

American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.



National Constitution and Bylaws
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PREAMBLE

WHEREAS, the Mothers of Sons and Daughters who served and died in the Allied Cause during the great World War, or died as the result of such service, in order to associate themselves together for loyal and patriotic service, do unite to establish this permanent organization.

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION OF AMERICAN GOLD STAR MOTHERS, INC.

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of this organization shall be AMERICAN GOLD STAR MOTHERS, INC.

ARTICLE II

Nature and Objects

1. American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., is an organization of Mothers whose sons and daughters served and died while on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States, or died as a result of such service, or were missing in action.

2. The objects of the corporation shall be:

- To keep alive and develop the spirit that prompted world services;
- To maintain the ties of fellowship born of that service, and to assist and further all patriotic work;
- To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation;
- To assist all Veterans and their dependents in the presentation of claims to the Veterans Administration; to give aid wherever and whenever possible to Veterans through voluntary service, monetary, or material contributions;
- To inculcate lessons of patriotism and love of country in the communities in which we live;
- To inspire respect for the Stars and Stripes in the youth of America;
- To extend needful assistance to all Gold Star Mothers and, when possible, to their descendants; and
- To promote peace and goodwill for the United States and all other Nations.

ARTICLE III

Organization

Sec. 1. American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., shall be organized into Chapters and Chapters into Departments.

Sec. 2. Chapters shall be chartered by the National Executive Board within the United States and the Territorial and Insular Possessions of the United States. The National Executive Board shall designate the Department under whose jurisdiction each Chapter shall function, except the Grace Darling Seibold Chapter, Washington, D.C., which shall at all times be privileged to function as a Chapter directly under the jurisdiction of the National Executive Board.

Sec. 3. The minimum membership of a new Chapter shall be five eligible Mothers.

Sec. 4. Departments shall be chartered by the National Executive Board and shall be composed of Chapters within their respective States.

Sec. 5. Each Charter shall be signed by the National President and the National Secretary.

ARTICLE IV

Eligibility and Membership

Sec. 1. Natural Mothers or adoptive mothers who were citizens or legal residents of the United States or the Territorial and Insular Possessions of the United States at the time of their sons' or daughters' induction into the United States Armed Forces and whose sons or daughters became missing in action, died while on active duty or died as a result of such service are eligible for membership in American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.

Sec. 2. Stepmothers who are citizens or legal residents of the United States or the Territorial and Insular Possessions of the United States who assumed the responsibility of a son or daughter under the age of fifteen years and reared this son or daughter who served and was missing in action, died while on active duty or as a result of such service, are eligible for membership in American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.

Sec. 3. Chapter members in good standing are deemed members of the national organization of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.

Sec. 4. No person shall be a member of more than one Chapter at any one time.

Sec. 5. Membership shall be active members in the Chapter whose dues, including per capita, shall be paid annually and collected by the Chapter.

Sec. 6. All members will be assigned to a Chapter. Members requesting a transfer from one Chapter to another shall complete a Member Transfer Request and submit it to the National Service Officer for processing.

Sec. 7. Gold Star Fathers, Gold Star Siblings and Gold Star Grandparents are eligible to join as Associate Members. They pay no dues, hold no office and have no vote, but may be appointed as a Deputy to the representative at the VA Medical Center.

Sec. 8. Rosters of the membership of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., shall not be released for political or commercial purposes without approval of the National Executive Board.

Sec. 9. An honorary membership to American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., may be granted to Mothers who were not citizens at the time of their sons' or daughters' induction into the United States Armed Forces and whose sons or daughters died while on active duty, became missing in action, or died as a result of such service. They pay no dues, hold no office and have no vote.

ARTICLE V

Finance and Dues

Sec. 1. The revenue of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., shall be derived from annual membership dues and from such other sources as may be approved by the National Executive Board.

Sec. 2. The amount of the annual per capita shall be determined by each National Convention for the ensuing year. If no change in the current per capita is made at a National Convention, the amount for the ensuing year shall remain the same as that of the preceding year.

Sec. 3. All per capita due and payable to American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., shall be forwarded to the National Treasurer.

Sec. 4. Each Department of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., may designate by vote of the Department annual membership dues as the Department deems advisable. Such dues shall include the National and Chapter per capita.

Sec. 5. Each Chapter of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., may designate by vote of the Chapter such annual membership dues as the Chapter deems advisable. Such dues shall include the annual National and Department per capita.

Sec. 6. There shall be a National Finance Committee, appointed by the National President, which shall be responsible for the preparation of the yearly budget and the handling of funds under the budget and for the performance of such other duties as shall be prescribed by the National Executive Board.

ARTICLE VI *National Convention*

Sec. 1. The National Convention shall be held annually at a place to be determined by the National Second Vice President, with approval of the National Executive Board. The National Convention may be held electronically with the approval of the National Executive Board and announced in the Convention Call. The Convention Call shall be printed in the MAR-APR issue of the Gold Star Mothers Newsletter and distributed to the membership.

Sec. 2. The purpose of the National Convention is to elect National Officers for the ensuing year and to transact any and all such corporate business as might properly come before it. Election of National Officers shall be decided by a majority vote of delegates present and voting at the National Convention.

Sec. 3. Each Chapter shall be entitled to one delegate for each five members, or major fraction thereof, whose current National per capita has been received by the National Treasurer at least thirty days prior to the convening of said convention, and to one alternate for each delegate. Delegates and alternates shall be elected at a regular or special business meeting of the Chapter for which a notice has been given to all members at least ten days prior to said meeting. In addition, each incumbent Chapter President, Department President, Past National President and current National Officer, by virtue of their offices, shall be a delegate without alternate.

Sec. 4. Each properly accredited delegate shall be entitled to one vote. Alternates have all the privileges of delegates except that of voting.

Sec. 5. A quorum of a National Convention shall consist of a majority of registered delegates.

Sec. 6. The National President shall preside as Chair of the National Convention.

ARTICLE VII
National Officers

Sec. 1. The National Officers shall be elected by a majority vote of delegates assembled and voting at each National Convention and shall consist of: President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Chaplain, Sergeant-at-Arms, Flag Guard (or Bearer), and Banner Guard (or Bearer). A person shall be eligible for re-election to the office of National President, or the respective offices of Vice Presidents, provided she has served two terms on the National Executive Board since her tenure as National President or National Vice President. A person shall be eligible for re-election to the office of National President, or the respective offices of Vice Presidents, but shall not serve more than two terms. To be eligible for the office of National President or First or Second Vice President, a member shall have served a term as Chapter President, Department President and two terms on the National Executive Board. If no one candidate for an office receives a majority vote on the first ballot, delegates will then vote on the two candidates who received the greatest number of votes on the first ballot.

Sec. 2. Additional National Officers, including a National Service Officer, VAVS National Chair, Americanism Chair, Information and Technology Chair, Legislative Chair, Historian, Community Service Chair and Parliamentarian, may be appointed by the incoming National President with the consent and approval of the National Executive Board.

Sec. 3. All National Officers shall serve until the adjournment of the succeeding National Convention following their election or appointment.

Sec. 4. In the event of the resignation or death of a National President, the First Vice President automatically becomes President for the unexpired term. The Second Vice President becomes First Vice President. A vacancy in the Second Vice Presidency or any other elected National Office shall be filled by vote of the National Executive Board. Any past Chapter President or Department President is eligible for election to such vacancy, providing she has served two terms on the National Executive Board. Resignations must be in writing and addressed to the National Secretary with a copy to the National President.

ARTICLE VIII
National Executive Board

Sec. 1. Between National Conventions, the administrative power and management of the organization is vested in the National Executive Board, composed of all National Officers, both elected and appointed.

Sec. 2. Two-thirds of the members of the National Executive Board shall constitute a quorum of said Board.

Sec. 3. The National Executive Board shall act by majority vote.

ARTICLE IX
Official Publication

Sec. 1. The organization shall publish or have published an official publication in the interest of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., and its members.

Sec. 2. The official publication of the organization shall be designated "The Gold Star Mother," shall be published once every other month, and a copy thereof forwarded to each member of the organization in good standing.

Sec. 3. The printing of "The Gold Star Mother" shall be under the supervision and control of the National Executive Board.

Sec. 4. The financial operation of the printing and publishing of "The Gold Star Mother" shall be under the supervision and direction of the National Finance Committee and the National Executive Board.

ARTICLE X *National Headquarters*

The National Headquarters of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., located at 2128 Leroy Place NW, Washington, D.C. 20008, shall not be encumbered, transferred, sold or otherwise disposed of. Authorization for any action would require a two-thirds vote of delegates present and voting at the National Convention. Any sale or disposal of said real estate or household property shall be in conjunction with National Congressional Charter and rules of 501(c)(3).

ARTICLE XI *Discipline*

Sec. 1. All matters pertaining to suspension, expulsion, or any form of discipline of a member, Chapter or Department of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., shall be under the jurisdiction of the National Executive Board, subject to the provisions of this Constitution and Bylaws. The rules relating to the handling of disciplinary matters shall be promulgated by the National Executive Board in the Code of Procedure.

Sec. 2. Dishonesty, disloyalty, neglect of duty, insubordination or conduct injurious to American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., or any member, Chapter or Department, shall constitute cause for disciplinary action. All charges must be made in writing and under oath by the accusers, and no member in good standing shall be suspended or expelled until a fair hearing is held in accordance with the rules set forth by the National Executive Board in the Code of Procedure.

Sec. 3. Any former member who has been suspended or expelled from American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., shall not be reinstated or admitted to membership in any Chapter without the written approval of the National Executive Board and the Chapter to which the member belonged at the time of the suspension or expulsion.

Sec. 4. Any Department or Chapter charter which has been suspended, canceled or revoked shall not be reissued without the written approval of the National Executive Board.

Code of Procedure

a. Whenever a case arises which would appear to justify disciplinary action against a member, the Chapter shall attempt to resolve the problem.

b. If the Chapter is unable to reach a satisfactory solution, it shall refer the problem to the Department President with a full written summary of the case. The Department President then shall bring the matter before the Department Board and shall attempt to work out a satisfactory solution without formal disciplinary action.

c. If the Department Board is unable to resolve the problem, it shall refer the summary furnished by the Chapter to the National Executive Board and shall submit therewith the recommendations of the Department Board.

d. If, in the opinion of the National Executive Board, a formal hearing is necessary, it shall require that charges under oath and in writing be submitted to the National Secretary and a copy to the National President. Reasonable notice in writing of the charges made and the date set for the hearing shall be furnished to the involved member, and the member shall be given the opportunity to be present throughout the hearing. The National Executive Board shall not be bound by formal rules of evidence, but the involved member must be given a reasonable opportunity to confront her accusers, to question them and to present her own defense. The involved shall have the right to be represented by any other member of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., whom she may select to act as her counsel. The National Executive Board may also, in its discretion, allow the accused member to be represented by an attorney-at-law, and if the National Executive Board retains an attorney-at-law to represent it at the hearing, the member shall have the right to be so represented.

e. Immediately following the close of the hearing, the National Executive Board shall consider the evidence and reach its decision. Notice of the decision of the National Executive Board shall be sent to the member(s) and to the Department and Chapter involved.

f. The same procedure as set forth above shall be followed in any case where disciplinary action seems to be in order against a Chapter, except that action shall be initiated at the Department level. If disciplinary action should be required against a Department, the National Executive Board shall initiate such proceedings in the manner set forth in this Code of Procedure. After a hearing held in accordance with the Code of Procedure, the National Executive Board shall have full power to suspend or revoke the charter of any Department or Chapter and to expel or suspend any member of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.

ARTICLE XII *Ratification*

All acts performed and Charters heretofore granted by American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., are hereby ratified and confirmed.

ARTICLE XIII *Amendments*

Sec. 1. This Constitution may be amended at any National Convention by a two-thirds vote of the delegates present and voting, provided the proposed amendment has been printed in "The Gold Star Mother" at least thirty days prior to the convening of the next National Convention, or by unanimous vote without notice.

Sec. 2. No proposed amendment shall be submitted through the National Secretary to the Departments and National Executive Board or considered by the National Convention as provided in Section 1 of this Article unless said proposed amendment has first been submitted by a Department Board, Department Convention or by the National Executive Board.

Sec. 3. All proposed amendments submitted for consideration shall be accompanied by minutes in proper format of the meeting at which the proposed amendment was approved by a Department Board.

Sec. 4. All amendments to this Constitution shall become effective upon ratification as prescribed in Section 1 and Section 2 of this Article XIII.

ARTICLE XIV *Resolutions*

Resolutions may be adopted at a Department Board Meeting, Department Convention or at a National Executive Board meeting. After ratification by the National Executive Board, resolutions shall be presented at the next National Convention.

ARTICLE XV *Parliamentary Authority*

Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall govern this organization in all cases to which they are applicable and not inconsistent with this Constitution and Bylaws.

NATIONAL BYLAWS

ARTICLE I

National Officers and Election

Sec. 1. The National Convention shall elect National Officers as prescribed in Article VII of the National Constitution.

Sec. 2. The Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the National President and shall consist of a minimum of three but not more than five members. The Nominating Committee shall present the slate of National Officers at the National Convention. The slate shall have no more than one candidate from each Department except in the event of no other willing candidates from other Departments.

Sec. 3. When there is but one nominee, it shall be in order for the Recording Secretary to cast the elective ballot for the nominee.

Sec. 4. If a slate of candidates is brought in by a Nominating Committee, the Chair must also ask for nominations from the floor for each office. If a candidate for office is absent due to unforeseen circumstances, she may be nominated providing she has sent written consent for her candidacy.

Sec. 5. The Election Judge shall inform the Presiding Officer that she is ready to give her report as soon as the ballots have been counted and the result determined.

Sec. 6. The Election Judge shall hand the ballots and/or results of a National Election in a sealed envelope to the National Secretary, who will retain the same until the National Officers have been installed, after which said documents shall be destroyed by the National Recording Secretary.

ARTICLE II

Duties of Officers

Sec. 1. THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT shall be the executive head of the organization and shall perform all duties and exercise the powers usually incident to her office. She shall be Chair of and preside at the National Convention and meetings of the National Executive Board. She must appoint all Standing Committees as directed in the National Constitution and Bylaws and is ex officio member of all committees, except the Committee on Nominations. She shall appoint, subject to ratification by the National Executive Board, a National Finance and Budget Committee to be composed of the National President and National Secretary, ex officio, the National Treasurer and two other members of the National Executive Board.

The incoming National President shall plan the installation of National Officers. The Installing Officer shall be a National or Past National Officer in good standing of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., and shall use the ritual thereof.

Sec. 2. THE NATIONAL FIRST VICE PRESIDENT shall fulfill the obligations and discharge the duties of the National President in the event of the latter's temporary absence or inability to serve. She shall perform other duties as assigned and at the request of the National President.

Sec. 3. THE NATIONAL SECOND VICE PRESIDENT shall fulfill the obligation and discharge the duties of the National President in the event of the National President's or National First Vice

President's temporary absence or inability to serve. She shall perform other duties as assigned and at the request of the National President.

Sec. 4. THE NATIONAL SECRETARY shall make and keep in permanent form a record of the proceedings of the organization. She shall also act as Secretary to the National Executive Board and shall make and keep in permanent form a record of the proceedings of said Board. She shall prepare and submit to the Editor of "The Gold Star Mother" reports from the National Executive Board meetings to the organization. She shall be ex officio member of the National Finance and Budget Committee. She shall conduct the correspondence of the organization and shall keep the same in permanent form and issue such notifications as may be necessary. She shall sign all official papers with the National President. She shall perform other duties as assigned and at the request of the National President.

Sec. 5. THE NATIONAL TREASURER is required to be insured during her term of office for a sum to be determined by the National Executive Board, the cost to be borne by the organization. Three signatures are required on all bank accounts, namely: National President, National First Vice President and National Treasurer. Any of the two above signatures are required on all National checks.

She shall deposit the funds of the organization in an institution or institutions designated by the National Executive Board. She shall collect all fees and per capita and shall certify to the payment thereof. She shall keep the financial books of the organization, pay claims approved by the National Executive Board and render a statement at the close of the calendar year to each Chapter delinquent in the payment of National per capita. She shall render to the organization at the annual convention a statement of the monies received and disbursed during the interim between annual conventions and also render a monthly financial statement to the National President. She shall submit her books thirty days following the National Convention to a firm of Certified Public Accountants approved by the National Executive Board, and at the end of her term, she shall turn over all funds and property of the organization to her successor to the National Executive Board, for which a receipt will be given. She shall be the custodian of property of the organization, except as hereinafter provided.

Sec. 6. THE NATIONAL CHAPLAIN shall open all meetings with prayer and perform such other services as she may be able to render as Chaplain and shall present a report of her activities for the preceding year at the annual convention. She shall be Chair of the Convention Memorial Service and write the memoriam column for "The Gold Star Mother." She shall perform other duties as assigned and at the request of the National President.

Sec. 7. THE NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICER shall perform such duties as prescribed by the National Executive Board, which includes, but is not limited to, management of all electronic and hard copy membership and memorial information, processing of electronic and hard copy communications pertaining to the interest of the organization, oversees all Headquarters and office supplies, assists with all AGSM, Inc., events and may serve as the hostess and manager of headquarters at the discretion of the National Executive Board. She shall perform other duties as assigned and at the request of the National President.

Sec. 8. THE NATIONAL HISTORIAN shall research, analyze and record the past activities of the current year, to include historical documentation of the organization. She shall gather and oversee the permanent recording of historical data from sources which may include archives, diaries, new files and photographs, as well as collect newspaper items, invitations, photographs

and other souvenirs. She shall work toward preserving the heritage of the organization. She shall perform other duties as assigned and at the request of the National President.

Sec. 9. THE NATIONAL SERGEANT-AT-ARMS shall see that order is maintained during meetings and at convention and perform such other duties as requested by the presiding officer. She shall perform other duties as assigned and at the request of the National President.

Sec. 10. THE TWO NATIONAL COLOR GUARDS shall be the custodians of the flag and banner of the organization. They shall present the Colors of the organization upon direction of the National President or the National Executive Board. She shall perform other duties as assigned and at the request of the National President.

Sec. 11. THE NATIONAL VAVS REPRESENTATIVE shall represent the organization at the National Advisory Committee meetings, keep well informed on all directives from the Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service and impart full and complete information and directives to members of all voluntary services in "The Gold Star Mother." She shall certify all appointments of local VAVS Representatives and perform all other duties pertaining to her office, keeping a complete file and making regular reports for the approval of the National Executive Board. She shall perform other duties as assigned and at the request of the National President.

Sec. 12. THE NATIONAL AMERICANISM CHAIR shall direct and encourage activities for the promotion of Patriotism and perform all other duties incident to the office. She shall perform other duties as assigned and at the request of the National President.

Sec. 13. THE INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY CHAIR shall have published the official organization publication, "The Gold Star Mother." She shall have a copy of each issue of the publication distributed to each Member in good standing and each Associate Member who elected to pay for the publication. She shall be responsible for creating, publishing and managing social media posts on all American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., official social media accounts. She shall be responsible for updating content on all American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., websites. She shall oversee the production of or produce all graphic, photo or video content used on National websites and social media provided to partner organizations or news media. These activities include, but are not limited to, managing and producing print and digital media, to include flyers, programs, journals, invitations and registrations for activities and events hosted by the National Executive Board. She will also be responsible for maintaining brand integrity across all media platforms and ensuring all AGSM materials have consistent branding. She will also be responsible for database management and administration of other third-party software, digital and cloud accounts. She shall be responsible to and under the direction of the National Executive Board. She shall perform other duties as assigned and at the request of the National President.

Sec. 14. THE COMMUNITY SERVICE CHAIR shall compile Community Service Reports which are received from the Department Community Service Chairmen and render a report at the National Convention. She shall perform other duties as assigned and at the request of the National President.

Sec. 15. THE PARLIAMENTARIAN shall study the Constitution and Bylaws of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., and interpret same upon request of the National President. Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall be the basis for the Parliamentarian's rulings in all cases to which they are applicable. She shall perform other duties as assigned and at the request of the National President.

ARTICLE III
Meetings

Sec. 1. The National Executive Board shall meet within twenty-four hours after the adjournment of the National Convention and shall also meet in Washington, D.C., in September and February and immediately before the succeeding National Convention. Special meetings may be held at the call of the National President upon reasonable notice to the members or at the request in writing of seven members of the National Executive Board to the National Secretary.

Sec. 2. Seven members of the National Executive Board shall constitute a quorum.

Sec. 3. The National Executive Board shall act by majority vote of those present at any meeting of the National Executive Board.

ARTICLE IV
Duties and Powers of the National Executive Board

Sec. 1. It shall be the duty of the National Executive Board to enforce the Constitution and Bylaws of the organization; to enforce the enactments and resolutions adopted by the annual National Convention; to fill vacancies in elective office of the National Executive Board for the remainder of an unexpired term; to approve or disapprove claims against the organization; and otherwise transact the administrative business of the organization between annual conventions.

Sec. 2. The National Executive Board shall have the power to grant or deny petitions for new charters by either Chapters or Departments; to cancel, revoke or suspend charters of Chapters or Departments; and to exercise such executive and judicial powers as are inherent in such executive boards generally, as are or may be necessary in effectuating the objectives of the organization or the performance of the duties and powers of the National Executive Board.

Sec. 3. The National Executive Board shall follow the Code of Procedure for cancellation, suspension or revocation of charters and for the suspension or expulsion of members as set forth in the National Constitution.

Sec. 4. Upon revocation, cancellation or suspension of the charter of a Chapter of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., said Chapter shall immediately cease operations and deliver its charter to its Department. The Department Board is authorized, empowered and directed by and through its duly authorized agent to take possession, custody and control of all records, property and assets of said Chapter, which shall belong to the Department of which the Chapter was a member. It shall be the duty of the Department to forward an official notice to the National Service Officer. No financial responsibility of the Chapter shall be assumed by the Department.

Sec. 5. Upon suspension or revocation of a Department charter, the National Executive Board may provide for the supervision of all Chapters in said Department until such time as another Department is organized and instituted. The National Executive Board may transfer the Chapters of a Department whose charter has been suspended or revoked to another properly existing Department.

Sec. 6. The National Executive Board shall consider and ratify in its discretion all committees appointed by the National President.

Sec. 7. The National Executive Board shall have the power to direct the National President to carry out its orders in respect to its findings.

Sec. 8. The National Executive Board, after proper notice and a hearing in conformity with the provisions of the Code of Procedure, has the authority to remove any National Officer, including the National President, from her office.

Sec. 9. The National Executive Board shall provide for the appointment and employment of such subordinate officers and employees as may be needed for the administration of the affairs of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., and prescribe their duties and compensation.

Sec. 10. Members of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., who desire to represent American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., on the boards of another organization of any type must submit a written request to be appointed as the representative of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., to such board. The National Executive Board will review the request and, if approved, submit a written endorsement for such member to serve on the board as our official representative. American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., will in no way be liable for any adverse actions taken by such member in their service on such board, nor any adverse actions taken by the board should they become the subject of litigation.

ARTICLE V *Committees*

Sec. 1. There shall be the following Standing Committees: Finance and Budget; Headquarters; Standing Rules; Constitution and Bylaws; and Legislative appointed by the National President in accordance with the National Constitution and approved by the National Executive Board. Standing Committees function from convention to convention and shall be composed of members of the National Executive Board and Past National Officers.

Sec. 2. Special Committees may be appointed from time to time by the National President or National Executive Board. A member of the National Executive Board or Past National President shall at all times be chair of a special committee.

Sec. 3. All committees, Standing and Special, shall report to the National Executive Board.

ARTICLE VI *Dues*

Sec. 1. (a) The annual dues shall be paid to the Chapter Treasurer. Included shall be the per capita which shall be sent to the Department Treasurer. The Department Treasurer will in turn forward the National per capita to the National Treasurer prior to February 15th of the ensuing year.

(b) Mothers who are 80 years of age or older are exempt from payment of per capita dues. There must be a five-year prior membership eligibility for exemption from nonpayment of dues for those members over 80.

Sec. 2. (a) The calendar year is January 1st through December 31st. For the purpose of keeping adequate records and accountings, dues should be paid in the month of December preceding the ensuing year.

(b) A member whose dues for the current calendar year are not paid by March 1st of such year shall be moved to inactive status and suspended from all privileges and cannot hold office or vote.

(c) Dues for the current calendar year will be accepted to and including December 31st of each year. The inactive member shall be reinstated to all privileges when payment is received.

(d) If the National per capita has not been paid for two consecutive years, the inactive member moves to former member status and must reapply for membership as a new member in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws.

ARTICLE VII *Amendments*

Sec. 1. These bylaws may be amended at any National Convention by a two-thirds vote of the delegates present and voting, providing the proposed amendment has been printed in "The Gold Star Mother" at least thirty days prior to the convening of the next National Convention, or by unanimous vote without notice. See Article XIII of the Constitution.

ARTICLE VIII *Resolutions*

See Article XIV of the Constitution.

ARTICLE IX *Parliamentary Authority*

Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall govern this organization in all cases to which they are applicable and not inconsistent with this Constitution and Bylaws.

DEPARTMENT BYLAWS

ARTICLE I *Organization*

- Sec. 1. Each Chapter shall be a member of a Department.
- Sec. 2. States may elect to affiliate with a neighboring state with the approval of the National Executive Board.
- Sec. 3. A Charter shall be issued to each Department by the National Executive Board.
- Sec. 4. Each Department, by vote of its members, may designate the amount of its annual Department dues.

ARTICLE II *Officers*

- Sec. 1. The elected officers of a Department are recommended to be a President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Chaplain, Sergeant-at-Arms, Flag Guard and a Banner Guard.
- Sec. 2. A Corresponding Secretary, Historian, Community Service Chair, VAVS Chair and Americanism Chair may be appointed by the Department President with the approval of the Department Executive Board. If deemed necessary, a Legislative Chair and Parliamentarian may be appointed by the Department President with the approval of the Department Executive Board and they shall be members of said Board.

ARTICLE III *Duties of Officers*

- Sec. 1. THE DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT shall preside at all Board and Executive Board meetings and the Department Convention. She shall appoint all committees and shall be an ex officio member of same, except the Nominating Committee. She shall sign approve all expenditures and sign checks drawn on the treasury for appropriations of money and shall perform all other duties and exercise the powers usually incident to the chief executive office.
- Sec. 2. THE DEPARTMENT FIRST VICE PRESIDENT shall fulfill and discharge the duties of the Department President in the event of her absence or inability to serve.
- Sec. 3. THE DEPARTMENT SECOND VICE PRESIDENT shall fulfill and discharge the duties of the Department President in the event of the Department President's and First Vice President's absence or inability to serve.
- Sec. 4. THE DEPARTMENT RECORDING SECRETARY shall make and keep in permanent form a record of the proceedings of the Department, also act as Secretary to the Executive Board and keep a permanent record of its proceedings. Copies of the minutes of Department Board Meetings shall be sent to all Department Officers, Chapter Presidents, National President and any current National Officer or Officers in the Department after they have been approved.
- Sec. 5. THE DEPARTMENT CORRESPONDING SECRETARY shall conduct the correspondence of the Department and keep copy of same in permanent form; shall notify each Officer, Chapter

President, Past Department President and VAVS Representative of time and place of Board Meetings, shall notify same of time, place and purpose of special meetings.

Sec. 6. THE DEPARTMENT TREASURER shall deposit all funds in a bank, shall collect all fees and certify to the payment thereof; shall keep the financial books; shall pay claims approved by the Department President; shall prepare a financial report to be presented at each Convention of monies received and disbursed between Conventions; shall have books audited by three members of the Department appointed by the Department President prior to each Convention; shall collect the National per capita for each member and shall forward to the National Treasurer before February 15th of each year.

Sec. 7. THE DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN shall open all meetings with prayer and perform such other services as she may be called upon to render. She shall give a report of her activities of the preceding year at each Department Convention and shall report all deaths to the National Chaplain by the tenth of each month. She shall be Chair of the Convention Memorial Service.

Sec. 8. THE DEPARTMENT HISTORIAN shall preserve a record of the activities of the Department, including newspaper clippings, photographs and other souvenirs which may be of interest to the Department and shall present at the annual Department Convention the history of the preceding year.

Sec. 9. THE DEPARTMENT SERGEANT-AT-ARMS shall see that order is maintained during meetings and at Department Convention and shall perform such other duties as requested by the presiding officers.

Sec. 10. THE DEPARTMENT COLOR GUARDS shall be the custodians of the Colors and shall present and retire same at Department Board Meetings and at the Department Convention. They shall present the Colors upon direction of the Department President or the Department Board.

Sec. 11. THE DEPARTMENT VAVS CHAIR shall cooperate with the VAVS Representatives in the Department, coordinate and encourage volunteer service for all agencies in the VA system and render a report of such activities within the Department at each Department Convention.

Sec. 12. THE AMERICANISM CHAIR shall direct and encourage participation in all patriotic affairs within the Department and encourage activities for the promotion of patriotism and perform all other duties as are incident to her office.

Sec. 13. THE DEPARTMENT PARLIAMENTARIAN shall study the Constitution and Bylaws of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., and interpret same upon request of the President. Robert's Rules of Order Revised will be the basis of the Parliamentarian's rulings in all cases to which they are applicable.

Sec. 14. THE DEPARTMENT LEGISLATIVE CHAIR shall keep informed of all legislation of interest and benefit to American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., and report on same to the members.

Sec. 15. THE DEPARTMENT COMMUNITY SERVICE CHAIR shall compile a Community Service Report from the reports received from the Chapter Community Service Chair and forward same to the National Community Service Chair for reporting at the National Convention.

ARTICLE IV

Duties of a Department

1. To promote peace, harmony and good fellowship among all Chapters.

2. To comply with the Constitution and Bylaws of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.
3. To carry out our Mission in deeds as well as words.
4. To organize and establish new Chapters, maintain existing Chapters and instruct Chapters in the procedures of the Ritual and the duties of all Department Officers, Chapter Officers, the National Constitution and Bylaws, the Department Bylaws and the Standing Rules so that Chapter, Department and National are functioning in unity.
5. To maintain compliance with all financial reporting requirements as shall be promulgated by the Internal Revenue Service, the state within which the Department operates and the National Executive Board.

ARTICLE V *Meetings*

Sec. 1. The Department President shall call a meeting of the Department Board at least once a year.

Sec. 2. The Department Board shall consist of all Department Officers, elected and appointed, incumbent Chapter Presidents or other duly authorized representatives who shall be the Vice Presidents in their order. If neither Vice President is able to serve, then the Chapter President shall authorize in writing a member of her Chapter to represent her. In addition, the Past Department Presidents and VAVS Representatives have a vote.

Sec. 3. The Department President may call a meeting of the Department Executive Board at her discretion. A Department Executive Board Meeting is only an advisory meeting. All voting shall be done at a Department Board Meeting. The Department Executive Board is comprised of all Department elected and appointed officers. Five officers constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE VI *Conventions*

Sec. 1. Department Conventions shall be held annually preceding the National Convention by not more than a three-month period.

Sec. 2. Department officers shall be elected at the Department Convention.

Sec. 3. Each chartered Chapter is entitled to be represented by one delegate and one alternate, duly elected, for every five members or major fraction thereof. In addition, each Chapter President, Department Officer, Past Department President shall be a delegate with one vote and shall have no alternate.

Sec. 4. A copy of the proceedings of the Department Convention shall be sent by the Convention Secretary to all Department Officers, Chapter Presidents, National President and current National Officer or Officers in the Department.¹

¹ Robert's Rules of Order Revised state that all minutes shall be distributed by the Recording Secretary. If someone other than the Recording Secretary records the minutes of a Department Convention, said minutes shall be given to the Department Recording Secretary who was in office during the Convention for distribution immediately following the department Convention after they have been approved.

Sec. 5. Installation of Department Officers shall take place before the Department Convention adjourns. The President-elect shall select her Installing Officer from the membership and the Ritual of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., must be used. The Installing Officer shall be either a Department Officer, Past Department Officer, National Officer or Past National Officer.

ARTICLE VII *Elections*

Sec. 1. Elections may be by ballot or acclamation. When there is but one nominee, it shall be in order for the Recording Secretary to cast the elective ballot for the nominee. If no candidate for an office receives a majority vote on the first ballot, delegates will then vote on the two candidates who received the greatest number of votes on the first ballot.

Sec. 2. If a slate of candidates is brought in by a Nominating Committee, the Chair must also ask for nominations from the floor for each office. A Nominating Committee shall consist of three, five or seven members appointed by the Department President. If a candidate for office is absent, she may be nominated provided she has consented in writing to her candidacy.

Sec. 3. To be eligible for the office of Department President, a member must have served a term as Chapter President. To be eligible for the office of Department First Vice President or Second Vice President, a member must have served or be serving as a Chapter President.

Sec. 4. Notification shall be given to Chapters at least ten days prior to an election.

Sec. 5. The President-elect shall plan the installation of officers and shall choose the Installing Officer, who must be a member in good standing. She shall be a Chapter President, Past Chapter President, Department Officer, Past Department Officer, National or Past National Officer of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. The ritual of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., shall be used for the installation ceremony.

ARTICLE VIII *Vacancies*

In the event of the resignation or death of a Department President, the Department First Vice President automatically becomes Department President for the unexpired term. The Department Second Vice President becomes Department First Vice President. A vacancy in the Department Second Vice President or any other office shall be filled by vote of the Department Board, providing she has served as Chapter President. All resignations must be in writing and addressed to the Department Corresponding Secretary with a copy to the Department President.

ARTICLE IX *Discipline*

Discipline shall be outlined in Article XI of the National Constitution and Code of Procedure of the same Article.

ARTICLE X

Standing Rules

A Department shall adopt Standing Rules at the Department Convention. Following the Department Convention, said Standing Rules shall be forwarded to the National Constitution and Bylaws Chair for review by the National Executive Board to ensure they are in accordance with the National Constitution, National Bylaws and Department Bylaws.

ARTICLE XI *Resolutions*

Resolutions shall be adopted at Department Board Meetings and Conventions. After adoption, they shall be submitted to the National Executive Board through the National Resolutions Chair. Refer to Article XIII and XIV of the Constitution.

ARTICLE XII *Parliamentary Authority*

Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall govern the Department when applicable and not inconsistent with this Constitution and Bylaws.

CHAPTER BYLAWS

ARTICLE I *Organization*

Sec. 1. A Chapter shall function as a unit within a Department.

Sec. 2. Any member in good standing, with the assistance of a Department Officer, may organize a Chapter within her own Department.

Sec. 3. Those who desire to form a Chapter shall make application for a charter to the President of the Department in which they reside. The charter shall be issued by the National President and National Secretary upon receipt of the application properly executed by the charter members of the proposed Chapter.

Sec. 4. The Chapter shall be instituted and officers installed within ninety days from date of charter.

Sec. 5. Charters shall be kept open for all eligible participants whose membership applications are received in National Headquarters within sixty days from the date of charter.

ARTICLE II *Officers*

Sec. 1. Chapter Officers elected annually are recommended to be a President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Chaplain, Sergeant-at-Arms, Flag Guard (or Bearer) and a Banner Guard (or Bearer).

Sec. 2. The Chapter President may appoint a Corresponding Secretary, Historian, Custodian of Records, Community Service Chair, VAVS Chair, Americanism Chair and, if deemed necessary by the Chapter, a Parliamentarian and Legislative Chair.

Sec. 3. When a Chapter membership is small and can no longer function having different members for offices of President, Secretary or Treasurer, upon permission from the National Executive Board, the charter may be kept by one member providing she pays her per capita dues to the Department Treasurer.

ARTICLE III *Duties of Officers*

(a) THE CHAPTER PRESIDENT shall perform the duties and exercise the powers usually incident to the chief executive's office. She shall preside at all meetings of the Chapter. She shall appoint all committees and is an ex officio member of same, except the Nominating Committee. She shall act as judge at all elections and obligate new members. She shall sign all checks drawn on the treasury for appropriations of money. All questions of debate shall be decided by vote of the Chapter.

(b) THE CHAPTER FIRST VICE PRESIDENT shall uphold and maintain the Constitution and Bylaws of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., and assist the Chapter President in any way possible. She shall discharge the duties of the Chapter President in her absence or inability to serve.

(c) THE CHAPTER SECOND VICE PRESIDENT shall assist the Chapter President in any way possible and shall fulfill and discharge the duties of the Chapter President and First Vice President in their absence or inability to serve.

(d) THE CHAPTER RECORDING SECRETARY shall make and keep in permanent form a record of the proceedings of the Chapter and its Executive Board. She shall have available at all meetings a copy of the Chapter's Standing Rules.

(e) THE CHAPTER CORRESPONDING SECRETARY shall conduct the official correspondence of the Chapter, sending a copy of same to the Chapter President and keeping a copy in the Chapter files. She shall send date of obligation of all new members to the Department Treasurer and notify each member in good standing at least ten days prior to election of officers and three days prior to special meetings, stating purpose of same. She shall also notify each member in good standing of date, time and place of regular meetings.

(f) THE CHAPTER TREASURER shall receive and disburse all funds of the Chapter, keep accurate accounts and give a statement of the financial condition of the Chapter at each meeting and at the end of her term. She shall pay all claims approved by the Chapter. She shall screen all new membership applications and send the application fee to the Department Treasurer. She shall notify all members when dues are payable and shall send annual Department and National per capitas to the Department Treasurer by January 15th of each year. She shall have the books audited before the end of her term by three members of the Chapter, appointed by the President. Three signatures are required on all bank accounts, namely: Chapter President, Chapter Treasurer and one other officer, with any one signature required on Chapter checks.

(g) THE CHAPTER CHAPLAIN shall conduct the devotional exercises at the opening and closing of each meeting; conduct all Memorial Services and send notice of deaths of members and Dads to the Department Chaplain and perform such other duties as pertain to her office.

(h) THE CHAPTER CUSTODIAN OF RECORDS shall keep on file a copy of all membership applications after they have been approved and after the obligation has been taken. She shall be custodian of all other records of interest and value to the Chapter. She shall handle all supplies, except those pertaining to the Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service hospital program.

(i) THE CHAPTER HISTORIAN shall compile a written history of the Chapter annually and preserve in permanent form all pictures, photographs, newspaper clippings, souvenirs, etc., of interest to the Chapter.

(j) THE CHAPTER SERGEANT-AT-ARMS shall guard the door of the Chapter room and see that order is maintained during meetings. She shall assist during obligation ceremonies and perform such other duties as the Chapter President may direct.

(k) THE CHAPTER COLOR GUARDS (Flag Bearer/Banner Bearer) shall carry the Colors in presenting and retiring same at Chapter meetings. They shall see that the Colors are in place before and properly cared for after each meeting and shall assist during obligation of new members and at such other official times as the Chapter President may direct.

(l) THE CHAPTER VAVS CHAIR shall render such services as the Chapter directs to hospitalized veterans through the Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service Representative and in other facilities through the proper authorities.

(m) THE CHAPTER AMERICANISM CHAIR shall further all patriotic work as outlined in the Objectives of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., and shall support and cooperate in all programs set up by Department and National Americanism Chairmen.

(n) THE CHAPTER PARLIAMENTARIAN shall study the Constitution and Bylaws of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., and interpret same upon request of the Chapter President.

(o) THE CHAPTER LEGISLATIVE CHAIR shall keep informed of all legislation of interest and benefit to American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., and report on same to the members.

(o) THE CHAPTER COMMUNITY SERVICE CHAIR shall keep a record of the Community Service performed by its members and forward annually to the Department Community Service Chair to be reported at the Department Convention.

ARTICLE IV *Duties of a Chapter*

1. To promote peace, harmony and good fellowship among all members.
2. To comply with the Constitution and Bylaws of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.
3. To carry out our Mission in deeds as well as words.

ARTICLE V *Meetings*

Sec. 1. The Chapter shall hold as many business meetings a year as possible, preferably nine business meetings a year.

Sec. 2. The quorum necessary to hold a business meeting shall be determined according to the membership of the Chapter by vote of the Chapter.

Sec. 3. A special business meeting of the Chapter may be called by the Chapter President, if deemed necessary. A written notice must be sent to each member of the Chapter at least three days prior to the date of a special meeting stating the purpose of same. Special meetings must pertain only to the business stated on the written notice.

Sec. 4. The Chapter President by virtue of her office is a member of the Department Board.

Sec. 5. If the Chapter President is unable to attend a Department Board Meeting, her vote shall be carried by the Vice Presidents in their order.

ARTICLE VI *Conventions*

Sec. 1. Each Chapter President, by virtue of her office, shall be a delegate to Department and National Conventions with one vote. She shall have no alternate. In addition, the Department President, Past Department Presidents and VAVS Representatives have a vote at Department Board Meetings and Department Conventions.

Sec. 2. Each Chapter in good standing is entitled to be represented by one delegate and one alternate for every five members or major fraction thereof.

ARTICLE VII
Elections

Sec. 1. Notification shall be given to every member at least ten days prior to an election.

Sec. 2. A member must be in good standing to be eligible for any office.

Sec. 3. Elections may be by ballot or acclamation and decided by a majority vote of the members present.

Sec. 4. If a slate of candidates is presented by a Nominating Committee, the Chair must also ask for nominations from the floor for each office. A Nominating Committee shall consist of three, five or seven members appointed by the Chapter President. If a candidate for office is absent, she may be nominated if she has consented to her candidacy in writing.

Sec. 5. Chapter Officers shall be elected annually not more than 90 days nor less than 15 days prior to Department Convention. If a Nominating Committee is appointed, it shall be named by the President at the regular January business meeting of the Chapter. The Committee shall present its slate of candidates at the regular February and March business meetings at which time the Chair shall ask for nominations from the floor, and if ten days' notice has been provided, the election of officers shall be held at the March meeting. Installation of officers shall be held in March or at the annual Department meeting.

Sec. 6. The President-elect shall plan the installation of officers and shall choose the Installing Officer, who must be a member in good standing. She shall be a Chapter President, Past Chapter President, Department Officer, Past Department Officer, National or Past National Officer of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. The ritual of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., shall be used for the installation ceremony.

ARTICLE VIII
Vacancies

Sec. 1. In case of the resignation or death of a Chapter President, the Chapter First Vice President automatically becomes Chapter President for the unexpired term. The Chapter Second Vice President becomes Chapter First Vice President and an election for the office of Second Vice President shall be held.

Sec. 2. In case of the resignation or death of a Chapter officer other than the President or First Vice President, such vacancy for the unexpired term shall be filled by an election at a Chapter business meeting after due notice has been sent to all members.

ARTICLE IX
Dues

Sec. 1. Each Chapter, by vote of its members, may designate the amount of its annual membership dues. Such membership dues shall include the Department dues, if applicable, and National per capita.

Sec. 2. (a) The calendar year is January 1st through December 31st. For the purpose of keeping adequate records and accountings, dues should be paid in the month of December preceding the ensuing year.

(b) A member whose National per capita for the current calendar year is not paid by March 1st of such year shall be considered inactive and suspended from all privileges, including holding office and voting, and has relinquished her right to use the registered trademark of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., in any form.

(c) A member whose National per capita for the current year is not paid by December 31st of such year may thereafter be reinstated only upon payment of unpaid National per capita.

(d) Members requesting a transfer from one Chapter to another must be in good standing in the Chapter she is leaving. The Chapter receiving such a transfer must vote in favor of the transfer for the transfer to be effective.

ARTICLE X *Per Capita*

Chapter shall pay the annual National and Department per capita based on individual membership as prescribed in Article V, Section 3 of the Constitution and Article I, Section 4 of the Department Bylaws. Chapter shall send National and Department per capita to the Department Treasurer by January 15th of each year.

ARTICLE XI *Discipline*

Any Chapter failing to meet its obligations as outlined in the Constitution and Bylaws or ceasing to function for six months as a Chapter of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., or refusing to pay any Department and National per capita shall upon order of the National Executive Board surrender its charter for cancellation. Upon failure to surrender such charter, immediate steps may be taken by the National Executive Board for its revocation, suspension or cancellation. See Article XI of the Constitution.

ARTICLE XII *Standing Rules*

A Chapter may adopt Standing Rules at any regular business meeting, providing said Standing Rules have been read at the previous business meeting or have been distributed to each member of the Chapter at least fifteen days prior to the date of meeting at which the vote will be taken on them. All proposed Standing Rules must be approved by the Department Board as not being contrary to the Constitution and Bylaws.

ARTICLE XIII *Resolutions*

Resolutions may be adopted at Department Board Meetings and Conventions. See Article XI of Department Bylaws and Article XIII of the Constitution.

ARTICLE XIV
Parliamentary Authority

Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall govern the Chapter in all cases when applicable and not inconsistent with the Constitution and Bylaws.

**AMERICAN GOLD STAR MOTHERS, INC.
CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION**

Know all men by these presents that we, the undersigned persons, of full age, citizens of the United States, and all being citizens of the District of Columbia, desire to associate ourselves for benevolent, charitable and loyal and patriotic purposes under Subchapter Three of the Incorporation Laws of the District of Columbia as provided in the Code of Laws in and for the District of Columbia, enacted by Congress and approved by the President of the United States, do hereby certify:

First: The name or title by which such Society shall be known in law is "American Gold Star Mothers."

Second: The term of its existence shall be sixty years.

Third: The particular business and object of the Society are to unite with loyalty, sympathy, benevolence, charity and love for each other mothers whose sons or daughters have made the supreme sacrifice while in any branch of the Military or Naval Service of the United States of America, or who have died as a result of such service, and to establish chapters in other jurisdictions, and to have and exercise all the powers conferred by the laws of the District of Columbia upon similar societies.

Fourth: The number of its trustees, directors or managers for the first year of existence shall be fifteen (15) in number.

Fifth: The main office of the Society shall be the City of Washington, District of Columbia, with Chapters in such other place or places as may be designated from time to time by the Board of Trustees, Directors or Managers.

Sixth: This Society reserves the right to amend, alter or change any provision contained in this Certificate of Incorporation in any manner prescribed by Statute.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have hereunto affixed our hands and seals this twenty-ninth day of December, 1928.

GRACE DARLING SEIBOLD (Seal)

HATTIE LEE HURLEY (Seal)

OLIVE CARPENTER (Seal)

FRANCES E. HIBBS (Seal)

MARGARET E. LOVELESS (Seal)

District of Columbia, ss:

I, Marian C. Lockwood, a Notary Public in and for the District aforesaid, do hereby certify that Grace Darling Seibold, Olive Carpenter, Margaret E. Loveless, Hattie Lee Hurley and Frances E. Hibbs, parties to the annexed Certificate of Incorporation of the American Gold Star Mothers, bearing date on the twenty-ninth of December, A.D. 1928, personally appeared before me in the District aforesaid, the said Grace Darling Seibold, Olive Carpenter, Margaret E. Loveless, Hattie Lee Hurley and Frances E. Hibbs, being personally known to me to be the persons who made and signed the said certificate and acknowledged the same to be their act and deed for the purpose therein set forth.

Witness my hand and seal this 29th of December, A.D. 1928.

(Notarial Seal)

MARIAN C. LOCKWOOD

Notary Public in and for the District of Columbia

**CERTIFICATION OF INCORPORATION
OFFICE OF THE RECORDER OF DEEDS
District of Columbia**

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and verified copy of the Certificate of Incorporation of the American Gold Star Mothers and of the whole of said Certificate of Incorporation, as filed in this Office the 5th day of January, 1929, and recorded in Liber 45, Folio 151, et seq., one of the Incorporation Records of the District of Columbia.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hands and affixed the seal of this Office this 6th day of April, A.D. 1934.

(Seal)

JEFFERSON S. CRAGE
Recorder of Deeds, D.C.

**AMENDED CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION OF
AMERICAN GOLD STAR MOTHERS, INC.**

At a special meeting of the National Executive Board of the American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., held on Monday evening, March 1, 1937, at headquarters in the New Colonial Hotel in the City of Washington, District of Columbia, a quorum of said Board being present, it was agreed that the Certificate of Incorporation of organization should be amended as follows:

Page 1. Paragraphs Third and Fourth shall be deleted and the following two paragraphs inserted in their place:

"Paragraph Third" and "Paragraph Fourth," the Amended Certificate will then read:

"Paragraph Third: That the objects of the corporation shall be:

- To keep alive and develop the spirit that promoted world service;
 - To maintain the ties of fellowship born of that service, and to assist and further all patriotic work;
 - To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation;
 - To assist veterans of the World War and their dependents in the presentation of claims to the Veterans Administration and to aid, in any way in their power, men and women who served and died or were wounded or incapacitated in the World War;
 - To perpetuate the memory of those whose lives were sacrificed in said War;
 - To maintain true allegiance to the United States of America;
 - To inculcate lessons of patriotism and love of country in the communities in which they live;
 - To inspire respect for the Stars and Stripes in the youth of America;
 - To extend needful assistance to all Gold Star Mothers and, when possible, to their descendants; and
 - To promote peace and goodwill of the United States and all other Nations.
- This is an association of Mothers whose sons and daughters served and died in the Allied Cause in the Great World War, or died as a result of such service."

"Paragraph Fourth: This association may be supported by gifts, contributions, bequests, membership fees and income from endowments. Its income shall be used for the payment of expenses and salaries incident to carrying on the work of the organization. None of the income

shall be distributed in the form of profits to any member or Officer, except as salaries are paid in accordance with the Budget approved by the National Executive Board and presented at biennial conventions."

AMERICAN GOLD STAR MOTHERS, INC.

BY DELIA TOWNE BLAKE, *National President*

BY OLIVE SMITH CARPENTER, *National Recording Secretary*.

Olive Smith Carpenter, the National Recording Secretary of the American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., certified under oath that the above is the Act of the American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., authorized at the special meeting of the National Executive Board thereof held at headquarters in Washington, D.C., on the 1st day of March, 1937.

OLIVE SMITH CARPENTER, *National Recording Secretary*, AMERICAN GOLD STAR MOTHERS, INC.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 9th day of March 1937.

(Notarial Seal)

LOUISE E. DEMORELAND, *Notary Public*

Commission expires April 1, 1940.

**AMENDED CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION
OFFICE OF THE REGISTER OF DEEDS
District of Columbia**

This I to certify that the foregoing is a true and verified copy of the Certificate of Amendment to Certificate of Incorporation of AMERICAN GOLD STAR MOTHERS, INC., and of the whole of said Certificate of Amendment as filed in this Office the 10th day of March, A.D. 1937, and recorded in Liber 53, Folio 595, et seq., one of the Incorporation Records of the District of Columbia.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of this Office this 20th day of March, A.D. 1937.

Wm. J. Tomkins, *Recorder of Deeds, D.C.*

CERTIFICATE OF AMENDMENT OF AMERICAN GOLD STAR MOTHERS, INC.

We, Emogene M. Cupp, President, and Mary Teater, Secretary, certify that the amendment was adopted at a meeting of members held on July 3, 1978, at which a quorum was present, and the amendment received at least two-thirds of the votes which members present were entitled to cast.

The Articles of Incorporation are hereby amended to change the term of existence from sixty years to perpetual.

(President) EMOGENE M. CUPP

(Secretary) MARY TEATER

I, Cleva L. Baylor, a Notary Public in and for the City of Washington, District of Columbia, do hereby certify that EMOGENE M. CUPP, President, and MARY TEATER, Secretary, personally appeared before me and acknowledged the above Certificate of Amendment to be their act and deed.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 28th day of September 1978.
(Notarial Seal) CLEVA L. BAYLOR, *Notary Public*

CERTIFICATE OF AMENDMENT OFFICE OF RECORDER OF DEEDS

Corporation Division Washington

(State Seal)

This is to certify that the pages attached hereto constitute a full, true and complete copy of CERTIFICATE OF AMENDMENT OF AMERICAN GOLD STAR MOTHERS, INC., as received and filed September 28, 1978.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of this office to be affixed, this the 28th day of September, A.D. 1978.

PETER S. RIDLEY, *Recorder of Deeds, D.C.*

MARGURITE C. STOKES, *Second Deputy Recorder*

**ARTICLES OF AMENDMENT TO THE ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION
of
AMERICAN GOLD STAR MOTHERS, INC.**

TO: The Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, Washington, D.C.

Pursuant to the provisions of the District of Columbia Nonprofit Corporation Act, the undersigned adopts the following Articles of Amendment to its Articles of Incorporation:

FIRST: The name of the corporation is: AMERICAN GOLD STAR MOTHERS, INC.

SECOND: The following amendment to Paragraph Third of the Articles of Incorporation was adopted by the corporation in the manner prescribed by the District of Columbia Nonprofit Corporation Act, which amendment shall be substituted in its entirety for the former Paragraph Third, which should be deleted:

"Paragraph Third: The purpose for which the corporation is organized is to operate exclusively for charitable, religious, educational scientific and literary purposes, within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), including among such purposes the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations thereunder; and within such limits, on a nonpartisan basis,

To keep alive and develop the spirit that promoted world service;

To maintain the ties of fellowship born of that service, and to assist and further all patriotic work;

To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation;

To assist veterans of World War I, World War II, the Korean Conflict, Vietnam, and other strategic areas and their dependents in the presentation of claims to the Veterans Administration and to aid, in any way in their power, men and women who served and died or were wounded or incapacitated during hostilities;

To perpetuate the memory of those whose lives were sacrificed in our wars;

To maintain true allegiance to the United States of America;

To inculcate lessons of patriotism and love of country in the communities in which we live;

To inspire respect for the Stars and Stripes in the youth of America;
To extend needful assistance to all Gold Star Mothers and, when possible, to their descendants; and
To promote peace and goodwill for the United States and all other Nations.
This is an association of Mothers whose sons and daughters served and died in our Nation's wars."

THIRD: The following amendment to Paragraph Fourth of the Articles of Incorporation was adopted by the corporation in the manner prescribed by the District of Columbia Nonprofit Corporation Act, which amendment shall be substituted in its entirety for the former Paragraph Fourth, which should be deleted:

ARTICLES OF AMENDMENT

"Paragraph Fourth: No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, trustees, directors, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make distributions in furtherance of its purposes; No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation and the corporation shall not participate in, intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office; Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law) or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law); Upon dissolution of the corporation, the Board of Directors shall, after paying or making provisions for the payment of all the liabilities of the corporation, dispose of all of the assets of the corporation exclusively for the purposes of the corporation in such manner, or to such organization(s) organized and operated exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, scientific or literary purposes as at the time qualify as an exempt organization(s) under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Board of Directors shall determine; and Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Superior Court of the District of Columbia (or a successor court), exclusively for such purposes or to such organization(s), as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes."

FOURTH: The amendments were adopted in the following manner: The amendments were adopted at a meeting of the National Executive Board held on February 19, 1986, at which a quorum was present, and the amendments received at least two-thirds of the votes which members present or represented by proxy at such meeting were entitled to cast.

Dated 19 February 1986, AMERICAN GOLD STAR MOTHERS, INC., by NORA J. GOLSH, President, VIRGINIA D. HEMPEL, Secretary

Document revised 2008

Amended June 2012

Amended June 2013

Amended June 2014

Amended June 2015
Amended June 2017
Amended June 2020
Amended June 2021
Amended June 2022
Amended June 2023

Who Is a Gold Star Mother?

Often, the question has been asked “Who is a Gold Star Mother?” During the early days of World War I, a Blue Star was used to represent each person, man or woman, in the Military Service of the United States. As the war progressed and service members were killed in combat, others wounded and died from wounds or disease, there term “Gold Star” came to be used. A Gold Star was substituted and superimposed upon the Blue Star, leaving an outline of blue around the entire star. The idea of the Gold Star was the honor and glory accorded the person for the supreme sacrifice in offering the last full measure of devotion to country and the pride of the family in this sacrifice, rather than the sense of personal loss which would be represented by other mourning symbols.

On June 4, 1928, a group of 25 Mothers residing in Washington, DC, met to make plans to organize a national organization to be known as American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., a nondenominational, nonprofit and nonpolitical organization. On January 5, 1929, the organization was incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia. The Charter was kept open for 90 days. At the end of this time, there were 65 members, which included mothers throughout the United States: North, South, East and West.

There were many small groups of Gold Star Mothers functioning under local and state charters. When these groups learned of a national organization, with representation in nearly every State in the Union, many chose to affiliate with the larger group. This group was composed of Mothers who had lost a son or daughter in World War I.

Contact Us

2128 Leroy Place NW Washington, DC 20008

Phone: 202-265-0991

Email: info@americangoldstarmothers.org

Web: www.americangoldstarmothers.org