

1 Rural Nurse Organization Bylaws  
2 Revised: April, 2007

3  
4 **ARTICLE I: NAME, LOCATION, FORM OF**  
5 **ORGANIZATION, LOGO**

6  
7 Section 1: Name. The name of the organization shall be the  
8 Rural Nurse Organization; hereafter referred to as the  
9 RNO.

10  
11 Section 2: Location. The mailing address for the  
12 organization's offices is:

13 Rural Nurse Organization  
14 P.O. Box 11025  
15 Tuscaloosa, AL 35486-0007

16  
17 Section 3: Form. RNO is a non-profit organization under  
18 RCW Chapter 24.03 and Section 501(c)3 of the Department  
19 of the Internal Revenue. Articles of Incorporation are  
20 registered in the State of Washington.

21  
22 Section 4: Logo. RNO logo is patented and registered with  
23 the United States Patent and Trademark Office officially on  
24 November 11, 1997.

25  
26 **ARTICLE II: PURPOSE**

27  
28 Section 1: Purpose. RNO is an organization formed for the  
29 purpose of recognizing, promoting and maintaining the  
30 specialty of Rural Nursing practice through written  
31 information education and networking. RNO embraces the  
32 American Nurses Association code of ethics and the Canadian  
33 Nurses Association ethical principles. RNO intends to:

- 34 • Provide a voice for rural nurses to nursing and health  
35 care agencies, academia and government
- 36 • Articulate and recognize rural nursing as a specialty
- 37 • Be a provider of information regarding continuing  
38 education for rural nurses
- 39 • Be an advocate for the inclusion of rural practice  
40 theories in nursing education
- 41 • Work towards quality accessible health care for rural  
42 citizens through interactive efforts with other health  
43 care providers and legislative bodies
- 44 • Recognize outstanding performance of Rural Nurses.

45  
46 **ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP**

47  
48 Section 1: Eligibility. Individuals eligible for membership  
49 shall be registered nurses, nurse educators, licensed  
50 practical/vocational nurses and nurse assistants, those  
51 nurses having special skills and knowledge relative to rural  
52 nursing or those who are advocates for rural healthcare.  
53 Membership exceptions will be forwarded to the membership  
54 committee for review and if determined eligible, forwarded  
55 to the Board of Directors for approval.

56 The following unique characteristics describe the  
57 environment in which rural nurses provide health care:

- 58 • The expert nurse needs extensive knowledge of  
59 community resources and is deeply involved in providing

- 60 health care for the entire community with a high degree  
61 of visibility
- 62 • Individuals must strive to be independent, self-directed,  
63 flexible and be able to work in different areas or  
64 overlap with other disciplines on any given day
- 65 • Scarcity of resources
- 66 • Expanded scope of practice in a generalist role with  
67 multiplicity of functions
- 68 • Geographic isolation
- 69 • Fewer nurses
- 70 • Recruitment of staff is difficult and ongoing
- 71 • Limited educational and networking opportunities
- 72 • Feeling of always "being on duty"

73  
74 A. Individual Membership. Any individual employed as a  
75 Rural Nurse, Rural Nurse Manager, Rural Nurse Educator or  
76 other provider of rural nursing services shall be eligible for  
77 membership.

78 B. Institutional Membership. An institution which employs  
79 Rural Nurses, Rural Nurse Managers and/or Rural Nurse  
80 Educators is eligible for institutional membership.

81 C. Student Nurse Members. Any person actively enrolled in  
82 an accredited nursing program on a full-time basis is eligible  
83 for student nurse membership. Student members may not  
84 vote or hold office. Proof of enrollment is required by  
85 written verification/letter from an accredited school of  
86 nursing.

87 D. Sustaining Member. Persons or organizations providing  
88 financial support to the RNO are eligible for sustaining  
89 membership. Sustaining members may not vote or hold office.

90 E. Honorary Member. The Board of Directors, by two-  
91 thirds (2/3) vote, may confer the title of Honorary Member  
92 on a person or persons of distinction who has rendered  
93 outstanding service to rural nursing. Honorary members do  
94 not pay dues, vote, or hold office.

95 F. Associate Member. A friend or supporter of rural  
96 nursing, including licensed practical/vocational nurses and  
97 nurse assistants working with rural nurses and advocates for  
98 rural nurses. An Associate Member may vote, but may not  
99 run for an elected office.

100 G. Emeritus Member. Member is good standing for ten  
101 years or more who leaves the nursing profession because of  
102 retirement or illness.

103  
104 Section 2: Establishment of Membership. Persons who  
105 qualify for membership, upon approval of application and  
106 payment of dues, shall be accepted as RNO members.  
107 Acceptance of membership in RNO will constitute an  
108 agreement of such member to comply with the Bylaws. No  
109 persons will be denied membership due to race, color,  
110 national origin or sex.

111  
112 Section 3: Establishment of Chapters. The chapter is the  
113 integral organization component at the local level made up of  
114 members of the RNO. The "local level" refers to a category  
115 of membership while the "chapter" refers to the decision-  
116 making body operating at the local level. The chapter is  
117 chartered by the national organization to implement its  
118 philosophy, objectives and leadership at the local level, as  
119 well as to coordinate the professional activities of the

120 chapter in liaison with the state level and the national level.  
121 Chapters shall act in accord with the By-laws of the national  
122 organization.

123  
124 Section 4: Resignation, Forfeiture, Revocation

125 Resignation. A member may resign by sending a letter of  
126 resignation to the Board of Directors. The resigned member  
127 will not receive any refunds of dues.

128 Forfeiture: Forfeiture of membership will occur 30 days  
129 following lapse of membership dues. Voting privileges are  
130 suspended until dues are current.

131 Revocation: Membership will be revoked as a result of willful  
132 violation of the bylaws or policies adopted by the RNO. A  
133 statement of cause will be sent by certified mail to the last  
134 recorded address of the member at least thirty (30) days  
135 before final action is taken. This statement will be  
136 accompanied by the time, date and place of the meeting of  
137 the Board of Directors at which the charges will be  
138 considered. The member will have the opportunity to appear  
139 in person and/or to be represented by counsel to present any  
140 defense to such charges before action is taken. Revocation  
141 will be by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board.

142 Members who resign or have their membership revoked will  
143 have no right, title or interest in any of the property of the  
144 RNO.

145  
146 Section 5: Dues and Assessments. Dues will be paid annually  
147 on the date of the initial or renewal payment. A dues renewal  
148 statement will be sent to all members one month prior to  
149 their renewal date. Dues will be: \$55 (U.S. funds) for all  
150 members, other than nursing students. Student dues will be  
151 \$25 per year (U.S. funds) for full-time nursing students.  
152 Dues for Institutional Membership shall be \$200 per year.  
153 Changes in dues structures or additional assessments must  
154 be recommended by the Board of Directors and adopted by  
155 the membership by two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members  
156 in the annual mail/fax vote. Notice of recommendations will  
157 be sent to each member by February 15. Implementation of  
158 new dues amounts or assessments will take effect July 1 of  
159 that year.

160  
161 ARTICLE IV: OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

162  
163 Section 1: Officers. Elected officers of the RNO shall be  
164 President, President Elect, Past President, Secretary,  
165 Treasurer, and Members-at-Large.

166  
167 Section 2: Eligibility of Officers (A) Be an Individual  
168 Member of the RNO, (B) Able to fulfill the obligations of the  
169 elected office, and (C) Hold no other elected office in RNO

170  
171 Section 3: Term of Office. Officers will be elected for two  
172 (2) year terms with the exception of the Members-at-Large.  
173 They will be elected for one (1) year terms. Term of office  
174 will be from April 15 to April 14 the following year. No  
175 officer will serve more than two (2) successive terms in the  
176 same office. The Secretary and Treasurer will have  
177 staggered terms. Members-at-Large will be elected for  
178 three (3) year terms. One member will be elected each year;  
179 thus the terms are staggered.

180  
181 Section 4: Election of Officers/Members-at-Large.

182 Officers/Member(s)-at-Large will be elected annually by a  
183 vote of the membership by April 1. A notice of the slate of  
184 officers/member(s)-at-large will be sent to members by  
185 February 15. Election will be held by voting by mail. A  
186 majority is required to elect. Ties will be determined by a  
187 flipping of a coin.

188  
189 Section 5: Board of Directors. The corporate powers of this  
190 organization shall be vested in and exercised under the Board  
191 of Directors. The Board of Directors shall consist of the  
192 Executive Committee, Executive Director, and a minimum of  
193 three (3) Members-at-Large and standing committee  
194 chairpersons. The Board of Directors shall consist of a  
195 majority of RNs.

196 (A) Duties and authority of Board of Directors:

- 197 • Supervise and direct the affairs of the organization,  
198 committees, and publications, within the limits of the  
199 Bylaws
- 200 • Approve the annual budget of the RNO and supervise  
201 the disbursement of funds
- 202 • Appoint standing and special committees
- 203 • Set dues and assessments
- 204 • Confer Sustaining and Honorary memberships
- 205 • Revoke memberships
- 206 • Develop policies and procedures
- 207 • Actively promote the RNO

208 The President, President Elect, Treasurer and Office  
209 Manager or their designee can sign checks drawn against the  
210 RNO account.

211 The President, President-Elect, Office Manager, and  
212 Treasurer will be bonded for an amount determined by the  
213 Board of Directors. The premium will be paid by the RNO.

214 (B) Meetings: No less than every four (4) months by  
215 teleconference or as an asynchronous discussion on the web.  
216 The discussion will be held over a specified 1-week period of  
217 time to be announced to all Board members via e-mail at least  
218 one month in advance. Special meetings may be called as  
219 needed to conduct the business of the organization by the  
220 President or one-half (1/2) of the board members.

221 Parliamentary procedures will be followed and minutes  
222 recorded. One-third (1/3) of the board members is a  
223 quorum. Meetings of the Board will be open to all members  
224 of the RNO. Board meeting dates and times will be listed in  
225 the Rural Nurse Connection. The meeting telephone number  
226 and access code can be obtained from the Office Manager.  
227 Closed sessions will only be held for personnel issues. Voting  
228 must be in open meetings with a majority of the quorum  
229 approving the motion

230 (C) Compensation: Board members will receive no  
231 compensation.

232 (D) Removal from Office: Any elected officer may be  
233 removed from office by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the  
234 members of the Board of Directors. Just cause for removal  
235 will be failure to maintain the obligations and duties of the  
236 office. The procedure for removal is provided in Article III,  
237 Section 3C, Revocation of Membership.

238 (E) Vacancy in Office: In the event of a vacancy in the office  
239 of President, the President-Elect will fill the office. The

240 office of President-Elect will be declared vacant until the  
241 next annual meeting. A vacancy in other elected or appointed  
242 offices will be appointed by the Board of Directors for the  
243 unexpired term.

#### 244 Section 6: Functions

245 The President shall:

- 246 • Arrange for and preside at all regular and special
- 247 meetings of the membership, Board of Directors, and
- 248 Executive Committee
- 249 • Distribute an agenda for Board meetings and the Annual
- 250 Meeting
- 251 • Be an ex-officio member of all committees except the
- 252 Nominating Committee
- 253 • Appoint the Executive Director, standing and special
- 254 committee chairs
- 255 • Represent or designate representation of this
- 256 organization to local, state and national organizations
- 257 • Change at his/her discretion the title of any standing
- 258 and special committees or office

259 The President Elect shall:

- 260 • In the absence of the President, assume all the duties
- 261 and have the authority of the President
- 262 • Be a member of the Board of Directors and Executive
- 263 Committee
- 264 • Succeed the President when the latter is unable to
- 265 complete the term of office

266 The Past President shall:

- 267 • Be a member of the Board of Directors and Executive
- 268 Committee
- 269 • Be chairperson of the Nominating Committee
- 270 • Be an ex-officio member of the Bylaws Committee

271 The Secretary shall:

- 272 • Be a member of the Board of Directors, the Executive
- 273 and Membership Committees
- 274 • Record and distribute the minutes of the meetings to
- 275 the Board of Directors.
- 276 • Maintain the documents of the organization
- 277 • Sign all official written meeting minutes

278 The Treasurer shall:

- 279 • Be a member of the Board of Directors, the Executive
- 280 and Finance Committees
- 281 • Be responsible for funds of the Organization and shall
- 282 deposit such funds in a designated bank
- 283 • Submit a written financial statement, including copies of
- 284 the check register, at each regularly scheduled meeting
- 285 of the Board
- 286 • Submit an annual written financial statement
- 287 • Submit financial records for review at the end of the
- 288 fiscal year
- 289 • Be bonded for an amount determined by the Board of
- 290 Directors; the premium will be paid by the RNO
- 291 • Be authorized to sign checks drawn against the funds of
- 292 the organization

293 The Executive Director shall:

- 294 • Be a member of the Board of Directors
- 295 • Be an ambassador for the organization
- 296 • Be an ex-officio member of the Membership Committee

297 The Members-at-Large shall:

- 298 • Be members of the Board of Directors

- 300 • Act as liaisons between members and the Board
- 301 • Accept duties as assigned by the President
- 302 • Be ex-officio members of the Membership Committee

#### 303 ARTICLE V

304 Section 4: Voting Eligibility: Voting will be held through a  
305 secure site on the members section of the website. Must be  
306 a current RNO member by January 31 in order to vote.

307 Section 6: Rights and Responsibilities - voting members will:

- 308 • Have the right to advise the Board of Directors of any
- 309 matter that may affect RNO
- 310 • Elect a President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer and
- 311 Member(s)-at-Large

#### 312 ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES

313 Section 1: Executive Committee. The Executive Committee  
314 shall be comprised of the President, Past President,  
315 President-Elect, Executive Director, Secretary, and  
316 Treasurer and is authorized to act for the Board between  
317 regular meetings as necessary to conduct the organization's  
318 business. Written minutes of all meetings shall be maintained  
319 and circulated to the full Board.

320 Section 2: Standing Committees. Bylaws, Education,  
321 Finance, Membership, and Communications.

322 Section 3: Committee Composition. Chairs will be appointed  
323 by the President, Committee chairpersons will solicit  
324 sufficient RNO members to complete the function of the  
325 committee. The nominating committee shall consist of the  
326 three (3) most recent Past Presidents who are active  
327 members. The most recent Past President shall act a  
328 committee chair.

329 Section 4: Terms of Committee Membership: All standing  
330 committees with the exception of the Nominating committee  
331 will serve two (2) year terms. Members of the Nominating  
332 Committee may not seek elected office and serve on the  
333 committee simultaneously.

334 The Bylaws, Communications, and Finance Committees will  
335 serve even years. The Membership committee will serve odd  
336 years.

337 Section 5: Duties of Committees  
338 Finance Committee

- 339 • Supervise the accounts of the RNO
- 340 • Submit an annual written RNO budget for the approval
- 341 of the Board of Directors
- 342 • Monitor the annual budget throughout the fiscal year
- 343 • Formulate financial policies of RNO
- 344 • The Treasurer will submit a copy of the annual budget
- 345 for the membership

346 Bylaws Committee

- 347 • Review, revise amendments
- 348 • Originate amendments when deemed necessary

- 358 • Submit, or cause to submit, all proposed amendments  
359 and author(s) as provided for in Article XI to the Board  
360 of Directors  
361 • Submit proposed amendments  
362 • Verify with the RNO Secretary changes adopted  
363 • Interpret the By-laws as requested by the Board of  
364 Directors  
365 • Review annually the voting by mail election policy and  
366 procedures with Nominating Committee  
367 • Review all new chapter bylaws  
368 Membership Committee  
369 • Maintain the membership list  
370 • Design and implement a membership drive yearly  
371 • Distribute a membership list annually  
372 Nominating Committee  
373 • Solicit from the membership names and qualifications of  
374 potential candidates  
375 • Review the qualifications of the candidates  
376 • The Nominating Committee will submit a list of nominees  
377 and their qualifications to the Board of Directors by the  
378 January Board meeting  
379 • The names and qualifications of all nominees will be sent  
380 to the membership by mail by February 15  
381 • The chairperson will appoint committee members to  
382 count the election ballots and report the results to the  
383 President  
384 • Review annually the voting by mail and fax\_policy and  
385 procedures with Bylaws Committee  
386 Communications Committee  
387 • Committee members will solicit articles for the editor  
388 • Assist the editor in design and content of the  
389 newsletter  
390 • Print and distribute the newsletter

391  
392 Section 6: Reports. Committee chairpersons will submit a  
393 written report to the Newsletter at least once a year.

394  
395 Section 7: Special Committees. Other committees deemed  
396 necessary will be appointed by the President, subject to the  
397 approval of the Board of Directors.

#### 398 399 ARTICLE VII: INSPECTION OF RECORDS

400  
401 Section 1: Records. The minutes and financial records will  
402 be available for review upon written request. If a member  
403 desires to have an agent or attorney present during his/her  
404 review this must be included in the request. The member,  
405 agent or attorney will be allowed a copy of the records.

#### 406 407 ARTICLE VIII: INDEMNIFICATION

408  
409 Section 1: Indemnification. The organization does, hereby  
410 agree, indemnify all present and former officers, Executive  
411 Director, and employees of RNO for expenses and costs,  
412 including attorney's fees, necessarily incurred by each in  
413 connection with any claim against such persons, by reasons of  
414 his/her being or having been, such officer, director or  
415 employee, except in relation to matters such person has been  
416 found guilty of negligence or misconduct in respect to the  
417 matter in which indemnity is claimed.

#### 418 419 ARTICLE IX: DISSOLUTION

420  
421 Section 1: Dissolution. In the event of dissolution of the  
422 organization, the net assets of the organization will be  
423 applied and distributed as follows:  
424 • All liabilities and obligations will be paid, satisfied, and  
425 discharged, or adequate provisions will be made thereof.  
426 • Distribution of remaining assets held for educational or  
427 similar use will be transferred to one or more  
428 organizations engaged in similar activities, pursuant to a  
429 plan of distribution as provided by law provided the said  
430 organization will qualify under the Internal Revenue  
431 Code and can best accomplish the objective for which  
432 this corporation was organized.

#### 433 434 ARTICLE X: PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

435  
436 Meetings of the organization shall be run according to the  
437 most recently published edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

438  
439 Section 1: Amendment of Bylaws. These Bylaws may be  
440 amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote. Amendments may be  
441 proposed by the RNO Board of Directors or by the signature  
442 of five (5) members of the RNO. The proposed amendments  
443 will be submitted to the RNO bylaws Committee by October  
444 1; with a rationale for each amendment. Voting on proposed  
445 amendments will be during the annual mail voting in March.

446  
447 Section 2: Effective Date of Amendments. All amendments  
448 adopted will become effective immediately unless otherwise  
449 specified.

450