



BYLAWS  
of the  
TOPANGA VOLUNTEER FIRE AND FORESTRY  
A CALIFORNIA NONPROFIT PUBLIC BENEFIT CORPORATION

ARTICLE I: Name

The name of this corporation shall be the Topanga Volunteer Fire and Forestry Department.

ARTICLE II: Offices

101 S Topanga Canyon Blvd #565 Topanga, CA 90290

ARTICLE III: Purpose

The purpose of this corporation shall be:

1. To operate a volunteer fire and forestry service for the purposes of: A) fire prevention, B) fire defense and suppression, C) general emergency services including basic medical response, and D) brush and land management E) search & rescue and other safety-related responses to the benefit of the residents and properties of the unincorporated community of Topanga Canyon, Los Angeles County, California, and adjoining areas.
2. To raise, collect, and allocate resources to meet the needs of the Topanga Volunteer Fire and Forestry Department.
3. To receive, hold and disburse gifts, donations, and other funds for its purposes.
4. To own and maintain personal property which is deemed necessary for its purposes.
5. To enter into, make, perform and carry out contracts of every kind, for any lawful purpose, without limit as to amount.

ARTICLE IV: Membership

Section 1: Classes of Membership. There shall be three classes of membership: Active, Reserve, and Auxiliary.

Section 2: Eligibility. Any person of good character, in good health, and at least eighteen (18) years of age, and who has met the standards of the current application form, shall be eligible for election to membership, provided a vacancy exists.

Section 3: Voting Members. Limited to Board members.

Section 4: Membership Limitation. The number of Active members shall not exceed twenty-five (25), not including support members.



Section 5: Election to Membership. Subject to policies and approval procedures established by the Board.

Section 6: Active Membership. The requirements of an Active member are as follows and must be fulfilled within **12 months** of the establishment of the nonprofit:

- (a) FFT2 or greater equivalent, with proof of minimum completed classes (through N.W.C.G. and/or State of California) S-190, S-130, and L-180.
- (b) Red Cross (or other) first aid/AED/CPR card holder.
- (c) Attend at least 50% of monthly training.
- (d) Hold valid California driver's license.
- (e) Be in good physical condition.

Section 7: Reserve Membership. For members who are working toward Active status but have not yet completed required training. Reserve members are encouraged to attend training and may be restricted from certain operations.

Section 8: Auxiliary Membership. For those in administrative roles or early engagement. May support logistics, communication, and certified first aid support during events.

#### ARTICLE V: Board of Directors

Section 1: Powers and Duties. All powers and duties of the corporation shall be exercised by or under the authority of the Board. The Board shall oversee operations, adopt policies, and ensure financial and strategic accountability.

Section 2: Composition and Terms. The Board shall consist of 7–9 Directors, including:

- President / Chair
- Vice President / Vice Chair
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Director of Training and Operations
- 3–5 At-Large or Neighborhood Representatives (representing Topanga's core neighborhoods)

Board members shall serve two-year terms. Directors may serve multiple terms if re-elected.

Section 3: Vacancies. Vacancies due to resignation, incapacity, or removal shall be filled by a majority vote of the remaining Board members.

Section 4: Meetings of the Board:

- (a) Meetings shall be held quarterly at a designated location or via virtual conferencing.



- (b) Special meetings may be called by any board member with at least 72 hours' notice.
- (c) A majority of current board members shall constitute a quorum.
- (d) Voting by proxy is not permitted.
- (e) Expected that ~2–4 hours/month for meetings and activities

Section 5: Compensation. Board members shall serve without compensation. Reasonable expenses may be reimbursed with prior approval.

#### ARTICLE VI: Officers

##### Section 1: Titles and Duties:

- President / Chair: Leads the board, represents the organization, calls meetings, and ensures board alignment with mission.
- Vice Chair: Supports the Chair in all leadership duties and steps in when the Chair is unavailable.
- Treasurer: Oversees finances, ensures financial compliance, and delivers reports.
- Secretary: Maintains records, documents minutes, and manages board communication.
- Director of Training and Operations: Shall be responsible for overseeing the coordination, development, and implementation of member training programs, liaising with partner agencies, and ensuring operational readiness aligned with safety protocols.

Section 2: Election and Terms. Officers shall be elected annually by the Board and may serve multiple terms.

Section 3: Resignation and Vacancies. An officer may resign by written notice. Vacancies shall be filled by a vote of the Board.

#### ARTICLE VII: Advisory Board

The Board may establish an Advisory Board of up to five (5) members with relevant experience (e.g., wildfire mitigation, nonprofit governance) to provide guidance.

#### ARTICLE VIII: Committees

The Board may establish standing or ad hoc committees, including:

- Finance & Audit
- Grants & Projects
- Community Outreach
- Training & Operations
- Home Hardening & Fuel Management
- Or others as deemed necessary



Each committee shall include at least one board member and may include community volunteers.

#### ARTICLE IX: Conflict of Interest & Geographic Equity

- Board members must act in the best interest of the organization, not solely their neighborhood.
- Any board member with a direct personal or geographic stake in a funding decision shall recuse themselves from voting.
- TVFFD will implement a funding allocation policy to ensure equitable distribution across neighborhoods based on safety impact, need, and engagement.

#### ARTICLE X: Fiscal Year

The fiscal year shall begin July 1 and end June 30.

#### ARTICLE XI: Amendments

These bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the Board at any regular or special meeting, provided notice is given at least 7 days in advance.

#### ARTICLE XII: Indemnification

The Corporation may indemnify its board members and officers to the fullest extent permitted by California law.

#### ARTICLE XIII: Dissolution

Upon dissolution, remaining assets shall be distributed to another 501(c)(3) serving public safety or community resilience in Topanga or neighboring regions.