

**EMERALD COAST PUBLIC RELATIONS ORGANIZATION
(Serving Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, and Walton Counties)
P.O. Box 4483
Fort Walton Beach, FL 32549**

Mission statement

The Emerald Coast Public Relations Organization is organized to foster an interest in the public relations field, to encourage professional development for those employed in the field, and to maintain a high degree of standards and ethics in the performance of public relations.

It does this through its regular meetings by offering programs to educate and improve performance, offering an accreditation program, and an awards program, promoting career development in public schools, providing workshops for its members, offering scholarships, and undertaking other worthy projects which reflect favorably upon the organization.

The organization subscribes to the code of ethics of the Southern Public Relations Federation which includes Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama and the Emerald Coast Public Relations Organization in Florida.

Constitution

**ARTICLE I
ORGANIZATION**

Section 1. The name of the organization shall be the Emerald Coast Public Relations Organization, hereafter referred to as ECPRO. The organization is an autonomous affiliate of the Southern Public Relations Federation (SPRF).

Section 2. Roberts Rules of Order shall govern the deliberation of ECPRO and the board in all cases in which they are applicable and not in conflict with these by-laws.

Section 3. The Board of Directors, hereafter referred to as the Board, with due prior notice to members, shall call all meetings.

**ARTICLE II
PURPOSE**

The purpose of ECPRO shall be

- a. to unite those engaged in the practice of public relations
- b. to promote and seek to maintain high standards to public service and conduct

- c. to exchange ideas, experiences, and to collect and disseminate information of value to public relations practitioners and the public
- d. to provide a means for professional development and accreditation for its members
- e. to promote an interest among students for pursuing public relations as a career

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. There shall be four categories of membership

- a. **Active Professional** (voting member): Open to individuals who devote at least 50 percent of their permanent employment to public relations activities and have a minimum of one year of professional experience in the following fields: publicity, advertising, press agency, public affairs, lobbying, issues management, fundraising, or development.
- b. **Inactive Professional** (voting member): An individual who has met the requirement for and attained The Accredited Public Relations Professional accreditation or other recognized public relations certification but who is currently not employed in public relations or a person retired from a full time career in public relations.
- c. **Sustaining Professional** (non-voting member): Any person employed in an allied field of the public relations profession as determined by the Board, or an active public relations volunteer.
- d. **Student Member** (non-voting): Open to college students interested in a career in public relations.

Section 2: Membership must be approved by a majority of the Board of Directors present.

ARTICLE IV BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. A Board of Directors, meeting monthly or on call of the president, shall manage the affairs of the ECPRO. The Board of Directors shall consist of the elected officers of ECPRO, the immediate past president and the chairpersons of committees.

Section 2. A simple majority of the board in attendance shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of ECPRO business. Committee chairpersons shall serve as voting directors of the Board.

Section 3. The Board shall fill vacancies occurring among the officers of ECPRO for the unexpired portion of that term with a majority of the board approving.

ARTICLE V DUTIES OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. The elected officers of the ECPRO shall consist of their President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary.

Section 2. The President shall preside at all meetings of the membership and Board of Directors. He/she shall appoint committees as necessary to foster the goals of ECPRO. He/she will sign as legal representative of ECPRO, documents approved by the Board of Directors, and shall serve as one of the ECPRO's representatives to SPRF meetings and events. To be considered for the position of President, a member must have served on the Board of Directors for a period of not less than one year. Exceptions to the time served requirement will be voted on by the Board of Directors.

Section 3. The Vice President shall assist the President in facilitating annual goals and programs of ECPRO. In the absence of the President, the Vice-President shall preside at meetings of the membership and the Board of Directors.

Section 4. The Secretary shall be responsible for keeping the official meeting minutes of ECPRO. He/she shall provide support to the President and Vice-President as needed, and assumes the duties of electronic notifications to members.

Section 5. The Treasurer shall be custodian of ECPRO funds with responsibility for billing and collecting annual dues, as well as preparing and presenting monthly and annual financial statements to the Board in a format consistent with standard accounting procedures. The Treasurer shall present an annual budget for the Board of Directors' approval. The Membership Chair and the Treasurer will work in partnership to ensure accurate membership records with both ECPRO and SPRF.

Section 6. Board members are expected to attend all board meetings, or submit a written report, and will chair a committee or other assigned projects during their term in office. Suggested committees are Membership, Program, Nominating, Publicity, Student Media Competition, and Accreditation. The Past President also serves as a member of the Board of Directors and a representative to SPRF. Committee chairs will ensure continuity files are maintained. A copy of these files will reside with the President and the Secretary. Committee chairpersons shall serve as voting directors of the Board.

ARTICLE VI DUES

Section 1. Dues will be set each year and acted on by the membership. The membership year will be the calendar year, and must be paid by January 31st of

each year. The board may determine membership fees for a portion of a year for new members.

Section 2. Membership belongs to the individual or organization paying the dues. Membership may be transferred from one individual to another when the represented organization is paying the dues. An application shall be processed for the new individual, if not already a member of ECPRO.

Section 3. A fee, to be determined by the Board, will be assessed for processing applications for a new membership. The fee does not apply to membership renewal.

Section 4. All voting members in good standing, who have paid current dues, shall be eligible to hold office.

Section 5. Members of any category may be removed from membership by the Board for cause by a two-thirds vote. For any cause other than non-payment of dues, the member shall be advised in writing of the complaint against him/her and be given a reasonable opportunity for defense.

Section 6. All membership discrepancies will be addressed by the officers of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VII ELECTIONS

Section 1. The President will appoint a nominating committee 60 days prior to the election of officers.

Section 2. Procedures for conduct of a written ballot for officers and directors shall be as follows:

- a. The Nominating Committee, after soliciting suggestions for officers, shall present a proposed slate of officers to the board for approval.
- b. At least 30 days before the business meeting where the election is to take place: The Nominating Chair shall submit the slate in ballot form to each qualified member; additional names can be taken from the floor, with the consent of the individual(s).
- c. An appointed committee shall count the ballots. A simple majority of those voting will be required for approval. No voting by proxy will take place.
- d. Officers and directors shall be installed at the annual business meeting and shall serve until successors are duly elected and installed.

ARTICLE VIII
AMENDMENTS

Section 1. This constitution may be amended upon approval of the majority of the voting members in attendance.