



CONSTITUTION OF THE AMERICAN JU-JITSU ASSOCIATION

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In order to further the study of the martial art of Ju-Jitsu the purpose and functions of the American Ju-Jitsu Association, hereafter referred to as the AJA, shall, in the interest of the public's benefit, have as its specific and primary purposes to:

- A. Serve as an association by which affiliated schools or clubs may cooperate and interact in order to promote the generous exchange of resources, ideas, information and the technical skills of Ju-Jitsu;
- B. Promote the martial art of Ju-Jitsu to the general public, and within the global martial arts community, by increasing awareness to the many benefits of learning Ju-Jitsu; and
- C. Support, develop, and foster national and international amateur sport competition within the guidelines exclusively set forth in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of the United States of America.
- D. Maintain the high standards of the martial art of Ju-Jitsu and provide for the orderly promotion of qualified persons within the American Ju-Jitsu Association.

ARTICLE 1: Government

SECTION 1: National Board of Directors

All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a National Board of Directors, hereafter referred to as BOD. The BOD shall establish all rules and regulations of the AJA including, but not limited to: standards of membership and promotion; imposition and collection of dues and fees; certification of ranks; member benefits and events; and rules of amateur competition. The BOD shall be composed of nine (9) members, unless an increase or decrease is declared by a BOD vote. A quorum of the BOD [50% + 1 member] must be present to conduct any form of business, vote, or action. A majority quorum vote of the BOD shall be required to approve all actions by the BOD.

The BOD shall operate under the California Corporations Code of 1980, as a non-profit public benefit corporation.

The term of office for BOD members shall be four [4] years and there shall be no term limits. Two [2] BOD members shall be subject to election/reelection every year [commencing in 2008] with three [3] BOD member subject to election on the fourth [4th] year [2012 and every 4th year thereafter]. This schedule may be altered by the BOD if a current BOD member leaves the BOD for any reason [retirement, illness, death, or removal]. The initial order of election shall be determined by the alphabetical order of the current BOD members' last names. The BOD shall have the right to elect and reelect its own members based upon the criteria listed in the paragraph below. An existing BOD member whose BOD seat is subject to election may indicate his/her desire to serve an additional term of office by notifying the chairman of the BOD. The chairman shall then notify the AJA Secretary who will poll the other BOD members in a timely manner.

A person seeking to become a candidate for a BOD seat must [a] hold a minimum AJA certified rank of sandan in Ju-Jitsu, [b] be an active instructor of a current AJA dojo at the time of initial election, and [c] have a demonstrated history of prior active involvement in AJA activities, including assumption of administrative and/or staff duties and responsibilities preferably at the national level, and [d] be nominated by an existing BOD member. A BOD affirmative vote is required for election to the BOD.

Up to one member of the BOD may be elected by the BOD to serve as a full BOD member solely on the basis meeting requirements [c] and [d] in the above paragraph.

A duly elected member of the BOD shall be awarded a *Lifetime Individual Membership* in the AJA and may retain BOD membership even though he/she may retire from actively teaching Ju-Jitsu. A member of the BOD may resign their seat on the BOD by written notice to the remaining members of BOD.

The BOD may remove a member of the BOD from the BOD for any offense listed in Section 6, or based upon other criteria established by the BOD .

One member of the BOD shall be elected as Chairman, who shall be responsible for the conduct of meetings, discussions and votes of the BOD related to AJA operational matters, in accordance with this Constitution. The term for Chairman shall be a maximum of four [4] years and there shall be no term limits. The term of office for chairman shall end at the end of his/her term of office as a BOD member and shall be subject to a revote at that time. Any bid to unseat the Chairman prior to the completion of the term shall require a BOD vote. Members removed from the Chairmanship position do not lose their seat on the BOD; to do so would require a separate vote (see above).

One member of the BOD shall be elected as Recording Secretary, by a majority vote. The Recording Secretary shall be responsible for recording all meetings, discussions and votes of the BOD related to AJA operational matters, as directed by the Chairman. The Secretary shall be the custodian of this Constitution and responsible for making any amendments to it under the direction of the Chairman, and in accordance with the regulations set forth in Article 1: Section 7. The BOD Recording Secretary may also perform the administrative duties of the Administrative Secretary under the direction of the AJA President (see Section 2: Administration, below) unless the President can secure someone else to be Administrative Secretary. In the event the President or Vice-President is unable to perform his/her duties due to temporary absence or vacation of the office, the Recording Secretary shall execute the duties of the President for a maximum of 30 days by which time the President or Vice-President must return to duty, or a new President or Vice-President will be appointed by the BOD.

The BOD shall convene at least once each calendar year for the purpose of discussing topics and voting, as necessary, on issues of AJA policy, and the administration of the AJA *General Fund* (see Section 4, below). The Chairman shall have the responsibility of convening such a meeting as well as determining its time and location. The Chairman shall prepare and send an agenda to all BOD members at least 45 days, but no less than 30 days, in advance. The Chairman may delegate to the Secretary the responsibility of contacting BOD members, and the delivery of the agenda.

The Chairman, at his/her discretion, may conduct the BOD annual meeting or other BOD business via U.S. mail, e-mail, or other communication medium, when a physical meeting is unrealistic or impossible. The Chairman may delegate to the Secretary the dissemination or gathering of business correspondence to and from the BOD.

SECTION 2A: Administration, BOD Appointments

The power to execute the rules and regulations set forth by the BOD shall be vested in a President of the AJA. The BOD shall elect the President, as well as other specified Administrative Officers, in order to carry out the mission and policies of the AJA, and to fill the various Commissions designated, herein. No person shall hold an Administrative Office in the AJA who is not a member in good standing (current membership dues paid). This Constitution does not preclude a BOD member from also serving as an Administrative Officer. Although not preferable, an Administrative Officer may occupy more than one administrative office on a temporary basis. An administrative officer may actively carry out the duties of another administrative office, but only on a temporary basis where the office may be vacant, and only until said vacancy can be filled. The following Administrative Officers shall be elected by BOD vote:

- A. President
- B. Vice-President
- B. Treasurer
- C. 3 Regional Directors
- D. Secretary to the President [not the same as BOD Recording Secretary and may be appointed by President].
- E. and no others

There shall be created a document describing the full authority, qualifications, duties and responsibilities of the President, as well as all other administrative offices of the AJA. Said document shall be titled Executive Supplement A: Administrative Authority and Job Descriptions. Said document shall be a direct set of Bylaws of this Constitution. Therefore, any changes to it shall be subject to the review and approval by the BOD.

The nominee to any of the above administrative offices must meet the qualifications for that position as stated in Executive Supplement A: Administrative Authority and Job Descriptions, and receive a BOD vote over all qualifying candidates as prescribed in said document. To remove any of the above Administrative Officers from his/her elected position requires a BOD vote.

SECTION 2B: Administration, Presidential Appointments

The President of the AJA shall prepare an *Annual Operating Budget* (see Section 4, below) to be submitted to the BOD no later than January 20th of each year. The President shall monitor the use of funds within the Annual Operating Budget to ensure compliance with AJA regulations regarding use of said funds. The President of the AJA shall have the authority to appoint specified Administrative Officers in order to carry out the mission and policies set forth by the BOD. The following administrative positions

shall be appointed by the President:

- A. Administrative Secretary
- B. Materiel Director
- C. Communications Director
- D. National Media Coordinator
- E. National Membership Director
- F. Certification Director
- G. Newsletter Editor
- H. National Awards Coordinator
- I. Webmaster
- J. Recruitment Director
- K. Others, dependent upon need

The appointee for any of the above administrative positions must meet the qualifications for that position as stated in Executive Supplement A: Administrative Authority and Job Descriptions. The President may consult with any other officer or any commission, to receive recommendations, before making an appointment. The President has the authority to recommend to the BOD the removal from office any of the above 'Presidential' appointed Administrative Officers from his/her position. However, to remove said appointee requires a BOD vote.

There shall be created a documentation of the method for conducting business between the various Administrative Offices, and with the members of the organization. Said document shall be titled Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual. Said document shall be an administrative directive under full control of the President of the AJA, and may not be altered without his/her express written permission. The President has the authority to make any necessary changes to basic procedures of administration, so long as those changes are in accordance with this Constitution and any applicable Bylaws.

SECTION 3: Commissions

There shall be a **National Standards and Certification Board**, hereafter referred to as NSCB, that shall, a) make recommendations to the BOD regarding the establishment of general guidelines to ensure that qualified members and instructors within the AJA are being duly recognized and promoted, b) be responsible to see that the guidelines approved by the BOD are fairly and equitably enforced, c) evaluate prospective dojo to assure that new dojo entering the AJA meet AJA established standards as well as assist prospective dojo to meet the established AJA criteria, and d) work with the president of the AJA to establish fair, common, and equitable minimum standards of technical proficiency for yudansha grades, regardless of style/ryu of the particular yudansha [black belt]. The NSCB shall be chaired by the vice-president of the

AJA. The NSCB shall be composed of the AJA vice-president and all AJA Regional Directors. The Chairman of the NSCB has the authority to delegate specific responsibilities to Regional Directors in order to conduct examinations and grant promotions to qualified yudansha who are dependent upon the AJA for further promotion. The certificate of promotion issued by the NSCB shall bear the signature of both the chairperson of the NSCB and the president of the AJA.

A document describing the general guidelines, standards and procedures for the promotion and certification of all AJA Yudansha shall be created in accordance with the paragraph above. Said document shall be titled Executive Supplement C: National Standards and Certification Board. Said document shall be an administrative directive to be carried out by the chairman of the NSCB [or his delegate], and may not be implemented or altered without the approval of the BOD. The chairman of the NSCB [or his delegate], has the authority to make any necessary administrative changes to basic procedures of the NSCB, so long as those changes are in accordance with this Constitution and any applicable Bylaws. This document shall include general criteria for regional promotional boards [whose use should be encouraged as a means of increasing the credibility and integrity of black belt promotions] and the establishment of “certified examiners” [whom member instructors shall be encouraged to use for testing/evaluating their black belt candidates] to be included in such document.

The general guidelines, standards and procedures contained in the Executive Supplement C: National Standards and Certification Board shall be such to allow for variations and requirements of different ryu [styles] of the art. However, the general guidelines, standards and procedures shall not preclude an instructor from having more rigorous criteria previously established by his ryu or from promoting his/her own students within the criteria of his/her ryu or dojo. Conversely, the AJA NSCB shall have the right to review any promotion submitted for AJA certification that falls outside the general guidelines, standards and procedures as stated in Executive Supplement C: National Standards and Certification Board or the standards of the particular dojo or ryu as previously approved by the NSCB when the dojo applied for AJA affiliation.

There may be several **Regional Advisory Boards**, hereafter referred to as RAB, which shall, a) make recommendations to the BOD regarding the establishment of standards and procedures pertaining to the conduct of regional AJA events and activities. It shall be the goal of each RAB, that whenever possible, to a) conduct at least two tournaments and two seminars (preferably four of each), annually, primarily for the benefit of all AJA members in the region although non-AJA dojo should also be invited to participate; b) conduct events such as exhibitions and demonstrations for the benefit of all AJA dojo in the region each year; and, c) host the AJA National Convention once every six (6) years. Each RAB shall be composed of the respective Regional Director (RD), who shall serve as the Chairman of the RAB, and all head instructors, instructors, and assistant instructors of all dojo in that particular region. The Regional Director shall have the responsibility of representing the views of all RAB members to the BOD.

Members of the Regional Advisory Board shall be defined as the head instructors [or their designated representatives] of all member AJA dojo and the RD [who may represent his/her own dojo]. A quorum of the RAB [50% + 1 member] must be present to conduct any form of business, vote, or action. A majority quorum vote of the RAB shall be required to approve all actions by the RAB.

The RAB has the authority to elect any RAB member to fulfill any duties it deems necessary in order to meet its requirements and the needs of its members.

Minutes of RAB meetings shall be submitted to the AJA Recording Secretary so that such minutes may be provided to all BOD members. All decisions of the Regional Advisory Boards are subject to review and approval by the AJA BOD in accordance with this constitution. The duties and responsibilities of the RAB are described in Executive Supplement A: Administrative Authority and Job Descriptions.

There shall be created a document describing the procedures for the conduct of the RAB. Said document shall be titled Executive Supplement D: Regional Advisory Boards. Said document shall be an administrative directive under the supervision of the Vice-President of the AJA, and may not be altered without his/her express written permission and subject to AJA BOD review and approval. The Vice-President has the authority to make any necessary changes to basic procedures of the RAB, so long as those changes are in accordance with this Constitution and any applicable Bylaws and have been approved by the Regional Directors.

There shall be a **Senior Advisory Board**, hereafter referred to as the SAB, that shall, a) serve in an advisory capacity to the national BOD or any other member, governing body, or commission of the AJA pertaining to any matter of concern within the primary and specific purposes of the AJA as prescribed in the preamble of the Constitution, and b) participate in scheduled BOD meetings but only in an advisory manner. Members of the SAB shall not have a vote, either singly or as a group on matters the BOD may vote on. The SAB shall be composed of retired BOD members or other senior martial artists in the martial arts community [recommended either by the SAB or BOD, who a) have volunteered to serve on the SAB, b) are in good standing with the AJA, and c) have been approved for SAB membership by the BOD. The term of office for all SAB members shall be three years, with all SAB members subject to reelection by the BOD on or about July 1 of the third year starting 2016, regardless of when they may have been individually elected to the SAB. [added March, 2014]

There shall be a **Public Relations Commission**, hereafter referred to as PRC, that shall, a) make recommendations to the BOD regarding the best ways to promote to the public a positive image of Ju-jitsu and the AJA; b) study student enrollment and retention practices both inside and outside the AJA in an effort to find the best ways to encourage new student enrollment in individual AJA dojo; c) actively pursue the

recruitment and addition of new dojo to the organization; and, d) establish the best ways to utilize public martial arts exhibitions and demonstrations, as well as print and broadcast media to promote AJA events and dojo. The Public Relations Commission shall be under the authority of the AJA President and its members shall include, at a minimum, the AJA Secretary, Communications Director, National Media Coordinator, Recruitment Coordinator, AJA Webmaster and at least one representative from each Regional Black Belt Board. The commission shall convene at least once each year to assign research projects, discuss findings, and make recommendations. The Secretary shall record commission meetings and disseminate recommendations to the BOD and, as necessary, to all AJA sensei. The complete duties and responsibilities of the PRC are described in Executive Supplement A: Administrative Authority and Job Descriptions.

There shall be an **Inter-Organizational Sports Council**, hereafter referred to as IOSC, that shall, a) provide a means by which the AJA may cooperate and interact with other Ju-jitsu and martial arts organizations, both nationally and internationally, to promote amateur Ju-jitsu competition; b) establish and promote local, regional, national and international competition using a limited number (3 to 4) of standardized competitive formats in which Ju-jitsu practitioners of all styles, organizations, ranks and ages may participate; and, c) communicate with national and international general amateur sports organizations for the purpose of seeking recognition of the IOSC [and respective organizations in other countries] as the governing body for amateur Ju-jitsu competition in the U.S. and member countries, respectively. The AJA President shall serve as the AJA IOSC chairman unless another designee is selected by the president, subject to approval by the AJA BOD. The details of who shall be a member of the AJA-IOSC, their responsibilities and duties, shall be described in Executive Supplement A: Administrative Authority and Job Descriptions and Executive Supplement E: Inter-Organizational Sports Council, which must be in compliance and accordance with the AJA Constitution and any applicable Bylaws

SECTION 4: General Fund and Annual Operating Budget (AOB)

The President of the AJA shall have the authority to set fees for Membership Dues, and sales of AJA supplies and services (patches, certificates, etc.). The AJA shall have a **General Fund** into which shall be deposited all income, including but not limited to income from Membership Dues, Special Events & Activities, and sales of AJA supplies.

The President shall with the cooperation of the Treasurer, prepare and submit to the AJA Board of Directors an Annual Operating Budget (AOB). The AOB shall be submitted to the BOD no later than January 20th of each year. The AOB shall never exceed 100% of the total income of the previous calendar year. The total income from the previous calendar year shall be rounded down to the nearest \$100, and shall be allocated to six (6) Operational Funds:

- Fifteen percent (15%) of the AOB shall be allocated to the **Petty Cash Fund**. The Petty Cash Fund shall be used to pay for one-time, non-recurring, miscellaneous expenses, including but not limited to equipment purchases, supplies, services, etc. The Petty Cash Fund, as well as the General Fund, shall be administered by the AJA Treasurer, according to the rules and procedures specified in Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual.
- Thirty percent (30%) of the AOB shall be allocated to the **Membership Fund**. The Membership Fund shall be used to pay for printing and postage for the newsletter, the AJA website, and the publication of materials for all AJA members and dojo. The Membership Fund shall be administered by the AJA National Membership Director, according to the rules and procedures specified in Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual.
- Fifteen percent (15%) of the AOB shall be allocated to the **National Standards and Certification Board [NSCB] Fund**. The NSCB Fund shall be used to pay for expenses incurred by the AJA NSCB, including but not limited to the costs of empanelling promotional boards, training Certified Examiners, etc. The NSCB Fund shall be administered by the AJA Vice-President, according to the rules and procedures specified in Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual.
- Ten percent (10%) of the AOB shall be allocated to the **Convention Fund**. The Convention Fund shall be used to pay for expenses incurred by the specific Regional Advisory Board for the planning and staging of the AJA Convention. The Convention Fund shall be administered on a rotating basis among the AJA Regional Directors, according to the scheduled location of the AJA Convention, according to the rules and procedures specified in Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual.
- Fifteen percent (15%) of the AOB shall be allocated to the **Travel Fund**. The Travel Fund shall be used to pay for, or subsidize, travel expenses incurred by the AJA Board of Directors and Administrative Officers to and from AJA sanctioned events and required meetings. The Travel Fund shall be administered by the AJA Secretary, according to the rules and procedures specified in Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual.
- Fifteen percent (15%) of the AOB shall be allocated to the **Scholarship Fund**. The Scholarship Fund shall be used for grants to deserving AJA members to attend AJA sanctioned events, as well as other educational purposes that fall within the purposes of the AJA as described in the first paragraph of the AJA Constitution. The Scholarship Fund shall be administered by the AJA President, according to the rules and procedures specified in Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual

No fund, except the General Fund, shall ever contain more than twice the amount allotted in the AOB. Expenses from tournaments, seminars, or any event where it is reasonable to expect that the income from said event will exceed the total expenses, shall be paid from the General fund. Expenditures which do not meet the criteria of any of the above funds of the AOB shall be paid from the General fund, upon approval by the BOD, according to the rules and procedures specified in Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual. The Treasurer shall disburse approved expenditures from each Fund, as authorized by the Fund Administrator, and according to the rules and procedures specified in Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual.

In the event that any expenditure which meets the qualifications of any of the AOB funds cannot be paid due to insufficient funds in said AOB fund, that expense may be paid from the General fund, upon approval by a majority vote of the BOD. In no event shall compensation be paid to members of BOD (or AJA officers or committee members), regardless of the type of services performed, if there are insufficient funds in either the General Fund or the AOB funds to pay for such services.

Nothing herein shall prohibit members of the BOD, and appointed officers and committee members of the AJA, from receiving reasonable compensation for services rendered on behalf of the AJA as martial arts instructors, or for providing examination and evaluation services for yudansha promotions, provided that such compensation shall not exceed comparable compensation received by martial artists of similar rank in the geographic region where the instructional or evaluation services are provided.

SECTION 5: Indemnification

The AJA shall indemnify an individual made a party to any legal proceeding resulting from any incident occurring at an AJA sponsored (sanctioned) event because he or she is or was a director, officer, employee or representative of the AJA, against liability incurred in the proceeding if:

- A. He or she conducted himself or herself in good faith;
- B. He or she reasonably believed that his or her conduct was in, or at least not opposed to, the best interest of the AJA; and
- C. In the case of any criminal proceeding, he or she had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful.

This Constitution and its Bylaws shall not be interpreted to limit in any manner the indemnification or right to compensation for expenses of an individual who would otherwise be entitled thereto, and shall be interpreted as mandating indemnification and compensation of expenses to the extent permitted by law.

SECTION 6: Sanctions (Punitive Actions)

Sanctions may be imposed against any dojo, student, instructor, administrative officer or BOD member who violates the AJA Constitution or Bylaws in any form or manner. Sanctions may include, but are not necessarily limited to, a) removal from elected or appointed AJA office; b) the suspension and/or revocation of AJA certifications and/or benefits; or c) suspension and/or revocation of AJA Dojo Charter. Sanctions may be imposed against any individual in the AJA for any of the following reasons:

- A. making false or misleading statements about rank, dojo, or martial arts background;
- B. gross disrespect, e.g. demanding a promotion, threats toward other AJA members, etc.;
- C. communicating in a rude, profane, or abusive manner;
- D. issuing ranks for personal or political gain;
- E. any conduct, not mentioned above, which in the opinion of the BOD, is unbecoming a martial artist.

The AJA Dojo Charter of a member dojo may be revoked by the BOD for any of the following offenses:

- F. refusing to collect AJA fees or remanding them to the AJA;
- G. refusing to have all students sign waivers as a precondition for actively participating in their dojo's instructional program and/or collect signed waivers for AJA sponsored events;
- H. practicing discrimination by restricting dojo membership or participation in the activities of the AJA on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, place of national origin, or any other reason established by legislation or court decision;
- I. abuse of students through extreme physical, emotional, or other unreasonable requirements;
- J. illegal issuance of ranks (e.g. Shodan issuing Shodan grade);
- K. willful and/or continuous violation of the AJA Constitution and Bylaws

Any individual or dojo accused of a violation shall have the opportunity to respond to said accusations before any action is taken by the BOD. The Secretary shall send a notice of the accusations, and the proposed sanctions to be imposed, to the accused party. The accused party shall have 30 days to reply in writing to the BOD, stating his/her position in the matter along with supporting evidence. The BOD shall evaluate the response and issue a decision within 30 days. ALL correspondence regarding sanctions (punitive actions) MUST be mailed to the AJA Secretary via certified mail with a return receipt requested. The decisions of the BOD are final.

SECTION 7: Amending the AJA Constitution and/or Bylaws

The AJA Constitution consists of the preamble and the five (5) articles, herein. Bylaws of this Constitution are the Executive Supplements A, B, C, D, and E. Any amendment to the AJA Constitution or the Executive Supplement A: Administrative Authority and Job Descriptions requires BOD approval. All other Bylaws are under the direct control of specified AJA Administrative Officers, and require no BOD vote, as long as changes do not affect or contradict the regulations set forth in the AJA Constitution or other Bylaws. However, the BOD reserves the right to review any and all changes to the AJA Constitution & Bylaws. The Secretary shall be the custodian of this Constitution and all AJA documentation, and responsible for making any amendments (additions, deletions, changes or corrections) under the direction of the Chairman, President or Vice-President, and in accordance with established regulations.

Any AJA member in good standing may propose changes to the AJA Constitution and/or Bylaws. The written proposal should state the proposed changes, clearly and completely state the reason(s) for the proposal, and include name, address, phone number[s] and email address of the person making the proposal. The proposed amendment should be sent to the AJA Secretary. The proposal will be immediately submitted to the BOD, or to the appropriate administrative officer, for consideration. For proposals requiring a BOD vote, the BOD members will review the proposal, and vote on the issue at its next scheduled meeting. The Secretary will inform the requestor of the results of the vote.

SECTION 8: Dissolution of the AJA

The AJA, its BOD, and this Constitution and its Bylaws, may only be dissolved by a BOD vote of the, or by action of the United States Internal Revenue Service. Upon the dissolution of the AJA, the BOD, shall, after paying or making provisions for the payment of all the liabilities of the AJA, dispose of all the assets of the AJA not exclusively designated for the purposes of the AJA, in such manner, or to such an organization or organizations, for charitable, educational, religious, or scientific purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law) as the BOD shall determine.

ARTICLE 2: Membership

SECTION 1: Dojo Charter

Membership in the AJA shall be open to all qualified active instructors in the martial art of Ju-Jitsu, and their students.

A Dojo Charter (affiliation) may be granted to the Head Instructor (sensei), or acting head instructor, of any dojo that teaches any classical Japanese Ju-Jitsu (Ju-Jutsu), and has an established program where students may obtain the rank of Shodan (or higher) in said style of Ju-Jitsu that meets the minimum standards set forth by the AJA National Standards and Certification Board. A Dojo Charter authorizes the holder (head instructor) to act as an officer of the AJA, serve as an active participant of the RAB, and conduct events (including, but not limited to: seminars, exhibitions, and tournaments), grant promotions, use the AJA logo, collect fees and issue Individual Memberships in the name of the AJA, as long those activities are in full compliance of this Constitution, and only as long as the Dojo Charter is held current.

A dojo charter may be issued only to a single specific dojo in one specific geographic location and to the actual named instructor who teaches specifically at that dojo location. The actual named instructor is responsible for the instructional program at that specific geographic location whether or not he is present. [added August, 2014]

If an instructor maintains physical dojos [schools, clubs, classes, training locations, etc.] in different geographic locations then the instructor must apply for a separate dojo charter for each dojo in a different geographic location and the person who actually & physically conducts the instructional program at that specific geographic location must be specified as the actual named instructor of that specific geographic location and be certified as an instructor by the AJA. [added August, 2014]

While the AJA does not wish to intervene in the philosophy or criteria regarding promotions or ranking, it is essential that each dojo adopt some standardized method of promotion so that its students will be in general compliance with other AJA students of similar grade. Refer to Article 4: Standardization.

The AJA Dojo Charter is only valid for one (1) calendar year. Renewal notices and forms are sent out, initially in October, for the coming year. Completed forms are to be returned to the stated location with the required annual renewal fee, postmarked by 12/15 for coverage effective January 1 of the following year. A new Dojo Charter will be issued on or after January 1. No other documentation is required for renewal. If a Dojo Charter is not renewed by the December 15 deadline established by administrative procedures (see Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual), a \$10.00 late fee will be assessed to the renewal fee and coverage cannot be guaranteed effective January 1 of the following year. Certification may be forfeited if the dojo

charter is not renewed within 60 days of expiration, in which case the dojo (head sensei) must re-apply as a new applicant.

An AJA Dojo Charter may be transferred to qualified sensei within the dojo. A qualified sensei, in this situation, should be a student of the current charter owner, and must be a current AJA member, with a valid Instructor Certificate issued by the AJA. The qualifying sensei must certify that he/she will continue to operate the dojo in accordance with AJA rules and regulations and follows the promotional standards of the dojo used by the previous sensei and approved by the NSCB at the time of dojo's application for membership in the AJA. The name designating the head sensei of the dojo will be changed upon issuance of the next annual dojo charter renewal. The new qualifying sensei will not have to go through the application process required of outside [non-AJA] dojo seeking AJA affiliation as long as the above conditions are met.

There is a minimum requirement of five (5) individual AJA members (sensei and four students) to maintain and renew an annual Dojo Charter. The head sensei of a dojo that cannot maintain the minimum requirement of five (5) individual AJA members may retain his/her dojo certification (without the charter) by renewing as an Associate Member. See Section 3, below, for rules concerning Associate Membership.

SECTION 2: Individual Membership

Membership in the AJA qualifies the student and sensei to receive promotions, newsletters, special awards, and other benefits. It also helps the AJA become a more effective and stronger organization. All participants, meaning all instructors, assistant instructors and students who participate in the instructional program of any AJA dojo and any related activities in any form or manner, are required to become AJA members. Individual AJA membership may require the payment of one or all of the following fees:

- A. A national fee, used to defray expenses of the national organization;
- B. A regional fee, if established by the region, to defray regional expenses; and established in this Constitution.

The AJA individual membership is only valid for one (1) calendar year. The required fee is paid directly to the head sensei of the dojo and a new membership card is issued. Individual Memberships may only be issued by the head sensei of the dojo (holder of an AJA Dojo Charter), or a Certified Instructor with permission of the head sensei. The instructions, forms, and fees for individual membership are contained in Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual.

SECTION 3: Associate Membership

The AJA understands that any dojo and its instructor may undergo changes and hardships. If for any reason a dojo, which has previously secured AJA membership certification, must temporarily cease operation, provisions are hereby made so that a sensei may retain his/her dojo certification through an individual AJA Associate Membership. Any head instructor holding an AJA Dojo Charter as described in Article 2: Section 1; Dojo Charter, for at least three (3) consecutive years, may retain his/her dojo certification by converting it to an individual Associate Membership. **Associate Membership is not available to non-AJA dojo or individuals.**

Associate Membership is essentially an “individual” membership in an inactive dojo, and does not carry with it the privileges given the Dojo Charter described earlier in these articles. The holder of an Associate Membership may not collect individual/student AJA membership fees in the name of the AJA. The holder of an Associate Membership may not request student promotion certificates to be issued from the AJA. The holder of an Associate Membership is entitled to apply for a “personal” promotion certificate from the AJA.

The holder of an Associate Membership may not renew said membership more than five (5) consecutive years. If the Associate Membership is not converted to a Dojo Charter within this time, AJA Dojo Certification and the Associate Membership shall be forfeited and the sensei will be required to re-apply for Certification at any future date.

The fee and procedure to for an individual Associate Membership is fully described in Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual

SECTION 4: Honorary Membership

For the purpose of goodwill within the worldwide martial arts community, and for providing public relations services within local communities, the AJA allows qualified sensei to bestow any worthy individual with an “Honorary Membership” award. Sensei who are qualified to grant Honorary memberships are any head instructor holding an AJA Dojo Charter as described earlier in these articles. Honorary membership may only be granted to non-AJA members, and may only be granted once to any individual.

Honorary membership may be granted to any officer of any martial arts organization (does not have to be Jujitsu), or a community leader such as a minister or a city official who may have helped a particular dojo with publicity, funding or finding a suitable location. The procedure and form to nominate an Honorary AJA member are contained in Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual.

SECTION 5: Foreign [International Affiliation] Membership

The AJA shall accept international dojo/organizations from other countries, hereafter referred to as “foreign” into the AJA, following the same procedures and requirements for evaluating and accepting domestic [inside the U.S.] dojo/organizations for membership and affiliation with the AJA as established by the AJA Constitution. Foreign dojo/organizations and their members shall be subject to the same rules, conditions, and standards as domestic dojo.

Foreign memberships shall be subject to the following limitations:

- A. Foreign dojo/organizations/members are NOT covered by the AJA insurance policy unless they are in the U.S. and participating in an officially AJA sanctioned activity, nor may they be eligible for some of the other benefits of domestic AJA dojo.
- B. Individual foreign dojo may not claim to be the sole representative of the AJA in their country unless the BOD has granted that privilege.
- C. Foreign organizations who are recognized as the sole governing body for ju-jitsu in their respective country[ies] AND can provide official government documentation establishing such may request that the AJA BOD to grant them the privilege of being the official representative of the AJA in their country[ies].
 - a. The AJA will require that the AJA be named as the sole and exclusive representative of the foreign organization in the U.S. and the possessions and territories of the U.S.
 - b. This will require BOD approval.
- D. Foreign organizations, whether or not they are the sole governing body for ju-jitsu in their respective country[ies], may request that a document of “mutual recognition” be created wherein each organization [foreign organization and the AJA] agree to recognize each other as a representative of their respective country[ies] recognize the ranks of all members certified by their respective organizations.

There shall be special conditions and fees for foreign membership [international affiliation]:

- A. If a foreign dojo/organization simply wishes recognition it must secure an annual dojo certificate and pay the same annual dojo fee as domestic dojo. The dojo certificate must be renewed annually [and fee paid] to maintain official AJA affiliation.
- B. If a foreign dojo/organization wishes to secure rank recognition for its sensei and/or any of its students, the normal requirements and procedures, as used for domestic dojo.
- C. Dojo/organization must submit an appropriate Student Register with fees for its members who are seeking rank certification.
- D. Dojo/organization must also submit a Rank Certificate Application form and appropriate fees for each candidate seeking a certificate of rank from

- the AJA.
- E. Fees may be waived or altered in accordance with AJA constitutional policy.

SECTION 6: Discrimination

Discrimination based on any other reason than the qualifications for membership stated above, is strictly prohibited. No person shall be restricted from membership or participation in the activities of the AJA, or its affiliated dojo, because of their creed, color, race, sex, place of national origin, or any other reason established by legislation, court decision, or common sense.

Any BOD member, administrative officer, instructor, assistant instructor and/or student of any AJA affiliated dojo, who participate in discriminatory practices of any kind, shall be subject to punitive sanctions, as described in Article 1: Section 6 of this document.

ARTICLE 3: Certification

SECTION 1: Rank Certification

No Rank or Grade shall be recognized by the AJA as being valid until the promotion is “certified” as having met all of the requirements set forth by the AJA and/or the National Standards and Certification Board (NSCB) for that rank. A rank or grade shall be considered “certified” when the “Certificate Application” form is signed by the appropriate regional director, attesting that the promotional criteria [already on file with the NSCB as part of the dojo’s original application process] have been followed.

No one shall act as the head sensei of an AJA affiliated dojo without a valid Certificate of Rank issued by the AJA. Any prospective head sensei of a dojo applying for an AJA Dojo Charter as described in Article 2: Section 1, above, must submit all of the requested documentation with the Dojo Application so that the AJA is able to verify the applicant’s stated rank (documentation may include a copy of promotion certificate, promoting sensei name and address, and/or other organization from which a previous certification was obtained).

The rank of any current AJA member (student or instructor), may be certified by submitting the proper application, signed by the promoting sensei, along with any required fee. No other documentation is required. The NSCB has the right to conduct, observe and/or review all Yudansha promotions and may decide to disapprove any request for rank certification where the promotion was not conducted according to AJA standards (see Article 4: Section 3, ‘Yudansha Promotions’, below).

Upon approval, a Certificate of Rank will be issued by the AJA, and the holder of said certificate, shall hold that rank at any AJA sanctioned event or affiliated dojo, and any non-AJA event or dojo choosing to recognize AJA certification. The AJA will provide confirmation of Rank to any organization or individual making a formal request, for any member who is in good standing. The AJA recommends that ALL student and instructor promotions should be certified. However, only the ranks of Sankyu and above are required to be certified.

The basic requirements for promotion needed to meet eligibility for certification are contained in Article 4: Standardization, below. Complete details and standards are contained in Executive Supplement C: National Standards and Certification Board. The application procedure and required fees to obtain either a Mudansha Grade Certificate, or Yudansha Rank Certificate, are described, along with the form and instructions, in Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual.

SECTION 2: Instructor Certification

No one is permitted to teach classes without supervision, or to grant promotions of any kind, in an AJA affiliated dojo, without a valid Instructor Certificate issued by the AJA. Any prospective head sensei of a dojo applying for an AJA Dojo Charter as described in Article 2: Section 1, above, must submit all of the requested documentation with the Dojo Application so that the AJA is able to verify the applicant's authority to teach the stated style or ryu of Ju-jitsu (documentation may include promoting sensei name and address who will verify applicant has his/her 'permission' to teach that style or ryu; and/or other organization from which a previous Instructor certification was obtained). In some cases, the AJA may grant an instructor certificate on the basis of the applicant's verifiable rank alone (see previous section).

All applicants for Instructor certification must be a legal adult as determined by the particular state they reside in or at least 18 years of age and must have completed a standard First Aid with CPR or ADF class. Candidates holding the rank of Shodan must have held that rank for at least one year. There is no time requirement for higher yudansha ranks. It is highly recommended that any candidate for Instructor Certification have been under long-term (6-12 months) observation, assessing the candidate's class teaching and supervisory abilities, by his/her instructor and/or Regional Director (or authorized representative).

Any current AJA member holding a valid certificate of rank of Shodan or higher, and having met all the requirements stated above, may be granted an Instructor Certificate by submitting the proper application, signed by the authorizing sensei, along with any required fee. No other documentation is required. The NSCB has the right to review all Instructor applications and may decide to approve or disapprove any request for instructor certification. The NSCB may request to observe and/or interview the applicant prior to making a decision.

Upon approval, an Instructor Certificate will be issued by the AJA, and the holder of said certificate, shall be permitted to teach classes without supervision, and to promote students according to the criteria set forth in Article 4: Sections 2 and 3, and to apply for AJA Rank Certification for said promotions according to Section 1, above. The application procedure and required fees to obtain an Instructor Certificate, are fully described, along with the form and instructions, in Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual. Complete details and standards are contained in Executive Supplement C: National Standards and Certification Board.

In order for an AJA Instructor Certificate to be valid the person possessing the Instructor Certificate must have a current AJA individual membership and be teaching in a dojo with a current AJA Dojo Charter.

ARTICLE 4: Standardization

SECTION 1: Standards of the American Ju-Jitsu Association

One of the main purposes of the AJA, as defined by this Constitution, shall be to "Maintain the high standards of the martial art of Ju-Jitsu."

The AJA will establish general guidelines for the orderly promotion of qualified persons within the AJA. The AJA does not set any policy affecting the philosophy, principles, methods, or sequence of instruction of an individual dojo. Nor does it dictate the types, names or even number of techniques taught within a particular dojo or belt level. This means that different dojo may have different requirements for similar ranks. In order to insure proper promotion it is necessary that the AJA set **minimum requirements of promotion**.

The NSCB shall review the promotional criteria and standards for all mudansha and yudansha grades submitted by a prospective dojo to assure that they meet the minimum standards below prior to approving a prospective dojo for AJA membership. Once a dojo is approved for AJA membership its promotional criteria and standards shall be seen as comparable and acceptable within the guidelines below. If the prospective promotional criteria and standards of the prospective dojo does not meet the minimum AJA criteria [below] then the Chairperson of the NSCB shall work with the instructor of the prospective dojo to alter the dojo's promotional criteria/standards so they are in compliance with those of the AJA *prior* to approving the dojo for AJA affiliation. The NSCB chairman may delegate this responsibility to the appropriate regional director, but shall still be responsible for the overall supervision and resolution of the matter.

The criteria for the established minimum requirements for promotion are not based on any particular style or 'ryu'. The word American in American Ju-Jitsu Association, refers only to geographical location, not any particular philosophy, strategy, style or ryu. Ju-Jitsu is the accepted English (American) spelling of the Japanese Ju-Jutsu. Therefore, any dojo affiliated with the AJA must teach a classical form of Japanese Ju-jitsu. This is not meant to imply that a member dojo cannot teach other forms of martial arts, or augment its style in any way it chooses. It simply means that a student must be able to achieve a Black Belt in some recognizable form of Japanese Ju-Jutsu.

SECTION 2: Mudansha (Student) Promotions

Mudansha means "person without rank" (mu = none; dan = rank; sha = person). Students are placed in 'grades' (kyu) according to skill level. Grades are numbered in descending order, with new students starting at the highest number grade (white belt is typically not considered a grade) and advancing to the 'first', or top level of Ikkyu. The

designation of student grades (kyu), colors of belts (no red or black), and the skill requirements of such, shall follow the instructional criteria of the particular system which is on file with the AJA and approved by the NSCB at the time of the dojo's application and acceptance into the AJA.

If a dojo changes its Mudansha belt rank requirements following NSCB approval for membership, then the dojo shall be required to submit its "new" standards to the NSCB for review and approval before issuing any promotions under the "new" standards..

No student shall be entitled to receive a promotion to any rank unless he/she has a valid (paid), up-to-date AJA membership and an appropriate Ju-Jitsu (Judo-style) uniform; called 'dogi', or 'gi'. All Mudansha promotions must be made by a person holding a current Instructor Certificate issued by the AJA (see Article 3: Section 2 above).

Since different styles and ryu may use different terminology (Japanese and/or English), descriptions of generally acceptable forms of these skills are contained in Executive Supplement C: National Standards and Certification Board.

The AJA recommends that ALL student promotions should be certified. However, the ranks of Sankyu and above are required to be certified. The application procedure and required fees to obtain a Mudansha Rank Certificate are fully described, along with the form and instructions, in Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual.

Brown Belts who have reached the grade of Ikkyu, who have shown a willingness to help in the dojo and have displayed leadership skills, may be certified as "assistant instructors". A certificate for this award may be obtained from the Certifications Officer. This is only an award and not an Instructor Certificate. An assistant instructor is not allowed to teach classes unsupervised, or to grant promotions of any kind. However, the holder on an Assistant Instructor certificate is granted the privilege of serving on the Regional Advisory Board. The application procedure and required fees to obtain an Assistant Instructor Certificate are described, along with the form and instructions, in Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual.

SECTION 3A: Yudansha (Black Belt) Promotions

The AJA recognizes ten (10) Yudansha ranks or degrees (Dan). Yudansha is typically referred to as any Black Belt rank, but the actual belt color may vary according to rank (see Special Indications of Rank, below). The AJA requires that ALL Yudansha promotions must be certified by the AJA National Standards and Certification Board (NSCB). Furthermore, for any Yudansha rank to be eligible for certification, the promotional requirements for the yudansha grade shall already be on file with the

NSCB, preferably approved by the NSCB as a part of the dojo's original application process and the "AJA Certificate Application" form shall be signed by the instructor indicating compliance with the previously approved standards of the dojo/ryu.

If a dojo changes its Yudansha belt rank requirements following NSCB approval for membership, then the dojo shall be required to submit its "new" standards to the NSCB for review and approval before issuing any promotions under the "new" standards.

All candidates for Yudansha promotions shall submit a "AJA Certificate Application" form to the NSCB via their instructor and the AJA Regional Director for the state in which the candidate resides. All requested information must be provided, and the form must be signed by the candidate's instructor. The "AJA Certificate Application" form and instructions are contained in Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual.

At the discretion of the NSCB, in promotions to all yudansha grades, the NSCB authorized representative shall be the candidate's instructor; as long as instructor holds a certified Yudansha rank of **at least one degree higher than the rank to which he is promoting the student** (e.g., a Shodan cannot promote a candidate to Shodan, or higher). The promoting instructor must also hold a valid Instructor Certificate issued by the AJA. The NSCB has the right to observe and/or review all Yudansha promotions made by the candidate's instructor and may decide to approve or disapprove any request for rank certification.

SECTION 3B: Yudansha Promotions Using Optional NSCB Criteria

Although a head instructor has the traditional authority to issue yudansha grades up to one grade below his/her own rank, as long as such criteria are on file with and approved by the NSCB [either as a part of the dojo's original application process or as a revision of such standards after approval as an AJA dojo], the head instructor is strongly encouraged to use the AJA yudansha promotional procedures contained in Executive Supplement C: National Standards and Certification Board. The Yudansha 'Request for Consideration of Promotion' form and instructions, and the 'Yudansha Certificate Application' are contained in Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual. The use of examination boards, including the use of "certified" examiners is strongly encouraged as it also increases the head instructor's integrity in the eyes of his/her students and the examination process itself.

The following material in Section 3B describes the criteria the NSCB will use only if it becomes involved in the evaluation process. It is being presented here, in summary, for informational purposes only.

The NSCB criteria shall also be used if an existing yudansha is dependent upon the AJA for future yudansha grade appointments. Reasons for applying for NSCB evaluation & promotion shall include, but not be limited to the following: extreme distance from the candidate's sensei, or the candidate's sensei has "retired", died, or is no longer teaching the ryu of ju-jitsu or ju-jitsu. NSCB procedures for a promotion through the NSCB are contained in Executive Supplement C: National Standards and Certification Board. The Yudansha 'Request for Consideration of Promotion' form and instructions, and the 'Yudansha Certificate Application' are contained in Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual.

A student of Mudansha grade shall not be able to apply to the NSCB for promotion to shodan [1st degree black belt] in Ju-Jitsu.

Promotion to the rank of Nidan requires a minimum of one (1) year as Shodan although up to two [2] years is recommended as the Shodan should secure their AJA Instructor Certificate prior to securing Nidan. The candidate must be a current AJA member and have a Shodan certificate issued by the AJA. It is recommended that the candidate hold a valid AJA Instructor Certificate.

Although a head instructor has the traditional authority to issue yudansha grades, all candidates for Nidan shall submit a 'Request for Consideration of Promotion' to the NSCB, and shall be evaluated, by written and/or oral examination, on the knowledge of basic Ju-jitsu principles. The candidate for Nidan shall also be evaluated on the applicant's contribution to the dojo.

At the discretion of the NSCB, promotion to Nidan may be made by the sensei of the student in compliance with the requirements and procedures of the specific style or ryu, and according to the regulations of the AJA, as stated above. If the candidate's sensei is also a Nidan, the testing, evaluation and promotion must be conducted by the AJA National Standards & Certification Board, or its duly appointed representative.

There shall be a proficiency evaluation including a mat examination for the rank of Nidan. The Yudansha 'Request for Consideration of Promotion' form and instructions, and the 'Yudansha Certificate Application' are contained in Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual.

A candidate for promotion to the ranks of Sandan, Yodan and Godan must hold a valid AJA Instructor Certificate and must also be a current AJA member with a certificate for the previous rank issued by the AJA. Promotions to Sandan and higher yudansha ranks shall be conducted by the NSCB, or its duly appointed representative. All candidates for promotion shall submit a 'Request for Consideration of Promotion' to the NSCB, and shall be evaluated, by written and/or oral examination, on the knowledge of basic Ju-jitsu principles. The candidate shall also be evaluated on his/her contributions to the Art and to the organization.

There shall be a proficiency evaluation for each rank and the candidate shall be evaluated not just on technical skills and knowledge, but on his/her ability to go beyond technique and display a thorough understanding of the principles behind the art. Minimum requirements for promotion to the ranks of Sandan, Yodan and Godan such as time in rank, proficiency and knowledge, are covered in Executive Supplement C: National Standards and Certification Board. The forms and instructions for 'Request for Consideration of Promotion', and the 'Yudansha Certificate Application' are contained in Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual.

A candidate for promotion to the rank of Rokudan, and higher yudansha ranks, must hold a valid AJA Instructor Certificate and must also be a current AJA member with a certificate for the previous rank issued by the AJA. Promotions to Rokudan and higher ranks must be conducted by the NSCB, or its duly appointed representative. There is no minimum time in rank requirement, nor is there a requirement for a mat examination for ranks of Rokudan and higher. However, proficiency evaluations are still required for all ranks. Candidates may be observed conducting classes, training, seminars, or any comparable activity that indicates both technical proficiency and teaching style. The candidate shall be evaluated for promotion based on his/her contributions to the art and to the organization.

SECTION 3C: Special Indications of Rank for Higher Grade Yudansha

In an effort to standardize belt colors and titles for higher yudansha grades, the AJA allows for certain Special Indications of Rank, and title, for Rokudan and higher Yudansha. A red belt with white segmentations may be worn at the rank of Rokudan (6th degree) and higher ranks. The title of Professor, or *Shihan*, may also be awarded to those holding the rank of Rokudan and higher. A solid red belt may be worn at the rank of Judan (10th degree).

However, this does not preclude a higher ranked sensei from wearing a colored belt characteristic of his/her ryu and described [and approved] by the NSCB when the dojo originally applied for AJA membership or if awarded by another sensei or organization in recognition of the sensei's accomplishments.

SECTION 3D: NSCB Right of Review

The NSCB shall periodically review the records of higher Yudansha in the AJA, following established procedure, to determine if they should be considered for further promotion. If so, the candidate will still need to submit a 'Request for Consideration of Promotion' and the 'Yudansha Certificate Application'.

The NSCB shall have the right to review any yudansha promotion made under any of the following conditions and shall have the right to deny recognition of any such promotions:

- A. The promotion is made by an organization other than AJA;
- B. The promotion is not made by the candidate's sensei;
- C. The sensei/student relationship is of a questionable nature.
- D. A promotion skips one or more ranks/grades (e.g. Ikkyu to Nidan, Shodan to Sandan);
- E. The Regional Director requests that the promotion be reviewed by the NSCB.

If the NSCB denies recognition of promotion for any reason, the NSCB chairperson shall notify the candidate of the decision of the NSCB and the reason (s) for the decision. The candidate does have the right to appeal the NSCB decision to the BOD.

ARTICLE 5: Liability

SECTION 1: Insurance

The AJA could be held liable for accidents that occur in any AJA affiliated dojo. For that reason, all AJA affiliated dojo must be able to show proof of liability insurance which extends coverage protection to the AJA [including its board of directors, officials and delegated representatives]. Failure to have adequate liability insurance coverage for a dojo, and any activities conducted by that dojo, would be considered an act of negligence, and may result in Sanctions imposed by the AJA according to Article 1: Section 6 of this document.

The AJA shall make every effort to maintain eligibility for the entire organization to be covered under one blanket insurance liability policy. A description of the AJA Liability and/or Medical Insurance policy shall be maintained by the AJA National Membership Director, and copies are available upon request.

In the event that the AJA is not able to secure insurance for the entire organization, each dojo must obtain proof of liability insurance from the landlord of the facility in which the dojo is operated, or purchase liability insurance from an independent source. The policy must also include liability insurance which extends liability coverage protection to the AJA [including its board of directors, officials and delegated representatives]. The head sensei of each dojo shall be notified in writing if such proof of insurance is required.

SECTION 2: Participant Release/Waiver Form

Any student or instructor participating in any AJA or dojo activity, either inside or outside the dojo, MUST complete and sign the appropriate "Participant Release", or "Waiver", which releases the dojo, instructors, students, the AJA and its officers, from any liability due to accidents or injury. Additionally, any student, under the age of 18 must also complete an "Authorization to Consent to Treatment of Minor" form, which must be signed by a parent or legal guardian.

The AJA "Participant Release" form shall be maintained by the AJA National Membership Director, and copies are available upon request. All AJA affiliated dojo must use this form. No deletions may be made to the form. However, additions may be made to the form in order to ensure its compliance with state and local laws, as long as said additions do not affect the rest of the document or render any part invalid.

Failure to have a signed waiver from every participant would be considered an act of negligence, and may result in Sanctions imposed by the AJA according to Article 1: Section 6 of this document.

SECTION 3: Safety

The AJA is committed to the idea that the highest priority of any sensei is the safety of all students, and must make sure that classes are always properly supervised. The sensei must make sure that all instructors and assistant instructors are properly trained and capable of adequately supervising the students, and that they know what to do and NOT to do in an emergency. First-aid and CPR courses are strongly recommended for anyone acting in a teaching or supervisory capacity. Make sure a first-aid kit is easily accessible, and it is fully stocked. Each dojo should have a set of simple safety rules posted where everyone can see them, and every student should understand and follow them. Review the safety rules with students on a regular basis.

SECTION 4: Sponsored Events and Activities

Any event or activity other than regularly scheduled training classes where the name and/or logo of the AJA will be used to convey the idea of AJA sponsorship, either real or implied, must receive prior sanctioning (approval) from the AJA President. Every sanctioned event or activity must have a host dojo that is responsible for requesting the sanction, locating a facility, applying for insurance, etc.

The AJA can sanction most outside activities such as seminars, exhibitions, demonstrations, and competitions, as long as said activities fall within the scope of the accident/liability policy. The sanctioning fee and additional insurance fee, if any, must be paid in order to secure an AJA sanction.

All Sanction Request forms must be approved by the Regional Director before being sent to the President for final review & approval. Sanction Request Forms, as well as instructions and procedures are contained in Executive Supplement B: Administrative Procedures Manual.