NATIONAL SEARCH DOG ALLIANCE

MEMBERS
POLICIES AND
PROCEDURES MANUAL
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### Purpose

The purpose of the Policies and Procedures is to outline practices guiding the Alliance in its activities and actions. This document sets the standard for judging future measures and for deciding how the Alliance shall be managed. They also describe job functions and operations.

### Use

Should there be any conflict between the Bylaws and the Policies and Procedures, the Bylaws shall take precedence in all cases.
M-1. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

All voting Directors shall be members of NSDA throughout their term of office and represent the interests of the organization as a whole rather than those of a particular constituency.

M-1.1 Responsibilities of Directors

- Be available to all members.
- Maintain a cordial relationship with other search organizations and enhance the Alliance’s public standing.
- Create a climate of cooperation and respect and build a competent Board.
- Assist with long range plans of the Alliance and monitor and strengthen programs and services.
- Participate actively in making decisions on behalf of the Alliance and to exercise their best judgment while doing so.
- While acting on behalf of the Alliance, set aside their own personal and professional interests. The organization’s needs shall come first.
- Bear the responsibility of ensuring that the Alliance remains true to its own mission and purpose by its compliance with all applicable federal and state laws.
- Protect assets and provide financial oversight.
- Be a representative of NSDA to the public and law enforcement.

M-1.2 General Powers

The governing body of the Alliance shall be the Board of Directors. Their duties shall include:

- governing the Alliance by administrative policies and objectives.
- establishing the divisions of the Alliance, monitoring their activities and, where decided, delegating powers to them.
- conducting all required corporation business.
- operating the financial affairs of the Alliance.
- acquiring sufficient resources for the Alliance’s operations.
- accounting to the members for the services and expenditures of funds.
- performing such other duties as may be assigned by the General Membership.

M-1.3 Manner of Operating

- Adhere to the NSDA Bylaws.
- Provide accurate information to members concerning NSDA operations.
- Conduct Alliance business openly.
M-1-4 Compensation of Directors

- Compensation of Directors shall be the same as compensation for Officers.
- Any reimbursement paid for travel on behalf of NSDA shall be reimbursed by original, itemized receipt only.
- There shall be no per diem paid.
- Air travel reimbursement shall be for coach fare.
- Lodging expenses shall be kept at a modest cost.
- Meals per day shall not exceed $40.00.
- NSDA shall not reimburse for personal alcoholic drinks but shall reimburse for alcoholic beverages when purchased as part of entertaining on behalf of the Alliance.

M-1.5 Conflict of Interest

Taken from Instructions for Form 1023, Appendix A: Application for Recognition of Exemption under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code

Article I Purpose

The purpose of the conflict of interest policy is to protect this tax-exempt organization’s (hereinafter known as the Organization) interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer or director of the Organization or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

Article II Definitions

1. Interested Person
   Any director, principal officer, or member of a committee with governing board delegated powers, who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.

2. Financial Interest
   A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:
   a. an ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the Organization has a transaction or arrangement,
   b. a compensation arrangement with the Organization or with any entity or individual with which the Organization has a transaction or arrangement, or
   c. a potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the Organization is negotiating or arrangement.
Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.

A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. Under Article II, Section 2, a person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the appropriate governing board or committee decides that a conflict of interest exists.

**Article III Procedures**

1. **Duty to Disclose**
   In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the directors and members of committees with governing board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

2. **Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists**
   After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, he/she shall leave the governing board or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

3. **Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest**
   a. An interested person may make a presentation at the governing board or committee meeting but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.
   b. The Chairperson of the governing board or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.
   c. After exercising due diligence, the governing board or committee shall determine whether the Organization can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.
   d. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the governing board or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the organization’s best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

4. **Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy**
   a. If the governing board or committee has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure
to disclose.

b. If, after hearing the member’s response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the governing board or committee determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

**Article IV Records of Proceedings**

The minutes of the governing board and all committees with board delegated powers shall contain:

1. the names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the governing board or committee’s decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.

2. the names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

**Article V Compensation**

1. A voting member of the governing board who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the organization for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to their own compensation.

2. A voting member of any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Organization for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to their own compensation.

3. No voting member of the governing board or any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Organization, either individually or collectively, is prohibited from providing information to any committee regarding compensation.

**Article VI Annual Statements**

Each director, principal officer and member of a committee with governing board delegated powers shall, upon being seated on the Board or committee, sign a statement which affirms that such person:

1. has received a copy of the conflicts of interest policy,
2. has read and understands the policy,
3. has agreed to comply with the policy, and
4. understands the Organization is charitable and in order to maintain its federal tax exemption, it must engage primarily in activities which accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.
The statements shall be kept on file by the Secretary for at least seven (7) years.

**Article VII Periodic Reviews**

To ensure the Organization operates in a manner consistent with charitable purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

1. Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information and the result of arm’s length bargaining.
2. Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations conform to the organization’s written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes and do not result in inurement, impermissible private benefit or in an excess benefit transaction.

**Article VIII Use of Outside Experts**

When conducting the periodic reviews as provided for in Article VII, the Organization may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used, their use shall not relieve the governing board of its responsibility for ensuring periodic reviews are conducted.
M-2. ELECTIONS

M-2.1.1 Voting Rights

All members in good standing shall have one (1) vote for the Board of Directors’ position to be filled from the entire membership of NSDA.

M-2.1.2 Election Procedures

Nominating Committee

- At the last quarterly meeting (October thru December), the Chair of the Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the President. The Chair shall select one (1) or more committee members. No member of the Nominating Committee may be up for election.
- Between January 1st and March 1st, any individual voting member may contact the Nominating Committee Chair to request to be placed on the ballot. All candidates must be a member of NSDA for one (1) year prior to filing to run for office in order to be placed on the ballot for that year’s election.
- The Nominating Committee Chair shall send the names of all applicants to the Membership Program Manager for verification of their membership.
- By March 5th of each year, the Nominating Committee Chair shall submit to the Board a slate of one or more voting members along with their biographical information and photograph.
- By March 8th of each year, the Nominating Committee Chair shall provide biographies and photographs of the approved slate of candidates to the Newsletter Chair to be placed in the newsletter and to the Corporate Secretary to be sent out via e-mail to themembers.

M-2.1.3 Ballot Procedures

- By March 15th of each year, ballots and candidate information shall be made available to the members. Candidates shall also be announced in the newsletter.
- Between March 15th and April 5th of each year, votes shall be cast in a manner to be determined by the Board.
- Ballots shall be maintained by the Corporate Secretary for a period of one (1) year.

M-2.1.4 Tabulation of Votes

- By April 15th, votes shall be tabulated by the Nominating Committee Chair and the ballot count shall be verified by the Corporate Secretary. In a conflict of interest, the count shall be verified by a member of the Board of Directors whose position is not up for election.
- As of April 15th each year, the nominated candidate with the greatest number of votes shall be declared elected. In the event of a tie, the candidates shall be submitted to the membership in a run-off election to be held at the earliest practical date.
• If, at the conclusion of the application period, a position for the Board remains without a qualified candidate, the position shall be filled by the 15th of July for a period of one (1) year by appointment of the incoming President with ratification by the Board by the 15th of July. The remainder of the term shall be filled through election in the subsequent year.

### M-2.1.5 Terms of Office

Directors shall be seated beginning with the commencement of New Business at the Quarterly Membership Meeting following the election and serve through Old Business at the Second Quarterly Membership Meeting three (3) years hence.
M-3. MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

M-3.1 Classifications

All classes of membership shall be open to all persons at least eighteen (18) years of age upon application and payment of appropriate dues. Non-US citizen voting membership shall be limited to 25% of the current membership roles.

Member in Good Standing: Any member who has paid their dues and is compliant with the policies and/or requirements of the Alliance.

- FOUNDING MEMBER: An individual who supported the founding of the Alliance with a one-time lump sum payment. This is a lifetime membership and a Founding Member has full voting rights in the Alliance. This is a closed category.
- INDIVIDUAL: One payment of dues, in an amount to be determined by the Board, shall be applicable for the period of one (1) year. An Individual Member has full voting rights in the Alliance.
- LIFETIME: One payment of dues, in an amount to be determined by the Board, shall be applicable for the lifetime of the member. A Lifetime Member has full voting rights in the Alliance.
- TEAM: A specified number, to be determined by the Board, of members of a search and rescue team, including, but not limited to, K-9 handlers, medical personnel, support staff, etc., may join for a period of one (1) year. Each team member listed on the roster has full voting rights in the Alliance.
- CORPORATE: One payment of dues, in an amount to be determined by the Board, shall be applicable for the period of one (1) year. The corporation may place a quarter (1/4) page advertisement, approved by the Board of Directors, in the NSDA newsletter each month for twelve (12) issues and on the web page each month for twelve (12) months. A Corporate Member has no voting rights.
- SUSTAINING: Membership granted by the Board of Directors to a person having an interest in the promotion and support of the Alliance’s objectives and K-9 Search and Rescue. One payment of dues, in an amount to be determined by the Board, shall be applicable for the period of one (1) year. A Sustaining Member has no voting rights.
- HONORARY: Membership granted by the Board of Directors to a person having made an exemplary contribution to NSDA. There shall be no payment of dues. An Honorary Member has no voting rights.

M-3.2 Application Process

- Team and Individual Membership applications are found on the NSDA website at www.n-sda.org
Applications may be forwarded, by mail with a check for dues, to the address indicated on the application. Application may also be made on the NSDA website through electronic payment.

Receipt is hereby defined as when an application(s) is received by the Treasurer, whether by mail or electronic means.

Completed applications (see form in appendix) along with the applicable fees, payable to National Search Dog Alliance, shall be remitted to the Treasurer or designee at the National Search Dog Alliance business address at 1302 Waugh Drive, #121, Houston, TX. 77019, at the Treasurer’s address or application may be made on the NSDA website at www.n-sda.org with electronic payment.

The Treasurer or designee shall deposit funds to the NSDA business account within five (5) business days of receipt.

On a weekly basis, the Treasurer or designee shall scan completed applications and electronically transmit them to the designated Membership Administrator or send them by mail, whichever is the most expedient.

The Membership Administrator shall process the application as soon as administratively possible. (S)he shall then:

- create a new membership card for the applicant and laminate it.
- send the applicant a letter along with their membership card thanking them for joining NSDA.
- add the applicants’ names to the membership and e-mail Excel lists.

The Membership Administrator shall periodically send updated membership and e-mail lists to the officers and members of the Board.

### M-3.3 Dues

- The Board of Directors shall determine, once a year, the annual dues payable to the Alliance by the members.
- All Individual, Team, Sustaining and Corporate Members must pay dues each year.
- Dues shall become payable annually, twelve (12) months from the original membership application date.
- Dues shall be payable in advance.
- The website membership program shall give notice to each member thirty (30) days in advance as to the amount of dues payable.
  - If dues remain unpaid after the due date, the membership shall be terminated, all rights removed and the member removed from the roster.
M-4. SOLICITATION AND RECEIPT OF DONATIONS

M-4.1 Approval

- All donation requests made in the name of NSDA to businesses, foundations or organizations shall first be approved by the Vice President.

M-4.2 Acknowledgement

- All donations (where the donor is known) of products, services and money shall be recognized by the Secretary with a letter or card bearing the NSDA letterhead/logo.

M-4.3 Accounting

- All donations shall be recorded in the NSDA accounting records.
- Monies donated for a specified, designated or earmarked purpose shall be used for the stated purpose only. A separate accounting record shall be kept by the Treasurer and/or Assistant Treasurer for each of these funds.
- In the event the donation cannot be used for the intended purpose, the donor shall be notified by the NSDA Vice President. At the donor’s discretion, the monies may either be transferred to a different purpose, or refunded.
### M-5. CANINE BEHAVIOR

#### M-5.1 Tolerance

Aggressive behavior by a canine at any NSDA function shall not be tolerated. The handler may be asked to remove the canine by any NSDA Board member, any official representative of NSDA or by the person in charge of the function.

#### M-5.2 Aggressive Behavior Definition

Aggressive behavior is defined as any uncontrolled growling, snarling, lunging or other unprovoked reaction directed at either a person or a canine, whether contact is made with the intended target or not.

#### M-5.3 K-9 Protection

A canine which is protecting itself, its handler or another person or canine from an aggressive action shall not be considered the aggressor.

#### M-5.4 Attendance at NSDA Functions after Incidents

- A canine that is removed from a NSDA function may be allowed to attend a another NSDA function in the event that the owner/handler can produce evidence that the canine has successfully attended behavior modification training.
- If the canine is involved in a second aggressive behavior incident, that K-9 shall not be allowed to attend future NSDA functions.
- Records of these incidents shall be kept by the NSDA Secretary and the Testing Chair.
M-6. HUMAN/HANDLER/GUEST BEHAVIOR

Issued: February 1, 2009
Revised: May 4, 2017

M-6.1 Behavior Tolerance

Aggressive, hostile, abusive or inappropriate behavior by a human at any NSDA function shall not be tolerated. The individual may be asked to leave by any NSDA Board member, any official representative of NSDA or by the person in charge of the function.

M-6.2 Behavior Definitions

Aggressive, hostile, abusive or inappropriate behavior includes, but is not limited to:
- physically abusing an animal.
- any unprovoked aggressive reaction (verbal or physical) directed at either a person or a canine, whether physical contact is made with the intended target or not.
- fighting.
- clearly unwanted sexual advances that do not stop when asked.
- inappropriate verbal derision, mockery, or bullying.
- other behavior deemed inappropriate by the NSDA Code of Ethics or.
- behavior deemed inappropriate by an attending NSDA Board member or by the person in charge of the function.

M-6.3 Protection

An individual who is protecting themselves, their canine or another person or canine from an aggressive action shall not be considered the aggressor.

M-6.4 Attendance at NSDA Functions after Incidents

- Repeated issues with the same individual shall be handled in accordance with the Policies and Procedures for removing a member.
- If the individual is not a member of NSDA and is involved in a second aggressive behavior incident, they shall not be allowed to attend future NSDA functions.
- Records of these incidents shall be kept by the NSDA Secretary and the Testing Chair.
| M-7. DISPLAY OF PATCHES AND LOGO | issued: February 1, 2009  
|                                  | revised: April 12, 2014  
|                                  | revised: September 4, 2016  
|                                  | revised: June 1, 2017 |

### M-7.1 Registered Trademark

The NSDA logo is a registered trademark and, as such, should display the registered symbol ® whenever possible.

### M-7.2 Logo Usage

- The logo may be used on stickers as issued and for sale by NSDA on vehicles and other devices to advertise and promote the Alliance, membership in the organization and pride in K-9 search and rescue.
- The logo may be used on patches as issued and for sale by NSDA for the promotion of the organization.
- The NSDA logo may be used on business cards which must be authorized by the Board of Directors.
- All articles, publications, use on social media or web pages that imply endorsement by NSDA must have prior written approval by the NSDA Board of Directors or its designee.

### M-7.3 Logo Changes

- Only a unanimous Board decision may alter or change the accepted NSDA logo.
- The NSDA logo may only be reproduced in size(s) and color(s) as dictated by NSDA.
- If the logo is changed, and since it is a registered trademark, a new registration must be sought for the different logo.

### M-7.4 Prohibited Usage

The NSDA logo shall not be used:

- on personal or non-NSDA legal documents (e.g., contracts, checks, etc.).
- to mislead or misrepresent that NSDA issued a certificate or document.
- to indicate or imply operational status of a person/handler, their canine or their team.
- to represent to the public that a vehicle is an emergency vehicle.
- to suggest that an individual, team or canine that was not, nor ever has been, a part of the NSDA certification process is certified by NSDA.
- NSDA reserves the right to disallow any unauthorized use of the logo.

**NOTE:** Any unauthorized use of the NSDA logo may result in legal action.
18.1 Usage

A member shall not identify, represent or market their certification in any manner that may be considered misleading or a misrepresentative of the intended use.

18.2 Wording

- For marketing purposes, on business cards or in any other form of publication, an Alliance member shall use the term “NSDA Certified”.
- Alliance members shall not use the term “NSDA Accredited”.
M-9.1 Public Appearances, Handouts, Media Contact

Any public appearances, handouts, or media contact being conducted in the name of NSDA must be approved by a member of the Board of Directors or its designee.
Paid and non-paid professionals have the right to expect specific behavior of each other. With this in mind, members of the National Search Dog Alliance (NSDA) shall adhere to the following code of ethics at all times.

Section I
Law Enforcement, Emergency Management and other Agencies Having Jurisdiction have high expectations and requirements of those with whom they work. As such, all NSDA members will conduct themselves in the highest ethical manner as expected of all emergency personnel.

Section II
As SAR Responders, we must conduct ourselves in a professional manner at all times. We will only respond to an incident when called by the agency in charge and/or their designees. When responding, we are there to assist the agency that is in charge, and for the victim, not ourselves or our team/agency and will conduct ourselves as such. We are bound to follow the directions of the representatives from the agency that is in charge.

Section III
It is imperative that we train to a high level of competence and always accurately represent the capabilities of ourselves and our canines. We will keep ourselves physically fit so that we can safely and effectively complete assigned tasks.
M-11. EVALUATIONS ADMINISTRATOR DIVISION

M-11.1 Application Process

Application received

- Administrator
  - Reviews application.
  - Makes sure all paperwork is included.
  - If all paperwork is there, Administrator notifies applicant that paperwork has been received.
  - If all paperwork is not there, Administrator returns the application with deficiencies noted and tells them they may resubmit it when it is completed.
  - After all documentation is collected, Administrator sends the resume and electronic checklist to the Evaluator Chair to check for omissions.
  - If the documentation is complete, the Evaluator Chair sends the resume and electronic checklist to the Board for review. If there are no questions/objections, the President notifies the Evaluator Chair who notifies the Administrator to continue with the processing. If there are questions/objections, the Administrator will acquire any necessary information.
  - Interviews applicant by phone.

- If the application is in order and the reference has been received, the Administrator notifies the candidate that the initial review has been completed.
- When the applicant has completed all necessary requirements, the Evaluator Chair shall add the Evaluator’s name in the monthly Board report and add the Evaluator to the NSDA Evaluator List.

IF Application approved:

- Letter of acceptance done by Administrator and mailed to accepted applicant along with a contract.
- Upon receiving the signed contract, the Evaluator Administrator notifies the appropriate Workshop Evaluators to arrange a teleconference with the applicant.

IF Application is disapproved:

- Letter of rejection shall be sent out by the President of the Alliance.
- Letter shall include:
  - reason(s) for rejection.
  - fifteen (15) day opportunity to amend the problem(s).
- Letter shall be copied to the Administrator and kept on file with the original application.
- If no amendment to the person’s application is received, the matter shall be considered closed.
• If an objection, amendment and/or request for a hearing are received, it shall be handled in accordance with the Appeals Process section of the Evaluator Guidelines.


M-12. CERTIFICATION TESTING COMPLAINTS and PROTESTS

M-12.1: Disciplinary Proceedings for Conduct Prejudicial to NSDA Certification Testing

- Responding to conduct considered prejudicial:
  - Persons conducting themselves in a manner that is prejudicial to NSDA during a certification event must be dealt with promptly.
  - Conduct considered prejudicial includes, but is not limited to
    ➢ abusive behavior toward a dog or person.
    ➢ severe punishment of a dog.
    ➢ subjecting a dog/person to a life-threatening situation.
    ➢ a participant/Evaluator who is under the influence of illicit or illegal drugs or alcohol.

- Eligibility to File Complaints:
  - Any K-9 handler, participant, Evaluator, or observer attending a NSDA certification testing event may file a complaint with the Evaluations Manager concerning conduct prejudicial to the interests of NSDA and/or the certification testing event.
  - All complaints must be in writing, must be signed by the person making the complaint, and must be received by the Evaluations Manager within two (2) weeks of the event.
  - The Evaluations Manager is required to accept a written complaint or protest which is submitted within this time period and shall convene the Hearing Committee.

M-12.2: Lodging Protests

- Grounds for Protests:
  - Persons filing protests of a test or other activity directly related to a NSDA certification event shall be limited to the following grounds for filing:
    ➢ The Evaluator/Apprentice who evaluated the test was not eligible to evaluate.
    ➢ The Evaluator/Apprentice did not follow the field test guidelines for that discipline.
    ➢ The K-9 or handler had not met the Prerequisites for the test and/or was ineligible to take the test.
    ➢ The handler or K-9 was in violation of rules of conduct for the certification test as stated in the Handler Briefing.

- Complaint Investigation Requirements:
  - The Evaluations Manager shall submit the complaint/protest to the Hearing Committee to investigate fully and actively.
  - The Evaluation Manager shall appoint the Chair of the Hearing Committee taking into consideration the discipline being investigated.
  - Investigation into the grievance shall include written statements obtained from the complainant, witnesses, and participants.
  - In addition, evidence such as photographs, drawings, or other items may be collected to assist in investigating the account.
  - When statements and evidence have been gathered, the Hearing Committee Chair shall
schedule a hearing to take place in person, by conference call or by electronic media.

- **Procedure for Hearings:**
  - When the Hearing Committee Chair has determined that the complaint has merit, he/she shall notify the individual(s) by e-mail or other electronic means of the date, time and place/manner of the meeting at which the complaint is to be decided.
  - The inquiry of the Hearing Committee shall be held within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the petition of defense. The complaining and defending parties shall be present by the determined manner. Legal Counsel shall not be allowed.
  - Hearings shall be open only to those persons directly involved in the dispute (handler, Principal and/or Apprentice Evaluator, witness(es), subject(s), etc.) and shall be closed to all other persons.
  - When all required persons have presented their statements, the charge(s) shall be read/distributed by the Hearing Committee Chair to the complaining and defending parties.
  - Statements from persons lodging complaints shall be reviewed as well as any evidence and explanation of the situation.
  - Statements of witnesses and evidence of persons charged with complaints shall be reviewed.
  - After all statements and evidence have been presented, the Hearing Committee shall adjourn to deliberate.
  - The Hearing Committee shall have five (5) days from the date of the hearing to notify the complaining and defending parties of their decision.

- **Hearing Committee Decisions:**
  - The Hearing Committee shall determine if the subject of the complaint has or has not committed a violation.
  - Findings shall be based solely on the information and evidence presented at the hearing.
  - If claims charged against the person named in the protest are determined to be unfounded, the Hearing Committee Chair shall notify the complaining and defending parties, the Evaluations Manager and Testing Division Manager in writing, via e-mail or other electronic means, of such a decision within five (5) days from the date of the hearing.
  - If the protest is deemed to have merit, see Section 3, Disciplinary Sanctions.
  - The decision of the Hearing Committee shall be final; no further appeals are available.
  - A complete written account of the entire complaint, the hearing, including copies of all statements, maps or other evidence in the issue, and detailed notes regarding the evidence and decision process is required as part of the final hearing report.
  - All of the final paperwork shall be sent, within five (5) days of the determination, to the NSDA Secretary to be kept on permanent file.

**M-12.3: Disciplinary Actions**

- Should the complaint be found to be legitimate against a Principal/Apprentice Evaluator, the Hearing Committee shall recommend one or more of the following action guidelines to the Evaluations Manager. A copy of these recommendations shall be copied to the Testing Division
Manager:
- written letter of reprimand for a Principal and/or Apprentice Evaluator.
- giving a full test in that discipline under the guidance of another Principal Evaluator.
- suspension of eligibility to participate in all testing events for a specific period of time.
- permanent suspension of eligibility for participation in NSDA certification testing events.
- free retest for handler within six (6) months, with/without NSDA covering expenses of an Evaluator to travel to the general area of the participant(s).
- awarding the certificate if it is deemed appropriate.
- refund of testing fee.

Should the complaint be found to be legitimate against a person other than the Principal/Apprentice Evaluator, the Hearing Committee shall consider the following guidelines appropriate to recommend to the Testing Division Manager:
- counseling on the proper method of participation during NSDA testing events.
- a recommendation to the Evaluator and/or hosting team that the subject or assistant not be permitted to participate in NSDA testing for a specified period of time.
M-13. NEWSLETTER

M-13.1 Deadlines

- 8th of the month: Deadline for articles and photos
- 9th of the month: Editor formats the newsletter
- 10th of the month: Sent to a NSDA President approved proof reader for corrections/comments/changes
- 12th of the month: Returned to Editor for final review
- 13th of the month: Sent to web poster
- 15th of the month: Posted to web/e-mail notice to members