

Statutes of the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States of America

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Introduction

We, the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States of America, called to follow Christ in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi, in order to provide for the life of the Order and specifically for its organization and function, do establish and adopt these Statutes.

All regulations not in accordance with these present National Statutes are abrogated [cf. General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order (hereafter General Constitutions), article #7].

Section I

Organization and Structure

Article 1. National Fraternity

The National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States of America (hereafter NAFRA)

1. is a juridic person [cf. Code of Canon Law, canons #116 and #117] made up of the Regional and Local Fraternities of the Secular Franciscan Order (hereafter SFO) [legal title for the international body is Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis (OFS)] existing within the United States [cf. Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order (hereafter Rule), article #2; General Constitutions, articles #1.5 and #65.1; Code of Canon Law, canons #214 and #303];
2. is animated and guided by a Council and Minister who are duly elected;
3. is organized and functions in conformity with the Code of Canon Law, and the following SFO documents: the Rule, the General Constitutions, the Ritual, the International Statutes and these National Statutes [cf. General Constitutions, article #4.1].

Article 2. Governing Body

1. The governing body of NAFRA is the National Fraternity Council. The National Executive Council acts on behalf of the National Fraternity Council when the members of the entire Council are not in session [cf. General Constitutions, article #66.1].
2. The Conference of National Spiritual Assistants exercises pastoral care and spiritual guidance in regard to NAFRA as one of the integral component parts of the SFO by suitable means including participation in deliberations of its governing body [cf. Statutes for Spiritual and Pastoral Assistance to the Secular Franciscan Order (hereafter Statutes for Spiritual Assistance), articles #19 and #20].

Article 3. National Fraternity Council

1. The National Fraternity Council is composed of the Regional Ministers, the National Executive Council, and the members of the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants.
2. The business of the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States of America shall be conducted by the National Fraternity Council.
3. In addition, the National Fraternity Council has legislative, deliberative and elective powers; in conformity with the Rule and the General Constitutions, it may make legislative decisions and produce norms valid within its national confines.
4. The regular meeting of the National Fraternity shall be the annual meeting of the National

Fraternity Council convoked by the National Minister, which convocation shall provide for at least two months' advance notice.

5. The National Fraternity Council meets in elective chapter every three years; the National Minister convokes this meeting at least two months in advance, indicating the place, the day and the time of the election.
6. If considered necessary by the National Executive Council, or when at least one-third of the Regional Ministers requests it, the National Fraternity Council may meet at other times during any year.
7. In addition to the duties enumerated in article #66.2 of the General Constitutions, the National Fraternity Council has the following duties:
 - a. To compose and approve modifications to boundaries of Regional Fraternities (See Appendix A);
 - b. To set the fair share amount of annual financial contributions to NAFRA from the Regional Fraternities.

Article 4. Structure for Property Control

1. In accordance with article #54 of the General Constitutions, NAFRA is incorporated under the laws of the United States of America, State of Ohio, as "The National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order - U.S.A." and has its statutory office at 1615 Vine Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202.
2. The elected officers of the National Fraternity Council shall function as the officers of the corporation.
3. Upon the termination of existence of the corporation, all assets, real and personal, tangible and intangible, along with its library and records, shall become the property of the "juridic person immediately superior" [cf. Code of Canon Law, canon #123].
4. NAFRA is the organic union of all Local and Regional Secular Franciscan Fraternities located within the United States of America and is itself incorporated. Therefore, no Local or Regional Fraternity may itself incorporate without the specific written prior approval of NAFRA. Because of the usual requirement to incorporate for the purpose of owning real estate, no Local or Regional Fraternity may acquire real estate without the specific written prior approval of NAFRA.
5. In accord with article #54.3 of the General Constitutions, for the fraternities at each level, a financial audit must be done every 3 years, just prior to the end of the Council's term of office. This audit may be conducted by a professional accountant who is not a member of the fraternity Council, or by a "board of examiners" established by the particular fraternity (consisting of two or more experts selected at large by the membership who are not also members of that fraternity's Council). A written report of such audit must be given to the Council of the higher fraternity.

Article 5. National Executive Council

1. Between the meetings of the National Fraternity Council, an elected National Executive Council shall carry on the business and carry out the purposes of the National Fraternity in a spirit of ministry and service [cf. General Constitutions, article #66.1].
2. The National Executive Council is composed of the National Minister, the National Vice Minister, the National Secretary, the National Treasurer, at least one elected Councilor, and the International Councilor. The President of the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants is by right a member of this Council. The Chair(s) of the National Formation Commission and the National Commissions' Coordinator may attend meetings of the National Executive Council.
3. All members of the National Executive Council have voting rights. The Chair(s) of the National Formation Commission and the National Commissions' Coordinator exercise a consultative role.
4. Election of the members of the National Executive Council shall proceed in accordance with Section II of this document.
5. The duties of the National Executive Council are:
 - a. To form, animate, guide and coordinate the SFO at the national level;
 - b. To see that the decisions of the National Fraternity Council are carried out;

- c. To provide practical and pastoral interpretations and to clarify specific points in the National Statutes, with validity until the next meeting of the National Fraternity Council;
 - d. To resolve urgent problems which may arise that were not encompassed in the General Constitutions or National Statutes, until the next meeting of the National Fraternity Council;
 - e. To intervene to resolve serious and urgent problems in a spirit of reconciliation when requested by a Regional Fraternity Council or on the National Executive Council's own initiative;
 - f. To hear appeals from decisions of dismissal from membership rendered by Regional Executive Councils where appropriate [cf. General Constitutions, article #59];
 - g. To establish and direct commissions and committees deemed necessary to achieve the goals and objectives determined by the National Fraternity Council;
 - h. To present to the representative of the International Fraternity and the representative of the Conference of General Spiritual Assistants a stipend appropriate to the journey made and the length of stay required at the time of fraternal and pastoral visits, and also on the occasion of their presiding over and witnessing elections;
 - i. To administer the financial affairs of NAFRA, including events not foreseen in the annual budget approved at the annual meeting of the National Fraternity Council, such as extraordinary (non-budgeted) expenditures, not to exceed five per cent (5%) of the annual budget.
6. When not in session, the National Executive Council may conduct business electronically (i.e., via e-mail, telephone, fax, etc.), provided that any decisions and determinations made in this way are reviewed and ratified at the next regular meeting of the Council.

Article 6. Duties of Officers of the National Executive Council

1. The National Minister, in addition to the duties enumerated in article #67 of the General Constitutions, has the following duty:

To approve when necessary extraordinary (non-budgeted) expenditures, not to exceed one per cent (1%) of the annual NAFRA budget.

2. The National Vice Minister's duties are enumerated in article #52.1 of the General Constitutions.
3. The National Secretary, in addition to the duties enumerated in article #52.2 of the General Constitutions, has the following duty:

To maintain and supervise the archives of the National Fraternity in accordance with instructions of the National Executive Council.

4. The National Treasurer, in addition to the duties enumerated in article #52.4 of the General Constitutions, has the following duties:

- a. To ensure the deposit of all funds of the National Fraternity which may come into the hands of the National Treasurer into such bank accounts in the name of NAFRA as the National Executive Council shall designate;
- b. To provide for the payment of monies as the business of the National Fraternity may require as approved in the annual budget or on the order of the National Minister or the National Executive Council. All payments are to be made by check.
- c. To submit an annual budget to the National Executive Council for its review, and to the National Fraternity Council for its review and approval at the annual meeting.
- d. To be responsible for the financial books and records of NAFRA. Upon the written request of any member of the National Fraternity Council to the Treasurer, these financial records shall be open for inspection.
- e. To provide the National Fraternity Council with financial reports of receipts, expenditures, and balances in NAFRA's treasury throughout the year, and at the beginning of each year, to provide a written statement of receipts, expenditures and

balances in NAFRA's treasury for the preceding year.

5. The International Councilor's duties are enumerated in article #75 of the General Constitutions and article #7 of the International Statutes.
6. The President of the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants, in addition to the duties enumerated in article #90 of the General Constitutions, has the following duties:
 - a. To attend meetings of the National Fraternity Council and of the National Executive Council, of which he is a member by right, collaborating with these bodies in all their activities;
 - b. To act collegially with the other National Spiritual Assistants to coordinate spiritual assistance on the national level and to cooperate in the initial and continuing formation of the brothers and sisters [cf. General Constitutions, article #90.3b; Statutes for Spiritual Assistance, article #19];
 - c. To vote in all matters which come before these bodies for decision except for financial matters and in elective chapters.

Section II

Voting and Conduct of Business

Article 7. Convocation

1. The regular meeting of the National Fraternity shall be the annual meeting of the National Fraternity Council called by the National Minister.
2. The National Executive Council shall meet at least twice during the period between annual meetings of the National Fraternity Council.
3. The National Fraternity Council shall meet in elective chapter once every three years.
4. The National Fraternity shall celebrate a National Congress at least once every five years, at a time and place determined by the National Executive Council and confirmed by the National Fraternity Council.
5. The Minister of each Regional Fraternity shall receive at least two months' notice of the place, day and time of the annual National Fraternity Council meeting.

Article 8. Voting Rights

1. All members of the National Fraternity Council as defined in article #3.1 of these National Statutes may vote. No Spiritual Assistant at any level, however, shall vote on any question involving financial matters [cf. General Constitutions, article #90.2] or in elective chapters [cf. General Constitutions, article #77; Statutes for Spiritual Assistance, article #12.3]. This restriction applies to Secular Franciscans as well as religious friars and sisters serving as Spiritual Assistants for a particular Secular Franciscan fraternity.
2. The Minister of each Regional Fraternity has the primary responsibility for casting the vote of the Regional Fraternity in all elections and on all business that may come before the National Fraternity Council.
3. Substitutes/Delegates
 - a. In the event a Regional Minister is impeded from attending the National Fraternity Council meeting, then the delegate of the Regional Fraternity shall automatically be the Regional Vice Minister pursuant to the provisions of article #52.1.c of the General Constitutions.
 - b. If both the Regional Minister and the Regional Vice Minister are so impeded, then a member of the Regional Executive Council selected by that body shall attend and exercise all of the powers of a delegate for the Regional Fraternity.
4. No Regional Fraternity may cast more than a single vote on any issue or in any election.
5. Even if a person has a right to vote in his or her own name by more than one title, such person may cast only one ballot [cf. Code of Canon Law, canon #168].
6. During those meetings of the National Fraternity Council at which elections occur, the members of the outgoing and of the incoming National Executive Council, upon election and even prior to formal installation, are members with full rights of the National Fraternity Council until the end

of said meeting.

Article 9. Quorum; Majority; Counting Ballots; Procedure

1. No official business may be transacted at a National Fraternity Council or National Executive Council meeting unless a quorum is present. A quorum is defined as the presence of more than half of the number of those having the right to vote [cf. General Constitutions, article #77.4].
2. A majority, sometimes designated an absolute majority, is more than half of the total number of votes cast. A relative or simple majority is the highest number of votes cast on a motion or in an election [cf. Code of Canon Law, canon #119].
3. Where questions arise concerning procedures that are not covered by the Code of Canon Law, the General Constitutions or the National Statutes, reference may be made to Robert's Rules of Order. The President of the Elective Chapter (i.e., the Secular Franciscan who presides), after taking advice, retains the authority to determine any matter of procedure.

Article 10. Elections

1. Elections shall take place according to the norms of article #76.1 of the General Constitutions, the National Statutes, and the International Statutes.
2. The National Fraternity Council elects the Secular members of the National Executive Council.
3. The International Councilor is elected by the National Fraternity Council and represents NAFRA as a member of the International Council of the Secular Franciscan Order (hereafter CIOFS) in accordance with its Statutes.
4. The National Fraternity Council also elects a substitute delegate for the International Councilor from among the elected members of the National Executive Council should he or she be prevented from attending the CIOFS General Chapter [cf. article #5.2 of CIOFS Statutes]. In the event of such impediment, the National Minister shall inform the CIOFS Presidency of it and of the substitute delegation [cf. CIOFS Statutes, article #8.1].
5. The convocation and nominations for the office of International Councilor shall be carried out as in article #11 of these National Statutes.
6. In tallying votes which are conducted by secret written ballot, each elector shall submit one vote. Then all ballots, including blanks, shall be counted to assure the validity of the vote [cf. Code of Canon Law, canon #173.2].

Article 11. Convocation and Nominations

1. At least four months prior to elections, the National Executive Council shall appoint a Chair for a Nominations Committee which will, acting according to norms established by the National Executive Council, present a slate of nominees for the offices to the members of the National Fraternity Council. This presentation shall be made approximately two months prior to the date set for the elections.
2. To be eligible as a candidate for election to office in the National Fraternity, one must be a permanently professed active member of the SFO [cf. General Constitutions, article #30]. Candidates should be convinced of the validity of the Franciscan evangelical way of life, attentive to a broad and encompassing vision of the life of the Church and of society, open to dialogue and ready to give and receive help and collaboration [cf. General Constitutions, article #31.3].
3. It shall be the duty of the Nominations Committee to ensure that each candidate meets the qualifications for the office for which she or he is proposed, has reviewed the duties of that office, and is willing to serve if elected.
4. Any individual elected to a national office may not hold an elected office at the Regional Fraternity level or the Local Fraternity level. (See Article 28)
5. The provisions of article #76 of the General Constitutions shall be followed for convocation of the National Fraternity Council meeting for the purpose of elections.
6. Notification of CIOFS
 - a. The National Minister shall in timely fashion contact the General Minister of the SFO, requesting that she or he or a delegate preside over forthcoming National Fraternity

elections.

- b. The National Minister shall in timely fashion contact the President of the Conference of General Spiritual Assistants, requesting that he or a delegate attend forthcoming National Fraternity elections as the ecclesial witness.

Article 12. Right to Vote at Elections

The right to vote in elective chapters has been defined in article #8 of these National Statutes.

Article 13. Terms of Office

In addition to the provisions enumerated in article #79 of the General Constitutions, the following apply:

1. Length of Terms
 - a. The Secular members of the National Executive Council are elected for a term of three years.
 - b. The term of the International Councilor is governed by the provisions of article #5.4 of the International Statutes.
 - c. The term of the President of the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants is determined by the members of that Conference.
2. For a third and final successive election to the office of National Councilor (which includes every elected office except those of National Minister and National Vice Minister) or International Councilor, a majority of two-thirds (2/3) of the votes of those present, which must be obtained on the first ballot, will be necessary.
3. The outgoing National Minister cannot be elected to any other office on the National Executive Council. (See Article 28)

Article 14. Procedure in Voting

1. The vote shall be taken and completed as to each office before proceeding to the next, commencing with the office of National Minister. Persons not elected to the first office voted upon may be nominated for remaining offices.
2. Further nominations shall be received or at least solicited from the floor at the elective chapter.
3. The election procedure shall follow the provisions of articles #76 and #78 of the General Constitutions.
4. The election of National Councilors proceeds in the same manner as provided for in article #78.1 of the General Constitutions.

Article 15. Provisions for Vacancies, Resignations, and Removals

1. The provisions of articles #81.1, #81.2 and #83 of the General Constitutions shall govern the procedure to be followed in the event the National Minister or National Vice Minister resigns or is impeded from performing the duties of the office.
2. When the office of National Councilor becomes vacant, the Executive Council will proceed to appoint someone to substitute for him or her until the end of the term for which the Councilor was originally elected. If the appointee is already an elected member of the Council, he or she retains the right to vote. If the appointee is not an elected member, he or she serves without a vote.
3. The provisions of article #84 of the General Constitutions shall govern the procedure to be followed to secure the removal for cause of the National Minister or members of the National Fraternity Council.
4. The provisions of article #84.4 of the General Constitutions shall govern the appeals process for any officer removed from office.

Section III

Fraternal Life

Article 16. Fraternity Life

1. The provisions of articles #2, #3 and #4 of the General Constitutions concerning the nature of the vocation to the SFO apply.
2. The fraternal life, with its vitality and sustaining force, is meant to exist on the national level as well as on regional and local levels. For this reason, the National Fraternity is so constituted by leadership and structure, vitalized by the participation of its members, and nurtured by ongoing formation and spiritual assistance as to achieve its objective of being a real fraternity; and the same is true for each Regional and Local Fraternity.
3. The Fraternities should bear in mind that they are subject to the vigilance of the local Ordinary insofar as they perform their apostolic activities within the local churches. Secular Franciscans should, therefore, dialogue with their local Ordinaries and follow their directions, inasmuch as they are the moderators of the ministry of the Word and of the Liturgy and the coordinators of the various forms of apostolate in the local Diocesan church [cf. Rule, article #6].
4. The external sign of the SFO in the United States is the TAU.

Article 17. Fraternal and Pastoral Visitations

The provisions of articles #92 through #95 of the General Constitutions and article #14 of the Statutes for Spiritual Assistance concerning the fraternal and pastoral visitations apply.

Article 18. Local Fraternity

1. The Local Fraternity is the primary constituent part of the entire structure of Secular Franciscan life to which the member relates [cf. Rule, article #22].
2. The provisions of articles #46 and #47 of the General Constitutions shall govern the canonical establishment of new fraternities and determine the Franciscan friar province which assumes pastoral care [cf. Statutes for Spiritual Assistance, articles #6.1 and #11.2].
3. The Council of each Local Fraternity is composed according to the requirements of article #49.1 of the General Constitutions. With respect to the fraternity they assist, anyone who serves as a Spiritual Assistant is subject to the same rights and restrictions as are Franciscan religious Spiritual Assistants [cf. articles #12, #13, #15, #23 and #24, Statutes for Spiritual Assistance]. Spiritual Assistants who are Secular Franciscans may not be elected to other positions on the Councils of fraternities they assist.
4. A Local Fraternity may pass to the pastoral care of another friar province of the First Order or Third Order Regular in one of two ways [cf. General Constitutions, article #47.2; Statutes for Spiritual Assistance, article #6.2]:
 - a. The Council and Minister of the Local Fraternity approach the Regional Executive Council, including the Regional Spiritual Assistant(s), with the request for transfer. If the Regional Executive Council, including the Regional Spiritual Assistant(s), approves the request, the Regional Spiritual Assistant asks the Provincial Ministers or Provincial Spiritual Assistants of the two friar provinces to effect the transfer.
 - b. For the sake of providing better pastoral care, the Provincial Ministers or Provincial Spiritual Assistants of two friar provinces may initiate the transfer of a Local Fraternity from the care of one province to that of the other. The Provincial Ministers or Provincial Spiritual Assistants act in consultation with the Councils, including the Spiritual Assistants, of the Local and Regional Fraternities.
5. Establishment of sections or cells
 - a. Should one or more groups desire to establish permanent sections within a Local Fraternity based on particular needs or common interests, they may do so subject to the direction of the Local Fraternity Council [cf. General Constitutions, article #50.2.d], so long as they continue to participate fully in the Local Fraternity's fraternal and apostolic life. The Regional Fraternity will receive notice of the formation of such groups.
 - b. Such sections remain subject to the Local Fraternity as constituent parts of it [cf.

General Constitutions, article #34].

6. No official business may be transacted at a Local Fraternity meeting unless a quorum is present. The quorum consists of a majority of active members who are not excused from attendance.
7. The Local Fraternity is responsible for contributing to the Regional Fraternity on a fair share basis from its common fund to underwrite the costs of that fraternity [cf. General Constitutions, article #30.3]. A fair share contribution is made based on the number of active and excused brothers and sisters, but not for those who are deemed lapsed.
 - a. An active fraternity member is one who participates both by attending fraternity meetings and by providing financial support to the community, or whom the fraternity has excused from such obligations.
 - b. Those brothers and sisters who neither attend meetings, support the community financially, nor have valid reasons due to health, family, work or distance, and who, after personal invitations to return to fraternity, consciously and deliberately reject or ignore the invitation, will be termed "lapsed" and will not be carried on the fraternity membership roll nor be reported as a member to higher fraternity Councils [cf. General Constitutions, article #53.3].
8. The Local Fraternity will present to the Regional Minister or his or her delegate and to the Regional Spiritual Assistant or the representative of the Conference of Regional Spiritual Assistants a stipend appropriate to the journey made and the length of stay required at the time of fraternal and pastoral visits, and also on the occasion of their presiding over and witnessing elections.
9. It is at the local level that activities have their greatest meaning to members of the SFO. The Local Fraternity Council should expend great care to provide for thought-provoking activities and programs to foster Franciscan life and to deepen Franciscan spirituality among fraternity members.
10. As fraternity members become unable to attend meetings on a regular basis, the Local Fraternity Council should set up a method by which regular contacts are maintained [cf. General Constitutions, #53.3].
11. The provisions relating to property control which appear in these National Statutes in the section dealing with the responsibilities of the National Fraternity shall apply to the Local Fraternities insofar as they may be adapted to the needs and circumstances of the Local Fraternity.
12. As required by article #54.2 of the General Constitutions, the National Executive Council shall approve statements for use by the Local Fraternities that establish "precise criteria" for their "statement of purposes" and "internal controls" which must be used in their establishing documents.
13. Affiliation with a local fraternity
 - a. Those who, without belonging to the SFO, wish to participate in its life and activities (*see GC Art. 53.5 and 103.1*) according to Franciscan principles and teachings, may be welcomed by the local fraternity, so as to make their communion living and effective. Individuals wishing to become affiliates should make their desire known by a written request to the local fraternity council, which makes a decision regarding the request.
 - b. These affiliate brothers and sisters will have no juridical bond with the Secular Franciscan Order and are, therefore persons welcomed to love and be loved "as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ" (*SFO Rule Art. 13*). They may share the experiences and activities of the fraternity, without the right to vote.
 - c. In order that the identity of the fraternity not be altered, the number of affiliates may not exceed 40% of the number of active professed members of a fraternity.
 - d. Regional councils have the right to establish their own guidelines for the acceptance of affiliates.

Article 19. Formation

1. Orientation
 - a. Orientation is a time for determining a person's interest, eligibility and disposition to enter into the initial formation process [cf. Guidelines for Initial Formation in the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States (hereafter Guidelines for Initial

Formation), page 25].

b. The period of orientation shall consist of not less than three (3) months.

2. Initial Formation

a. Inquiry – The period of Inquiry, which begins with the Ceremony of Introduction and Welcoming [cf. Ritual, page 9], shall consist of not less than six (6) months.

b. Candidacy – The period of Candidacy, which begins with the Rite of Admission [cf. Ritual, page 11], shall consist of not less than eighteen (18) months and not more than thirty-six (36) months.

c. All persons in initial formation, in addition to attending their formation sessions, must participate in the meetings of the Local Fraternity as this is an indispensable presupposition for initiation into community prayer and into fraternity life [cf. General Constitutions, article #40.3].

d. To be admitted to the SFO in the United States, a person must be a fully initiated member of the Catholic Church (i.e., having received the Sacraments of Baptism, Chrismation/Confirmation and Holy Eucharist) in addition to being an actively practicing Catholic.

3. Profession

a. The minimum age for perpetual profession as a Secular Franciscan in the United States is twenty-one (21) years.

b. The minimum age for temporary profession as a Secular Franciscan in the United States is eighteen (18) years.

4. Ongoing Formation

Ongoing formation is the responsibility of all professed members consonant with article #44 of the General Constitutions.

5. Form and Methodology

a. The form (i.e., content and process; cf. General Constitutions, #38.2) to be employed in both initial and ongoing formation is that found in the Guidelines for Initial Formation.

b. The methodology employed in formation should be both interactive and experiential in nature [cf. *General Constitutions*, #40.4].

c. Opportunities for fraternities to meet together for the purposes of common ongoing and initial formation shall occur whenever possible at all levels of fraternity [cf. *General Constitutions*, #40.1].

6. Provisions for Remote Initial Formation

In those rare instances in which a person is legitimately impeded from participating in the normal formation process of a Local Fraternity, recourse may be had to the *Guidelines for Remote Initial Formation in the United States* as adopted by the National Executive Council in June 2000.

Article 20. Transfer, Withdrawal, Suspension and Dismissal from the Fraternity and from the Order

The provisions set forth in articles #55 through #59 of the *General Constitutions* shall constitute the manner and means for transfer, withdrawal, suspension and dismissal from the fraternity and from the Order.

Article 21. Regional Fraternity

1. The Regional Fraternities are constituted according to the provisions of the *General Constitutions*, article #61.

2. The governing body of each Regional Fraternity is the Regional Fraternity Council. The Regional Executive Council acts on behalf of the Regional Fraternity Council when the members of the entire Council are not in session [cf. *General Constitutions*, article #62.1].

3. The Regional Spiritual Assistant or the Conference of Regional Spiritual Assistants exercises

pastoral care and spiritual guidance in regard to each Regional Fraternity as an integral component part of NAFRA and of the SFO, by the same means and manner as does the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants in regard to NAFRA [cf. *Statutes for Spiritual Assistance*, articles #21 and #22].

Article 22. Regional Fraternity Council

1. The Regional Fraternity Council is composed of the Ministers of the Local Fraternities that together form the Regional Fraternity, the Regional Executive Council, and the Regional Spiritual Assistant or the Conference of Regional Spiritual Assistants, each of whom may vote. Regional Spiritual Assistants, however, do not vote in financial matters and in elective chapters [cf. *Statutes for Spiritual Assistance*, article #12.1].
2. The Regional Fraternity Council is the representative body of all of the Local Fraternities that together compose the Regional Fraternity, and has the power to create regional guidelines in conformity with the *Rule*, the *General Constitutions* and the *National Statutes*.
3. The Regional Fraternity Council shall meet at least once a year. Every third year the Regional Fraternity Council shall meet in elective chapter in accord with the *General Constitutions* and these *National Statutes*.
4. The Regional Fraternity Council has the duties set forth in article #62 of the *General Constitutions*.

Article 23. Regional Executive Council

1. Between the meetings of the Regional Fraternity Council, an elected Regional Executive Council shall carry on the business and carry out the purposes of the Regional Fraternity in a spirit of ministry and service [cf. *General Constitutions*, article #62.1].
2. The Regional Executive Council is composed of the Regional Minister, the Regional Vice Minister, the Regional Secretary, the Regional Treasurer, at least one elected Councilor, and the Regional Spiritual Assistant or the President of the Conference of Regional Spiritual Assistants. In addition, the Regional Formation Director may also be elected. In those regions in which the Regional Formation Director is appointed rather than elected, she or he attends the meetings of the Regional Executive Council and exercises a consultative role.
3. All elected members of the Regional Executive Council and the Spiritual Assistant have voting rights.
4. Election of the Secular members of the Regional Executive Council shall follow the model set forth in **Section II** of these *National Statutes* which deals with the National Fraternity insofar as it may be adapted to the needs and circumstances of the Regional Fraternity.
5. The Regional Executive Council may establish and direct commissions and committees deemed necessary to achieve the goals and objectives determined by the Regional Fraternity Council.
6. When not in session, the Regional Executive Council may conduct business electronically (i.e., via e-mail, telephone, fax, etc.), provided that any decisions and determinations made in this way are reviewed and ratified at the next regular meeting of the Council.
7. The Regional Executive Council shall meet at least twice a year, at times and places to be determined by its members. The Regional Minister shall give written notice of meetings at least two months in advance.

Article 24. Duties of Officers of the Regional Executive Council

1. The Regional Minister has the duties set forth in article #63 of the *General Constitutions*.
2. The duties of the Regional Vice Minister, Secretary, and Treasurer shall follow the model set forth in that portion of these *National Statutes* which deals with the National Fraternity insofar as it may be adapted to the needs and circumstances of the Regional Fraternity.
3. Each Regional Fraternity shall follow the model set forth in that portion of these *National Statutes* which deals with the National Fraternity in connection with policies and procedures to be followed in the event of resignation or removal from office on the part of any elected Officer.

Article 25. Structure for Property Control for the Regional Fraternity

1. The provisions relating to property control which appear in these *National Statutes* in the section dealing with the responsibilities of the National Fraternity shall apply to the Regional Fraternities insofar as they may be adapted to the needs and circumstances of the Regional Fraternity.
2. Particular note should be taken that expenses of the Regional Executive Council and those individuals invited by this Council to serve the Regional Fraternity in some capacity shall be borne by the Regional Fraternity for attendance at required meetings.
3. The Regional Fraternity is responsible for contributing to the National Fraternity on a fair share basis from its treasury to help provide for the expenses of NAFRA.
4. As required by article #54.2 of the *General Constitutions*, the National Executive Council shall approve statements for use by the Regional Fraternities that establish "precise criteria" for their "statement of purposes" and "internal controls" which must be used in their establishing documents.

Article 26. Fraternal and Pastoral Visits to the Regional Fraternity

1. The provisions of article #92 through article #95 of the *General Constitutions* concerning the fraternal and pastoral visitations apply as does article #14 of the *Statutes for Spiritual Assistance*.
2. The Regional Fraternity will present to the National Minister or his or her delegate and the representative of the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants a stipend appropriate to the journey made and the length of stay required at the time of fraternal and pastoral visits, and also on the occasion of their presiding over and witnessing elections.

Article 27. Franciscan Youth and Young Adults

The provisions of articles #96 and #97 of the *General Constitutions* concerning Franciscan Youth and Young Adults apply.

Article 28. Applicability of These Statutes to All Levels of Fraternity

The various provisions set forth in these *National Statutes* for NAFRA administration shall be used as a model for elections, conduct of business, structures for control of property, composition and duties of the Fraternity Minister and of the Fraternity Council, replacement of officers who are unable to continue in office, and similar business of the fraternity at any level. However, Articles 11.4 and 13.3 do not apply to regional and local fraternities. A member of a regional council may also be a member of a local fraternity council.

Article 29. Amendments

1. These *National Statutes* may be amended by two-thirds vote of the National Fraternity Council provided that a copy of the proposed amendment is distributed to the National Fraternity Council at least 60 days before the vote on said amendment is to be taken.
2. All such amendments are subject to the approval of the Presidency of CIOFS.

ATTESTED AS APPROVED ON OCTOBER 18, 2002 BY THE NATIONAL FRATERNITY COUNCIL, NAFRA/USA.

ATTESTED AS AMENDED ON JUNE 6, 2003 BY THE NATIONAL FRATERNITY COUNCIL, SFO-USA.

APPROVED AND RATIFIED BY THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENCY, JULY 4, 2003

William Wicks, SFO - National Minister

Elizabeth Allen, SFO - National Secretary

ATTESTED AS AMENDED ON May 11, 2004 BY THE NATIONAL FRATERNITY COUNCIL, SFO-USA.

CONFIRMED BY THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENCY, JUNE 12, 2004.

Carol Gentile, SFO - National Minister

Elizabeth Allen, SFO - National Secretary

ATTESTED AS AMENDED ON OCTOBER 22, 2004 BY THE NATIONAL FRATERNITY COUNCIL, SFO-USA.

CONFIRMED BY THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENCY, JANUARY 8, 2005.

Carol Gentile, SFO - National Minister

Elizabeth Allen, SFO - National Secretary

ATTESTED AS AMENDED ON OCTOBER 27, 2006 BY THE NATIONAL FRATERNITY COUNCIL, SFO-USA.

CONFIRMED BY THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENCY, April 20, 2007.

Carol Gentile, SFO - National Minister

Elizabeth Allen, SFO - National Secretary

Appendix A

National Statutes Article 3.7.a: Composition of the Regional Fraternities

Name of Region, followed by short geographic description:

50 'Ohana 'O Ke Anuenue : HI.

51 Five Franciscan Martyrs : FL, plus up to about 31 degrees n latitude to include South GA, Lower AL around the Mobile Bay area.

52 St. Francis : s CA up to San Luis Obispo area.

53 Blessed Junipero Serra : n CA from Bakersfield n; most of NV except Las Vegas area.

54 Troubadours of Peace : OR, WA, ID, AK.

55 Queen of Peace : ND, MN, IA, most of SD except sw area around Rapid City, e 2/3 NE, w 1/4 WI.

56 Divine Mercy : Lower MI, plus Lucas County OH (Toledo OH area).

57 Saint Margaret of Cortona : VA, DC, all of MD except far w around Cumberland, s central PA around the Harrisburg/Lancaster/York area, far e WV around Martinsburg/Charles Town area.

58 St. Thomas More : AZ, s part NV around Las Vegas.

59 Mother Cabrini : ne IL including all of metro Chicago, w to Rockford and s to Kankakee.

60 St. Joan of Arc : LA, MS, far e TX from Houston e, s 2/3 AR from Little Rock s, far sw TN around Memphis.

61 Brothers and Sisters of St Francis : NC, SC, n 90% GA, AL except lower part around the Mobile Bay

- area, TN except far sw area around Memphis.
- 62 Exaltation of the Holy Cross : N/A.
- 63 Franciscans of the Prairie : n 3/4 IL, excluding East St Louis/Bellville area and s, excluding also ne area from Rockford to Kankakee.
- 64 Holy Trinity Region : KY, s half OH including the counties of the Diocese of Columbus (except Tuscarawas County) and part of the Diocese of Steubenville; se IN near Louisville KY.
- 65 La Verna : e 3/4 WI, Upper MI.
- 66 Our Lady of Indiana : n 3/4 IN, excluding areas around Evansville and Louisville KY.
- 67 Los Tres Compañeros/the Three Companions : central TX from OK border s to Mexico and Gulf of Mexico, w to San Angelo and Abilene, and e to (but not including) Houston.
- 68 Lady Poverty : WV except far e WV around Martinsburg/Charles Town area, w half PA except Erie, far w MD around Cumberland, far e part OH around Steubenville.
- 69 St Katharine Drexel : DE, e half PA except s central area around Harrisburg/Lancaster/York, s half NJ from Trenton s.
 Maximillian Kolbe : n 1/2 OH including all of the counties in the Diocese of Cleveland, the Diocese of Youngstown, and the counties of the Diocese of Toledo, except Lucas County (Toledo area), and only the county of Tuscarawas in the Diocese of Columbus.
- 71 Bl Kateri Tekakwitha : upstate NY plus Erie PA, excluding NY counties adjacent to borders with NJ, CT, and far e PA, also excluding far ne NY around Plattsburgh, Saranac Lake and Long Lake.
- 72 Santa Maria de las Montañas : CO, UT, WY except far n area around Sheridan, sw area SD around Rapid City, w 1/3 NE to include Stratton, nw corner KS to include Atwood.
- 73 Our Lady of the Rockies : MT; far n WY around Sheridan.
- 74 St Clare : s 80% MO, n 1/3 AR excluding Little Rock and s, s 1/4 IL from East St Louis/Bellville s, far sw corner IN around Evansville.
- 75 Our Lady of Guadalupe : NM, far w TX excluding Abilene and San Angelo and e, far e AZ in Navajo reservation area around St Michaels.
- Solanus Casey : CT, RI, w 1/3 MA from Holyoke/Springfield and w, s MA around Fall River /New Bedford, and part of Cape Cod, NY counties adjacent to borders with NJ, CT and far e PA except part of s Westchester County which is shared.
- 76 Bedford, and part of Cape Cod, NY counties adjacent to borders with NJ, CT and far e PA except part of s Westchester County which is shared.
- 77 Our Lady of the Angels : n half NJ excluding Trenton and s; NY counties of Staten Island and Manhattan (New York County), plus part of s Westchester county.
 St Elizabeth of Hungary : VT, NH, ME, e 2/3 MA excluding Holyoke/Springfield and w, also excluding s MA around Fall River /New Bedford, plus part of Cape Cod, far ne NY around Plattsburgh, Saranac Lake and Long Lake.
- 78 excluding s MA around Fall River /New Bedford, plus part of Cape Cod, far ne NY around Plattsburgh, Saranac Lake and Long Lake.
- 79 Tau Cross : NY counties on Long Island, plus Bronx.
- 80 Juan de Padilla : KS except nw corner around Atwood, OK, plus area around Kansas City MO.

Statement of Purposes

The Secular Franciscan Order is an "Association of the Christian Faithful." [1] More specifically, it is an association whose members lead an apostolic life and strive for Christian perfection while living in the world and who share the spirit of some religious institute [i.e. one of the branches of the Franciscan First Order and the Third Order Regular] under the higher direction of that same institute...." [2] It is governed by the universal law of the Church, and by its own: the Rule, the Constitutions, the Ritual, and the particular statutes.[3] The Constitutions have as their purpose: to apply the Rule; to indicate concretely the conditions for belonging to the SFO, its government, the organization of life in fraternity, and its seat.[4] The Secular Franciscan Order is divided into fraternities of various levels - local, regional, national, and international. Each one has its own moral personality in the Church[5]. These various fraternities are coordinated and united according to the norm of the rule and of the constitutions.[6] In order to implement the "...precise criteria regarding the purpose of the juridical

person" [i.e., the individual fraternity at each level] required by Article 54.2 of the General Constitutions as apply in the civil law, the National Fraternity Council of the SFO-USA has approved the following statement for local and regional fraternities to be included in their establishing documents:

The fraternity as an individual, component unit is organized to promote the purposes of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States of America through fraternal activities at the local and regional levels for the benefit of the Secular Franciscan Order, and to do any thing or act incidental to or connected with the foregoing purposes or advancement thereof but not for the pecuniary profit or financial gain of its members, directors (i.e. council members) or officers. All income and earnings of the fraternity shall be used exclusively for the fraternity's purposes and no part of the net income, net earnings or assets of the fraternity shall inure to the benefit or profit of any private individual, firm, corporation or association.

The fraternity is organized exclusively for tax-exempt purposes as that term is defined in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and shall not carry out any activities not permitted to be engaged in by an entity exempt from federal income tax. No substantial part of the activities of the fraternity shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation and the fraternity shall not participate in or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public service.

No member, trustee or officer of the fraternity or any other private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the fraternity's assets upon the dissolution of the fraternity. No member, director or trustee of the fraternity shall receive any salary, other compensation or pecuniary profit of any kind for services as such member, director or trustee other than reimbursements of actual and necessary expenses in the performance of his or her duties as such member, director or trustee.

In the event of the dissolution of the fraternity or the winding up of its affairs, the fraternity's property shall not be conveyed or distributed to any individual or organization created or operated for profit or to any individual for less than fair market value but shall, after necessary expenses thereof, (including payment of the fraternity's debt) be distributed to the next higher fraternity (which has been created and operated for non-profit purposes similar to those of this fraternity and qualifies under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.)

Approved ____November 2003_____ by the National Executive Council.

Certified by ____Elizabeth Allen, SFO_____, Secretary.

1. See Code of Canon Law, Can. 298.
2. See Code of Canon Law, Can. 303.
3. See General Constitutions, Article 4, 1.
4. See General Constitutions, Article 4, 3; also Code of Canon Law, Can. 304.
5. See Code of Canon Law, Can. 687 [309,313].
6. See Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order, 20.

Fraternity Internal Controls and Treasury Guidelines

Introduction

Canon 1284 of the Code of Canon Law(1) provides that all administrators are to perform their duties with the diligence of a "good householder."

Internal control has been defined as the overall plan of organization and the methods employed to safeguard assets, ensure the reliability of accounting data, promote efficient operations and ensure compliance with established policies. An internal accounting control system should provide reasonable assurance that: assets are safeguarded; the financial records reflect all financial transactions that have occurred; financial reports are accurate; and, there is proper oversight of the person(s) responsible for cash custody and accounting.

In accordance with Article 54.2 of the General Constitutions, which calls for "...precise criteria regarding... the administration of its material goods and the relevant internal controls," the National Fraternity- SFO-USA has approved the following guidelines for use by local and regional fraternities. *[NAFRA National Statutes, Article 18(12) states: "As required by article #54.2 of the General Constitutions, the National Executive Council shall approve statements for use by the Local Fraternities that establish "precise criteria" for their statement of purposes" and "internal controls" which must be used in their establishing documents. Article 25(4) is identical except for reference to Regional Fraternities.]*

General

[Note: General Constitutions, Article 51(5) states: "...The provisions regarding the rights and duties of ...the treasurer apply, with the appropriate adaptations, to all levels."]

1. The treasurer, whether appointed or elected, must have the necessary skills to adequately discharge the duties incumbent upon this important office (Note: In fraternities in which the councilors are elected as a block instead of by individual offices, the new council portions out the responsibilities at its first official meeting. (See CNSA, "Suggested Election Procedures To Complement and Clarify the Norms Established by NAFRA", 17(b)).
2. It is never appropriate to have the minister or spiritual assistant act as treasurer. *[General Constitutions, Article 82 states: "The following are incompatible: ... (b) The offices of minister, vice-minister, secretary and treasurer at the same level."]* However in emergency situations, e.g., the treasurer resigns, or is temporarily unable to carry out his or her duties, the minister may function as treasurer for two or three months while a replacement is sought or the treasurer is able to resume his or her duties.
3. It is the council's responsibility to make sure the treasurer is maintaining adequate records and discharging the duties of the office in a Franciscan manner. At a minimum, the council should provide for an audit of the treasurer's records at least just prior to the end of his or her term of office. *[General Constitutions, Article 62(2) states: "The regional council has the following duties: ... (j) To have, before its term of office is finished, the regional fraternity's financial and real estate situation audited either by an expert who is not a member of the council or by the fraternity's board of examiners." Also, NAFRA National Statutes, Article 4, #5 states: "In accord with article #54.3 of the General Constitutions, for the fraternities at each level, a financial audit must be done every 3 years, just prior to the end of the Council's term of office. This audit may be conducted by a professional accountant who is not a member of the fraternity Council, or by a "board of examiners" established by the particular fraternity (consisting of two or more experts selected at large by the membership who are not also members of that fraternity's Council). A written report of such audit must be given to the Council of the higher fraternity."]*

Books of Account

4. The treasurer shall have custody of all funds and securities and shall keep full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements in books belonging to the fraternity and shall deposit all moneys and other valuable effects in the name and to the credit of the fraternity in such depositories as may be designated by the council. It is the treasurer's duty to protect the financial interests of the membership in their contributions and other payments into the common fund and any other fund established by the council.
5. The treasurer shall record each contribution received in the appropriate register, with the date and the name of the contributor (See NAFRA National Statutes, Article 18(7)). Confidential

annual statements prepared from (or a photocopy of) the member's record, signed by the treasurer, should be sent to the individual members who request it, summarizing his/her contributions to the fraternity. In regional fraternities, the treasurer shall record each local fraternity's per capita contributions separately in a register maintained for that purpose. The record should include, along with the amount of per capita paid, the number of professed members, candidates, and inquirers so that the correct membership numbers are available for the annual report to the national fraternity. *[General Constitutions, Article 51(4) states: "The treasurer, or bursar, has the following duties: ...(a) To guard diligently the contributions received, recording each receipt in the appropriate register, with the date on which it was given, the name of the contributor, or the one from whom it was collected."]*

6. The treasurer shall disburse the funds of the fraternity as may be ordered by the council, taking proper vouchers for such disbursements in a timely manner. *[General Constitutions, Article 51(4), states: "The treasurer, or bursar, has the following duties: ...(b) To record in the same register the items of expense, specifying the date and purpose, in conformity with the directions of the fraternity council."]*

Cash and Banking

7. Every established and emerging fraternity must have its own bank account(s) which should be in the name of "Secular Franciscan Order, ... ", followed by appropriate fraternity, region, etc., name, and use the appropriate federal identification number. (Note: The term "bank" used in this document means any appropriate financial institution including a credit union.)
8. All bank accounts must have signature authority for the minister and the treasurer, i.e., either one can sign checks and make withdrawals. This is necessary to insure the payment of bills in case of a temporary vacancy in the office of treasurer or the temporary inability of the treasurer to discharge his or her duties. (See number 2, above).
9. Ideally, cash receipts such as common fund donations received at local fraternity meetings, should be counted by two persons. A note of the amount received should be given to the minister.
10. Ideally, all mail should be opened by the secretary or minister.
11. The treasurer shall perform a monthly reconciliation of book to net bank balances. If a discrepancy is noted during the reconciliation process, the treasurer shall promptly determine the source of the error and make appropriate correction to the records.
12. All moneys shall be deposited intact as soon as possible after receipt. All checks should be endorsed with "For Deposit Only" and the name of the fraternity. The practice of accepting checks made out to the name of the treasurer should be avoided. Under no circumstances shall payments be made from undeposited cash receipts. If cash is needed for immediate expenditure, it should be taken from a petty cash fund authorized by the council, and the payment noted on a suitable petty cash voucher (inexpensive pads of these vouchers are available from any office supply store).
13. All expenditures (other than from petty cash) must be made by check drawn on the fraternity's bank account. Expenditures of a routine nature are pre-approved by the council in the form of an annual budget. Extraordinary expenses (up to a maximum of 5% of the annual budget total) must be approved by the council before payment, or on the alternative, by the minister (up to 1% of the annual budget), and reported to the council.
14. All Petty Cash Funds must be reimbursed periodically by check (using the "Imprest" method).
15. Where it is deemed appropriate by the council, the treasurer may advance funds to council members, for their future budgeted expenses. These funds must be fully accounted for by the council member before any further advances can be made.

Financial and Other Reports

16. The treasurer must make an annual or more frequent financial reports to the membership and council that shows details of all income, expenses, cash balances, investments and any moneys held in trust, and to the next higher council as part of the fraternity's annual report. *[General Constitutions, Article 51(4) states: "The treasurer, or bursar, has the following duties: ...(c) To render an account of his or her administration to the assembly and to the council of the*

fraternity according to the norms of the national statutes.."] A local fraternity treasurer should publish the annual report in the fraternity bulletin or newsletter. In addition that same report must be given to the regional council. The regional treasurer's report should be disseminated to the membership through the fraternity ministers or the newsletter. The regional financial report should also be delivered to NAFRA as part of the region's annual report. In addition, the treasurer should provide a written financial report periodically to the council; in regional fraternities to the executive council.

17. An annual written report by the council of the fraternity must be made to the council of the next higher fraternity. Such report must include:
 - a. Details of membership
 - b. Description of activities, goals and accomplishments
 - c. Treasurer's annual financial report
 - d. Budget for the upcoming year

Other Treasurer's Duties

18. In addition to the above, the treasurer has the duty to promptly submit all records for review by the council when requested, and by the higher council upon fraternal visitation.
19. The treasurer should assist the council in preparing an annual budget showing estimated income and expenses for the upcoming period, in order to help the council plan for future needs. In regional fraternities, the treasurer should assist the regional executive council in preparing an annual budget for submission to the regional fraternity council for its approval. *[General Constitutions, Article 50(2) states: "...The duties of the council are also: ...(e) To decide on the destination of available funds and, in general, to deliberate on matters concerning financial management and economic affairs of the fraternity. Article 62(2) states: "The regional council has the following duties: ...(I) To make decisions regarding the use of available funds and, in general, to deliberate on matters regarding the financial management and the economic affairs of the regional fraternity."]*
20. When a fraternity is de-activated, the treasurer shall dispose of the moneys remaining in the fraternity's treasury either according to the decision of the remaining members, consistent with the "Statement of Purposes" as adopted by NAFRA, or transfer them to the regional executive council where they will be placed in an interest-bearing escrow account managed by the regional executive council *[See CNSA Guidelines For De-activating an Established Fraternity]*. In the case of a suspended fraternity, the treasurer must immediately transfer the moneys in the fraternity's treasury to the regional executive council where they will be frozen in an interest-bearing escrow account managed by the regional executive council *[See CNSA Guidelines For Suspending a Canonically Established Fraternity]*.
21. Treasurer's records should routinely be kept for 6 years. Equipment warranties should be retained for as long as they are effective. However records relating to large acquisitions such as cars, or furniture and equipment with a value of over 1% of the annual budget should be retained for 6 years after disposal of the asset. In addition, records having ongoing importance such as deeds and titles and those relating to the fraternity's Federal ID number, and State tax exemption status should be retained permanently.
22. Reference should be made to:
 - a. General Constitutions (2000), Art. 52.4 and 52.5
 - b. NAFRA Statutes (2002), Art. 6.4, Art. 24.2 and Art. 28.

1. See also Canon 1028 of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches, which governs the Eastern Catholic Churches.

Approved "ad experimentum" on November 27, 2003 by the National Executive Council.

Certified by _____ Elizabeth Allen, SFO _____, National Secretary.

January 8, 2005

Carol Gentile
SFO National Minister
136 Woods Avenue
Monaca, PA 15061-2461
USA

Dear Carol,

Re: Amendments to National Statutes of SFO - USA

With reference to your proposed changes to Article 11.4, Article 13.3 and Article 28 of your National Statutes, we would like to inform you that the CIOFS Presidency has approved the amendments to the National Statutes of the United States which read as follows:

Article 11.4 - leave as is with a reference to Article 28: "**(See Article 28)**".

Article 13.3 - leave as is with a reference to Article 28: "**(See Article 28)**".

Article 28 - Applicability of these statutes to all levels of fraternity.

The various provisions set forth in these National Statutes for NAFRA administration shall be used as a model for elections, conduct of business, structures for control of property, composition and duties of the Fraternity Minister and of the Fraternity Council, replacement of officers who are unable to continue in office, and similar business of the fraternity at any level. **However, Articles 11.4 and 13.3 do not apply to regional and local fraternities. A member of a regional council may also be a member of a local fraternity council.**

Fraternal regards,

Encarnación del Pozo

General Minister SFO

(The changes described above have been made to the body of the Statutes.)