in the United States of America.

(c) Accountants who shall have been engaged in accountancy instruction for a period of not less than three years in schools recognized by the board of examiners.

SEC. 6. All credits for education and experience shall be allotted by the board of examiners.

SEC. 7. Upon election each member or associate shall be entitled to a certificate setting forth that he is a member or an associate of the Institute, but no certificate shall be issued until receipt of initiation fee and dues

for the current year. Certificates of membership shall be returned to the council upon suspension or termination of membership for any cause except death.

SEC. 8. Members of the Institute shall be entitled to describe themselves as Members of the American Institute of Accountants and associates as Associates of the American Institute of Accountants.

### ARTICE III

#### FEES AND DUES

SECTION 1. Initiation fees shall be as follows:

By a member upon admission.....	\$50.00
By an associate upon becoming a member.....	25.00
By an associate upon admission.....	25.00

SEC. 2. The dues for each fiscal year shall include cost of subscription to *The Journal of Accountancy* and of the year-book of the Institute and shall be as follows:

By each member.....	\$25.00
By each associate.....	10.00

SEC. 3. The initiation fee shall be paid when application is made. If application be rejected such fee shall be promptly returned to the applicant. All dues shall be paid in advance and shall be apportioned in the first instance to the end of the fiscal year. No dues shall be paid by members and associates of the Institute while they are engaged in military or naval service of the United States or its allies during war.

### ARTICLE IV

#### VOTING

SECTION 1. Every member of the Institute shall be entitled to attend all meetings of the Institute and to cast a vote upon all questions brought before such meetings.

SEC. 2. Associates of the Institute shall not be entitled to vote, but may attend all meetings of the Institute and have the privilege of the floor in the discretion of the chair or of the meeting in session.

SEC. 3. No member shall be entitled to vote at any meeting when his dues shall be sixty days in arrears.

SEC. 4. Any member of the Institute may be represented at regular and special meetings of the Institute by another member acting as his proxy, provided, however:

- (a) That no person shall act as a proxy for more than five members.
- (b) That no proxy given shall confer power of substitution and that all proxies shall be valid only for the meeting for which specifically given.

## ARTICLE V

### TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. Resignations of members and associates may be offered in writing at any time and shall be effective on the date of acceptance. Action upon the resignation of a member or an associate in good standing shall be taken by the executive committee and, in the case of a member or an associate under charges, by the council.

SEC. 2. A member or an associate who fails to pay his annual dues or any subscription, assessment or other obligation to the Institute within five months after such debt has become due shall automatically cease to be a member or an associate of the Institute.

SEC. 3. No person whose membership shall have been forfeited for non-payment of dues or other sum due by him to the Institute may be reinstated, but a member or an associate who shall resign while in good standing may be reinstated by a three-fourths vote of the members of the council present and voting at any regular or special meeting of the council, provided the person applying shall submit with his application for reinstatement the amount of dues and assessments, subscriptions, etc., not in any case to exceed \$25.00, which would have been payable by him if he had continued in membership from the time of resignation to the date of application for reinstatement. No person shall be considered to have resigned while in good standing if at the time of his resignation he was in debt to the Institute for dues or other obligation.

SEC. 4. A member or an associate renders himself liable to expulsion or suspension by the council sitting as a trial board if

(a) he refuses or neglects to give effect to any decision of the Institute or of the council, or

(b) he infringes any of these by-laws or any of the rules of professional conduct as approved by the council of the Institute, or

(c) he is convicted of a felony or misdemeanor, or

(d) he is declared by a court of competent jurisdiction to have committed any fraud, or

(e) he is held by the council to have been guilty of an act discreditable to the profession, or

(f) he is declared by any competent court to be insane or otherwise incompetent, or

(g) his certificate as a certified public accountant is revoked or withdrawn by the authority of any state or territory of the United States or of the District of Columbia, or

(h) his certificate as a certified public accountant shall have been revoked or withdrawn by the authority of any state or territory of the United States or of the District of Columbia and such revocation or withdrawal remains in effect.

## ARTICLE VI

### TRIALS AND PENALTIES

SECTION 1. Any complaint preferred against a member or an associate under section 4 of article V shall be submitted to the committee on professional ethics. If, upon consideration of a complaint, it appears to the committee that a prima facie case is established showing a violation of any by-law or rule of conduct of the Institute or conduct discreditable to a public accountant, the committee on professional ethics shall report the matter to the executive committee, which shall summon the member or associate involved thereby to appear in answer at the next regular or special meeting of the council.

SEC. 2. If the committee on professional ethics shall dismiss any complaint preferred against a member or an associate, or shall fail to act thereon within ninety days after such complaint is presented to it in writing, the member or associate preferring the complaint may present the complaint in writing to the council. The council shall make such investigation of the matter as it may deem necessary and shall either dismiss the complaint or refer it to the executive committee which shall summon the member or associate involved thereby to appear in answer at the next regular or special meeting of the council.

SEC. 3. For the purpose of adjudicating charges against members or associates of the Institute as provided in the foregoing sections, the council shall convene as a trial board. The executive committee shall instruct the secretary to send due notice to the parties concerned at least thirty days prior to the proposed session. After hearing the evidence presented by the committee on professional ethics or other complainant and by the defense, the trial board by a two-thirds vote of the members present may admonish or suspend for a period of not more than two years the member or associate against whom complaint is made or by a three-fourths vote of the members present may expel the member or associate against whom complaint is made. A statement of the case and the decision of the trial board thereon, either with or without the name of the person involved, shall be prepared by the executive committee and published in *The Journal of Accountancy*.

SEC. 4. At any time within two years after the expulsion or suspension of any member or associate, the council, sitting as a trial board, by a three-fourths vote of the members present may recall, rescind or modify such expulsion or suspension.

## ARTICLE VII

### COUNCIL AND OFFICERS

SECTION 1. The governing body of the Institute shall be a council consisting of :

(a) Thirty-five members in practice, not more than six of whom shall be residents of the same state, seven of whom shall be elected at each

annual meeting for a term of five years or until their successors shall have been elected, and

(b) The following officers of the Institute: a president, two vice-presidents (both vice-presidents shall not be residents of one state), and a treasurer, all of whom shall be members in practice and shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year or until their successors shall have been elected, and

(c) All past presidents who are members of the Institute.

SEC. 2. The same person shall not hold the office of president for more than two successive years.

SEC. 3. The council shall elect a secretary of the Institute who shall act as an executive officer under the direction of the council. The secretary may be chosen from without the membership of the Institute, but he shall have the privilege of the floor at meetings of the Institute, the council and the executive committee.

SEC. 4. The Institute at each annual meeting shall elect two auditors, who shall audit the accounts for the current fiscal year and report at the next annual meeting. The books and accounts shall be submitted by the treasurer for audit at least one week preceding the date of the annual meeting.

SEC. 5. In the event of a vacancy or vacancies occurring between meetings of the Institute in the membership of the council or in any of the executive offices of the Institute, the council shall be empowered to elect a member or members to fill such vacancy or vacancies until the next annual meeting or until a successor or successors shall have been elected. Such election shall be by majority vote of the council and may take place at any regular or special meeting of the council or, in lieu of a meeting, nominations may be called for by the president and the names of the nominees submitted to the members of council for election by mail ballot. Vacancies in the membership of the council shall be filled at the next annual meeting by election by the Institute for the unexpired terms.

SEC. 6. The office of a member of the council shall be rendered vacant by his absence from four consecutive meetings of the council.

## ARTICLE VIII

### DUTIES OF COUNCIL AND OFFICERS

SECTION 1. It shall be the duty of the president or, in his absence, of one of the vice-presidents or other members of the council designated by the council to preside at all meetings of the Institute and of the council. The president shall call special meetings of the Institute or of the council when he deems it necessary, or when requested to do so by the executive committee, or upon the written request of at least one hundred members of the Institute for a meeting of the Institute, or of at least five members of the council for a meeting of the council.



The duties of the vice-presidents and the treasurer shall be those usually appertaining to their respective offices.

The secretary, in addition to performing the usual duties of his office, shall discharge such other duties as may be assigned to him by the council or by the executive committee. The secretary of the Institute shall be the secretary of all committees.

SEC. 2. It shall be the duty of the council to take control and management of all the property of the Institute, to elect or appoint such agents or employees as may be necessary for the proper conduct of the affairs of the Institute, to keep a record of its proceedings and to report to the Institute at each annual meeting. The council shall exercise all powers requisite for the purposes of the Institute.

SEC. 3. The council shall adopt an annual budget showing the money appropriated for the purposes of the Institute and estimating the revenue for the ensuing year. No debts shall be contracted nor money expended otherwise than as provided in the budget without the approval of a majority of the council.

SEC. 4. The council may, in its discretion, delegate to the executive committee all functions of the council except the election of officers and members, the right to review the rules and regulations of the board of examiners, discipline of members, filling a vacancy in the executive committee and the adoption or alteration of a budget.

## ARTICLE IX

### COMMITTEES

SECTION 1. There shall be twelve regular standing committees, namely:

EXECUTIVE.

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS.

ARBITRATION.

BUDGET AND FINANCE.

BY-LAWS.

CREDENTIALS.

EDUCATION.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION.

MEETINGS

NOMINATIONS.

PUBLICATION.

STATE LEGISLATION.

SEC. 2. (a) The executive committee shall consist of the president and treasurer of the Institute and five other members of the council elected by the council.

(b) The committee on professional ethics shall be elected by the council and shall consist of five members of the council not members of the executive committee.

(c) The committee on nominations shall consist of seven members. Two members of the committee shall be elected by the council from its membership at the meeting of the council held on the Monday preceding the annual meeting of the Institute or at any adjournment thereof. Officers and other members of council whose terms expire within one year shall not be elected to the committee on nominations. The five remaining members of the committee shall be elected by the Institute at the annual meeting and shall be members in practice who are not officers or members of the council.

(d) The committee on education shall consist of five members appointed by the president for a term of three years, except that, of the members first appointed, one shall serve for a term of one year, two for a term of two years, and two for a term of three years. Appointments to fill vacancies occurring before the end of a term shall be for the unexpired term only.

(e) All other standing committees shall be appointed by the president and shall consist of a chairman and two other members of the Institute.

(f) Except as provided above, all standing committees shall serve until the annual meeting of the Institute next following their election or appointment.

SEC. 3. The president of the Institute shall be ex-officio a member of all committees.

SEC. 4. A majority of each committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. All committees shall be subject to the call of their respective chairmen, but, in lieu of a meeting of a committee, the chairman may submit any question to the members of the committee for vote by mail, and any action approved in writing by not less than two-thirds of the whole committee shall be declared an act of the committee.

## ARTICLE X

### DUTIES OF COMMITTEES

SECTION 1. The duties of the various committees shall be as described in this article and, in addition, such other duties as are indicated by their respective titles.

SEC. 2. The executive committee shall administer the affairs of the Institute, supervise the finances and exercise such other powers as may be designated by the council. It shall keep minutes of its proceedings and shall report fully to the council at each meeting thereof.

No payments except for duly authorized salaries shall be made by the treasurer without the approval of the executive committee.

SEC. 3. The committee on professional ethics shall perform the duties set forth in section 1 of article VI and may advise any one applying to it as to whether or not a submitted action or state of facts warrants a

complaint against a member or an associate of the Institute, provided, however, that if the committee finds itself unable to express an opinion, such inability shall not be construed as an endorsement of the action or state of facts.

SEC. 4. The committee on arbitration shall sit as a committee in equity to investigate and decide disputes between members or associates of the Institute or others which shall, by agreement of the parties, be submitted to the committee in due form. If the decision of the committee on arbitration in any dispute be rejected by any member or associate of the Institute, the matter shall be reported to the council, which may instruct the executive committee to prefer charges against the offending member or associate if it shall decide, by a two-thirds vote of members present, that the recommendation of the committee on arbitration should have been accepted.

SEC. 5. The committee on credentials shall convene immediately after the annual meeting of the Institute shall have been called to order and at any time during the meeting may register proxies submitted to it. Only proxies validated by this committee shall be entitled to vote.

SEC. 6. The committee on publication shall supervise *The Journal of Accountancy*.

## ARTICLE XI

### NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

SECTION 1. (a) Nominations for officers and members of the council shall be made by the committee on nominations at least sixty days prior to the date of the annual meeting at which the elections are to take place. Notice of such nominations shall be mailed by the secretary to all members at least thirty days prior to the annual meeting.

(b) Any ten members of the Institute may submit independent nominations, provided that such nominations be filed with the secretary at least twenty days prior to the date of the annual meeting. Notice of such independent nominations shall be mailed by the secretary to all members at least ten days prior to the annual meeting.

(c) Nominations for officers and members of council may be made from the floor at the time of the annual meeting only by the consent of the majority of the members present in person.

SEC. 2. Election of officers, members of council and auditors shall be by ballot. The president shall appoint a chairman and two tellers, who shall receive and count the ballots cast for each officer, member of council and auditor and shall announce the result to the presiding officer. A majority of votes shall elect.

If there be no majority on the first ballot for any one or more officers or members of council or auditors, additional ballots shall be taken at once for the particular office or offices in which there shall have been no election until an election be effected.

SEC. 3. The members present at any election of officers, members of council and auditors, and eligible to vote in such election, may direct the secretary to cast a ballot for any nominee or nominees for such office or offices, and election by such ballot shall be valid and effective.

## ARTICLE XII

### EXAMINATIONS

SECTION 1. The examination of candidates for admission to the Institute shall be under the supervision of a board of examiners, which shall consist of nine members in practice, three of whom shall be elected each year by the council, at its first meeting after the annual meeting of the Institute, to serve for a term of three years.

SEC. 2. The board of examiners shall hold simultaneous examinations for candidates either annually or semi-annually, as it may deem expedient, at such places in different parts of the country as it may select, where candidates for admission may conveniently attend. Such examinations shall be oral or written or partly oral and partly written, and by this method or such other methods as may be adopted, the board of examiners shall determine the preliminary education and training and the technical qualifications of all candidates for admission before the applications shall be submitted to the council.

SEC. 3. The board of examiners shall organize by the election of a chairman and shall formulate the necessary rules and regulations for the conduct of its work, but all such rules and regulations may be amended, suspended or revoked by the council. The board may appoint duly qualified examiners to prepare examination questions and to grade the papers of applicants. Each applicant shall pay an examination fee, which shall be applied to the payment of expenses incident to examinations.

## ARTICLE XIII

### MEETINGS

SECTION 1. There shall be a regular meeting of the Institute on the third Tuesday of September of each year. The fiscal year of the Institute shall end with the 31st day of August of each year.

SEC. 2. Special meetings of the Institute may be convened as provided in article VIII, section 1, at such places as the executive committee shall designate. No business shall be transacted at such meetings other than that for which the meetings shall have been convened.

SEC. 3. Notice of each meeting of the Institute, whether regular or special, shall be mailed to each member and associate of the Institute, at his last-known address, at least thirty days prior to the date of such meeting.

SEC. 4. In lieu of a special meeting, the Institute in meeting assembled may direct, or the council by a majority vote may direct, that the president submit any question to the entire membership for a vote by mail, and any

action approved in writing by not less than a majority of the members of the Institute shall be declared by the president an act of the Institute and shall be so recorded in its minutes. Mail ballots shall be valid and counted only if received within sixty days after date of mailing ballot forms from the office of the Institute.

SEC. 5. Regular meetings of the council shall be held on the Thursday next after the third Tuesday in September, the second Monday in April and the Monday next preceding the third Tuesday in September in each year.

SEC. 6. Special meetings of the council may be called as provided in article VIII, section 1, of these by-laws.

SEC. 7. Notice of each meeting of the council except the meeting on the Thursday after the third Tuesday in September shall be sent to each member of the council at his last-known address twenty-one days before such meeting. Such notice as far as practicable shall contain a statement of the business to be transacted.

SEC. 8. A transcript of the minutes of each meeting shall be forwarded to each member of the council within thirty days after such meeting.

SEC. 9. In lieu of a special meeting of the council the president may submit any question to the council for vote by mail and any action approved in writing by not less than two-thirds of the whole membership of the council shall be declared by the president an act of the council and shall be recorded in the minutes of the council.

SEC. 10. Fifty members of the Institute shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business duly presented at any meeting of the Institute. Twenty members of the council shall constitute a quorum of the council.

SEC. 11. The rules of parliamentary procedure contained in Robert's *Rules of Order* shall govern all meetings of the Institute and of the council.

## ARTICLE XIV

### CHAPTERS

Upon application to the council of the Institute and subject to its approval there may be organized in any state or territory of the United States, by members of the Institute resident or having a place of business therein, subsidiary bodies to be known as chapters of the American Institute of Accountants. The council shall prescribe the rules and regulations for the government of such chapters.

## ARTICLE XV

### AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the by-laws of the Institute shall be proposed only at an annual meeting of the Institute. If approved by a two-thirds vote of the members present at such meeting, any such proposed amendment shall

be submitted to all the members of the Institute for a vote by mail, and if approved in writing by a majority of the members of the Institute shall be declared by the president to be effective. Mail ballots shall be valid and counted only if received within sixty days after the date of mailing ballot forms from the office of the Institute.

It shall be compulsory for the secretary to embody in the call for the annual meeting all proposals to amend prepared by the committee on by-laws for submission to such meeting and any other proposals to amend of which he shall have had notice endorsed in writing by thirty or more members in good standing at least sixty days prior to the date of such meeting.

## **RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

Including amendments prepared by the committee on professional ethics and approved by the council September 19, 1927.

(1) A firm or partnership, all the individual members of which are members of the Institute (or in part members and in part associates, provided all the members of the firm are either members or associates), may describe itself as "Members of the American Institute of Accountants," but a firm or partnership, all the individual members of which are not members of the Institute (or in part members and in part associates), or an individual practising under a style denoting a partnership when in fact there be no partner or partners or a corporation or an individual or individuals practising under a style denoting a corporate organization shall not use the designation "Members (or Associates) of the American Institute of Accountants."

(2) The preparation and certification of exhibits, statements, schedules or other forms of accountancy work, containing an essential misstatement of fact or omission therefrom of such a fact as would amount to an essential misstatement or a failure to put prospective investors on notice in respect of an essential or material fact not specifically shown in the balance-sheet itself shall be, ipso facto, cause for expulsion or for such other discipline as the council may impose upon proper presentation of proof that such misstatement was either wilful or the result of such gross negligence as to be inexcusable.

(3) No member or associate shall allow any person to practise in his name as a public accountant who is not a member or an associate of the Institute or in partnership with him or in his employ on a salary.

(4) No member or associate shall directly or indirectly allow or agree to allow a commission, brokerage or other participation by the laity in the fees or profits of his professional work; nor shall he accept directly or indirectly from the laity any commission, brokerage or other participation for professional or commercial business turned over to others as an incident of his services to clients.

(5) No member or associate shall engage in any business or occupation conjointly with that of a public accountant, which in the opinion of the executive committee or of the council is incompatible or inconsistent therewith.

(6) No member or associate shall certify to any accounts, exhibits, statements, schedules or other forms of accountancy work which have not been verified entirely under the supervision of himself, a member of his firm, one of his staff, a member or an associate of this Institute or a member of a similar association of good standing in a foreign country which has been approved by the council.

(7) No member or associate shall take part in any effort to secure the enactment or amendment of any state or federal law or of any regulation of any governmental or civic body, affecting the practice of the profession, without giving immediate notice thereof to the secretary of the Institute, who in turn shall at once advise the executive committee or the council.

(8) No member or associate shall directly or indirectly solicit the clients or encroach upon the business of another member or associate, but it is the right of any member or associate to give proper service and advice to those asking such service or advice.

(9) No member or associate shall directly or indirectly offer employment to an employee of a fellow member or associate without first informing said fellow member or associate of his intent. This rule shall not be construed so as to inhibit negotiations with any one who of his own initiative or in response to public advertisement shall apply to a member or associate for employment.

(10) No member or associate shall render or offer to render professional service, the fee for which shall be contingent upon his findings and the results thereof.

(11) No member or associate of the Institute shall advertise his or her professional attainments or service through the mails, in the public prints, by circular letters or by any other written word except that a member or an associate may cause to be published in the public prints what is technically known as a card. A card is hereby defined as an advertisement of the name, title (member of American Institute of Accountants, C. P. A., or other professional affiliation or designation), class of service and address of the advertiser, without any further qualifying words or letters, or in the case of announcement of change of address or personnel of firm the plain statement of the fact for the publication of which the announcement purports to be made. Cards permitted by this rule when appearing in newspapers shall not exceed two columns in width and three inches in depth; when appearing in magazines, directories and similar publications cards shall not exceed one quarter page in size. This rule shall not be construed to inhibit the proper and professional dissemination of impersonal information among a member's own clients or personal associates or the properly restricted circulation of firm bulletins containing staff personnel and professional information.



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