

APTA Bylaws v5.0

Version History

Version 1.0 – Written in February, 2008 by the Board Chair, Prasad Sammeta

Version 2.0 – Written in January, 2013 by the Bylaws Team

(Chair: Seetharamudu Ande; Team members: Tulasiram Ravuri & Raja Brahma)

Version 3.0 – Written in November, 2014 by the Bylaws Team

(Chair: Satya Swarup Addagarla; Team members: Tulasiram Ravuri & Raja Brahma)

Version 4.0 – Written in October, 2016 by the Bylaws Team

(Chair: Srinivas Chimata; Team members: Sreenivas Gali, Venkat Velivela, Satya Gopalam & Srinivas Rayapureddy)

Version 5.0 – Written in August, 2018 by the Bylaws Team

(Chair: Venkat Veera Velivala; Team members: Srinivas Rayapureddy, Siva Chandu, Tirumala Kummarapurugu, & Satyam Marthambadi)

Contents

Item	Page #
1. Version History	1
2. Article I – Name and Organization	2
3. Article II – Mission Statement and Objectives	2
4. Article III – Membership	3-8
Member Categories	3-4
Disciplinary/Corrective Actions (Suspensions/Expulsions)	5-8
5. Article IV – General Body	8
6. Article V – APTA Advisory Council (AAC)	9
7. Article VI – Board of Directors	9-13
Board Related	9-12
Board Nominated Committees	12-13
8. Article VII – Executive Committee	13-20
Core Executive Related	13-18
Executive Nominated Committees	18-20
9. Article VIII – Decision Making in Board and Executive Committee	20
10. Article IX – Election and Voting	21-23
11. Article X – Meetings	23
12. Article XI – Bylaws Amendments	24-25
13. Article XII – Budget and Financing	25
14. Article XIII – APTA Event Guidelines	26
15. Article IX – Communication Moderation	26
16. Article XV – ASEP Rules and Guidelines	27
17. Article XVI – Web Site and PO Box	27
18. Article XVII – Order of Business	27
19. Article XVIII – Seal	27
20. Article XIX – Dissolution	27

Article I: Name and Organization

Section 1:

The name and title of this organization is “American Progressive Telugu Association”, herein after referred in short as “APTA”.

Section 2:

It is a not-for- profit organization registered in 2008 under the laws of the State of Kansas and shall exist in perpetuity.

Section 3:

The APTA shall exercise all powers conferred by the Statutes of the State of Kansas for a not-for-profit organization.

Section 4:

- a) Life Members, Patron and Grand Patron Members constitute the **General Body** of the Organization. Hereafter Life/Patron/Grand Patron Members will be referred as General Body in this document.
- b) All APTA activities are supervised & executed by (i) Advisory Council (ii) Board and its Nominated committees (iii) Executive & its Nominated Committees.
- c) The above three bodies shall have the structure, authority and responsibility detailed in Articles IV, V, VI and VII.

Article II: Mission Statement & Objectives

Section 1:

APTA Mission Statement:

To empower the Telugu speaking people in North America into a growing relationship of Fraternity and Extended Family and inspire them through the concepts of mutual help and support the needy people to bring a positive social change.

Section 2:

The objectives of APTA shall be the following, but not limited to:

- a) Preserve and maintain the heritage of people of the Telugu language origin
- b) Assist and promote cultural, educational, social, economic and community activities of the Telugu speaking people
- c) Collaborate, cooperate and assist in the organization of periodic member networking events
- d) Foster friendship and understanding between Telugu speaking people and other communities and to support humanitarian causes from time to time.
- e) Hold any other non-profit community service events (in India as well as in North America) as determined by the Board of Directors and/or the Executive Committee.
- f) Help and assist members in the APTA Organization in a few areas such as jobs, educational, legal, immigration, medical/health-care, women empowerment, matrimonial services, to name a few.

Article III: Membership

Section 1:

Membership Rules

Membership in APTA shall be open to any Telugu speaking person or to any person of Telugu origin or a descendant of such family residing in North America and abiding by the objectives defined in Article II as long as all new memberships are validated, verified and approved by the APTA Memberships team. Any person interested to become a member of this APTA Organization must be referred by an existing member of the APTA.

- a) Family is considered as a unit for membership enrollment. The unit includes individual, spouse and legal dependents such as children under 18 years only.
- b) No more than one membership in a family shall be allowed unless the child is older than 18 years. If a General Body Member is with married status, the legal spouse shall also be eligible to contest and be allowed to vote in APTA elections.
- c) Children in a family with more than 18 years old shall be allowed to take Student/Annual/Life/Patron/Grand Patron Membership.
- d) Children in a family who become life members or higher category will be eligible to vote, but the minimum age to contest in the APTA elections shall be 25 years or older.
- e) Albeit only one of the spouses in a family is a General Body Member, both spouses are eligible to contest in APTA elections.
- f) Albeit only one of the spouses in a family is a General Body member, both spouses can be nominated to any Board or Executive related nominated positions (as long as they meet the eligibility criteria mentioned in the below mentioned sections).

Section 2:

Membership Categories

Depending up on the eligibility, an individual seeking an APTA membership shall be granted any one of the following five categories of memberships. All memberships shall be taken either online (on APTA web site) or by filling the membership form and sending it to the APTA PO Box, along with a check (to pay the membership dues). None of the membership dues shall be paid via company-matched funds.

1. Student Members

- a. Membership is free for Students. However, they are expected to become Annual/Life/Patron/Grand Patron member once they start on their new jobs.
- a. Student members are entitled to participate in all activities of the organization except that they are neither eligible to vote/contest in any APTA elections nor be nominated in non-Student related positions.

2. Annual Members

The Annual members' membership fee shall be \$25 or more per calendar year. These annual memberships shall expire by the end of year (December 31st of each year) regardless when the members take their memberships during a year. Annual members are entitled to participate in all activities of the organization except that they are neither eligible to vote/contest in any APTA elections nor be nominated in any Board or Executive related positions.

3. Life Members

- a. Members who pay one-time membership fee of \$100 are considered as Life members. Life members are entitled to all benefits in the organization for their life time. An upgrade from an Annual membership to a Life membership shall be allowed. For instance, an existing annual member who has paid \$25 for annual membership any time during a year shall need to pay only \$75 more to become a Life member before the year end (Dec 31st).
- b. Life members are eligible to vote in any APTA elections and to contest for elected positions and to be nominated or appointed to any Board and Executive positions, except to BOD (Board Of Directors) and to AAC (APTA Advisory Committee). Please refer to the Board Directors' and AAC members' eligible criteria listed in the Articles VI and VII.

4. Patron Members

- a. Members who pay membership fee of \$1000 or more (up to \$4999) are considered as Patron members. It shall either be a one-time payment or through an upgrade from a Life membership.
- b. All Life members shall be allowed to upgrade to Patron memberships any time by paying the balance amount towards a minimum total of \$1000.
- c. Life members can become Patron Members by paying the differential amount dues. For instance, an existing Life member who has paid \$100 for Life membership shall need to pay only \$900 more to become a Patron member.
- d. Patron Members will have all the benefits, privileges and rights (such as voting and contesting in APTA elections as well as getting nominated/appointed to any Board and Executive related Nominated positions) that Life Members do have. Patron Members will gain the eligibility to contest as a Director of the Board in the APTA elections. An existing Life member shall be allowed to upgrade to the Patron membership until a day (11: 59 PM Eastern Time) before the deadline date of the Election Nomination Form Submission (set by the Elections Committee in their Election Manual).

5. Grand Patron Members

- a) Members who pay membership fee of \$5000 or more are considered as Grand Patron members. It shall either be a one-time payment or through an upgrade from a Life/Patron membership.
- b) All Life members and Patron members shall be allowed to upgrade to Grand Patron memberships any time during a year by paying the balance amount towards the total of \$5000. For instance, an existing Patron member who has earlier paid \$1000 for Patron membership shall need to pay only \$4000 more to become a Grand Patron member. Similarly, an existing Life member who has earlier paid \$100 for Life membership shall need to pay only \$4900 more to become a Grand Patron member.
- c) All Grand Patron members shall have all benefits, privileges and rights (such as voting and contesting in APTA elections as well as getting nominated/appointed to any Board and Executive related Nominated positions) that Life and Patron members do have.

Section 3:

Membership Enrollment and Responsibilities

All new members shall be referred by at least one current APTA member.

- a) A person shall become an APTA member only up on a review by the Memberships team as mentioned in the above Section 1.
- b) Memberships team shall maintain records of all members along with respective sources of references and family details.

- c) Memberships team shall work closely and hand-in-hand with the Web Team to maintain the members list on APTA web site.
- d) All General Body members shall be added to an official Email distribution list such as apta_reg_members@googlegroups.com
- e) At most, two email id's per family (one for General Body Member & another for a legal spouse) can be added to this official distribution list, which in turn, shall be moderated by the Mail Moderation team.
- f) The Email distribution lists shall only be used for official communication and shall be moderated by the Mail Moderation team.
- g) Effective date: A membership is effective after it is validated and approved by the Memberships team.
- h) The APTA membership fee is non-refundable in any circumstances including a few cases such as members' suspensions or expulsions with the Board's disciplinary actions.
- i) The eligible voters' contact information (such as name, email & telephone numbers of Voters and Referrers) is required to be shared to all Election Contestants as per the time lines mentioned in the Election Manual.
- j) A General Body member can personally be contacted through phone or email unless and otherwise the recipient sends a formal email to sender and request not to contact him/her.

Section 4:

APTA banner/logo is required to be placed in the following scenarios:

- a. If any public event is organized by APTA Members with more than 100 people's attendance (out of which 75% or more are the APTA members).
- b. If APTA communication channels are used for the promotion of the event such as mailing to APTA members, Sending Text/WhatsApp Messages (personally or in the group) etc.

Section 5:

Corrective actions, Suspension, Permanent Revocation (Expulsion) – All the Suspension rules, corrective/disciplinary actions and expulsions will apply to whole membership (including households i.e. spouses/children).

- (i) Suspension of membership on any demonstrated activity (such as conflicting with the APTA Objectives defined in the Article II or one of the items listed in below sub-sections) shall constitute grounds for initiating revocation of a membership.
- (ii) Conviction of a member, in a court of Law, for a criminal offense involving moral turpitude shall constitute reason for automatic revocation of membership. The Board may seek advice on these matters from APTA Advisory Council (shall be referred as AAC hereafter). The Board shall take final decision in these cases after consulting AAC.
- (iii) If a General Body member who has either taken membership or upgraded to the next level by paying fee with Credit Card or a check, but after the payment if they are intentionally making a stop-payment (either in PayPal or in Bank transactions), they shall be subject to an immediate suspension and further followed by potential expulsion (if not pleaded guilty and paid back the respective membership fee within 30 days). Any such payments that are meant for ASEP or sponsoring for any APTA events and later filing dispute on the payments shall result in the above mentioned disciplinary action.
- (iv) All the disciplinary related communication shall be sent out to the General Body either by the Board Chair or by the Board Secretary. The Memberships team shall maintain a separate list of all suspended/expelled members for records.
- (v) General Body members can report to the Board about an incident attracting disciplinary proceedings.

- (vi) Regardless of a formal complaint lodged by a member, if the Board believes that a violation has taken place beyond a reasonable doubt (except in a case where at least 33% of the total General Body disagree through Emails on the Board's action within 30 days), the Board can exercise discretionary powers and initiate disciplinary proceedings against the violating member.
- (vii) Depending up on the nature and gravity of violation, the Board may decide to put the violating member under suspension while the disciplinary proceedings are in progress. The Board does have power and responsibility to call for explanation from such a suspended member, giving him/her 30 days to respond.
- (viii) The Board of Directors may review the received explanation from such suspended members and up on the satisfied explanation from the suspended members, it shall revoke the suspension with/without certain conditions. If not satisfied, the Board can choose to withdraw the granted membership and expel the suspended member for good from the organization. The official expulsion (permanent revocation of membership) mail shall be sent to the expelled member and also to the General Body either by the Board Chairperson or by the Board Secretary. The Memberships team shall maintain a record of all such expelled members.
- (ix) Once a suspended person's membership is reinstated followed by his/her suspension revocation by the Board, he/she shall still have a right to vote in the APTA elections, but however he/she shall not contest in next two terms from the date of his/her membership reinstatement.
- (x) If the Board does not take any corrective action on a suspended member within 180 days from the date of suspension, the "low category" of the corrective action as mentioned in the below item (c) of XI shall be applicable.
- (xi) The corrective actions on suspended members (when proven at fault) may be categorized as follows:
 - a. Organizational threat or abuse (**High category**) – The corrective action may include restricting all membership privileges (such as voting/contesting in elections and participating in APTA Events/Conventions/Conferences) for several years and/or up to the expulsion. Some of the wrong-doings in this category include
 - i. Stealing of General body member information.
 - ii. Creating new organizations with a majority of members from APTA to damage APTA & its growth.
 - iii. Proven evidence of discouraging new potential members to join APTA.
 - iv. Lawsuits/Legal cases on APTA or its Leadership and/or Legal notices to APTA Leadership with baseless and unproven allegations without first formally approaching the Leadership
 - b. Group abuse or baseless allegations (**Medium category**) – Corrective actions in this category may include one or more of following such as a) not able to vote and b) not able to contest in APTA elections for one or more terms.
 - c. Personal abuse or baseless allegations (**Low category**) - Corrective action may include extending the suspension for up to one year.
- (xii) Suspended members may get in to further disciplinary actions if there is "no response" or "refused to give explanation within 30 days of explanation requested by Board" or suspensions can be extended indefinitely as per the Board's discretion.
- (xiii) Suspended member may face further disciplinary actions if failed three times in a row to attend meetings scheduled by the Board for explanation. Exceptional cases may include, but not limited to,
 - a. Suspended member or someone in the family with health emergencies.
 - b. Suspended member is out of town and not accessible to phone with unreasonable time zones.
 - c. Professional emergencies and production crisis that conflict with scheduled meeting times.
- (xiv) All the communication regarding Suspension shall be released by Board Chairman or Board Secretary. All suspended member details and the suspension shall be communicated to General Body within 30 days unless the suspension is revoked without any corrective/disciplinary action.

(xv) **A comprehensive list of Violations attracting disciplinary proceedings by the Board**

The following list has a few examples of violations. However, the list shall not be construed as a complete list of the violations falling within the scope of the current Article. To be precise, the final decision on any disciplinary related matters shall be left to the discretion and decision of the Board of Directors with a majority of voting in the Board (except in a case where at least 33% of the total population General Body disagree through Email on Board action within 30 days).

- (1) Misusing APTA name for promoting self-interest such as personal faith, personal political ideology, personal financial interest or personal business
- (2) An APTA office-bearer neglecting assigned APTA responsibilities/assigned duties
- (3) Contacting and bothering APTA members via email and/or social media (such as messages of WhatsApp, Facebook etc) with non-official yet disruptive communication without members willingness to receive such communication and/or recipient requested to not contact any further through phone, Email or any social media.
- (4) Misusing the APTA membership data or sharing it with others to create unofficial mail distribution lists or WhatsApp groups without any proper approval from the Executive team
- (5) Intentionally dragging APTA in to regulatory enquiries and/or filing legal cases against APTA or its leadership without formally raising complaint with the Board (atleast 30 days before filing a legal complaint).

(6) While a member is under suspension:

- (a) his/her email ID will temporarily be removed from all official APTA Communication channels such as ap-ta@googlegroups.com, apta_reg_members@googlegroups.com etc. and also his/her phone number or user ID from any other APTA recognized social media platforms such as APTA official WhatsApp groups.
- (b) he/she will temporarily be removed from the nominated/elected positions
- (c) he/she will not be allowed to vote in APTA elections
- (d) he/she will not be allowed to contest for any position in APTA elections
- (e) he/she will not be inducted into any APTA Nominated positions
- (f) he/she will not be allowed to send any mails or to make calls to the APTA membership on any APTA related matters
- (g) he/she will not be allowed to access the APTA membership database (to contact all members either by copying/blind-copying them directly on emails or via any unofficial email/social media channels)

(7) When a member is expelled from APTA:

- (a) he/she will no longer be allowed to vote in any elections in APTA
- (b) he/she will no longer be allowed to contest for any position in any elections in APTA
- (c) he/she will lose all membership privileges including but not limited to referring students to ASEP for scholarships.
- (d) he/she will no longer be able to login to the APTA account. Access will be revoked.
- (e) his/her Email ID will be removed permanently from all official APTA Communication channels such as ap-ta@googlegroups.com, apta_reg_members@googlegroups.com etc and also the phone numbers will be removed from all electronic communication channels including WhatsApps & Telegram etc.
- (f) he/she shall permanently be removed from the nominated/elected positions and such positions shall be announced "vacant" by the Board
- (g) he/she will not be inducted into any APTA Nominated positions

(viii) he/she will not be allowed to access the APTA membership database (to contact all members either by copying/blind-copying them directly on emails or via any unofficial email/social media channels)
 (ix) his/her membership fee will not be returned

(x) he/she cannot appeal back to the Board for reinstatement of his/her membership. Expulsion means the permanent revocation of his membership

Article IV: General Body

Section 1:

The General Body shall consist of Life Members, Patron and Grand Patron Members.

Section 2:

The General Body member and his/her spouse shall have right to vote in the APTA elections. Two ballots can be sent to each family (one for husband and another for wife). If the spouse email id and phone number are not logged in the Membership data, two ballots shall be sent to the given email ID of the primary member. Otherwise, one ballot each shall be sent to two different emails of both wife and husband.

- I. General Body can request the Bylaws amendments and to approve/reject the Board proposed amendments as per the Article XI.
- II. Recalling an elected APTA Leader
 - a. The General Body shall have a right to elect/recall the elected members such as Executive committee, Board and any other delegates that represent APTA in affiliated organizations.
 - b. As directed and supervised by the Board, such recalling requests can be initiated by the APTA Elections Committee (AEC, as defined in this document in the following sections) after receiving recall petitions from the General Body. AEC can recall a subset or full elected committees with or without cause, by the consent of 51% of the whole General Body (in other words, total membership). Whoever members respond to AEC's call with "Yes" answer to the recall action will be counted as a consenting vote. Whoever members don't respond, their answers will be taken as "No" answer to the recall action. The tools for such response collection from the General Body shall entirely be left to the discretion and decision of AEC.

Section 3:

Direct Communication with Board and/or Executive Team

- a) All registered members shall have a right to directly communicate either with the Board or with the Executive or with both via official mailing distributing lists (as described in the Articles VI and VII) or shall directly contact them as per the contact information of the Leadership listed on the APTA web site.
- b) The moderators of such official Board and Executive distribution list shall let the members write to these DL's by making appropriate moderation settings so that the members' mails would not be bounced.

Article V: APTA Advisory Council (AAC)

- a) This AAC team consists of nominated advisory body. The Board shall recommend AAC members to the current AAC Chairperson. The AAC Chairperson will nominate (expand) new team members with the following instructions of the eligibility criteria and the AAC team members shall elect the AAC Chair for the new term.
- b) The eligibility criteria for a new AAC member are as follows:
 - (i) Shall be a Life member at least for 5 years and in addition, he/she shall have upgraded the Life membership to Patron membership by the time of his/her inclusion in to the AAC team.
 - (ii) Should have not been suspended or expelled from APTA in the past.
 - (iii) Should not have filed any legal cases against APTA.
 - (iv) In exceptional cases, an eminent and well-known Telugu person can be exempted from the (i) criterion (with a majority of approval from the rest of the AAC members and the Board Directors) when he/she shall take a Grand Patron membership along with big donations to the organization.
- c) The term for the AAC Chairman position will be 2 years.
- d) AAC chair or members shall not continue more than 2 terms in a row.

The main purpose of this council is to function as an advisory body to the Board in legislative, legal and disciplinary matters. AAC shall review the matters referred by the Board and provide an opinion within the requested target time. Chairs of all Board-nominated committees shall attend the AAC meetings as ex-officio members to advice on their respective subjects. AAC, in conjunction with the APTA Board, shall be responsible for laying down the Road map for the organization. AAC shall recommend the long and short term objectives to the Board.

Article VI: Board of Directors

Section 1:

What is Board?

- a. The business of the Board shall be managed by a team consisting of eleven (11) members, hereinafter referred to as “Board of Directors” or simply “Board”.
- b. Ten (10) members of the Board shall be elected by the General Body and the eleventh Board Member shall be the current President of the APTA Executive Committee.
- c. Voting right: All eleven Board members shall have equal voting privileges and responsibility in the Board meetings.
- d. Elected Body: All ten Board members (except the ex-officio President) shall be elected by the General Body in the biennial elections held by the Elections Committee.
- e. If the list of contestants for the Board Directors exceeds 10, then all of them will end up in the elections and the top ten people would be considered Elected.
- f. If a Director of the Board resigns voluntarily or gets removed with a disciplinary action, that position can be refilled within 90 days or it shall remain vacant for the rest of the term. The Board member contestant with next highest majority of vote (followed by the first 10 contestants) can be offered the vacant position with consent from a majority of the rest of the Board Directors.

- g. Term: Each Board Director's term shall be two years from the start date of the new term (usually at the beginning of the biennial term). In other words, the current term is valid until the day of the oath-ceremony of all new Board members starting in the next term. However, the term of a Board Director can end pre-maturely due to
 - (i) voluntary resignation duly processed and approved by a majority of the Board members or
 - (ii) termination by the Board as a result of disciplinary proceedings initiated for violation as per the Section 4 of Article III.
- h. An elected Board member shall serve no more than two terms consecutively on the Board. An exception is the ex-officio member, the current President, who primarily represents the Executive Committee and is expected to bring all Executive meeting updates to the Board. In other words, the President's term in the Board shall not be counted against these two consecutive terms.
- i. Board Quorum & Decisions: Six out of eleven (6 of 11) members of the Board shall constitute a quorum. Any motion or proposal laid before the Board shall become a Board's Resolution if it is passed in the Board's meeting with a simple majority (6 out of 11 Board Members). The Board meeting shall have a minimum quorum (at least six members) to do any decision-making and in such quorum again, a majority shall prevail (in a rare case of a Board meeting with only six members' attendance, at least four members have to say "Yes" to pass a proposed resolution).
- j. Chairperson and Secretary:
 - i. The Board shall be headed by the Chairperson and shall be assisted by Secretary, in discharging assigned functions.
 - ii. Both Chairman and Secretary shall be elected from the Board Members in their first Board meeting at the beginning of their new biennial term with a majority vote (6 out of 11 Board Members; in the year of 2017, it shall be 8 out of 14). The AAC Chair shall oversee the election process of both Board Chair and Secretary in the first Board Meeting and then shall swear both of them in, along with the rest of the Board members. All Board members shall be requested to complete their Oath forms (sent to them by the AAC Chair) after their first Sworn-in Board meeting and then shall send the filled-in forms to the General Secretary.
 - iii. The Term of both Chairman and Secretary shall be one calendar year each.
 - iv. The Board Chair shall be the ex-officio member of the Executive committee automatically and shall have the voting privilege like any other Executive member in the Executive Committee meetings.
 - v. Recalling the Board Chair: In a case when the Chair cannot do justice to his/her role or in a major conflict with a majority of the Board Directors or becoming a major impediment in the Board business, the rest of the Board Directors shall re-convene and re-elect a new Board Chair with a majority voting in the quorum. Albeit the Board Chair has been recalled, he/she shall still continue as the Board Director until his/her term expires.
 - vi. Recalling the Board Secretary: In a case when the Secretary cannot do justice to his/her role or in a major conflict with the majority of the Board Directors or becoming a major impediment in the Board business, the rest of the Board Directors shall re-convene and re-elect a new Board Secretary with a majority voting in the quorum. Albeit the Board Secretary has been recalled, he/she shall still continue as the Board Director until his/her term expires.
 - vii. The Board Chair shall be responsible for filing the annual Certificate of Good Standing of the organization from the web site of Kansas State of Secretary. All elected members (Board and Core Executive team) shall be required to provide whatever information (including their Social Security Numbers) is requested by the Executive team.

Section 2:

Eligibility for a Director of the Board:

The following points are the eligible criteria (all three criteria together must be met) for a valid APTA member to contest in elections as a Director in the APTA Board.

- a) Must be either a Life member or a Patron member or a Grand Patron member for at least two full years. For a precise definition of “two full years”, here is an example – the contestant must be either a Life or a Patron or a Grand-Patron member as of Dec 31, 2016 to run in elections for a Board Director position for the term, 2019-2020. For a two year old life member to be eligible as a contestant, he/she must upgrade the Life membership to the Patron member as per the below sub-section b.
- b) If the contestant is not a Patron member but only a Life member by the time of the Election Notification Date, he/she must become a Patron member at least one day prior to the deadline date of the Board Director Nomination Form Submission Date as per the sub-section (iv) of Section 2 of Article III.
- c) Must have served in the current or previous terms (one of the following criteria shall suffice)
 - (i) either in AAC or in Board or in Core Executive committee or
 - (ii) either as a Chair of a Board-nominated committee or as a Chair of an Executive-nominated committee or
 - (iii) as a Regional Vice President
- d) Must not have been suspended or expelled in the past.
- e) Must not have any previous history of filing any legal cases against APTA.

Section 3:

Board Functions:

- a) Both Board Chair and Board Secretary shall be the official representatives of the Board. All official Board related communication to the General Body shall be handled either by the Chair or by the Secretary. In the absence of both of them, the rest of Board members shall assign the temporary communication responsibilities to one among them (with a majority voting).
- b) Frequency of Board meetings: The Board shall meet at least once in a month.
- c) Meeting proceedings: The meeting shall be chaired by the current Chairperson, but moderated by the Secretary and all meeting proceedings shall be recorded by the Secretary, unless the Chairperson delegates such responsibility to another Board member in special situations. In the absence of Chairperson, the meetings shall be chaired by the Secretary. The Board Meeting minutes shall be distributed to the extended executive team’s DL such as apta-exec@googlegroups.com and it is left to the Board’s decision whether to share these meeting minutes with the General Body or not.
- d) All official communication among the Board Directors shall be done with a mailing distribution list such as, apta_bod@googlegroups.com. This distribution list shall be owned and moderated by both Board Chair and Board Secretary. The General Body shall have a right to communicate directly with the Board via this distribution list.

Section 4:

Board’s Authority and Responsibility

- a) The Board shall have total control over the affairs of APTA Organization and shall exhibit leadership towards achieving APTA objectives.
- b) The Board safeguards all the properties and funds belonging to APTA. Except for a minimum balance mandated by bank limits and some amount for APTA operational maintenance expenditure, all unused funds shall be deposited in FDI insured securities or similar deposits, to be able to withdraw the funds on demand.

- c) The Board shall have authority and is responsible for conducting internal audit. It shall nominate a team of Internal Audit and appoint a valid APTA member as its Chair.
- d) In cases of all ambiguous matters that are not clearly listed or not at all listed in this Bylaws document or in any other dilemma situations, the Board's decision shall be final (with a majority voting in the Board) and a few examples could be (but not limited to) Bylaws amendments, Election Process related matters, and Disciplinary/Violation related matters.
- e) The Board is the disciplinary body in APTA. For further details, refer to the Section 4 of Article III.

Section 5:

Board-Nominated Committees

- a) The Board shall be responsible for appointing such Committees as Elections, Bylaws, Legal Advisory Council, Internal Audit, and Conference Advisory Committee. All the Committees appointed by the Board shall report to the Board. The Board (with a majority voting in the Board) shall nominate the Chair for each of the Committees. All Board-nominated chairs shall be appointed by the Board within the first six months of the current term. In exceptional and valid cases, the Board can appoint a board-nominated chair for a new or an existing Board-nominated committee beyond the first six months.
- b) At any time during his/her current term, if performance of a Board-nominated chair/member is totally dismal and not up to an acceptable level, the Board shall re-nominate another qualified member in the former's place.
- c) Each committee shall have a total of three or more members (one Chair and others being Vice-Chairs and/or members). Each Chair of these committees can nominate two or more members of his/her choice to be part of the committee.
- d) All Board-nominated committees (including the Bylaws and Elections Committee) shall submit their detailed plans of operations to the Board and get the Board's approval. For instance, the Elections committee shall first submit their plan of Election Procedure (deadlines of nomination filing/withdrawals/finalizations, election voting tools used, to name a few) and only after the Board's approval, the Elections team shall proceed to conduct the Elections. Similarly, the Bylaws team shall submit a plan (with a detailed amendment procedure and deadlines of general body's feedback, approval/rejections, to name a few) and only after the Board's approval, the Bylaws team shall proceed to conduct the Bylaws Amendments Process.
- e) **Eligibility for all Board-Nominated Committee Chairs:**
From the below list of four requirements, he/she must meet the first requirement (i) as well as one of the rest of the three requirements (either ii or iii or iv).
 - i. A valid APTA Life/Patron/Grand Patron Member for at least one full year. For a precise definition of "one full year", here is an example – he/she must be a Life/Patron/Grand Patron Member as of December 31, 2017 to be eligible to be nominated for the term, 2019-2020 and
 - ii. Served as a Director of the Board in the current or the past terms or
 - iii. Served as a member of the Core Executive committee in the current or the past terms or
 - iv. Served as a member in AAC or in any of the Board-nominated committee or in an Extended Executive team in the current or the past terms.

Note: Except the Elections Committee Chair (and his/her team members), the rest of the Board-nominated Chairs shall be nominated by the new Board when the new term starts. The Elections Committee Chair, on the other hand, shall be nominated by the current/outgoing Board at least two months before the new term starts.
- f) The Term of all Board-nominated positions shall be two years, along with the Board Director positions.
- g) The list of the Board-nominated Committees includes the following, but not limited to
 - i. APTA Bylaws Committee (ABC):
The purpose of this committee is to conduct the process to amend the current Bylaws based on brainstorming done with in the bylaws team, feedback provided by the General Body (including the

Extended Executive members) and a subsequent approval by the Board (this team shall seek the feedback from the membership on what particular items in the current Bylaws need to be amended, the Board shall be the final authority to take any decisions on the Bylaws amendment processes and procedures). For further details, refer to the Article XI.

ii. APTA Election Committee (AEC):

The purpose of this committee is primarily to conduct the biennial election process for all eligible elected positions, but also some similar tasks such as recalling an executive member, for example. For further details, refer to the Article IX. The term of this team is valid until the next Election Committee is announced by the Board, irrespective of the current or new Board.

iii. Legal Advisory Committee (LAC):

The purpose of this committee is to provide the appropriate legal advice to the Board. This team shall review the disciplinary cases and shall send its appropriate recommendations to the Board.

iv. Internal Audit Committee (IAC):

The purpose of this committee is to audit all APTA related financial transactions and to closely work with the Executive Treasurer team (Treasurer and three Joint Treasurers) and assist them with the annual Tax filing procedure.

v. Conference Advisory Committee (CAC):

1. The purpose of this committee is to find an appropriate location and suggest the names of potential Conference Conveners to hold the biennial APTA National Conference. This team shall take charge for planning the resources and other requirements for such meets and for communicating well in advance with the General Body, making arrangements for such conferences, to name a few.
2. CAC Chair person will be nominated by the Board.
3. The size of the CAC team may not exceed 3 members.
4. If a member played the role as CAC chair, he/she cannot play the same role for at least next 3 national conventions.
5. This committee will coordinate and receive all the bids from various regions (that includes the budget and recommended convener in each bid) for an upcoming national convention. CAC team will evaluate the bids as per the guidelines (prepared by the CAC team and approved by Board). Then the CAC team will recommend the place and convener to the Board for their approval.
6. Once the Convener is finalized and made the official announcement, CAC team will take the back seat and will do the expert advises as and when requested by the Convener and the convention team.

vi. Ethics Code Committee (ECC):

The purpose of this committee is to define the Ethical principles and Code of conduct for all APTA members. All such guidelines shall be posted on the APTA web site.

Article VII: Executive Committee

Section 1:

What is a Core Executive Committee?

Roles:

The Executive Committee shall be constituted by twelve (12) elected members as well as the Board Chair (being an ex-officio member). To differentiate the Elected Executive Committee from other Executive-nominated committees, the former is often referred as “Core Executive Committee” as well. The total members in the Core Executive Committee

shall be 12 and their roles shall be as follows:

President (1); General Secretary (1); Treasurer (1); Three Vice Presidents (3); Three Joint Secretaries (3); Three Joint Treasurers (3)

Purpose:

The Executive committee shall be the operating committee that conducts the day-to-day business of the organization. The Executive Committee shall implement all or at least some of annual goals and objectives established by AAC/Board.

Oath:

The AAC Chair shall swear-in all newly elected twelve Executive members in the first Core Executive meeting. All twelve members shall be requested to complete their Oath forms (sent to them by the AAC Chair) after their first Sworn-in Core Executive meeting and then shall send the filled-in forms to the General Secretary.

Quorum:

Seven out of Thirteen (7 of 13) members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum and the Executive committee. The Executive meeting shall have a minimum quorum (at least seven members) to do any decision-making and in such quorum again, a majority shall prevail (in a rare case of an Executive meeting with only seven members' attendance, at least four members have to say "Yes" to pass a proposed resolution).

Frequency of Meetings:

Executive Committee shall meet minimally twice in a month and all recorded Executive meeting minutes shall be posted on the APTA web site with members-only viewing privilege or alternatively shall be shared with the General Body. All meetings are chaired by President, but moderated by the General Secretary. In the absence of the President, one of the Vice-Presidents shall chair the Executive meetings. The Core Executive Meeting minutes shall be distributed to the extended executive team's DL such as apta-exec@googlegroups.com and it is left to the team's decision whether to share these meeting minutes with the General Body or not.

Elected Body:

All Core Executive team members (except the ex-officio Board Chair) shall be elected by the General Body in the biennial elections held by the Election Committee.

Term:

Each Executive team member' term shall be two years from the start date of the new term. An Executive committee member can serve no more than two terms consecutively in the same role. The term of the Board Chairperson as an ex-officio of the Executive Committee shall not be counted against these two consecutive terms. However, the term of an Executive team member can end pre-maturely due to

- (i) Voluntary resignation duly processed and approved by a majority of the Executive members or termination by the Board as a result of disciplinary proceedings initiated for violation as per the Section 4 of Article III.
- (ii) All official communication among the Core Executive members shall be done with a mailing distribution list such as aptacore-exec@googlegroups.com. This distribution list shall be owned and moderated by both President and Secretary. The General Body shall have a right to communicate directly with the Core Executive team via this distribution list.

Section 2:

Eligibility for the Executive President

The following criteria (together) must be met:

- a) Valid APTA Life/Patron/Grand Patron Member for at least two full years. For a precise definition of “two full years”, here is an example – he/she must be a Life/Patron/Grand Patron Member as of December 31, 2016 to be eligible for the term, 2019-2020.
- b) Must have served in the current or previous terms (one of the following criteria shall suffice)
 - (i) either in AAC or in Board or in Core Executive committee or
 - (ii) as a Chair of a Board-nominated committee or as a Chair of an Executive-nominated committee or
 - (iii) as a Regional Vice President
- c) Must not have been suspended with proven to be at fault or expelled in the past.
- d) Must not have any previous history of filing any legal cases against APTA.

Section 3:

Eligibility for the General Secretary

The following criteria (together) must be met:

- a) Valid APTA Life/Patron/Grand Patron Member for at least one full year. For a precise definition of “one full year”, here is an example – he/she must be a Life/Patron/Grand Patron Member as of December 31, 2017 to be eligible for the term, 2019- 2020.
- b) Must have served in the current or previous terms (one of the following criteria suffice)
 - (i) either in AAC or in Board or in Core Executive committee or
 - (ii) either as a Chair of a Board-nominated committee or as Chair of an Executive-nominated committee or
 - (iii) as a Regional Vice President
- c) Must not have been suspended with proven to be at fault or expelled in the past.
- d) Must not have any previous history of filing any legal cases against APTA.

Section 4:

Eligibility for the Treasurer

The following criteria (together) must be met:

- a) Valid APTA Life/Patron/Grand Patron Member for at least one full year. For a precise definition of “one full year”, here is an example – he/she must be a Life/Patron/Grand Patron Member as of December 31, 2017 to be eligible for the term, 2019-2020.
- b) Must have served in the current or previous terms (one of the following criteria shall suffice)
 - (i) either in AAC or in Board or in Core Executive committee or
 - (ii) either as a Chair of a Board-nominated committee or as Chair of an Executive-nominated committee or
 - (iii) as a Regional Vice President
- c) Must not have been suspended with proven to be at fault or expelled in the previous history.
- d) Must not have any previous history of filing any legal cases against APTA as an organization.

Section 5:

Eligibility for the rest of the Executive Team Members (Vice-President, Joint Secretary and Joint Treasurer)

The following criteria (together) must be met:

- a) Valid APTA Life/Patron/Grand Patron Member for at least one full year. For a precise definition of “one full year”, here is an example – he/she must be the Life/Patron/Grand Patron Member as of December 31, 2017 to be eligible for the term, 2019-2020.
- b) Must have served in the current or previous terms (one of the following criteria shall suffice)
 - (i) either in AAC or in Board or in Core Executive committee or
 - (ii) either as a Chair (or) Member of a Board-nominated committee; or as a Chair (or) Member of an Executive nominated committee
 - (iii) as a Regional Vice President or any region (state/city) level coordinators

Note: In other words, a member of the Extended Executive Teams shall qualify to contest for Vice-President/Jt. Secretary/Jt. Treasurer positions
- c) Must not have been suspended with proven to be at fault or expelled in the past.
- d) Must not have any previous history of filing any legal cases against APTA.

Section 6:

Executive Team Roles

a) President

- i. The President shall be the principal Executive Officer of APTA and shall preside at all the meetings of the Executive Committee.
- ii. The President shall also be one of the Directors of the Board as an ex-officio member.
- iii. The President shall appoint Chairperson(s) for all potential Nominated Committee(s), after gaining approval by a majority (7 out of 13) support of the Executive Committee.
- iv. The President shall be an owner of all APTA official email distribution lists and a manager of all official APTA WhatsApp groups.
- v. The President shall be the first official APTA Executive member on all APTA owned Banks and PayPal accounts (the second one being the Treasurer).
- vi. All APTA related official communication that goes out shall first be approved by the President.

b) Vice President

Vice Presidents shall assist the President in all matters and shall assume the duties of the President in his/her absence.

- i. The Vice President will be an ex-officio member of all committees nominated by the Executive committee and shall hold regular meetings with all Regional Vice Presidents.
- ii. The Vice President shall be a manager of all official APTA WhatsApp groups.
- iii. The additional duties and responsibilities of a Vice-President shall be defined by the President.

c) General Secretary

- i. The Secretary shall be the custodian of the Seal of APTA and all records and papers belonging to APTA. The Secretary shall closely work with the Memberships team in all membership record-keeping.
- ii. The Secretary shall collect all meeting agenda items, moderate the meetings, and keep minutes of all Executive meetings.
- iii. The Secretary shall maintain the list of all members and notify of all General Body meetings to the members.
- iv. The Secretary shall be an owner of all APTA official email distribution lists and a manager of all official APTA WhatsApp groups.
- v. The Secretary Team shall comprise the General Secretary and the three Joint Secretaries.

d) Treasurer

The Treasurer shall receive all monies for APTA and shall be the official book-keeper of all APTA finances.

- i. The Treasurer can write checks up to amounts of \$5000.00 without the Board's approval, but a co-signature of President shall be required for the amounts exceeding a limit of \$1000.00 (in other words, up to \$1000, Treasurer alone shall write a check). For the checks exceeding an amount of \$5000.00, the Treasurer shall seek the Board's approval. However, all the bills need to be kept safe in order to provide those bills to the internal or external auditors when needed.
- ii. The Treasurer shall be the second official APTA Executive member on all APTA owned Bank and PayPal accounts (the first one being the President).
- iii. The Treasurer shall prepare the annual Tax returns with the Internal Revenue Service in the current term. He/she shall also pass on all necessary information to the succeeding Treasurer that would file the Tax returns in the following term.
- iv. The Treasurer will also be responsible for finalizing annual accounts and getting them audited by a nominated internal auditor(s) and submit them for approval within Executive/Board of Directors meeting.
- v. The Treasurer Team shall send a quarterly Finance Balance Sheet to the General Body (to the official DL such as apta_reg_members@googlegroups.com).

e) Joint Secretary

- i. The Joint Secretary shall assist the Secretary in all matters and assume the duties of the Secretary in his/her absence.
- ii. The additional duties and responsibilities of Joint Secretary shall be defined by both President and Secretary.

f) Joint Treasurer

- i. The Joint Treasurer shall assist the Treasurer in all account reconciliations and assume the duties of the Treasurer in his/her absence.
- ii. The additional duties and responsibilities of Joint Treasurer shall be defined by both President and Treasurer.

Section 7:**Regional Vice Presidents (RVP)**

- a) There shall be a Regional Vice President (RVP) for each of ten US regions (New England, Mid Atlantic, Capitol, South East, North, Midwest, Central, South, Pacific North and Pacific South) and he/she shall be nominated by the President, with A majority of approval in the Executive Committee. A few more new regions in the US and Canada shall also be added depending up on the membership growth in those regions.
- b) Regional Vice Presidents shall have the following responsibilities, but not limited to:
 - i. take a leadership role in all APTA related activities in their respective regions.
 - ii. take an initiative in conducting at least one or two regional get-together events and/or picnics to strengthen bond among the members.
 - iii. assist and coordinate with the national level Executive-nominated Committees in achieving their assigned tasks.
 - iv. assist President and Vice Presidents in identifying and nominating the state/city level Coordinators, who shall act as points of contact for assisting members of APTA within their local jurisdictions with a few tasks such as membership drive, relocation assistance etc.
 - v. manage and maintain the regional email distribution lists and WhatsApp groups

- c) Eligibility for an RVP: Valid APTA Life/Patron/Grand Patron Member for at least one full year. For a precise definition of “one full year”, here is an example – he/she must be the Life/Patron/Grand Patron Member as of December 31, 2015 to be eligible for the term, 2017-2018.
- d) The Term of an RVP shall be two years, along with all other Executive-nominated positions.

Section 8:

Executive-Nominated Committees

The President shall appoint certain committees to support the Core Executive team in performing all APTA short-term and long-term Goals and Objectives.

All Executive-nominated chairs shall be appointed by the President (with a majority of approval in the team) within the first six months of the current term. In exceptional and valid cases, the President can appoint an executive-nominated chair for a new or an existing Executive-nominated committee beyond the first six months.

At any time during his/her current term, if performance of an Executive-nominated chair/member is totally dismal and not up to an acceptable level, the President shall re-nominate another qualified member in the former's place.

Each of these committee shall have three or more members (one Chair and others being members). Each Chair of these committees shall nominate, in conjunction with the President's approval, its members of his/her choice to be part of the committee. If there needs to be more members added to the committees, the Chairs of the committees shall work with the President and/or the Vice Presidents.

Eligibility for an Executive-Nominated Committee Chair (except for the Youth Services Chair):

(i) Valid APTA Life/Patron/Grand Patron Member for at least one full year. For a precise definition of “one full year”, here is an example – one must be a Life/Patron/Grand Patron Member as of December 31, 2015 to be nominated during the term, 2017-2018.

The Term of all Executive-nominated positions shall be two years, along with the Core Executive Committee positions.

List of all Potential Executive-Nominated Committees, but not limited to:

- i. ASEP Committee – APTA Student Educational Program (ASEP) is to extend assistance to the needy students in US and in India. This program is mainly designed to encourage merit students to continue education at Junior/College level as well in professional courses. APTA shall request donations from its members and organize student assistance every year before start of academic session. The Executive team shall nominate a Chair and a few regional Co-Chairs and also some regional level ASEP directors. The ASEP Committee shall oversee all program related tasks. All ASEP Guidelines shall be defined by Board and Core Executive Team and posted on the APTA web site. Each Life member shall refer to up three students and each Patron/Grand Patron up to five students.
- ii. Memberships Committee – This committee shall manage the membership registrations, welcome notes and carry the membership related operations. The Executive team shall nominate a Chair and a few regional Co-Chairs and also some regional level Membership directors. This team shall closely work with the Secretary team, Treasurer team, Mail/WhatsApp Moderation team and Web team.
- iii. Communications & Moderation Committee – This committee shall be a centralized team to moderate communications to its members. It shall moderate the assigned Email distribution lists and WhatsApp/Facebook groups.

- iv. Emergency Relief Committee – This committee shall be a centralized team to help and respond to emergencies called out by the Board or Executive Committee. An APTA member shall first contact the Executive team to seek approvals to raise funds from General Body for the affected Aptulu (in fatal road/fire accidents or sudden deaths, to name a few).
- v. APTA Farmer Protection Program (AFRP) (ఆప్త బంధు) – Many APTA members come from an agricultural background. Currently farmers in the Telugu speaking states are facing difficult situations due to climate changes, water resources, government policies etc. APTA wants to encourage farmers by educating them and helping them financially and strategically. This committee shall explore how APTA can help farmers back home.
- vi. APTA Travel & Relocation Information Program (ATRIP) – This program shall offer Travel related assistance to the members and their families. Relocation guidance within North America and when moving back to India shall be offered.
- vii. APTA Donations & Fundraiser Program (ADFP) – This team shall contact potential donors in the General Body as well as the non-members and seek for donations for the organization. It shall organize a few fund-raising programs all over the US (can also be in association with other associations or organization with a prior approval from the Board).
(viii) APTA Student Assistance Program (ASAP) – This program shall assist BS/MS Students in North America with their college admissions and job training/placement. The NextGen Program targeted at the youth (high-schoolers) shall advice the young students in the college admissions and other related matters.
- viii. APTA Medical Assistance Program (AMAP) – This program shall extend assistance for treatment and medicines to people in North America and in India, who cannot afford expenses due to poor financial status. APTA shall request donations from its members and other donors and organizes medical camps in India and extend individual assistance up on recommendation of the doctors treating the poor patients. All regional/national event/conferences shall promote the Business Forum meets.
- ix. APTA Talent Search and Assistance Program (ATSAP) – This program shall recognize people of extraordinary talents (such as Chess champions, other Sports champions, IAS trainees, to name a few) and assist them financially to encourage their development. APTA shall request donations from members/donors and assist such recognized people of extraordinary talents.
- x. APTA Women Forum – This program shall empower women in multiple areas such as jobs, children education, to name a few. APTA Web & News Letters – This team shall look after the Web site maintenance and publishing the Monthly News Letter.
- xi. APTA Cultural and Event Committee – This team shall work as a centralized team that can help and guide the local/regional events and the national conferences.
- xii. APTA Business Forum – This team shall help the entrepreneurs in the Organization to get connected with each other and to mentor any aspiring members. All regional/national event/conferences shall promote the Business Forum meets.
- xiii. APTA9, APTA Help Line (24 0 24 APTA9) – This team shall maintain APTA helpline for 24/7 help for APTA members. If APTA members or non-members meet with fatal accidents, the respective family members or friends shall call this number and seek for APTA's assistance. Similarly, all students can also seek this team's help.
- xiv. APTA Sports – This team shall focus on events that can promote the health-consciousness among the APTA members. It shall plan all regional level sports events/competitions among the APTA members. (xvii) APTA Immigration – This team shall serve the APTA members (in particular, the H1 Visa holders to get Green Cards or Visa renewals, F1 Students) with their immigration needs by holding useful seminars to them and by posting useful information on the APTA web site.
- xv. APTA Matrimonial Services – This team shall serve the APTA members with their matrimonial needs and shall closely work with the Web team to post all matrimonial details with members' login access.
- xvi. APTA India Operations – This team shall coordinate with India through a team of elected coordinators, who would liaise APTA and the associated organizations within India in assisting the Student community, undertake welfare

activities like rural drinking water, assist renovate schools in the villages, undertake medical camps to bring health awareness, setting up statues for Telugu Community stalwarts, honoring/felicitating eminent people serving the Telugu community and so on.

- xvii. APTA Youth Services – This program shall render services to the APTA youth in their high-school educational matters, college admissions, internships, placements, new jobs, to name a few. The eligibility for a Chair of this particular team shall either be a Student or a Life member.

Section 9:

Extended Executive Team

- a) Extended Executive Team shall comprise all team members of AAC, Board, Board-nominated committees, Core Executive, RVP's, Executive-nominated committees, and State/City/Area coordinators.
- b) The General Secretary shall call for all Extended-Executive team meeting at least once a quarter.
- c) All the official communication among the Extended Executive team members shall be sent to the official distribution list, apta-exec@googlegroups.com and it shall be owned and moderated by the Secretary team (General Secretary and three Joint Secretaries). The General Body shall have a right to communicate directly with the Extended Executive team via this distribution list and the required moderation settings shall be done by the Secretary team.
- d) None of the APTA leaders (to be specific, all members of the Extended Executive team) shall participate in or encourage any sorts of activities that cause damage or disruption to APTA in any unofficial APTA mail distribution lists or in social media such as WhatsApp groups. Such activities shall lead to disciplinary proceedings against them.

Article VIII: Decision Making in Board and Executive Committee:

- a) All decisions are made in meetings with a minimum attendance (quorum) of 6 out of 11 in the Board or of 7 out of 13 in the Executive Committee.
How is Majority is measured?
 Out of a minimum of six attendees in Board meetings, at least four members shall have to say "Yes" to a proposed item (and it shall be again four members out of seven members in the Executive meetings to say "Yes").
 Other examples → 5 people have to say "Yes", when the total attendees are 9; 6 people have to say "Yes", when the total attendees are 10.
- b) All financial decisions (exceeding an amount of \$5000.00) made in the executive committee must be reviewed and approved by the Board.
- c) The Board shall be the ultimate decision-making body in the APTA Organization. Its decision shall be final in all matters (Bylaws, Elections, Disciplinary and Finances, to name a few) that have not been listed here in the Bylaws.

Article IX: Election and Voting

Section 1: Election Frequency, Voting & Contesting Eligibility

- a) Frequency: Elections to fill in the positions in the Board and the Core Executive Committee shall occur once in every two years (biennial term).
- b) Voting & Contesting Eligibility:
 - i. All Life/Patron/Grand Patron members shall be eligible to vote for APTA General Body Elections provided they are in the list of members prepared by the Memberships team at least two months prior to the Election Notification Date. In other words, a voter must have been a valid Life/Patron/Grand Patron member as of two months prior to the Election Notification Date. For example, the voter's eligibility cut-off date shall be the Aug 20th, if the Election Notification Date is the Oct 20th.
 - ii. Life/Patron/Grand Patron members can contest in the APTA elections subject to the eligibility criteria defined for those positions as per the Articles VI and VII. Prior to contesting, each contestant shall be required to qualify for filing his/her nomination for the chosen position as per the below Section 2.
 - iii. Student and Annual Members are not eligible to contest in any elections whatsoever and they shall not have a voting right for deciding any motion or proposal concerning bylaws, legislative, legal or budget matters.

Section 2: Contesting Requirements:

- a) While filing a nomination, a contestant cannot file for more than one position. For example, a Board Director contestant can file only for the Board Director position, but cannot file another nomination for the President position simultaneously.
- b) Nomination Validation Process: As a part of nomination filing process, the contestant shall furnish the endorsement details of three APTA members that shall second the nomination. A valid member shall endorse more than one contestant but cannot contest in the same elections. In other words, the current contestants shall not endorse themselves or other contestants. The Nomination Validation sub-team of the Election Committee shall call or write to each endorser listed in the contestants' nomination forms to verify the endorsements. The contestants with the disqualified nominations shall not appear in the finalized list of qualified nominations.
- c) The contestant, if currently holds an elected or nominated Board/Executive position, doesn't have to relinquish the said position but shall not take part in any budget or policy making proceedings in the Board and Executive meetings.
- d) Election Committee members shall not be the contestants for any elected positions and they shall be neutral to all the matters related to the whole Election process.
- d) Overriding principles on eligibility for Executive Committee, Board of Directors and Chairs of nominated committees:
 - i. No contestant is eligible for filing nominations for more than one position either in the Board or in the Executive Committee or both of them combined together.
 - ii. No elected member shall hold two positions simultaneously. The definition of a position, in this context is a position either in the Executive committee or in the Board or the position of a Chair/Member of any nominated committee.
 - iii. Before accepting the 2nd position, one must resign from the previous position.
 - iv. The Board Chairperson and the Board Secretary shall be considered as board members only and hence treated as holding only one position respectively.

Section 3: Election Voting Tools used

It is totally left to discretion and decision of AEC as to which Election Voting tools shall be used for the Online Voting. AEC shall demonstrate to the Board and to a few other interested members as to how the Voting tools work prior to using them during the Voting phase of the Election Process.

Section 4: Election Campaigning

The contestants shall be distributed the list of all valid APTA voters' contact information (such as Voter's name, phone number, referrer name, referrer number, State/City etc.) and they shall also be allowed to send a limited number of mails to the official APTA Membership distribution list such as apta_reg_members@googlegroups.com.

- a) The moderation rights of apta_reg_members@googlegroups.com distribution list shall be handed over to the Elections Committee from the date of Election Notification Date. No other Executive team members, in particular the contestants, shall be on the moderation manager list of this DL.
- b) All Election campaigning related mails shall not be sent to any other APTA mailing distribution lists except to the apta_reg_members@googlegroups.com. Any contestant doing such email campaigning in other email distribution lists with the APTA members shall be disqualified in the Elections. Any member doing such email campaigning in other email distribution lists with the APTA members shall be subjected to a disciplinary action by the Board
- c) No slandering e-mails shall be released to the members. Mails coming from unknown resources (unless they are directly coming from the official email ID's of the contestants) shall not be released. All contestants for the elected positions shall notify the Elections team their valid email ID's well in advance, otherwise their mails shall not be released.
- d) Direct sending or Blind copying of any campaigning related mails to any APTA member or to all APTA members shall not be allowed. Unless the mails directly come from the contestants, the campaign related mails shall not be released by the Elections Team.
- e) The Elections Committee shall not be responsible for any campaigning done in the social media such as WhatsApp groups. Muting all official APTA WhatsApp groups shall be recommended and all of them are handed over to the AEC team right after the Election notification is released to the General body. No election campaigning in the official APTA WhatsApp groups shall be allowed.

Section 5: Election Procedure

The Board shall appoint an APTA Election Committee (AEC), three months before the expiry of the current term and inform the latter about the upcoming vacant positions for the new term. The official Election Process starts only after AEC sends out its first Election Notification to the General Body, not from the announcement date of the AEC Chair's nomination. AEC shall be the "final authority" in all election related matters, but it shall consult the Board and seek the Board's opinion in cases of ambiguity. The Executive Secretary team along with the Memberships team shall send a list of all eligible voters' info (name, marital status, spouse name, spouse email, spouse phone, email, phone number, referrer name, referrer number, state/city etc.) right after the election notification is released. Any discrepancies or disputes in the voter list shall be addressed by the Memberships and Secretary Teams together. AEC shall seek an approval from the Board on its proposed steps of the Election Process.

Below shall be a (but can change as per the convenience of AEC) normal list of steps in the Election Process. As listed in the in the sub-section (d) of Section 5 of the Article VI, AEC shall first submit a plan of the below Election Process to the Board to seek its approval.

- a) The AEC shall send a mail to all APTA registered members seeking nominations for the positions falling vacant including those of the exiting Board of Directors and Core Executive Team members.

- b) The nomination filing/validation/finalizing process shall normally be closed within the first three weeks from the date of Election Notification, but such a decision on the particular dates shall totally be left to the discretion and comfort of AEC.
- c) If nomination process results in more than one candidate for any of the announced positions, the AEC shall take such positions to the Elections. If there is only nomination received for an announced position, the contestant shall unanimously be declared as “elected”.
- d) If two contestants for the same position get equal number of votes, they both shall share the position during the specified term. For instance, if two contestants for the Treasurer position get 500 votes each, both shall share the position one year each during its two-year term.
- e) The modus operandi for conducting elections and the communication mechanism for the whole process shall be the exclusive jurisdiction of the AEC.
- f) The decisions made by the AEC shall be revoked or recalled only if 51% of the whole General Body pass a motion to do so.
- g) Online Ballot papers shall be sent to all the eligible members (via either email or online) with date and time of voting deadline. Physical postal mailing of Ballot papers to the voters and the non-online voting shall not be allowed.
- h) Spouse voting (two ballots for each eligible married voter) shall be allowed as per the voter eligibility criteria defined in the new Election Manual.
- i) Online Ballot papers up on receipt will be counted by the AEC and subsequently the candidates with majority votes will be declared as “elected”.
- j) Once the AEC has the Election voting results, it shall pass them on to the outgoing Board, which in turn shall announce the voting results to the whole General Body.

Article X: Meetings

Section 1: Annual/Quarterly Meetings

There shall normally be one Annual meeting and four quarterly General Body meetings in a calendar year and they shall be moderated by the General Secretary.

Section 2: Special Meetings

Special meetings of the General Body may be called for by the Board of Directors or up on the written request to the President of the Executive by at least one-third (33%) of the total voting members.

Section 3: Quorum

In cases of differences or conflicts on any specific issues among the members of the elected bodies (Board or Executive), majority's (quorum for a decision to be taken - six out of eleven in the case of Board and seven out of thirteen in the case of Core Executive) opinion is taken as the final resolution.

Section 4: Disputes

For all and any disputes within APTA, the Majority Verdict (six out of eleven members) of the Board of Directors shall be the final judgment.

Section 5:

Failure to attend three meetings successively by any Board Director or Executive member, without a prior notice to the meeting moderators, may be considered as lack of commitment. Unless a satisfactory explanation is received in advance, the Board Director or the Executive member may be removed with a majority's (quorum for a decision to be taken - six out of eleven in the case of Board and seven out of thirteen in the case of Core Executive) voting and the position shall be declared vacant. Vacancies in the Board and Executive committee shall be filled by a vote of the majority of the remaining committee members, subjected to the eligibility criteria of the Board and Executive position (as per Articles VI and VII) and the term of such Board Director or Executive will be valid until the current term expires.

Article XI: Bylaws Amendments

Section 1: Procedure

- a) The Board shall request the Bylaws team to collect all amendment requests from the General Body. All mails with the amendment requests from the General Body shall be sent to an official email distribution list such as apta_bylaws@googlegroups.com. This distribution list shall be owned and moderated by the Bylaws team members. Alternatively, the Bylaws team shall consider better polling tools, if available. But the selection of such tools (either email communication or polling tools) shall be left to the decision of the Bylaws team.
- b) The Bylaws team shall communicate with the General Body by setting up deadline dates for receiving all new amendment requests and/or updating the existing amendments and for the Board to approve the new Bylaws amendments and finally for the General Body to approve/reject the proposed Bylaws amendments.
- c) The Bylaws team members shall brainstorm and discuss all received/proposed amendment requests. The Board Chair (representing the Board) and President (representing the Executive Committee) shall be the ex-officio members of the Bylaws team and they both shall participate in all Bylaws related discussions.
- d) The Bylaws chair shall send a final copy of the updated Bylaws document to the Board. After the Board reviews the document, it can either suggest any further updates or directly send it back to the Bylaws team with its approval. The latter shall then send the finalized copy to the General Body to seek its approval.
- e) Anywhere from two weeks to three weeks shall be given to the General Body to review the new Bylaws document that comprises all newly added and/or updated amendments and within the targeted deadline date, the General Body shall send its approval/rejection back to the Bylaws team on any particular item(s) in the document. Refer to the below Section 2 for the approval/rejection criteria. All replies from the General Body shall only be sent back to the official email distribution list, apta_bylaws@googlegroups.com. The Bylaws shall then send the approval/rejection results to the Board and the Board, in turn, shall make further decisions on the Bylaws amendment process depending on the received feedback from the General Body. Once approved, the Board shall announce the new Bylaws "official" and shall instruct the Web team to upload them to the APTA web site and shall send a copy of the new Bylaws to the Elections Committee and to the General Body.
- f) All email communication related to the Bylaws amendments shall only be sent (either by the Bylaws team or by the Board) to the official registered membership distribution list, apta_reg_members@googlegroups.com.
- g) The cut-off date for the new officialized Bylaws document with all approved amendments is recommended to be prior to the Election Notification Date (for the new term). The elections must be planned to be concluded by the end of the current biennial term (by the Dec 31^s of the 2nd year in the term) so that the new term would start on the following Jan 1st.
- h) NOTE: 2010-2020 term's biennial elections shall be held as per these current Bylaws (Version v5.0).

Section 2: Criteria for General Body's Approval/Rejection of Bylaws Amendments

- a) 33% of the whole General Body (in other words, total APTA membership as of the date the Bylaws team sends a mail to the General Body seeking the latter's approval for the new amendments) shall need to say "No" to reject any new/updated amendment(s) in a specific Article/Section in the document. Whoever members from the whole General Body do not reply by the deadline date for the General Body's feedback, their replies shall be counted as "Yes" to the proposed amendments. The Bylaws team shall either choose polling tools on its own or shall take assistance from the AEC team to collect the responses from the General Body.
- b) The Memberships and/or Secretary Teams shall confirm the total valid membership count to the Board and to the Bylaws team a day before the Bylaws team sends an updated Bylaws document to the General Body for the latter's approval.

- c) If the Bylaws team receives equal to or greater than 33% (a little over 1/3rd of the total membership) “No” replies to the new/updated Bylaws amendment(s) from the General Body, the former shall incorporate the General Body’s majority decision in the place of its proposed amendments. In addition, if there is a valid and convincing recommendation from a member (albeit it doesn’t meet the 33% criterion), the Bylaws shall consider to incorporate it in to the new Bylaws document.
- d) If the Bylaws team receives less than 33% (a little less than 1/3rd of the total membership) “No” replies from the General Body, the Board shall declare the New Bylaws “official and approved” by sending a mail to the General Body and the Web team shall upload the New Bylaws to the APTA Web site with an immediate effect.
- e) In any case of ambiguities, the decision on the Bylaws amendment process shall entirely be left to the Board’s decision (with a majority voting in the Board).

Article XII: Budget and Financing

Section 1:

The President and/or Treasurer shall submit an annual budget at the beginning of each year to the Board to seek the Board’s approval. Once approved by the Board, the Executive team shall share the proposed annual budget with the General Body and publish it on the APTA website (available only to the General Body with member login access, not to the non-members).

Section 2:

- a) The Treasurer shall open and maintain the required savings/checking accounts in reputed banks.
- b) All APTA Bank Accounts shall be joint accounts to be operated jointly by President and Treasurer. Separate accounts (or sub-accounts within the main accounts) are strongly recommended for Membership, ASEP finances, Local/Regional Events, National Conferences, Emergency Funds, APTA Operational Expenses, to name a few.
- c) The Treasurer shall alone sign on Checks up to \$1000 and above \$1000, the President shall be a co-signer along with the Treasurer.
- d) The Treasurer shall seek Board’s prior approval for any expenditure exceeding \$5000. With a prior approval from the Board, Treasurer shall transfer Funds from Secured Deposit Account to Checking/Savings Account, for the purpose of meeting pre-approved expenditure.

Section 3:

The Treasurer shall maintain all the records of the expenses and receipts and get them audited on an annual basis and submit a balance sheet of assets and liabilities along with other Financial Statements as required by the Government and shall seek Board’s approval.

Section 4:

- a) APTA shall allocate up to \$10,000 per year for annual operational expenses such as web site hosting/design/maintenance, PO Box renewal and other miscellaneous ones. This amount shall be taken out from the Membership fund. For the amounts exceeding \$10,000, the Executive team shall seek the Board’s approval.
- b) For ASEP and other related projects (such as eminent Telugu community stalwarts’ Statue setups, financial help to kids with extraordinary skills, to name a few), the Executive team shall seek donations from the General Body, but the Membership funds shall not be utilized. The Executive team shall spend up to \$5000 per each event such as an ASEP function held in India. If the total expenditure for each of such events exceeds \$5000, the Executive team shall seek the Board’s approval. If the total expenditure of all such events exceeds \$20,000 per year, the Executive team shall seek the Board’s approval.
- c) Annual local region level event expenses: For the regions exceeding 250 registered members, the local leadership and/or RVP shall be entitled to spend up to \$5000 and for the regions less than 250 members, it shall be \$3000. This is mainly meant for the lunch/dinner or welcome events to entertain the guests coming from other regions or from India. But the money spent on these kinds of events shall only be collected locally from the members and the collected money shall be sent to the Treasury team, which in turn, shall pay for these events.

Article XIII: APTA Event Guidelines

- a) A list of all applicable guidelines for local, regional and national events shall be prepared by CAC (Conference Advisory Committee) and shall be posted on the Web site.
- b) Annual/biennial National conventions/conferences shall be planned by the Core Executive team and the Board together and shall involve CAC in all such Conference related matters. CAC team shall collect all potential proposals from different regions and submit a report to the Board and the latter, will in turn, shall finalize a prospective Convention Chair. The Board shall approve the Budget of such conferences.
- c) All local/regional events shall be planned by the respective Regional Vice Presidents along with the local leadership.

Article XIV: Communication (Email/WhatsApp) Moderation

- a) A list of all applicable Communication Moderation Guidelines shall be prepared by the Communication Moderation team and shall be posted on the Web site.
- b) Ideally, the official communication channels (email distribution lists, WhatsApp groups etc.) shall help the Leadership team to communicate the Organization related news and updates to the General Body.
- c) General Body shall communicate among themselves and also with the Extended Executive team (refer to the Section 7 of Article VII for the definition of Extended Executive team) by writing to the official Email distribution lists (as per Articles VI and VII). All these distribution lists shall be moderated by the Secretary team and the Communication Moderation team. Only mails with useful information shall be released to avoid spamming the whole membership.
- d) WhatsApp groups shall be official only when they are authorized either by President or by General Secretary and shall only be moderated by the APTA Extended Executive team members. None of the Extended Executive team members shall be allowed to moderate any unofficial communication groups that shall conflict with the objectives of APTA and/or that shall damage the reputation of APTA.
- e) All local/regional official WhatsApp groups shall be moderated by a few of respective local Extended Executive team members that shall be appointed by the respective Regional Vice Presidents (with an official confirmation from either President or Vice-Presidents or the Secretary team).
- f) For all unlisted and new official Mail distribution lists and WhatsApp groups, the moderation rights shall be with President/Vice-Presidents/Secretary team.
- g) Subject level discussions shall be avoided in the official email distribution lists, but they can be held in the web-based discussion forums on APTA web site.
- h) Whoever from the General Body violates the official Communication protocols shall be subjected to the disciplinary proceedings by the Board. Deliberate misuse of the official email distribution lists shall not be

tolerated by the Leadership.

Article XV: ASEP Rules and Guidelines

A detailed list of all applicable ASEP Rules and Guidelines shall be prepared by the ASEP team and shall be posted on the Web site. These rules and guidelines shall change with time. The ASEP team shall seek for approvals from the Core Executive Committee and Board, if any of the existing rules/guidelines need to be changed. After the ASEP team finalizes the list of scholarship recipients, the President shall submit the budget in the Board meeting for the latter's approval.

Article XVI: Web Site and PO Box

- a) APTA shall have a dedicated web site to host all APTA related content. Annual budget for web site hosting/maintenance shall be allocated by the Executive team, in consultation with the Board. All applicable guidelines (ASEP, events/conference, mail/communication moderation, elections, and disciplinary action, to name a few) shall be posted on the web site.
- b) APTA shall have a dedicated mail box for all postal related mail communication. Annual budget for its renewal shall be allocated by the Executive team.

Article XVII: Order of Business

- 1) Roll Call 2) Reading of the Minutes of the preceding meeting 3) Reports of Committees
- 4. Reports of Officers 5) Old and Unfinished Business 6) New Business 7) Adjournments

Article XVIII: Seal

APTA shall have a common Seal with power to break, change or renew the same when necessary.

Article XIX: Dissolution

In the event of dissolution of APTA, it shall, after paying or providing for payment of all liabilities under Sec. 501 c (3), transfer the funds and assets to another not-for-profit organization as approved by the General Body.