

Georgia Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns

Constitution July 1994

Preamble

Georgia Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns shall work collaboratively in support of multicultural populations with disabilities to attain their maximum potential through the delivery of equitable and qualitative rehabilitation services.

We shall promote and advocate for a greater understanding of the diversity of multicultural populations with disabilities; to empower and promote self-determination through informed choices, for full inclusion and integration into services for the pursuit of meaningful opportunities.

We are committed to actively engaging in recruiting, employing, retaining, advancing, and educating culturally sensitive rehabilitation professionals and paraprofessionals to serve in leadership positions within the public and private rehabilitation community.

Mission Statement

The Georgia Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns is a diverse group whose purpose is to advocate for and with multicultural populations with disabilities to achieve equitable and quality in services; to insure facilitation of full inclusion and integration in the social, cultural, educational, and economic experiences in society; advocate and encourage the recruitment of ethnic professionals to provide role models, and culturally sensitive professionals to meet the changing demography of Rehabilitation Services.

Article I- Name

The name of the organization shall be the **Georgia Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns**, a division within the Georgia Rehabilitation Association.

Article II- Definition

For the purpose of this constitution, the following terms are defined:

- ❖ **NRA** shall mean the National Rehabilitation Association.
- ❖ **GRA** shall mean the Georgia Rehabilitation Association.
- ❖ **NAMRC** shall mean the National Association for the Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns.
- ❖ **GAMRC** shall mean Georgia Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns.
- ❖ **Board of Directors** shall mean the duly elected officers, and four (4) directors elected from the members.
- ❖ **Board** shall refer to the Board of Directors of GRA.

- ❖ **Region** shall refer to the Southeast Region.
- ❖ **Member** shall mean any member of NRA/GRA regardless of race, who is directly involved or concerned with the delivery of rehabilitation services to the multicultural populations with disabilities.
- ❖ **Culture** shall mean all of the learned customs, languages, beliefs, values, laws, pattern of thinking, feelings, behaviors, and symbols that are constantly communicated among a set of people who share a common way of life- and thus, passed on from generation to generation. Cultural variations within a society are often based more on social class than on ethnic/racial differences, i.e. people of the same social class but dissimilar ethnic backgrounds tend toward similar values and behaviors. Those of different social classes tend to have different values and behaviors even though the backgrounds are similar.
- ❖ **Ethnic Minority Group** means people whose physical appearance or cultural practices are unlike those of the dominant group which make them susceptible to different and unequal treatment.

Article III- Purpose

The purpose of this Association through its Board of Directors shall be to advise the Board relative to how GRA can assure appropriate involvement of GAMRC members in its affairs; serve as liaison between the Board and GAMRC members; and to select a GAMRC Member to serve on the GRA Board.

The purpose will be carried out by:

- ❖ Developing and maintaining a direct channel for the mutual exchange of ideas and counsel between the Board and Georgia Association Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns.
- ❖ Proposing programs and research projects to GRA which will enable them to effectively meet the needs of members.
- ❖ Training GAMRC officers and members to assume leadership roles in the NRA, GRA, and other organizations within the rehabilitation community.
- ❖ Exchanging ideas among members relating to programs regarding legislation, membership recruitment, conference participation, and other projects or activities.
- ❖ Serving as the GRA principal advocate for multicultural rehabilitation concerns.

Article IV- Membership

Any member of NRA and NAMRC who is directly involved or concerned with the delivery of rehabilitation services to the multicultural populations with disabilities shall constitute the Georgia Association Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns. Membership classifications and dues in the multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns shall be prescribed in the GAMRC By-laws. Membership in good standing shall be based on payment of annual NRA and GAMRC dues.

Article V- Conduct of Affairs

Business activities of GAMRC shall be conducted by the Board of Directors.

Article VI-Board of Directors

- Section 1: **Composition:** The Board of Directors shall be composed of President, Vice President, President-Elect, Vice President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and (4) Directors elected from the association membership.
- Section 2: **Election and Term of Office:** Elections shall be held no later than November 30 of each election year. The elected officer shall be President, Vice President, President-Elect, Vice President-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer. Four (4) Directors shall be elected to serve on the Board of Directors. Each official shall serve for a term of two years. The term of office begins January 1. Vacancies occurring between elections shall be filled by appointment of the Board of Directors. The appointee shall serve until the term expires. In order to establish the Board, initial members will serve a two/three year term and thereafter all will serve a two year term.
- Section 3: **Power:** The Board of Directors shall perform the functions of GAMRC necessary to assure the orderly operation of GAMRC. It shall establish policies and procedures relative to GAMRC.
- Section 4: **Committees:** The President shall appoint committees necessary to carry out the functions of GAMRC. It shall be done in concurrence with the Board of Directors.
- Section 5: **Meetings:** Upon the call of the President, the Board of Directors shall conduct regular business meetings at a time and place convenient to most of its members.
- Section 6: **Other:** The President, with the concurrence of the Board of Directors may seek to secure funds from foundations, agencies, or other sources for either specific or general program purposes.

Article VII- Amendments

- Section 1: **Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws:** This Constitution and By-Laws may be amended by a majority vote of members present and voting at the Annual Business Meeting (usually at the annual GRA Conference site). In the event a Conference is not held, the voting will be conducted by mail no later than November 30. The proposed changes must be submitted in writing to the Board of Directors 45 days prior the annual conference. The Board of Directors shall duly notify the membership of the proposals at least 30 days prior to the Annual Conference.
- Section 2: **Amendment Proposals:** Amendments may be proposed by any member of the Board of Directors or GAMRC membership.

Article VIII- Quorum

For purposes of conducting GAMRC business, a quorum shall mean two-thirds of the Association membership present and voting.

Article IX- Parliamentary Authority

The business of this Association shall be conducted in accordance with the Robert Rules of Order, revised.

Article X- Adoption

This constitution shall be adopted through (1) approval by two-thirds majority of GAMRC Board of Directors and NAMRC Board and (2) approval by a majority of the GRA Board.

Georgia Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns

By-Laws

Article I- Name

The name of this organization shall be the Georgia Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns.

Article II- Relationship to Other Organizations

The Georgia Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns shall establish and maintain working relationships with GRA, NRA, NAMRC, and/or other organizations having similar or common objectives; or whether the objectives of GAMRC would be enhanced or advanced by such relationships; or common objectives; or whether the objectives of this Association would be enhanced or advanced by such relationship.

Article III- Association Objectives

The objectives of Georgia Association Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns are as follows:

- 1). To encourage the equitable delivery of the rehabilitation services to multicultural populations with disabilities.
- 2). To promote the provision of quality rehabilitation services to meet the needs of the multicultural population.
- 3). To provide a forum for discussion vital issues related to rehabilitation of the multicultural populations with disabilities.
- 4). To collaborate and serve as a communication and programmatic link between personnel, institutions, and organizations.
- 5). To advocate, propose, and support legislation that address itself to rehabilitation needs of multicultural populations with disabilities.
- 6). To encourage recruitment, employment, professional development, and retention of multicultural personnel within the public and private rehabilitation community.
- 7). To create and maintain an atmosphere of ethnic and culture sensitivity among all rehabilitation personnel in delivery of services.
- 8). To provide consultation and education of multicultural issues to rehabilitation personnel.

Article IV- Membership

Section 1: **Eligibility:** A paid member of NRA/NAMRC.

Section 2: **Member:** Shall mean any paid member of NRA, who considers him/herself to be involved or concerned with the delivery of rehabilitation services to the multicultural population with disabilities.

- Section 3: **Student Membership:** will be extended to persons enrolled in a full-time accredited college leading to a degree in social or rehabilitation services. Student members shall be extended full membership privileges.
- Section 4: **Consumer Membership:** will be extended to disabled individuals who embrace and support the objectives of this Association. Consumer members shall be professionals who are not employed in the helping-profession field.
- Section 5: **Association Affiliate:** will be extended to persons involved in other human service professional organizations as recognized by the Board of Directors, who embrace and support the Association's objectives. Recognized Association Affiliates will be eligible for reduced registration fees at Association sponsored conferences, receive Association literature, but shall not enjoy voting privileges nor be eligible to hold office.
- Section 6: **Privileges of Membership:**
- a) All classes of membership shall be entitled to participate in the Association meeting.
 - b) Members, excluding Association Affiliate shall be entitled to one vote, eligible to serve as an officer, or board of directors, providing they are in good standing at the time of nomination and election.
 - c) All classes of membership shall receive literature on the activities of the Association.

Article V- Membership

Dues will be paid each year and expire at the end of the membership.

Membership will be maintained as long as the individual is in good standing (dues paid) with NRA/GRA and NAMRC.

Article VI- Meetings

GAMRC Meetings: There shall be at least one general GAMRC meeting to be convened at the annual GRA Conference site. Additional meetings will be called by the President, and held at a time and place convenient to a majority of GAMRC members for the purpose of conducting GAMRC business.

Article VII- Board of Directors

Section 1: **Composition:** The Board of Directors shall consist of the elected officers, and four (4) directors elected from the membership.

Section 2: **Term of Office:** All Directors shall be elected for a term of two (2) years with the privilege of re-election and shall remain in office until their successors are elected. In order to establish the Board, initial members shall serve a two/three year term and thereafter **all** will serve a two-year term.

Section 3: **Eligibility:** All Directors must be a member of GAMRC, NRA/GRA prior to the date of nomination and election.

Section 4: **The Board of Directors shall:**

- a) Conduct necessary business between meetings of GAMRC.
- b) Meet at least four (4) times during the year.
- c) Report to GAMRC membership on all business.
- d) Establish policies and procedures relative to GAMRC.
- e) Fill vacancies which occur between elections.
- f) Meet the call of the President.
- g) In concurrence with the President, prepare an annual budget to be submitted to the GRA board.
- h) In concurrence with the President, secure funds from sponsors or alternative sources of support for either specific or general program purposes.
- i) Automatically resign from Board after three (3) absences from regularly scheduled Board meetings during a calendar year, unless re-appointed by the board.

Section 5: **Quorum:** For the purposes of conducting business a quorum shall mean two-thirds of the Board of Directors.

Article VIII- Officers

The elected officers of GAMRC shall be President, President-Elect, Vice President, Vice President-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer. They shall serve for two years in office. The term of office shall begin January 1. The duties of the officers are as follows:

Section 1: **President**

- a) Administer the operation of GAMRC and calls meetings of GAMRC and the Board of Directors.
- b) Presides at all meetings of the Association and Board of Directors.
- c) Serves as an official representative of GAMRC at Regional, National and State Assemblies and GRA Board Meetings.
- d) Appoints, with the approval of the Board, chairpersons for each standing committee, with the exception of the nominating chair. Special committees may be appointed as needed.
- e) Serves as an ex-officio member with voting privileges on all committees, with the exception of the nominating committee.
- f) Shall sign for all payment of GAMRC funds.
- g) Submit an Annual Report of the yearly activities to NAMRC, GRA Board, and the GAMRC membership.
- h) Works with the Vice President in carrying out the activities of GAMRC.

Section2: **President Elect**

- a) Serves as an Ex-Officio Member of all Standing Committees.
- b) Serves on the Board of Directors
- c) Serves as a member of the Planning and Evaluation Committee.
- d) Performs assignments as made by the President.

- e) Utilize this term of office to become thoroughly familiar with the Constitution and By-Laws of the Georgia Rehabilitation Association and operations.
- f) Shall automatically become President following the end of office of the incumbent President.

Section 3: **Vice President**

- a) Serves on the Board of Directors.
- b) Assumes the duties of the President in his/her absence.
- c) Serves as Chairperson of the Conference Planning Committee.
- d) As chairperson of the Conference Planning Committee, coordinates conference functions with the Nominating Committee.
- e) In the absence of the President and President Elect, calls the meeting to order and presides until the immediate election of a Board member to preside.

Section 4: **Vice President Elect**

- a) Serves on the Board of Directors as a member of the Executive Committee.
- b) Utilize this term of office to become thoroughly familiar with the Constitution and By-Laws of GAMRC.
- c) Assist the Vice President in planning and conducting the Annual Conference.
- d) Shall automatically become the Vice President following the end of the office of the incumbent Vice President.

Section 5: **Secretary**

- a) Shall record minutes of all GAMRC and Board of Directors meetings.
- b) Mail minutes of all meetings to the Board of Directors.
- c) Mails notices of GAMRC or Board meetings
- d) At all meetings, have copy of By-Laws, listing of standing committees and record attendance.
- e) Maintains up-to-date list of active GAMRC members.
- f) In absence of President, Vice President, President Elect, and Vice President Elect, calls the meeting to order and presides until the immediate election of a Board member to preside.

Section 6: **Treasurer**

- a) Has custody of all funds of GAMRC
- b) Handles all deposits.
- c) Pays invoices on the order of the Board or with prior authorization as authorized by the Board.
- d) Prepares financial report (in duplicate) for all meetings.
- e) Before Annual Meeting, prepares all records and vouchers for audit.

Article IX- Standing Committees

Section 1: The Georgia Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns shall have the following standing committees:

By-Laws
Membership/Credentials
Nominating
Issues/Programs and Conference Planning
Ways and Means

Section 2: Each committee shall have a chairperson appointed by the President, with the advice and concurrence of the Board. The Chairperson will be appointed at the beginning of each administration. The Nominating Chair is exempt from this procedure.

Section 3: All committee appointments shall terminate upon the election of new Officers. Chairpersons may be re-appointed, if the incoming officers so desire.

Section 4: Committee Responsibilities

By-Laws Committee: Review the Constitution and By-Laws; propose and review amendments brought to the Board of Directors; present proposed amendments at the annual business meeting for discussion and ratification by GAMRC membership.

Membership Committee: To organize and direct the recruitment activities for NRA/GRA and GAMRC for purposes of increasing membership, to maintain an updated list of active GAMRC members, verify membership of all persons voting, and tabulate ballots.

Nominating Committee: To supervise and conduct the election of officers, and board of directors. This committee shall consist of no more than five persons, three of whom shall be selected by the President and approved by the Board and two to be appointed by the Board of Directors. Members of the nominating committee shall designate one of the five to serve as Chairperson.

Issues/Programs & Conference Planning Committee: To recommend and conduct ongoing programming for professional development of the GAMRC and GRA memberships. To propose concerns relating to the objectives of GAMRC; identify topics to be addressed for the purpose of training conferences or task force issues. To collect and disseminate information relating to national and local studies on multicultural populations with disabilities. Being the Chairperson for this committee is the responsibility of the Vice President.

**Publications/Public
Relations Committee:**

To publish at least two newsletters per year for the purpose of updating membership on GAMRC activities. To coordinate news releases or articles to professional newsletters.

**Ways and Means
Committee:**

To develop and recommend to the Board of Directors, at the minimum, one (1) major project no later than the second regularly scheduled Board meeting and subsequently conduct and/or assure the successful conduction of the income-producing projects which are adopted. To recommend separate income-producing projections to the Board of Directors to be conducted during the Annual Chapter, Regional and National Conference.

Article X- Elections

Section 1: **Nominating Committee** shall:

- a) Compile a list of possible nominees from suggestions made by the Board of Directors and members of the Georgia Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns.
- b) Contact prospective candidates, inform each of the duties and responsibilities and obtain consent to be nominated.
- c) Present the Board the names of those candidates to run for election.
- d) Prepare the slate of candidates for presentation to the membership. Every effort must be made to present a contested slate.

Section 2: **Election**

- a) An election may be held at the Annual Business Meeting of GAMRC or conducted by mail.
- b) If conducted by mail, ballots must be sent to each member at least 30 days prior to the Annual Conference and must be return to the Nomination Committee three (3) days before the start of the conference.
- c) A plurality of the votes cast shall be necessary for election.
- d) In the event of a tie, the President shall convene the Board of Directors. By voice vote or written ballot, they shall vote to break the tie. The President shall vote only if there is a tie within then Board of Directors.
- e) Membership/Credentials Committee shall coordinate elections for President Elect, Vice President, Vice President Elect, Secretary, Treasurer and Board of Directors.

Any member of the Membership/Credentials Committee accepting the nomination to run for office shall resign from the committee.

Article XI- Amendments

The By-Laws may be amended by a majority vote of members present and voting at the Annual Business Meeting. In the event the Annual Business Meeting is not held (GRA

Conference site), the voting shall be conducted by mail no later than November 30th. The proposed changes must be submitted in writing to the Board of Directors. The Board will duly notify the membership of the proposals at least 15 days prior to the Annual Conference.

Amendments may be proposed by any member of the Board or Association membership.

Article XII- Parliamentary Authority

The business of this Association shall be conducted in accordance with the Robert Rules of Order, Revised.

Article XIII- Disbursement of Monies

Upon dissolution of this organization, all assets after paid liabilities, will be relinquished to a non-profit organization, which is involved in working with the multicultural persons with disabilities in the areas of health, education, welfare, or employment.

Article XIV- Adoption

The By-Laws shall be adopted through (1) approval by two-thirds majority of the GAMRC Board of Directors, (2) approval by NAMRC Board, and (3) approval by a majority of the GRA Board.

