



BY LAWS OF THE MIDDLE EAST PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (MEPA)

Created July, 2011

ARTICLE I: NAME AND PURPOSES

1.1 Name

The name of this organization shall be the Middle East Psychological Association (MEPA).

1.2 Purpose

The purposes of this association is to further the development and advancement of psychologists and mental health clinicians in Kuwait and the Middle East in the areas of sharing knowledge, collaboration, and ethical practice, and promote the general well-being of their clients and communities.

No part of the earnings of MEPA shall incur to the benefit of or be distributable to its members, officers, or other private persons except at the association's discretion to provide compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in further enhancement of the organization.

ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP

There shall be three categories of membership in this organization: Member, Associate, and Student Affiliate.

2.1 Full Member:

Those who meet the requirement for full membership including a graduate degree in a mental health specialty field or demonstrated clinical competency, completed a membership application, and have paid the organization dues for the calendar year. Membership dues will cost 25KD per year (not prorated).

- (a) To serve as a MEPA Officer, Committee, or Committee Chair.
- (b) To attend and participate in MEPA board meetings.
- (c) To receive MEPA publications.
- (d) To receive discounted attendance dues for MEPA programs.
- (e) To receive formal documentation of the individual's Full Member status.

2.2 Affiliate Member:

To qualify as an affiliate member, individuals must possess an interest in mental health topics. Membership dues will cost 15KD per year (not prorated). Affiliate Members are entitled to the following rights and privileges:

- (a) To attend and participate in MEPA board meetings.
- (b) To receive MEPA publications.
- (c) To receive discounted attendance dues for MEPA programs.
- (d) Receive formal documentation of the individual's Affiliate Member status.
- (e) Affiliate Members shall not be entitled to hold office or serve as Chairs of Committee of the organization.

2.3 Student Affiliate:

To qualify as a Student Affiliate of MEPA, an individual shall be enrolled in a program or school of recognized standing in the area of psychology, social work, counseling, or marriage and family therapy. Membership dues will cost 5KD per year (not prorated). A Student Affiliate shall be entitled to the following rights and privileges:

- (a) To attend and participate in MEPA board meetings.
- (b) To receive MEPA publications.
- (c) To receive discounted attendance dues for MEPA programs.
- (d) Receive formal documentation of the individual's Student Affiliate Member status.
- (e) Affiliate Members shall not be entitled to hold office or serve as Chairs of Committee of the organization.

2.4 Application Review

The Chair of the Membership Committee shall be responsible for communicating to each of the applicants regarding their membership status in a timely fashion. The Chair will also be responsible for ensuring that prospective members meet respective requirements for membership.

2.5 Membership Dues

Membership dues will renew on an annual basis (September, 1st) and will costs will be determined by the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE III: EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

3.1 Officers

The Officers of MEPA shall be President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Social Chair.

3.2 Term and Duties

The term of office for all Officers shall be two years. The President shall preside at all meetings and shall perform all other usual duties of a presiding officer.

The duties of the Vice-President includes supporting the Executive Board and filling-in for the President when they are unavailable.

The duties of the Treasurer include overseeing the custody of all membership dues and property of the organization. They will also oversee the receipt of all money by the organization, direct disbursements as provided under the terms of these bylaws, maintain the keeping of all financial accounts, prepare the annual budget in consultation with the President and the Executive Board, and make an annual financial report to the organization. In the event of the incapacity of the Treasurer or a vacancy in the position, the Vice-President will oversee the responsibilities until the position can be fulfilled.

The Secretary shall create and safeguard all records of the organization. They will be responsible for keeping minutes of each meeting, distribute minutes of meetings via email to membership, and keep an updated membership mailing list.

The Social Chair shall be responsible for organizing refreshments for meetings and MEPA functions and other similar duties as needed.

3.3 Removal of Officers

Any Officer may be removed from office before the completion of their term by a public 2/3 vote of those present at a MEPA meeting if it appears that the best interest of the organization are not being served by the person in question.

3.4 Dual Offices

An Officer is able to run for another office in the MEPA during the last year of their term of their current position.

ARTICLE IV: COMMITTEES

4.1 Primary Committees

- (a) **Ethics Committee:** will consist of at least 2 members but no more than 5 and will be responsible for the creation and maintenance of the MEPA Ethics Code. Members will also be responsible for when ethical violations have been reported and are obligated to work with the Executive Committee to resolve ethical concerns regarding members and membership applicants.
- (b) **Membership Committee:** will consist of at least 2 members but no more than 5 and will be responsible for soliciting prospective members, review membership applications, and liaison with the Treasurer and members to collect membership dues.
- (c) **Professional Development Committee:** will consist of at least 2 members but no more than 5 and will be responsible for the development of professional development programming.
- (d) **Community Outreach Committee:** will consist of at least 2 members but no more than 5 and will be primarily responsible for creating outreach materials pertaining to MEPA and psychoeducational materials for public distribution. Members will also hold some responsibility for maintaining and updating MEPA websites, Facebook, Twitter, etc. with ongoing MEPA and psychological information.

Additional committees may be created as needed.

4.2 Committee Oversight

Each committee will be headed by a Committee Chairperson who will serve for 2 years. Committee Chairs will be responsible for the activities and duties of their individual committees and may hold meetings, assign duties, and generally act in a leadership capacity. They will also be responsible for reporting Committee activities and updates to the Executive Committee. If a Committee Chair position becomes vacant, the President and the Executive Committee will work to fill it.

SECTION V: FINANCES

5.1 Fiscal Responsibility

MEPA Treasurer shall present the Executive Committee a proposed annual budget for the following year and a financial report on the prior year's budget.

5.2 Fund Disbursement and Allocation

Disbursement of funds shall be made as follows:

- (a) The Executive Committee shall authorize disbursements within the amounts of the approved budget for purposes which are consistent with the Bylaws of MEPA.
- (b) The Treasurer with the concurrence of the President is authorized to allocate unexpected funds from one category of the approved budget to another provided that the total expenses for the year are not exceeded.
- (c) Once a budget has been approved, disbursements for items not contained in the approved budget for purposes congruent with the mission and purpose of MEPA may be authorized by a 2/3 vote at a monthly MEPA Board Meeting provided that the total expense not exceed the proposed budget.

SECTION VI: MEETINGS

6.1 Meetings

Meetings will be held monthly and will include all members of the Executive Committee and Committee Chairs. Member who do not hold elected positions are also welcome and encouraged to attend and participate in the monthly meeting. The dates, times, and locations of the meetings will be determined at the meeting. The Executive Committee may require additional meetings as needed.

6.2 Order of Business:

- 1) Take attendance
- 2) Review of minutes of preceding meeting
- 3) Report of each Executive Committee member
- 4) Report of each Committee Chair
- 5) Old and unfinished business
- 6) New business
- 7) Adjournments

SECTION VII: VOTING

7.1 Voting

The election of the Executive Committee and Committee Chairs will occur by email whereby Full-Members of MEPA will be asked to email the Secretary their vote for the available position(s). The Secretary will collect, count, and report the results at the following monthly MEPA meeting.

All other issues that require voting will be done during the monthly MEPA meetings, with the decision based on the majority vote.

ARTICLE VIII: ETHICS

8.1 Adherence

All members of MEPA including those at Full-Member, Affiliate Member, and Student Member status will agree to adhere to the MEPA Code of Ethics. All members will agree to adhere to the MEPA Ethics Code when they complete their membership application.

8.2 Ethical Violations

When an ethical violation of a MEPA member is being reported it should first be brought to the attention of the Ethics Committee Chair. The Ethics Committee Chair will then request a private meeting with the Executive Committee to present the case. The Ethics Committee Chair and the Executive Committee will then determine appropriate actions.

If it is determined that the alleged ethical violation warrants action, the accused party will be asked to attend a meeting with the Executive Committee and the Ethics Chair. The accused party will to defend the ethical complaint. The Executive Committee and the Ethics Committee Chair will then deliberate and determine the best course of action. Notice of action will occur in the form of a letter from the MEPA President sent via email.

Actions that may be taken on a MEPA member could include the following:

- (a) Verbal and written warning.
- (b) Temporary suspension of membership. Suspension may require the completion of a professional development course on a specific topic relevant to the offense (e.g., ethical practice) before the suspension is lifted. All MEPA benefits (e.g.,

reduced registration costs of professional development activities) will be suspended during this period.

- (c) Permanent removal of MEPA membership (membership dues will not be returned).

ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS

Amendments to these Bylaws may be proposed by a majority vote at a MEPA Board Meeting. The proposed amendments will be then added to the Bylaws.

These by-laws are revised and adapted to conform to the geographical and cultural norms of the Middle East (specifically the State of Kuwait) by the Executive of MEPA under the supervision of Nicholas Scull, PhD, President and Charter Member.