

**UFR Constitution**  
Amended March 2024

**Preamble:**

The United First Responders Union believes that the foundation of our society is through the unification of democratic people to advance the dignity, welfare, and autonomy of all workers. That it is only through the empowerment of the many, protected and advanced through the united efforts of all workers, and this Constitution, that we may secure for ourselves, and all labor, the inherent rights to which this, and all unions, are ordained to preserve.

**Article I: Name**

This organization, hereinafter referred to as the Union, shall be known as the United First Responders and shall be identified by the initial UFR.

**Article II: Jurisdiction**

This Union shall have jurisdiction of all First Responders and of the persons to which that title is granted by their municipal, county, state, or federal government. The Union shall also include those workers who wish to become a part of the Union without such title, regardless of their field of endeavor or geographical location, provided that their inclusion is not to the detriment or against the interests of themselves, or the Union membership.

**Article III: Objects**

The object of the Union shall be:

- A. To unite the workers within its jurisdiction into a single cohesive labor union for the purpose of collective effort
- B. To empower the workers to improve the conditions in which they work with respect to wages, hours, working conditions, and other various condition of employment
- C. To disseminate information, and train the workers to gather information, pertaining to economic, social, political, and other matters influencing their lives and welfare
- D. To advance the interest of the workers by advocating for, and training the works to advocate for, the enactment of laws beneficial to them, as well as the defeat or repealment of laws to the Union and its members detriment
- E. To do all things necessary or proper to secure the natural rights, dignity, and self-fulfillment of the workers
- F. To fight discrimination and harassment in all its forms

## **Article IV - Organizational Structure**

The structure of the organization shall consist of the following, all hereinafter described:

1. The National Board - appointed members of UFR National Leadership
2. The Executive Board - Consisting of elected representatives from Regional Leadership
3. Regional Leadership - Consisting of elected representatives from all locals in their region
4. State Leadership - Consisting of elected representative from all Counties in their region
5. County Leadership - Consisting of elected representatives from all Locals in their region
6. Chartered Locals - individual locals with their own elected Chief and Shop Stewards

## **Article V - Membership**

### *Section 1 - Eligibility*

- A. All persons engaged in the First Responder field, and other fields of endeavor, in both public and private sectors, excepting those excluded by law or who shall impact their ability, or the ability this Union, to receive any municipal, county, state, or federal benefits which would impact the ability of the Union and its members to fulfill the objects listed in **Article III** of this Constitution.
- B. All persons who are officers of labor organizations representing workers within the jurisdiction of the Union shall be eligible for membership in the Union
- C. Members of the Union who are on leaves of absence from their employment or who are employed on a full-time or part-time basis by the Union or a Local or who are or may be retired for any reason may continue to be active members
- D. No person, otherwise eligible for membership, shall be denied membership in the Union because of sex/gender identity, race, color, creed, nationality, or sexual orientation.
- E. No person, otherwise eligible for membership in the Union, shall be admitted to membership if the person has been fined, suspended, or expelled by a Local in this Union, until the person has complied with the terms of such fine, suspension, or expulsion
- F. Members of a Local who are or may be retired for any reason or who are, or who may be on leaves of absence, may elect to continue to be an active member or to assume the status of associate member. In the event any such person elect to become an associate member, the person shall lose voting privileges, but shall not be recruited to pay dues

### *Section 2 - Applications*

- A. Membership in the Union shall be obtain and maintained through membership in a chartered Local of the Union
- B. All applications for membership shall be free of any initial fees unless otherwise approved by the Executive Board
- C. In the event an application for membership is denied, any approved fees shall be refunded to the applicant
- D. Each Local shall establish a membership committee/committees which shall act upon applications for membership. Membership committees shall accept or reject such applications subject to the right of the Local to overrule the committee, and right of the Regional Leadership to overrule the Local.
- E. A Local shall not establish qualification for membership which contravene qualification set forth in this Constitution

### *Section 3 - Transfers*

- A. The Executive Board shall establish rules and procedures for the transfer of membership of a member of the Union from the jurisdiction of one Local to another
- B. The member shall be granted such transfer of membership if the member is in good standing
- C. All Locals shall be supplied with certificate of transfer forms by the Union

### *Section 4 - Termination*

- A. Membership in the Union shall be terminated when any member accepts a position which would render the person ineligible for membership, except if the member who temporarily assumes such a position in which they may retain membership for a period no to exceed thirty (30) days, provided during such period such member shall not hold any elected or appointed office within the Union
- B. A withdrawal card shall be issued by the Secretary of the Local upon application of a member in good standing leaving the jurisdiction of the Union.
- C. Membership in the Union shall be terminated following receipt of a member's written request sent to the Local of the Union in which the membership is maintained

## **Article VI - Dues, Fines, Assessments**

### *Section 1 - Membership Dues*

- A. Each member of the Union shall pay the membership dues established by the members of the Executive Board.
- B. Membership dues shall be collected in the matter determined by the National Board
- C. The Executive Board may establish minimum membership dues

### *Section 2 - Per Capita Dues*

- A. The National Board shall establish per capita dues to the Union. Locals shall be required to pay the per capita dues to the Union within the time and in the manner set forth by the National Board and Executive Board
- B. Per Capita dues shall allow for the retention of a percentage, established by the Executive Board, of all Local Dues collected to remain with the Local and to be managed by the Locals elected Treasurer, for expenses related to Article III of this Constitution incurred by that Local, with the oversight and assistance of the Regional Leadership

### *Section 3 - Local Special Assessments*

- A. Locals may levy a special assessment in cases of emergency or when income from dues is inadequate to finance necessary expenses of the Local
- B. Before a Local may levy a special assessment it shall:
  - a. Give the reason for the assessment to the member's subject there to:
  - b. Obtain approval by a majority vote of the members in good standing voting in a special meeting after reasonable notice is given of the intention to vote upon such a question in that special meeting.

### *Section 4 - Union Special Assessments*

- A. A special assessment may be levied by the National Board in cases of emergency of when income from dues is inadequate to finance necessary national expenses
- B. Before the National Board may levy a special assessment it shall:
  - a. Give the reason for the assessment to the Executive Board
  - b. Obtain approval by a majority vote of the member of the Executive Board in a special meeting after reasonable notice is given of the intention to vote upon such a question in that meeting

### *Section 5 - Non-Payment of Dues*

A member in default, without good cause, in the payment of any installment of dues for sixty (60) days from the date such amount becomes due, shall be automatically suspended from the rights of membership and, if the default continues without good cause for an additional thirty (30) days, after notice in writing by the Local Secretary, shall be automatically expelled from the Union. "Good Cause" shall be that which the governing body of the Local determines to be a good cause.

## **Article VII - Governing Authority**

### *Section 1*

The affairs of the Union shall be governed by its membership in the following manner:

- A. The National Board as the highest governing authority of the Union, subject to the right of referendum of the Executive Board
- B. By the Executive Board exercising the authority of the National Board between Biennial Conventions, in accordance with the Constitution and the mandates of the National Board, subject to the right of appeal to the National Board, the referendum and the recall. All appeals pending in non-Convention years may be heard and resolved by the elected delegates of the Regional Leadership at meetings to be called by the UFR Secretary-Treasurer. The decisions of the Executive Board must be complied with before the right to appeal can be exercised and such decisions shall remain in effect until reversed or modified
- C. By the National Board President as the principal executive officer of the Union, who shall have the authority to carry out policies in the Union in accordance with the Constitution and the mandates of the National Board and the Executive Board, subject to the right of appeal to the National Board, the referendum and the recall.
- D. By the Locals of the Union conducting their affairs in accordance with this Constitution and Local Bylaws and Rules which they may adopt so long as they do not contravene any provision of this Constitution.

## **Article VIII - National Board**

### *Section 1*

The National Board shall be appointed by the President and consist of:

- A. The President / Chief Executive Officer
- B. Vice President
- C. Chief Financial Officer
- D. Chief Technology Officer
- E. Chief Marketing Officer
- F. Chief Political Officer
- G. Other appointments as necessary

### *Section 2*

- A. Except in the case of the President, if a vacancy should occur among the members of the Executive Board, the Executive Board shall designate a successor, having the same constitutional qualifications as the member whose place the person takes
- B. If the office of President becomes vacant, the Executive Board shall designate a successor from among the Executive Board, who shall serve until the next regular Convention at which a successor shall be elected.
- C. The President shall vote in National Board meetings only in the event of a tie vote, or in the event the National Board vote potentially violates this Constitution

## **Article IX - Executive Board**

### *Section 1*

The Executive Board of the Union shall be elected by the members of the Regional Leadership and shall consist of the following:

- 1. The President
- 2. The Secretary-Treasurer
- 3. Vice President(s) (911 Operators and Dispatchers, others)
- 4. Regional Executive Board - representing the UFR Main Regions
  - a. Northeast - Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey
  - b. Southeast - Alabama, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia.

- c. Central - Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma, Texas, and Wisconsin.
- d. Western - Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Nevada, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wyoming

## *Section 2*

1. Except in the case of the President, if a vacancy should occur among the members of the Executive Board, the Executive Board shall designate a successor, having the same constitutional qualifications as the member whose place the person takes and that person shall serve until the next regular Convention, at which time a successor shall be elected for the balance of the unexpired term, if any.
2. If the office of President becomes vacant, the Executive Board shall designate a successor from among the Executive Board, who shall serve until the next regular Convention at which a successor shall be elected for the balance of the unexpired term, if any.
3. If a vacancy should occur among the Vice Presidents at least one year prior to the start of the next regular Convention, such vacancy shall be filled by means of a special election of a successor for the balance of the unexpired term. Such election shall be conducted by the Secretary-Treasurer within 60 days after the date of start of the vacancy, under rules approved by the Executive Board. Ballots shall be cast by the presidents of the eligible locals, carrying the voting strength that such locals were assigned at the last regular Convention.
4. The President shall vote in Executive Board meetings only in the event of a tie vote

## *Section 3*

The Executive Board shall meet not less than two (2) times a year. In the event the President shall refuse to call a meeting of the Executive Board when requested to do so by one-third (1/3) of its members, the Secretary-Treasurer of the Union shall call such a meeting.

#### Section 4

The Executive Board shall have the authority to:

- (a) Issue Local Charters;
- (b) Remove any officer of a Regional or Local leadership only on clear proof of fraud or dishonesty after sworn charges have been made, after a fair trial, and opportunity for appeal as provided in this Constitution;
- (c) Have an independent audit made of the books of the Secretary-Treasurer of the Union no less than once per year and to publish to the membership the results of such audit;
- (e) Cause an inspection to be made of the financial records of any Local and order an independent audit of the books of any Local when convinced that such audit is necessary and proper to protect the membership of the particular Local and the interest of the Union and to publish to the members affected the results of such audit; the cost of such audit to be borne by the Union;
- (f) Establish and maintain organizing, publicity, educational and research committees and any other types of committee as the National may authorize to promote the purposes of the Union.
- (g) Approve the employment of personnel not elected which may be necessary to carry out the objectives and to effectuate the policies of the Union and to fix the compensation of such personnel within the limitations of the budget approved by the National;
- (h) Approve strikes called by a Regionals or Locals and render financial and other assistance in connection therewith as hereinafter more fully set forth;
- (i) Call for strikes in the manner specified in this Constitution;
- (j) Call a meeting of any Local or Regional board, in which meeting the Executive Board or its representatives may participate, when the Local has been requested to call such a meeting and has refused or failed to do so. The Executive Board may take this action only under one or more of the following conditions:
  - (1) When so directed by the National;
  - (2) When the Executive Board has received written charges that the Officers of a Local are withholding from their members information necessary for the effectuation of current policy or the achieving of important objectives of the Union;



(3) When a Local is pursuing a course of action which, if continued, would warrant its expulsion or the appointment of a temporary administrator

(k) The Executive Board shall interpret this Constitution, except as it may have been interpreted by the National, subject to referendum;

(l) The Executive Board may order the repeal of any Bylaw or Rule of a Local inconsistent with this Constitution. The affected Local may appeal to the National. However, the order of the Executive Board shall be effective pending such appeal.

#### *Section 5*

The Executive Board shall have authority to establish and dissolve organizing committees upon such terms and conditions as may be deemed for the best interest of the Union. Such organizing committees may be granted all of the rights and privileges of Locals under this Constitution. No organizing committee shall be granted jurisdiction which conflicts with that of any chartered Local of the Union.

#### *Section 6 - Appeal Procedure*

- A. The Executive Board of the Union shall establish reasonable appeal procedures within the structure of the Union to review complaints of members which allege violation of the Constitution, Local bylaws, or the rights and privileges of members which are unable to be resolved by elected Regional leadership

## **Article X - Duties of National Officers**

### *Section 1 - National President*

- A. The National President, as the principal executive officer of the Union, shall have full authority to execute the policies of the Union as established under this Constitution. Should the President find that the policy of the Union has not been clearly formulated, the President shall poll the members of the National Board, and the affirmative opinion of a majority of the National Board shall have the force and effect of a decision reached in a meeting of the National Board and the results of the poll shall be entered into the minutes of the next meeting of the National Board.
- B. The National President shall preside over the meetings of the National Board
- C. The National President shall call regular and special meetings of the National Board as required
- D. The National President shall be the official spokesperson for the Union in all its external and internal relations and may authorize counsel, or other agents of the Union, to speak for the Union in the National President's place of stead
- E. The National President shall recommend to the National Board the employment of such personnel as may be required in the National Presidents Opinion to effectuate the programs of the Union
- F. The National President shall hold no other offices in the Union and shall not be engaged in any other employment, or receive payment from any other outside sources. The National President shall receive the annual salary established for the office by the National Board, payable in twenty four (24) monthly installments.

### *Section 2 - Vice President*

- A. Assumes the role of the National President in event that the National President is unavailable or otherwise unable to perform his/her duties, with all the power and responsibility outlined in Article XI, Section 1, until such time as the National President can resume his/her role
- B. Oversees the day-to-day operations of all UFR National Divisions, and implements the Union's vision, policies, and goals
- C. Secondary spokesperson for the Union in all its external and internal relations
- D. The Vice President reports directly the the National President

### *Section 3 - Chief Financial Officer (CFO)*

- A. Responsible for making decisions for the Union for on-going and upcoming projects in relation to the Union's finances
- B. Has ultimate authority over the financial unit of the Union
- C. Chief financial spokesperson for the Union

#### *Section 4 - Chief Technology Officer (CTO)*

- A. Responsible for managing technical operation of the Union
- B. Oversees and supervises research and development
- C. Manages all regulatory and intellectual property
- D. Technical advisor to the National Board

#### *Section 5 - Chief Marketing Officer (CMO)*

- A. Responsible for all Union marketing activities up to and including
  - a. Brand Management
  - b. Marketing Communications
  - c. Market research
  - d. Customer service

#### *Section 6 - Chief Political Officer (CPO)*

- A. Responsible for overseeing and managing all lobbying campaigns for the Union
- B. Internal advocate for responsible political engagement
- C. Responsible for proactive engagement with political stakeholders to shape policies to benefit the Union and its members

#### *Section 7 - Primary Duty*

It is the primary duty of all members of the National Board, and those who serve beneath them, to serve the membership of this Union. All decisions made should take into consideration the ability of that decision to further the goals and aspirations of this Union, and every member within it. The Union does not work for you. You work for the Union!

### **Section XI - Duties of the Executive Board**

#### **Section 1 - The President**

- A. The Executive President shall preside over meeting of the Executive Board and all Executive Committees of the Union
- B. The Executive President shall call regular meetings of the Executive Board
- C. The Executive President shall recommend to the Executive Board the employment of such personnel as may be required in the President opinion to effectuate the programs of the Union, with approval from the National Board
- D. The Executive President shall preside over all Conventions
- E. The Executive President shall hold no other office in the Union and shall be elected by the Regional Leadership

- F. The President shall hold no other office in the Union

#### Section 2 - The Secretary-Treasurer

- A. Shall act under the direction of the President and the Executive Board
- B. Attend all meetings of the Convention, the Executive Board, and all Executive Committees and shall document a faithful record to be made of the proceedings
- C. Keep all contracts, books, records, monies, securities, and all other property of the Union not otherwise given by the Constitution to someone else and relay all to the National
- D. Have the custody of the Union Seal and cause it to be impressed upon such documents as the Executive Board of the Union shall direct
- E. Supervise the maintenance of membership lists as may be required by the National and shall cause the collection of per capita dues, assessments, and all other monies due to the Union and National
- F. Notify the Executive President whenever a Region or Local becomes delinquent for a period of thirty (30) days in the payment of any financial obligation to the Union
- G. Ensure fund belonging to the Local, Regionals, and National are deposited in a bank or banks approved by the Executive Board and National of the Union
- H. Invest funds belonging to the Regionals or Locals as directed by the Executive board
- I. Prepare, public, and distribute to the Executive Board, and National Board, of the Union a quarterly financial statement which shall list the total assets, liabilities, receipts, and disbursements of the Union
- J. Distribute funds locals when authorized by the Executive Board of the Union
- K. Cooperate with the auditor in the annual audit of the Secretary-Treasurer's books and such other audits as may be directed by the Executive or National Board
- L. Turn over all funds, books, records, and all other documentation and property of the Union in the Secretary-Treasurer's custody to any successor of office
- M. Perform all duties imposed upon the Secretary-Treasurer by this Constitution, and such other duties as shall from time-to-time be assigned the Secretary-Treasurer by the Convention, Executive Board, or National
- N. The Secretary-Treasurer shall hold no other office in the Union

#### *Section 3 - Vice President*

- A. Act under the direction of the President and perform such duties as may be assigned by the President of Executive Board
- B. Recommend to the President the employment of such personnel as may be required
- C. Recommend to the President that service of such personnel as may be assigned to the Vice President be terminated for cause

- D. Supervise full-time and part-time personnel as may be assigned for the Vice President and employ and terminate the employment of clerical forces subject to the limitation of the budget
- E. Preside at meetings
- F. Hold no other office in the Union

*Section 4 - Regional Executive Board*

- A. Act under the direction of the President and Vice President and perform such duties as may be assigned by the President and Vice President as it applies the the region the Board Member is representing
- B. Keep all members of the Executive Board apprised of Union, Political, outside labor, or any other events that are current transpiring in the Board Members respective region that may directly or indirectly impact the goals of the Union as a whole
- C. Work with the Secretary-Treasurer to ensure all funds, record, receipts, paperwork, and any other documentation or necessities of the Secretary-Treasurer are provide in an organized, timely, and thorough manner from the region in which the Board Member represents
- D. Coordinate with the Executive Board to create training programs, recruitment committees, and any other necessity to ensure that the Regions and Locals assigned to the Board Member are fully capable and self-sufficient
- E. Assist with the creation of policies and procedures that will be implemented by the Union and ensure that all resources are procured to follow-through with those policies and procedures in your respective Regions and Locals

**Article XII - Regional Leadership**

Regional Leadership will be broken down into 3 Levels - County, State, Region

*Section 1 - County Leader*

- 1. Elected by all Locals in that respective County/Parish/Borough
- 2. Responsible for the oversight of the following:
  - a. The assistance in formation and oversight of Training Committees in all Locals in that County
  - b. The assistance in formation and oversight of Recruitment Committees in all Locals in that County
  - c. The assistance in formation and oversight of all Community Action Committee in all Locals in that County
- 3. Settlement of all appeals and disputes in all Locals in that County, or submission up the chain of command if unable to do so

4. Oversight all locals in that County to ensure they have all resources and funding needed to accomplish their goals - reporting up the chain of command if necessary
5. Oversight of all locals in that County to ensure all Locals are following all aspects of this Constitution

*Section 2 - State Leader*

1. Elected by all County/Parish/Borough leadership in that state
2. Responsible for all County leadership, their oversight, and training
3. Settlement of all appeals and disputes not handled by County Leadership
4. Oversight of all County Leaders to ensure they have the sources and funding needed to accomplish their goals
5. Oversight of all County Leaders to ensure their following all aspects of this Constitution

*Section 3 - Regional Leader*

1. Elected by all State Leaders in their Region
2. Responsible for all State leadership, their oversight, and training
3. Settlement of all appeals and disputes not handled by State Leadership
4. Member of the Regional Executive Board and all responsibilities therein

**Article XIII - Locals**

*Section 1 - Charter*

- A. A local shall be a unit of the Union and shall be chartered by the Executive Board
- B. Locals shall be identified by number
- C. Local jurisdictions shall be assigned and described at the time Charters are issued
- D. No Local Charter shall be issued which grants jurisdiction in conflict with that of another Local

*Section 2 - Applications*

Application for Charter of change of jurisdiction shall be in writing upon forms provided by the Secretary-Treasurer of the Union and shall be signed by at least five individuals who are eligible for membership in that Local

*Section 3 - Jurisdictional Changes*

- A. The National of the Executive Board by an affirmative vote of three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) may change the jurisdiction of any Local

- B. Locals may combine or waive jurisdiction by an affirmative vote of a majority of those voting by referendum in each Local affected

#### *Section 4 - Jurisdictional Disputes*

- A. Jurisdictional Disputes between Locals will first be handled by County, State, and Regional Leadership. If no settlement is made, the Executive Board will make every reasonable effort to obtain an agreement among the involved locals. If no agreement can be reached, the matter will be resolved by the following procedures
  - a. Upon agreement of the Locals involved, an election shall be conducted in accordance with rules and procedures adopted by the Executive Board, and shall be conducted under the supervision of the Executive Board Vice President
  - b. If the locals will not agree to an election, the dispute shall be referred to an independent referee appointed by the Executive Board and approved by the National Board. The decision of the referee may be appealed to the UFR National Board within thirty (30) days of receipt of the referee's decision.
- B. Where appropriate, the Secretary-Treasurer shall issue a revised charter reflecting the outcome of any of the above procedures

#### *Section 5 - Causes for Revocation of Suspension of Charter*

The Charter of a Local may be revoked or suspended by the Executive Board for:

1. Failure to meet any financial obligations to the Union within sixty (60) days after it's due
2. Refusing or neglecting to install a successor to any Officer removed by the Union
3. Refusing or neglecting to make returns and reports required by the Union
4. Refusing or neglecting to bring a member to trail within thirty (30) days after being directed to do so by the Union
5. Resorting to a civil suit of criminal action against the Union or any Officer thereof before exhausting remedies within the Union organization
6. Refusing or neglecting to conform to or abide by any directions or decision of the National Board, Executive Board, or referendum vote of the membership

#### *Section 6 - Appeal of Revocation*

1. A Local may appeal the findings of the Executive Board to the National Board by giving written notice to the National Vice President within thirty (30) days after the publication of the findings of the Executive Board of the Union

2. A majority vote of the National Board will be required on appeals to overturn or sustain the findings of the Executive Board in the event of such an appeal

### *Section 7 - Authority, Duties, and Obligations of Locals*

The authority, duties, and obligations of chartered Locals, their officers, and members, in addition to those otherwise set forth in the Constitution or in their respective bylaws and rules shall be:

1. To represent the workers in their respective jurisdictions to the best of their ability in relation to all Local Matters
2. To actively implement all Union Programs and carry out the policies by the County, State, or Regional meetings at which it is required to be represented
3. To abide by the Constitution, the decisions of the Executive Board and National Board of the Union, and the decisions resulting from the referendum procedures
4. To adopt bylaws and rules that are consistent with this Constitution
5. To establish and maintain an actively function organization through transparency, education, legislative and community activity, as well as the formation of all necessary committees to accomplish the above
6. To participate actively in the political and legislative processes on a municipal, county, state, and federal level with special regard to legislation affecting the welfare of its members, and Labor Unions as a whole
7. To respect the picket lines of any Local of the Union engaged in a strike authorized and conducted in accordance with this Constitution
8. To provide for the bonding of Local Officers and other person who handle Union funds and property
9. To hold Local meetings frequently, and keep members informed of all actions and aspects of the Union
10. To hold Local elections with provision of reasonable opportunity for all members to vote in accordance with the bylaws and rules established by the Local and this Constitution
11. To participate in Local elections for County/Parish/Borough leadership election
12. To establish a quorum and other rules of conduct for Local meetings
13. To maintain adequate files and record and have made an annual audit of financial record of the Local by competent persons; make available Local financial statements to the membership at least annually, furnish to the Union's Secretary-Treasurer an acceptable form, and annual financial statement
14. To furnish the Secretary-Treasurer of the Union with timely notice anytime the U.S. Department of Labor initiates an audit or any other type of review of the Local's finances
15. To furnish the Vice President and Secretary-Treasurer of the Union with copies of bylaws and rules of the Local and copies of revisions as they may be made



16. To requires participation of all Local officers, stewards, and members requesting in appropriate training schools and programs
17. To establish committees to keep rank and file members informed of Union activities, and developed in the process' of recruitment, political actions, and contract creation and negotiation
18. To do all things necessary for the proper disposition of matters, which may come before the local for consideration
19. To maintain an active organization program and budget monies to support the Locals training and efforts in growth, politics, and community relations

#### Section 8 - Contact Responsibility

No Local, County, State, or Regional representative shall be authorized to make contacts or incur liabilities for the Union

#### Section 9 - Assets

All assets of a Local shall be considered a trust fund of the Union and held and administered by the Local for the members of the Union belonging to the Local so long as the Local remains a chartered Local of the Union. If the Charter of a Local is revoked, its assets will become the property of the local succeeding to the jurisdiction. If there is no succeeding Local, the assets shall become the property of the Union

#### Section 10 - Prohibition Against Incorporation

No Local shall be or become incorporated under the laws of any state, territory, or country unless otherwise required by law

### **Article XIV - Councils**

#### *Section 1 - State and City Councils*

- A. State Councils may be established under the direction of the Executive Vice President in all states where the Union has significant presence as determined by the Executive Board
- B. In cities where there is more than one chartered Local, Council may be established under the direction of the Vice President of the geographical District

#### *Section 2*

Each Council shall consist of representatives of Locals within the state of areas of the respective Council

#### *Section 3*

Councils shall operate under rules they may adopt which are approved by the Executive Vice President

#### *Section 4*

Councils shall be financed by participating Locals

### **Article XV - Elections**

#### *Section 1 - National Board*

- A. The President and Vice President of the National Board shall be appointed at the creation of the United First Responders articles of incorporation. All future Presidents shall be named at the resignation or retirement of the President. All future Vice Presidents of the National Board will be appointed by the incumbent President.
- B. Officers (CFO, CTO, CMO, CPO, etc) shall be hired and appointed by both the National Board President and Vice President

#### *Section 2 - Executive Board*

- A. The President, Vice President, and Secretary Treasurer of the Executive Board shall be nominated and elected by a majority vote of all Regional Leaders. This election shall take place every four years and will be done by an anonymous electronic vote through the UFR website and corresponding app, overseen by the National Board
- B. The Regional Leadership shall be nominated and elected by a majority vote of all State Leaders of their corresponding leaders every four years, and will be done by an anonymous electronic vote through the UFR website and corresponding app, overseen by the National Board and Executive Board.

#### *Section 3 - State Leaders*

State Leaders will be nominated and elected by a majority vote of all County Leaders from their corresponding states every four years, and will be nominated and elected by an anonymous electronic vote through the UFR website and app. These elections will be overseen by the Executive Board

#### *Section 4 - County Leaders*

County Leaders will be nominated and elected by a majority vote of all Local Leaders from the corresponding County every four years, and will be nominated and elected by an anonymous electronic vote through the UFR website and app. These elections will be overseen by the Executive Board and State Leaders

#### Section 5 - Local Leaders

Local leaders will be nominated and elected by a majority vote of all members of that corresponding Local. Elections will be held any time there is a vacancy, every 4 years, or the year prior to the expiration of any current contract - whichever the Local chooses and places in their bylaws. The nomination and election of Local Leaders will be done by an anonymous electronic vote through the UFR website and/or UFR app. The elections will be overseen by the Executive Board and County Leaders.

#### **Article XVI - Committees**

Any and all Committees shall be formed, named, and dissolved on an as needed basis by the National Board and Executive Board.

#### **Article XVII - Conventions**

##### *Section 1 - Biennial Conventions*

- A. The Union shall meet in Biennial Conventions at a place selected by the Executive Board or the Secretary-Treasurer when authorized by the Executive Board to do so
- B. The Secretary-Treasurer of the Union shall notify, in writing, all Local of the date and place of the Biennial Convention no later than ninety (90) days in advance of the opening date of the Convention

## *Section 2 - Special Conventions*

- A. Special Conventions may be called by the Executive Board and shall be called upon the the request of a 40% vote of the Regional Leadership
- B. The date and place of the Special Convention shall be specified on the calls thereof
- C. Action of the Special Convention shall be confined to the matters for which it was called
- D. The Secretary-Treasurer of the Union, within twenty (20) days following the receipt by the Secretary-Treasurer of a sufficient request or direction for a Special Convention, shall issue a call for a Special Convention to be held no later than thirty (30) days after the date of the call

## *Section 3 - Composition of Conventions*

- A. The Convention shall be composed of the National Board, Executive Board, Regional Leadership, and chosen delegates of each Local as follows:
  - a. One delegate if the Local has less than one hundred (100) members in good standing
  - b. Two delegates if the Local has 100 members, but less than 200 members
  - c. Three delegates if the Local has 200 members, but less than 300 members
  - d. One additional delegate for every 100 members of the Local over 300
- B. Locals shall elect their delegates in according with paragraph (A) on the basis of total number of members in good standing at the date of notification of the convention by the Secretary-Treasurer of the Union
- C. Each Local may elect an alternate delegate for each delegate elected who shall attend the Convention in the event the delegate is unable to attend
- D. No delegates will be entitled to representation at the Convention, nor will its delegates be seated, if the Local is considered more than 90 days delinquent in any per capita payments at the time of the Convention

## *Section 4 - Method of Voting*

- A. A Local delegate shall have one vote in the Convention, District Meeting, meeting of a bargaining unit, a national unit, or a sector - except on a roll call vote
- B. A roll call vote of the Convention, District Meeting, meeting of a bargaining unit or a sector may be had upon the request of twenty percent (20%) of the delegates
- C. Voting by roll call shall be by per capita vote with each delegate casting the number of votes assigned to the delegate by the delegate's Local and approved by the Credentials Committee and the Convention. A Local may designate one or more of its delegation to attend a District Meeting, a meeting of a bargaining unit,

a national unit meeting, or a sector meeting in accordance with its Local bylaws and the voting strength shall be equally divided among the delegates so designated. On roll call votes, a delegate shall cast one vote for each member in good standing as assigned to the delegate by the delegate's Local and approved by the Credentials Committee and the Convention.

#### *Section 5 - Certification of Delegates*

Each Local shall certify to the Secretary-Treasurer of the Union, not less than five (5) days prior to the opening of a Biennial or Special Convention, on credential forms provided by the Union, the names, addresses and voting strength of its delegates and alternates, if any, and the name of the Chair of its delegation.

#### *Section 6 - Powers of Convention*

The Convention shall have the power to:

- A. Pass upon the credentials and seating of the delegates
- B. Establish the policies to be followed by the Union
- C. Interpret and amend this Constitution
- D. Establish the number of Locals and Districts, and determine their jurisdiction and boundaries
- E. Cause the issuance and revocation of Local Charters
- F. Determine the number of Vice Presidents and/or At Large Executive Board Members
- G. Do all things necessary for the proper disposition of any matter which may come before it for consideration

#### *Section 7 - Order of Business*

Order of Business at a Convention shall be as follows:

- 1. Call to Order
- 2. Report on Credentials
- 3. Reading of Convention Rules
- 4. Report of Regional and Executive Board of the Union
- 5. Report on Committees
- 6. Unfinished Business
- 7. Nomination and Election of Officers
- 8. Installment of Officers
- 9. New Business
- 10. Adjournment

The order of business may be changed/suspended by a two-thirds vote of the delegates present

*Section 8 - Committee of Convention*

The Executive Board shall have the authority to appoint those committees which are not required by this Constitution or the Convention to be elected; and which may be necessary to promote and achieve the objectives of the Convention and the Union.

*Section 9 –Expenses of Convention*

The Union shall pay the normal and usual expenses incident to the meetings of the Convention together with the expenses of the Executive Board and of those other members or agents whose attendance at the Convention may be required by the Executive Board. The Locals shall pay the expenses of their respective delegates.

*Section 10–Attendance, Individual Members*

Any member of the Union in good standing may attend the general meetings of the Convention as an observer.

*Section 11–Officers at Conventions*

Officers of the Union and Executive Board members shall not be selected as delegates to the Convention. They shall have the privilege of speaking on the Convention floor, but shall not have the right to vote.

*Section 13–Convention Rules and Procedures*

The Convention shall be governed by the UFR Constitution and amendments to the Rules which may be adopted by future conventions. In situations where neither the UFR Constitution nor Rules adopted by the Convention are applicable, the Convention shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order.

## **Article XVIII - Collective Bargaining**

### **Section 1 - Bargaining Authority**

- A. United First Responders shall be the collective bargaining representative of the members of the Union
- B. Collective Bargaining within the established bargaining unit of units shall be conducted under the direction of the Executive Board, and all contracts or agreements entered into shall be in the name of the National Union and bear the signature of approval of an authorized agent of representative of the National Union
- C. Subjects for negotiations through the collective bargaining may be initiated by representatives of the bargaining unit or units to be affected but must be approved by the Locals Contract Committee, the Executive Board or its authorized representative, prior to submission to any employer. This shall not be a restriction of the presentation and submission of grievances through established channels of the administrative organization of the Units and the National Union

### **Section 2 - Bargaining Committees**

- A. The members of the bargaining unit, by popular vote, or by any other method approved by the Executive Board, should select members of a Bargaining Committee for its unit to represent the members of the unit in contract negotiations. These members should be selected from various shifts, and be as representational as possible of the bargaining unit through age, race, years of employment, etc. The Bargaining Committee for a unit, for its full term of office as determined by Local's bylaws, shall negotiate all agreements entered into between the employer and the Union that creates, amends, or augments the agreed upon contract
- B. The Bargaining Committee shall assure fair representation, and full transparency, for all segments of the bargaining unit. Disputes over the methods used shall be resolved by County Leadership, State Leadership, and finally the Executive Board for final appeals
- C. The Bargaining Committee should frequently consult with the Contract Committee and both Committees should keep the bargaining unit up-to-date on any and all information relating to contract negotiations using full transparency.

### **Section 3 - Contract Committee**

- A. The members of the bargaining unit, by popular vote, or by any other method approved by the Executive Board, should select members of the Contract Committee for its unit to represent the members of the unit in creation, amendments, or augmentations of the contract to be agreed upon by the

membership. Members of the Contract Committee should be selected from various shifts, and be as representational as possible of the bargaining unit through age, race, years of employment, etc. The Contract Committee for a unit, for its full term of office as determined by the Local's bylaws, shall consult with all members of the bargaining unit through face-to-face surveys to gather aspects of the upcoming contract that are important to members to have added or amended from the prior contract

- B. The Contract Committee shall assure fair representation, and full transparency, for all segments of the bargaining unit. Disputes over the methods used shall be resolved by County Leadership, State Leadership, and finally the Executive Board for final appeals
- C. The Contract Committee should frequently consult with the Bargaining Committee, and both Committees should keep the bargaining unit up-to-date on any and all information relating to contract negotiations using full transparency.

#### *Section 4 - Contract Ratification*

Any contract entered into through collective bargaining, or otherwise dealing with wages, hours, terms of employment, or other conditions of employment shall be subject to ratification by secret ballot of the members affected if the members themselves determine ratification is desirable. Procedures for ratification shall be established by each Bargaining Council.

### **Article XIX - Strikes**

#### *Section 1 - Authorization*

A Local or group of Locals shall strike as provided in this Constitution. Approval of the Executive Board of the Union shall be obtained before any strike action may be taken

#### *Section 2 - Notification*

After a strike vote has been taken by a Local or groups of Locals in a Region, and a strike is imminent, the Executive Vice President shall notify the Executive President and National President of the Union in writing

#### *Section 3 - Executive Board Action*



- A. The Executive Board of the Union shall be advised by the President that a strike is imminent and shall immediately determine the action to be taken
- B. Within ten (10) days after such notice has been received, the Executive Board of the Union shall determine whether strike action is approved
- C. In deciding whether to approve strike action, the Executive Board of the Union shall consider all factors connected therewith. If approved, the Executive Board of the Union shall assist therein and direct support to be given by the Union and all other Unions represented by the National.

*Section 4 - Penalties for Unauthorized Strike*

- A. Any Local engaged in a strike which is called in violation of this Constitution or without approval of the Executive Board of the Union may be denied financial and organizational assistance, as well as any other assistance, from the Union or any portion thereof
- B. When a Local continues to engaged in a strike that is not approved as provided in this Article or refuses or fails to terminate a strike when so ordered by the Executive Board of the Union, the Executive Board of the Union may institute Charter revocation proceedings in accordance with this Constitution with respect to the offending Union

*Section 5 - National Approval of Strike*

A strike of a Local or group of Locals may be approved by the National Board

*Section 6 - Procedure for Local Strike Vote*

In taking a strike vote, Locals shall act in accordance with the following minimum requirements

- A. The Locals shall, upon reasonable notice, call a meeting of its members, wherever feasible, and present the issue of issues involved in the proposed strike
- B. The members present at such meeting shall vote by secret ballot on the question of whether or not a strike shall be called
- C. Where members cannot, feasibly, be called, a secret ballot shall be taken of the members, by mail, website, app, etc, on the question of whether or not a strike shall be called
- D. A affirmative vote of at least 90% of the members voting shall determine whether or not a strike shall be called
- E. Copies of notice of the result of the strike vote shall be sent to the Executive Vice President and Executive President of the Union

*Section 7 - Local Strike Assistance*

When Locals, not directly involved in the negotiations, the breakdown of which has caused or is about to cause a strike, desire to add the striking Local or Locals by strike action, must first notify the Executive Vice President and Executive President of the Union of such desire, and, if they receive approval, shall proceed according to the provisions of this Constitution.

#### *Section 8 - Termination of Local Strikes*

- A. A local of Locals engaged in a Local strike may terminate such strike in accordance with Local Bylaws and Rules and approval of the Executive Vice President and President
- B. The National Board and Executive Board may terminate such strike by majority affirmative vote

### **Article XX - Charges Against Members**

#### *Section 1 - Specifications of Offenses - Locals*

Members may be fined, suspended, and/or expelled by Locals in the manner provided in the Constitution for any of the following acts:

- A. Making false material statements or withholding information when applying for membership
- B. Willfully refusing to pay dues, assessments properly established, fines properly imposed, or other valid financial obligations to the Union or Local
- C. Willfully violating the Constitution of the Union, or Local Bylaws/Rules
- D. Disobeying or willfully failing to comply with any lawful decision or order of the Union or Local
- E. Working without proper Union authorization during a period of a properly approved strike in or for an establishment which is being struck by the Union or Local
- F. Instigating or knowingly participating in an unauthorized strike or slowdown
- G. Willfully violating the adopted standards as to wages, hours, or working conditions
- H. Misappropriating money or property of the Union or Local
- I. Violating the CFR Policy on Mutual Respect by acting in a discriminatory or harassing way
- J. For any or all offenses, equally serious, which bring disrepute to the Union or Local

### *Section 2 - Specification of Offenses - Union*

Members may be suspended or expelled by trial courts selected by the Executive Board of the Union in a manner provided in the Constitution for any of the following acts:

- A. Willfully supporting or assisting any other labor organization in connection with a claim of jurisdiction in conflict with the jurisdiction of the Union with the exception of assisting other Unions who have First Responders among their membership that are unable to be represented by this Union (i.e. PBA, FOP, FMBA, IAFF)
- B. Willfully supporting or assisting any person, group of persons, or organization in any act or activities for the purpose of seeking or obtaining the replacement of the Union as a collective bargaining representative

### *Section 3 - Suspension Pending Trial*

An officer of the Union, members of the Executive Board, Local officer, or other elected official against whom charges have been filed for conduct set forth in Paragraphs (a) and (b) of Section 2 of this Article may be suspended from office by a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote of the Executive Board pending final determination of the charges by a trial court of any appeal resulting from such trial, where such suspension is determined by the Executive Board to be in the best interest of the Union.

### *Section 3 - Non-Immunity*

No member of the Union shall be immune from penalty for committing any offenses set forth in this Article by reason of the position or office the member may hold in the Union or any Local thereof

## **Article XXI - Trial and Appeals - General**

### **Membership of Officers of Locals**

#### *Section 1 - Person Subject to Trial*

- A. Member of the Union, including Officers of the Locals, shall be tried for any of the offenses listed in Article XX of provided herein
- B. Officer of a Local may be removed or suspended from office pursuant to the Articles of this Constitution as herein provided, excepting that the Executive Board of the Union may conduct such trials after notice to the Locals involved, on its own initiative in the event of inaction by the Locals. The procedure for such

trials shall be in conformity with the standards set forth in Sections 2, 3, and 5 of this Article

### *Section 2 - Charges*

- A. Charges made against a member of the Union or an office of the Local shall be in writing, signed and sworn to by the accuser. Charges of offenses shall be filed with the recording officer of the Local of which the accused is a member. In the event the accused is the recording officer, the charges shall be filed with the President of the Local. Should both the recording officer and Local President be involved as a charging party or as a party charged, the charges shall be filed with the Secretary-Treasurer of the Union. All charges of offenses described in this Constitution shall be filed with the Secretary-Treasurer of the Union. In the event the accused is the Secretary-Treasurer, the charges shall be filed with the Executive President of the Union. Trial procedures for all charges filed with the Secretary-Treasurer or the Executive President shall be in conformance with Section 3(b) of this Article
- B. Charges must be submitted within sixty (60) days of the time the accused became aware of the alleged offense. The accuser can be a victim of the offense(s), a witness of the offense(s), or someone who learned of the offense(s) after the alleged occurrence.
- C. Charges shall contain an allegation of the facts constituting the offense with which the accused is charged and the approximate date or date said offense is alleged to have occurred

### *Section 3 - Trials*

- A. The Bylaws or Rules of a Local shall specify the manner in which an accused person shall be tried and must conform with the following minimum standards
  - a. An unbiased court composed of not less than three or more than seven persons, who shall be members of the Local, not parties to the proceedings, shall be selected by the governing body of the Local using a random selection process. The court shall be bound to render a decision and impose a penalty, if the accused be found guilty, without bias or prejudice, based on all the evidence presented
  - b. A prosecutor, who is a member of the Local, but not an accuser, shall be appointed by the governing body of the Local to assist the accuser in the trial and presentation of evidence. If, after investigation, the prosecutor is of the opinion that there is not probable cause to believe that a violation punishable under this Article has been committed, the prosecutor shall report the findings in writing to the governing body of the Local with a recommendation that the charge not be prosecuted. Copies of the findings and recommendation shall be delivered to the accuser and

accused. The recommendation shall become final unless appealed by the accuser within thirty (30) days after receipt of written notice of the findings. Such an appeal shall be filed with the Local Secretary.

- c. If the prosecutor determines that probably cause does exist, the trial shall be held speedily with due notice to the accused
  - d. The accused shall have the right to select a member of the Local as counsel, the right to produce witnesses and present documentary evidence and to be heard on the accused's own behalf. The accused shall have the opportunity to cross-examine witnesses.
  - e. All witnesses shall testify under oath
  - f. A decision shall be reached and written notice of the decision and penalty, if any, shall be given to the person charged within five (5) days after the close of the trial. The requirement of such notice shall be satisfied by the personal service or certified mail receipt.
  - g. A faithful and accurate record of the proceedings shall be made and kept
  - h. The Local may suspend the accused pending the final decision on an appeal
- B. Trials conducted by the courts selected by the Executive Board of the Union must conform with the same standards as those of above in Section A

#### *Section 4 - Appeals*

- A. A member or officer of a Local upon being found guilty by a Local court may appeal as provided in this Section
  - a. Have the right to refer the matter to a membership meeting of the Local, within thirty (30) days after being found guilty by a court, which may affirm or reverse the decision or reduce the penalty, provided that where a Local membership meeting is held by section, units, or areas, the appeal shall be to the governing body of the Local
  - b. Have the right to appeal from the final decisions of the Local to the Executive Board of the Union within thirty (30) days after the final decision of the Local
  - c. The appeal to the Executive Board of the Union shall be directed, in writing, to the Secretary-Treasurer of the Union, who shall obtain the record of the case. The Executive Board shall review the case and affirm or reverse the decision or reduce the penalty or return the case for a new trial
- B. A member or officer of the Local upon being found guilty by a court selected by the Executive Board of the Union shall have the right to appeal as provided in this section
  - a. Have the right to appeal the decision of the trial court of the Executive Board of the Union within thirty (30) days after the date of the trial court's decision

- b. Have the right to appeal the decision of the Executive Board of the Union to the National Board by giving notice of appeal to the National Vice President within thirty (30) days after the decision.
- C. The thirty (30) day time limited provided in this section for filing of appeals from decisions of trial courts may be extended at the discretion of the body to which the appeal is being taken for an additional period not to exceed thirty (30) days, upon showing of justification by the party making the appeal

*Section 5 - Determination of Appeal*

Decision on appeal shall be determined by a majority vote

**United First Responders Policy on Mutual Respect**

1. United First Responders reaffirms its commitment, as a matter of principle and policy, that all forms of discrimination, for whatever reason, be vigorously opposed
2. Freedom from discrimination within our Union is a right and privilege of all UFR members. Any infringement upon those rights shall be subject to a complaint under the UFR complaint procedures outlined in this Constitution, and should be investigated immediately and without fear of reprisal and retaliation.
3. United First Responders has a zero tolerance policy for any form of discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, age, marital/parental status, political beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, or because the person is handicapped, disabled, or a veteran of military service.
4. Local Equality or Women's Committee are encouraged to provide continuous education and training assistance and by reporting to the members of the Local on the ways and means of eliminating discrimination in its entirety
5. All UFR Committees should be representative of the Union by being as inclusive as possible to all members, of all shifts, ethnicities, ages, and lengths of service as possible
6. Each Local should have one Shop Steward for every fifteen members and should be reflectives and representative of the entire membership of the Local as outlines in #5 above