



**MEPA**  
MIDDLE EAST  
PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

**BY LAWS OF THE MIDDLE EAST PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (MEPA)**

**Created July 2011 and Updated January 2019**

**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 purpose of this association is to further the development and advancement of psychologists and mental health clinicians in 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: Full Member, Associate/Affiliated, and Student.

**2.1 Full Member:**

Possess a minimum graduate degree (MS/MA) **or its equivalent\*** in any area of Mental Health, from a recognized institution of higher education.

\*If a Master's is not attained, a BA or BSc in the field of psychology or counseling can be accepted together with a demonstrated clinical competency of a minimal 5 years related work experience, and a letter of reference from a practicing, licensed or registered psychologist or qualified clinical supervisor.

Members are entitled to the following rights and privileges:

- (a) To vote and serve as a MEPA Board Officer, Committee, or Committee Chair.
- (b) To initiate committees, divisions, chapters, and events in coordination with board.
- (c) To receive MEPA publications.
- (d) To be included in the MEPA directory of psychologists published on its website.

- (e) To have access to promote job opportunities, research opportunities and scholarships, as well as conferences, events, training, etc. in the Middle East among MEPA's database.
- (f) To receive free or discounted attendance dues for MEPA programs and events.
- (g) To receive formal documentation of the individual's Full Member status if requested.

Membership dues will cost USD \$80 per year.

### **2.2 Associate/Affiliated Member:**

To qualify as an affiliate member, individuals must possess an interest in mental health topics. Professionals in complementary disciplines are welcome to become associate members of MEPA. Associates are non-voting members

Members are entitled to the following rights and privileges:

- (a) Access to e-mailing list regarding job opportunities, research opportunities, and scholarships.
- (b) Access to e-mailing list regarding conferences, training, events, etc. in the Middle East.
- (c) To receive MEPA publications.
- (d) To receive free or discounted attendance dues for MEPA programs and events.
- (e) To receive formal documentation of the individual's Associate/Affiliate Member status if requested.
- (f) Associate/Affiliate Members shall not be entitled to hold office or serve as Chairs of Committees of the organization.
- (g) Opportunity to network and be involved with professionals and academics in the field of psychology in the Middle East.

Membership dues will cost USD \$50 per year.

### **2.3 Student:**

To qualify as a Student member of MEPA, an individual shall be enrolled in a program or school of recognized standing in the area of psychology, social work, counseling, mental health, or marriage and family therapy. Students are non-voting members.

A Student member shall be entitled to the following rights and privileges:

- (a) Access to e-mailing list regarding job opportunities, research opportunities, and scholarships.
- (b) Access to e-mailing list regarding conferences, training, etc. in the Middle East.
- (c) To receive MEPA publications.
- (d) To receive free or discounted attendance dues for MEPA programs and events.
- (e) To receive formal documentation of the individual's Student Member status if requested.
- (f) Opportunity to network and be involved with professionals and academics in the field of psychology in the Middle East
- (g) Student members shall not be entitled to hold office or serve as Chairs of Committees of the organization.

Membership dues will cost USD \$50 per year.

## **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 annually on anniversary date based on official membership approval date.

## **ARTICLE III: EXECUTIVE BOARDS**

### **3.1 Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees is an appointed group of individuals that has overall responsibility for the management of the Association. The board of trustees is the governing body of MEPA and seeks to ensure the best interest of MEPA in all types of management decisions.

The Board of Trustees shall be the legislative body of the Association and shall have full power and authority over the affairs and funds of the Association within the limitations set by these Bylaws, including the power to review, upon its own initiative, the actions of any Board, Committee, Division, or Country Chapter.

Leaders of the Board of Trustees shall consist of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who is the Chair of the Board, MEPA Past-President, and three other appointed leaders with an interest in Mental Health. Leaders shall hold these roles until their successors are appointed and qualify. Successors are appointed by the Board of Trustees.

Any member of the Board of Trustees may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of a quorum of the Board of Trustees if it appears that the member's continued service in this position is not in the best interest of the Association.

Regular meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be held not less frequently than semi-annually at a time and place to be specified by a vote of the Board of Trustees.

### **3.2 Executive Committee**

The Officers of MEPA Executive Committee shall be President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Social Coordinator.

#### **3.2.1 Term and Duties**

The term of office for all Officers of the Executive Committee shall be two years.

The President is the administrative head of the association and reports to the Board of Trustees. Is responsible for the strategic leadership and daily operations of the association. Ensures that

the association adheres to the bylaws and enforces the association's policies and guidelines. Is responsible for running the association in a fair and efficient manner. Represents the association on international events as needed. Ensures accuracy of the minutes of meetings by reviewing them with the secretary. Shall preside at all meetings and shall perform all other usual duties of a presiding officer.

In the event that the President shall be unable to serve, the Vice-President shall serve as Acting President under the supervision of the Board of Trustees.

The President should be a PhD holder and should be a MEPA member for at least one year before becoming a President. Membership dues must be paid up to date.

The duties of the Vice-President include supporting the Executive Board and filling in for the President when he/she needs it. Ensures that the President's duties and functions are executed smoothly. Prepares the monthly meetings with the President. Assists President in every way before, during and after meetings and special events. Presides over monthly meetings in the absence of the President.

The Vice-President should be a PhD holder and should be a MEPA member for at least one year before becoming a Vice-President. Membership dues must be paid up to date.

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 Board of Trustees, 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. Treasurer membership dues must be paid up to date.

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 Executive Committee. Membership dues must be paid up to date.

The Social Coordinator shall be responsible for the creation of flyers or marketing mails to advertise association's events in conjunction with the President and Community Outreach Committee Chair. Responsible for maintaining and manage association's social media accounts (Instagram, Facebook, twitter, etc.) with the support of the Executive Committee members. Ensures proper media coverage at MEPA events and responsible for press releases together with President and Country Chapter's Directors. Membership dues must be paid up to date.

### **3.2.2 Removal of Officers**

Any Officer of the Executive Committee may be removed from office before the completion of their term by a two-thirds vote of a quorum of the Board of Trustees and Executive Committee, if it appears that the best interest of the organization is not being served by the person in question.

### **3.2.3 Dual Offices**

An Officer of the Executive Committee can run for another office position in MEPA during the last year of the term of their current position.

### **3.2.4 Remunerations**

All Executive Committee and Sub-Committee positions are on volunteer bases and duties should be performed with MEPA's interest as the main-focus and not for personal interest.

## **ARTICLE IV: SUB-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 and Country Chapter Director to resolve ethical concerns regarding members and membership applicants. Membership dues must be paid up to date.

(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, keep an updated membership mailing list, and liaison with the Treasurer to collect membership dues. Membership dues must be paid up to date.

(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. Will collaborate with Country Chapter Directors as well. Membership dues must be paid up to date.

(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/resources. Will collaborate with Country Chapter Directors as well. Membership dues must be paid up to date.

Additional committees may be created as needed. All members must have their membership dues paid up to date.

### **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, Sub-Committee Chairs, and Country Chapter Directors.

The dates, times, and locations of the meetings will be determined at the previous 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 Sub-Committee Chair
- 5) Report of each Country Chapter Director
- 6) Old and unfinished business
- 7) New business
- 8) Adjournments

## **SECTION VII: VOTING**

### **7.1 Voting**

The election of the Executive Committee, Sub-Committee Chairs and Country Chapter's Directors, will occur by email whereby Full-Members of MEPA will be asked to complete an anonymous election voting form. The Secretary and the current President will collect, count, and report the results at the following monthly MEPA meeting and by email to all members.

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, Associate/Affiliated 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 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: Annual Conference & Expo**

9.1 There shall be an Annual Conference & Expo of the Association at a time and place to be determined by the Board of Trustees. Joint meetings with related divisions and country chapters shall be subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees.

## **ARTICLE X: DIVISIONS**

10.1 Divisions may be organized to represent major scientific and professional interests that lie within the Association.

10.2 Any Member of the Association may apply for membership in one or more Divisions under the rules of eligibility and election established by the Division. Associate members or Members may remain Associate members or Members without divisional affiliation. A Division member must be an approved member of the association before applying for a division membership. Each division may determine its own qualifications for its membership classes.

10.3 A Division shall be established whenever one percent or more of the Members of the Association petition for it and Executive Committee approves. Executive Committee may create such Divisions provided that (a) they represent an active and functionally unitary interest of a group of Members, (b) their proposed objectives fall within the scope of MEPA's goals (c) their membership is not restricted on any basis other than psychological interest and qualifications and (d) the establishment of any new Division is not inimical to the welfare of any other Division already established.

10.4 A Division may be dissolved by the Executive Committee when (a) the number of members within the Division falls below .25% of the Members of the Association or (b) the Division votes to recommend dissolution.

10.5 A Division remains autonomous in all matters within its field that are not reserved to the Association by these Bylaws or Association Rules. Divisions may not establish or enforce standards for ethics, accreditation, certification, or credentialing of specialty recognition. Divisions must comply with all MEPA Bylaws, Association Rules and current policies.

10.6 A Division shall have a Chair, a Secretary and a Treasurer and such other officers as it may be required. The qualifications for its officers and the method of their election shall be determined by the Division and by the Association's Executive Committee. A Division may determine what persons among its membership shall have the right to vote in divisional matters.



10.7 Each Division shall draw up and maintain its own Bylaws and rules of procedure within the framework of these Bylaws and in conjunction with the Associations' Executive Committee. Each Division may elect such officers, appoint such committees, develop such sections, and adopt such rules of procedure for the conduct of its business as it may desire, except that its committee and governance structure is subject to review by the Executive Committee of the Association. Divisions shall oversee the activities of their sections and monitor for their compliance with the MEPA Bylaws, Associations Rules, and current policies. Each Division shall file with the Association's Executive Committee a copy of its current Bylaws; rules of procedure; committee and governance structure; and chapter and section information, including their Bylaws and rules of procedure. Local sections of Divisions must comply with MEPA Bylaws, Association rules and current MEPA policy. Annually, each Division shall submit to the Executive Committee a report which covers the activities of the Division and its sections during the preceding year.

10.8 A Division may administer special funds allocated to its use but may delegate such administrative functions to the division's Chair and Treasurer.

10.9 All division publications, website content, artwork, and events must be approved by the Association's Executive Committee.

10.10 Notwithstanding any other provision of these Bylaws or the Association Rules to the contrary, the Executive Committee may, at its discretion, recommend to the division appropriate sanctions where divisions have failed to comply with Bylaws, Association Rules or policies of the Association. Executive Committee may also dissolve a Division for good and with enough reason by a two-thirds vote of those from the Executive Committee. Before the imposition of sanctions or dissolution of a division, the reasons for sanctions or dissolution shall be stated in writing to the membership of the Division and the Division membership, through their Executive Committee, shall be given a full opportunity to respond.

## **ARTICLE XI. COUNTRY CHAPTERS**

11.1 Country Chapters may be created to represent MEPA in the particular country and shall follow professional interests that lie within the Association.

11.2 A Country Chapter shall be established whenever one percent or more of the Members of the Association petition for it and the Executive Committee approves. Executive Committee

may create such Country Chapter provided that (a) they represent an active and functionally unitary interest of a group of Members, (b) their proposed objectives fall within the scope of those specified in MEPA's bylaws (c) their membership is not restricted on any basis other than psychological interest and qualifications and (d) the establishment of any new Country Chapter is not inimical to the welfare of any other Country Chapter already established.

11.3 Any Member of the Association may apply for membership in a Country Chapter under the rules of eligibility and election established by the Country Chapter. A Country Chapter member must be an approved member of the Association before applying for a Country Chapter membership.

11.4 A Country Chapter shall have a Director, a Secretary and a Treasurer. The qualifications for its officers and the method of their election shall be determined by the Association's Executive Committee. A Country Chapter may determine what persons among its membership shall have the right to vote in Country Chapter matters.

11.5 Country Chapter publications, website content, artwork, and events must be approved by the Association's Executive Committee.

11.6 Country Chapter Director shall report to MEPA's President and all Country Chapter publications and events must be approved by MEPA's Executive Committee.

## **ARTICLE XII. AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to these Bylaws may be proposed by a majority vote from the MEPA Executive Committee and approved by the Board of Trustees. The proposed amendments will be then added to the Bylaws.

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These by-laws are revised and adapted to conform to the geographical and cultural norms of the Middle East by the Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee of MEPA.