

SARASOTA COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN DISASTER BYLAWS

I. **Sarasota Community Organizations Active in Disaster (Sarasota COAD)**

The name of the organization is the Sarasota Community Organizations Active in Disaster (Sarasota COAD). Sarasota COAD is a member of the Florida Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (FLVOAD). The jurisdiction is the County of Sarasota, State of Florida.

II. **Mission**

Sarasota COAD is a humanitarian association of organizations, government agencies, faith based organizations, or businesses with disaster planning and operations responsibilities or capabilities that have a disaster response program and policy for commitment of resources to meet the needs of people affected by disaster without discrimination that may be active in all phases of disaster. Its mission is to foster effective, streamlined service delivery to people affected by disaster, while eliminating unnecessary duplication of effort, through cooperation in the four phases of a disaster: preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation.

III. **Overview**

Sarasota COAD is not a competing or exclusionary organization. Sarasota COAD is intended to be a network for organizations active in disaster. Each Sarasota COAD member organization will maintain its own identity and independence while closely collaborating with other Sarasota COAD member organizations.

Sarasota COAD accomplishes its mission by adhering to the following principles:

- *Cooperation:* Foster cooperation among Sarasota COAD member organizations at all levels and in all phases of disaster
- *Coordination:* Coordinate the development of Sarasota COAD policies and procedures, and, the implementation of services among Sarasota COAD member organizations. Sarasota COAD may also provide links to national and international disaster relief organizations. Sarasota COAD serves as advocate and liaison between member organizations and the FLVOAD.
- *Communication:* Exchange and disseminate information among Sarasota COAD member organizations and the public, as well as local, state and federal agencies, in conjunction with the individual Sarasota COAD members.

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- *Collaboration*: Work together to achieve specific goals and to undertake specific projects at disaster sites and form partnerships during the disaster response.
 - Education - providing training and increasing awareness and preparedness in each organization.
 - Leadership Development - giving volunteer leaders training and support in order to build an effective COAD organization.
 - Mitigation - supporting the efforts of federal, state, and local agencies and governments and supporting appropriate legislation.
 - Convening Mechanisms – coordinating and supporting seminars, meetings, board meetings, regional conferences, training programs, and local conferences.
 - Outreach - encouraging the formation of and giving guidance to state and regional voluntary organizations active in disaster relief.

IV. Membership

A. Categories of Membership

1. Voting Member – If an organization meets all of the following criteria, they are eligible for the voting member category of membership.
 - Local, state or federal government organizations; 501(c)(3) not for profit organizations with voluntary memberships and constituencies; faith-based organizations; and businesses that regularly provide services in Sarasota County.
 - Organizations that have a disaster response program or are in the process of developing one.
 - Organizations that have a policy for commitment of resources to meet the needs of people affected by disaster without discrimination.

Only one official representative may be a voting member representing their organization.

2. Members – Those organizations who do not meet the above criteria. Members may participate, but are not voting members.

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B. Conditions of Membership

1. Agree with the mission of the Sarasota COAD.
2. Meet the membership criteria of the Sarasota COAD.
3. Appoint a representative to attend Sarasota COAD meetings.

C. Membership Application Procedures

1. Organizations requesting membership may apply by email or letter to the Sarasota COAD describing their intended commitment to the Sarasota COAD. Candidate organizations are encouraged to attend the meetings while their application is pending.
2. The Sarasota COAD will, by majority vote, determine the category and eligibility of the candidate organization and present for approval at the next business meeting.

D. Responsibilities of Membership:

1. The leadership of each member organization must be committed to sending knowledgeable and authoritative representatives to the Sarasota COAD meetings.
2. All voting members and members must have access to the resources of their organization to serve the needs of disaster victims.
3. The voting member organization that misses 50% of the meetings in a twelve-month period shall receive a reminder letter from the Sarasota COAD Chair encouraging their attendance.
4. If the organization or the representative fails to respond or participate, COAD may vote to remove them from the membership roles.

E. Termination of Membership – An organization's membership may be terminated by the following:

1. Voluntary - Submission of an email or letter of separation to the Leadership Team.

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2. Non-Voluntary - Consistent failure of the agency or their representative to meet the conditions and responsibilities of voting membership. Membership may be terminated at any time for any reason by a majority vote of the Sarasota COAD membership in attendance at any meeting.

V. Meetings

The meetings of the Sarasota COAD shall be guided by the *Democratic Rules of Order*, (Francis) except as otherwise provided for in these bylaws. Sarasota COAD will operate in the sunshine according to Florida law. All meetings will be noticed and are open to the public.

A. Business Meetings

1. Business meetings of the membership as a whole will be held a minimum of six times a year on a schedule set by the Sarasota COAD.
2. Adequate notice shall be sent to all members prior to any business meeting.
3. The representative has voice for and votes for their organization at business meetings. Other representatives from the same organization have voice, when recognized by, and, at the discretion of the Chair. The intent is to encourage a reasonable exchange of ideas without a monopoly by multiple representatives of a single organization.

B. Emergency Meetings

1. Emergency meetings to meet the needs of disaster events (or drills) can be called at any time by the Chair, Leadership Team or majority of the membership with minimal notice.
2. Telephonic/conference call meetings may be held provided that all parties can hear and participate in the business being conducted.
3. Emergency meetings are open to all voting members, members, and organizations/agencies invited by Sarasota COAD.

C. Strike Team Meetings

1. Strike Team meetings are open to members and their invitees.

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2. Strike Teams will meet a minimum of six times per year.

D. Quorum

1. Any general COAD meeting shall be a simple majority of all voting members.

2. Strike Team meetings shall be those present.

VI. Officer Positions and Leadership Team

A. Officers are elected by the membership of the Sarasota COAD. One single agency is not limited to holding only one leadership position. Officers are defined as the following:

Chair (may not serve more than two consecutive terms)

Function: Preside at meetings, act as spokesperson and represent Sarasota COAD, delegate tasks as pertains to Sarasota COAD business, convene business meetings and provide leadership.

First and Second Vice-Chairs (may not serve more than two consecutive terms)

Function: Exercise the authority and fulfill the duties of the Chair in the absence of that Officer and fulfill such other duties as assigned by COAD

Strike Team/Committee Chairs (may serve more than two consecutive terms)

Function: Presides at committee meetings, acts as spokesperson and represents the committee as pertains to Sarasota COAD business, convenes meetings and provides leadership.

Sarasota County Emergency Management (may serve more than two consecutive terms)

Function: Provides the perspective of Emergency Management on any issues brought before the committee.

B. Officer and Leadership Team positions must be filled by voting members. Members shall be elected by a majority vote of those present at a meeting called for the purpose of establishing Leadership Team positions. Individuals, not organizations, are elected. Any member of the Sarasota COAD may nominate a Leadership Team member. Nominations must be seconded to be accepted.

C. The Chair of the Sarasota COAD will be appointed by the Community Alliance of Sarasota County, pending Sarasota COAD approval.

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- D. Election of officers shall take place during the fourth calendar quarter of the year, with the term of office beginning at the next regular or special meeting. During the first year, officers shall take office immediately upon election.
- E. Vacancies in any office may be filled by majority vote of the members of the COAD at any regular or special meeting. Officers so elected shall serve out the remainder of that term.
- F. The Leadership Team consists of all COAD officers listed previously and up to 3 at-large members that are elected by the COAD membership.
- G. When a position is vacated, the Chair shall call for nominations and an election will be held at the next business meeting of the full membership.

VII. Ad hoc Committees

Ad hoc committees may be appointed at the discretion of the membership.

VIII. Voting

- A. Each member organization is entitled to one vote.
- B. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted.
- C. A quorum must be present for a vote to be held.
- D. All voting shall pass by simple majority vote.
- E. All votes (formal or consensus reached) will be recorded in the meeting minutes.
- F. An individual may represent more than one organization however that individual has one vote regardless of the number of organizations they represent.

IX. Health and Human Services (HHS) Support to Sarasota COAD

Staff for the Sarasota COAD will be provided by Sarasota County Health and Human Services Business Center. HHS staff will be assigned to provide support to Standing Committee Chairs, Strike Team Leaders or Ad-Hoc Committee Chairs. Staff will be responsible for maintaining organizational records, making notifications, and keeping summaries of meetings.

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X. Amendments

1. Amendments to these bylaws may be made by a simple majority vote. Amendments must be moved and seconded at a properly noticed business or special meeting to be voted on at the following business meeting.
2. Members must be notified of changes to these bylaws at least 14 calendar days prior to a vote.