

**CONSTITUTION
Of the Volunteer Chapter**

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Volunteer Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Volunteer Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee shall be to advance the general welfare of the blind of the Knox County area, of the state of Tennessee, and of the nation; to function as an integral part of the National Federation of the Blind; to serve as a vehicle for collective action by the blind of the area; to operate as a mechanism through which the blind and interested sighted persons can come together to plan and carry out programs to improve the quality of life of the blind; to provide a means of collective action for parents of blind children; to forward the interests of blind students and provide them with a means of joint action and expression; to promote the vocational, cultural, and social advancement of the blind; to achieve the integration of the blind into society on a basis of equality with the sighted; and to take any other action which will improve the overall condition and standard of living of the blind.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Section One--Active Members

The minimum age for active membership in this organization shall be 18 years. At least a majority of the active members of this organization must be blind. Any person may become an active member of this organization by a majority vote of the active members present and voting at any regular business meeting. An applicant for membership shall attend two consecutive meetings (A combination of face-to-face and/or phone call constitutes attendance at a scheduled meeting) before being elected to membership. All such elected members shall have the right to vote, serve on committees, speak on the floor, and hold office. All active members shall have equal rights and equal obligations with respect to any other matter(s) in the organization.

Section Two--Associate Members

Any person may be elected to associate membership in this organization by a majority vote of the members present and voting at any regular business meeting. Associate members shall have all the rights and privileges of active members, except that they may not vote, hold office, or serve on the Board of Directors, Associate members shall not pay dues.

Section Three – Dues

By voluntarily joining this organization a person expressly and implicitly consents to payment of dues and other assessments and fees that may be required of members. The dues of this organization shall be \$10.00 per year, payable in advance in January. The Volunteer Chapter shall forward five (5) dollars per year to the Treasurer of the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee for each member. The dues must be sent before March 1, in order to vote during the State Convention. No person may be an active member, or remain an active member, and no person may vote who is delinquent in the payment of his/her dues. Renewing members will be placed on inactive status if dues are not paid by January 31. The member will remain in inactive status without the right to vote until dues are paid. When a person is elected to membership in this organization, his/her state dues shall be sent without delay to the Treasurer of the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee.

Section Four—Extended Affiliation

Membership in this organization automatically establishes membership in the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee and the National Federation of the Blind.

ARTICLE IV. DISCIPLINARY REQUIREMENTS

Each member of this organization shall comply with this constitution, its by-laws, and established policies and procedures of this organization, the constitution of the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee and pertinent state and federal laws. Any member may be expelled for violation of this constitution or for conduct unbecoming to a member of the National Federation of the Blind by a majority vote of active members present and voting at any regular business meeting of this organization. The State Convention of this organization may reinstate any person who has been expelled unless such expulsion has been confirmed by the National Convention or by the Board of Directors of the National Federation of the Blind, in which event the person may not be reinstated except by the National Convention or by the National Board of Directors. Any person who feels that he/she has been unjustly expelled from this organization may appeal to the Board of Directors of the National Federation of the Blind, which may (in its discretion) consider the matter and make a binding d

ARTICLE V. Membership MEETINGS Section one--

Regular meetings

This organization shall hold a regular meeting each month. The time, date and location shall be approved by the membership. At least one third of the active members must be present to constitute a quorum to transact business. Each active member shall have one vote on every matter to be voted on by the members. In making decisions, a member who is present in a meeting is entitled to rely on information, opinions, reports or statements if prepared or presented by persons the member reasonably believes are within the persons' professional or expert competence. Such information may be provided either in person or by other means as appropriate. A phone in to the meeting is permitted and the active member calling in is permitted to have a vote in the meeting. The requesting member is not acting in good faith if he/she has knowledge concerning the matter in question that makes the reliance unwarranted. There shall be no proxy voting during any meeting of members. A detailed record shall be kept of all transactions made during every meeting of members. The official record shall be the written form of minutes approved by the body in a subsequent meeting.

Section two--Special Meetings

The President of this organization may call a special meeting of the body at any time he/she, or a majority of the Board of Directors, deems such action to be necessary. At such special meetings at least one third of the Active members must be present to constitute a quorum to transact business. Written notice containing place, date, time and a description of the matter, or matters, for which the meeting was called must have been sent to all active members at least ten days prior to the date of the meeting. Only business within the purpose(s) described in the meeting notice shall be conducted in a special meeting of members.

ARTICLE VI. COMMITTEES

The President may appoint such committees as he/she or the organization deems necessary. The President shall be an ex officio member of all committees.

ARTICLE VII. OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES

There shall be elected annually in January a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. A person must be present and an active member to be elected to a position in this organization. The ONE-YEAR term of these officers shall begin at the close of the meeting at which they are elected and qualified. Officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the active members who are present and voting. Election shall be by voice vote, standing vote, show of hands, or roll call vote unless at least four-fifth of the active members who are present and voting decide that a secret ballot shall be used. If no nominee receives a majority vote on the first ballot, the name of the person receiving the fewest votes shall be dropped from the list of nominees, and a second ballot shall be taken. This procedure shall continue until one of the nominees has received a majority vote from the active members present and voting. The duties of each officer shall be those ordinarily associated with that office. The President, the Vice President, and a majority of the Officers must be blind.

ARTICLE VIII. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors of this organization shall consist of the four (4) constitutional officers with the number of board members to be determined by the membership, in a meeting, prior to election. A person must be present and an active member to be elected to a position in this organization. At least a majority of the board members shall be blind. The Board of Directors shall advise the President and the Board of Directors shall have charge of the affairs of the organization between meetings. At least a majority of members of the Board of Directors must be present at any meeting to constitute a quorum for the Board of Directors to transact business. The Board shall meet at the call of the President or on written call signed by any two (2) of the other Board Members.

ARTICLE IX. COMPLIANCE

The Volunteer chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee and its members shall comply with the Constitution, by-laws, and established policies and procedures of the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee, the provisions of the contract between the chapter and the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee appearing on the back of the Charter of Affiliation and pertinent state and federal laws. Policy decisions of the National Federation of the Blind and the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee (whether made by the National Convention or the National Board of Directors or the State Convention or the State Board of Directors) are binding on this organization and its members, and this organization and its members shall participate affirmatively in carrying out such policy decisions. The Volunteer Chapter shall not merely be a social organization, but shall formulate programs and actively work to promote the economic and social betterment of the blind.

ARTICLE X. AFFILIATION

The Volunteer Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee shall be an affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee and the National Federation of the Blind and shall furnish to the President of the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee annually, on or before January 1, a list of the names and addresses of its members and elected officers. Upon request, this organization shall send a detailed financial report to the President of the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee without delay. A copy of the Constitution of the Volunteer Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind and all amendments to the Constitution shall be sent for review to the President of the

National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee and the National Federation of the Blind without delay.

As a condition of affiliation, it is agreed by this organization that the National Board of Directors or the State Convention or State Board of Directors) has the power to expel or discipline an individual member and to expel or reorganize a state affiliate or local chapter. In the event of reorganization, the assets of this organization shall belong to the reorganized chapter or if no reorganization occurs for a period of two years, to the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee, and the former chapter shall dissolve and cease to exist. The name National Federation of the Blind, Federation of the Blind, or any variant thereof is the property of the National Federation of the Blind; and this organization, if it ceases to be a part of the National Federation of the Blind, (for whatever reason) shall forfeit the right to use the name National Federation of the Blind, Federation of the Blind, or any variant thereof.

ARTICLE VII. OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES

There shall be elected annually in January a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. A person must be present and an active member to be elected to a position in this organization. The ONE-YEAR term of these officers shall begin at the close of the meeting at which they are elected and qualified. Officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the active members who are present and voting. Election shall be by voice vote, standing vote, show of hands, or roll call vote unless at least four-fifth of the active members who are present and voting decide that a secret ballot shall be used. If no nominee receives a majority vote on the first ballot, the name of the person receiving the fewest votes shall be dropped from the list of nominees, and a second ballot shall be taken. This procedure shall continue until one of the nominees has received a majority vote from the active members present and voting. The duties of each officer shall be those ordinarily associated with that office. The President, the Vice President, and a majority of the Officers must be blind.

ARTICLE XI. DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

The funds of this organization shall be deposited in a bank to be selected by the Treasurer with the approval of the President. If the members so vote, the Treasurer shall be bonded. All financial obligations of this organization shall be discharged by check, issued on a vote of the membership or Board of directors, and signed by the Treasurer or in lieu thereof, the Secretary. Proper documentation shall be provided to the Treasurer. Revenues received and expenses paid shall be tracked and recorded in accordance with procedures established by the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee.

ARTICLE XII. DISSOLUTION

In the event of the dissolution of this organization, or if (for whatever reason) it ceases to be an affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee, its assets shall be given to the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee To be held in trust for a reorganized chapter in the area. In the event that no chapter is reorganized in the area for a period of two (2) years from the date this organization ceases to be an affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee, the assets become the property of the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee.

ARTICLE XIII. AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended at any regular meeting of this organization by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the active members present and voting, provided the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing and read at a previous business session and provided it is in compliance with the provisions of the Charter of Affiliation and contract, and with the policies of the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee and the National Federation of the Blind.

Adopted: April 2018

Chapter President _____

Approved with suggestions: August 27, 2018
Board of Directors

Affiliate President *Christina Clift*

**OFFICIAL PLEDGE OF THE
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND**

I pledge to participate actively in the effort of the National Federation of the Blind to achieve equality, opportunity, and security for the blind; to support the policies and programs of the Federation; and to abide by its Constitution.