



Kashmiri Overseas Association, Inc.

www.koausa.org

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

Rules and Regulations

E-mail: management@koausa.org

Website: <http://www.koausa.org>

December 2008

FIRST EDITION



STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

RULES & REGULATIONS

VERSION 1.1

A KASHMIRI OVERSEAS ASSOCIATION (KOA) DOCUMENT

Copyright © 2008 by Kashmiri Overseas Association (<http://koausa.org>)

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in whole or in part, or stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without written permission of Kashmiri Overseas Association (KOA). For permission regarding publication, send an e-mail to management@koausa.org

HISTORY

Ver.	Prepared By:	Date:	Comments
1.0	Sunil Fotedar	December 14, 2008	ORIGINAL
1.1	Sunil Fotedar	December 14, 2008	Added Benefits of Membership, Modified Deadline for membership

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	1
2.0	ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	2
3.0	INTRODUCTION.....	3
3.1	MISSION	3
3.2	VISION	3
4.0	CODE OF CONDUCT FOR OFFICERS.....	4
4.1	CODE OF ETHICS	4
5.0	TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR MEMBERS	5
5.1	HOUSE RULES	5
5.2	TERMS AND CONDITIONS.....	5
5.3	MEMBERSHIP AND DUES.....	5
5.4	BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP.....	6
6.0	VOLUNTEERS	8
6.1	VOLUNTEERING - MEMBERS GET INVOLVED	8
6.2	HOW TO VOLUNTEER.....	8
7.0	KOA WEBSITES AND FORUMS.....	9
7.1	COPYRIGHTS.....	9
7.2	DISCLAIMER	9
7.3	PRIVACY STATEMENT.....	10
	Our Policy	10
	How Do We Use Cookies?.....	10
7.4	TERMS OF USE	11
7.5	KOA FORUM GUIDELINES	12
	KOAUSA e-Forum.....	14
	KOA Zonal e-Fora.....	14
	Violations and Offences	15

TABLE OF CONTENTS

8.0	TRANSITION PLAN.....	16
8.1	KOA WEBSITES AND E-MAIL IDENTIFIERS	16
8.2	KOA DOCUMENTS	17
8.3	BANK DETAILS	17
8.4	KOA RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR OPERATIONAL PURPOSES.....	18
8.5	MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS	18
9.0	ELECTION PROCEDURES	19
9.1	PURPOSE	19
9.2	DEFINITIONS	19
9.3	RESPONSIBILITIES.....	20
9.4	REQUIREMENTS.....	20
9.5	ELECTION PROCEDURE.....	22
9.6	ELECTION RESULTS	23
9.7	ISSUE RESOLUTION	23
9.8	REVISION	23
9.9	REFERENCES.....	24
9.10	ATTACHMENTS.....	25

1.0 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are grateful to Dr. Bansi Pandit, KOA NEC Chairman 2005, for writing *KOA Election Procedures*, which are included in this manual.

2.0 ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BOD	Board of Directors of the Kashmiri Overseas Association, Inc.
BLRC	By-Laws Review Committee
Bylaws	Bylaws of the Kashmiri Overseas Association, Inc.
CNEC	Chairperson of the Nomination and Election Committee
KOA	Kashmiri Overseas Association, Inc.
MNEC	Member of the Nomination and Election Committee
NEC	Nomination and Election Committee
President	President of the Kashmiri Overseas Association, Inc.
Secretary	Secretary of the Kashmiri Overseas Association, Inc.
TBD	To Be Determined

3.0 INTRODUCTION

The name of the organization is Kashmiri Overseas Association Inc. (KOA). The KOA is incorporated under the laws of Maryland as a non profit organization. The date of incorporation of the KOA is May 1st. 1983. The principal and registered office of the KOA is located at 8310 Nightingale Dr., Lanham, MD 20706. The KOA may also have offices, at such places both within and outside the state of Maryland as the Board of Directors (BOD) may from time to time determine or the business of the KOA may require. The KOA shall consist of Zones based primarily on the geographical locations. The grouping shall be reviewed from time to time by the BOD and changes made by a two-thirds majority of the BOD.

3.1 Mission

The KOA's mission is to promote Kashmir Pandit ethnic and socio-cultural heritage (language, history, art, etc), celebrate religious festivals of importance to Kashmiri Pandits; provide financial assistance to needy and deserving individuals, educational institutions, places of worship and shrines, both in the US and in India; preserve historical monuments and sites of religious and cultural significance in Kashmir, India; and provide assistance to displaced Kashmiri Pandits.

3.2 Vision

The KOA shall serve as the premier Kashmiri Pandit institution with a fundamental purpose that lies in promoting Kashmiri Pandit heritage and its way of living, Kashmiri Brahmanism and its philosophies; and be a center of social learning that caters to the spiritual, cultural, physical, humanitarian and educational needs of the community.

4.0 CODE OF CONDUCT FOR OFFICERS

The term "Officers" refers to elected officials, like zonal directors (BOD), and nominated persons, like Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Program Directors, Nomination and Election Committee (NEC), and By-Laws Review Committee (BLRC).

KOA is a non-profit organization registered in the state of Maryland, and as such the following documents govern all the non-profit organizations:

- Standards for Excellence Mission and Program

<http://www.marylandnonprofits.org/html/standards/principles.asp#PA>

http://www.marylandnonprofits.org/html/standards/MarylandStandards_2005.pdf.pdf

4.1 Code of Ethics

Additionally, the officers, in accepting a personal obligation to our corporation, and its members, do hereby commit themselves to the highest ethical and professional conduct and agree:

- to accept responsibility in making decisions consistent with the safety, health and welfare of the public, and to disclose promptly factors that might endanger the public or the environment;
- to avoid real or perceived conflicts of interest whenever possible, and to disclose them to affected parties when they do exist;
- to be honest and realistic in stating claims or estimates based on available data;
- to reject bribery in all its forms;
- to improve the understanding of technology, its appropriate application, and potential consequences;
- to maintain and improve technical competence and to undertake technological tasks for others only if qualified by training or experience, or after full disclosure of pertinent limitations;
- to seek, accept, and offer honest criticism of work, to acknowledge and correct errors, and to credit properly the contributions of others;
- to treat fairly all persons;
- to avoid injuring others, their property, reputation, or employment by false or malicious action;
- to assist colleagues in their development and to support them in following this code of ethics.

5.0 TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR MEMBERS

5.1 House Rules

- The Corporation is for the use of members only, as dictated by KOA bylaws.
- Members should be respectful of other members.
- Members should comply with the current membership policies of KOA.

5.2 Terms And Conditions

- Applications for membership are subject to approval by the Corporation, which has the right to refuse any application.
- The membership is for one calendar year, January 1 through December 31.
- Membership may be terminated at any time by a member informing the Corporation (Treasurer) in writing. If membership is terminated part-way through a year, no refund of membership will be available.
- Membership is not transferable, and/or may not be donated, lent, sold, or exploited for commercial use.
- Members must not use the name, logo or brand collateral of KOA, without the prior written permission of KOA.
- Members are requested to be respectful at all times of other members and users, and not to use abusive, obscene, racist, or otherwise discriminatory remarks.
- KOA provides free access to the internet via KOA-owned forums (currently hosted through yahoogroups), in addition to a domain-based e-mail id. This service is subject to compliance with KOA's Guidelines as well as Terms and Conditions.
- In the event that any of these conditions are not adhered to by the member, KOA reserves the right to take suitable action against the said member, as dictated by the KOA bylaws.
- The KOA administration reserves the right to amend the membership dues and these terms and conditions at any time by a simple board majority.

5.3 Membership and Dues

- **Life Member:** Any individual or family can apply for life membership and may be admitted as such a member unless otherwise disqualified to be such a member.
- **Family Member:** Any family may apply for membership of the Corporation and may be admitted as such a member unless otherwise disqualified to be such a member. Family means wife, husband and children under 18 years of age.
- **Single Member:** Any Persons over the age of 18 can apply for Single member and may be admitted as such a member unless otherwise disqualified to be such a member.
- **Senior Member:** Any couple (wife and husband) or a single persons over age 65 can apply for a Senior Member and may be admitted as such a member unless

otherwise disqualified to be such a member. Senior Member dues shall be at a reduced rate.

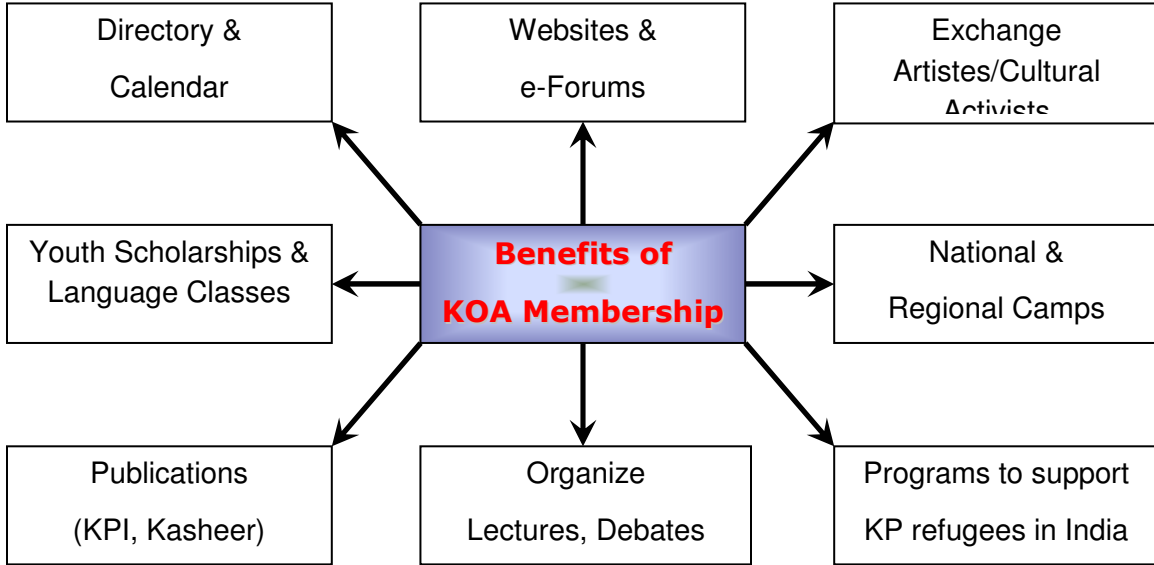
- **Associate Members:** Any individual or family who does not qualify for any of the above memberships and residents of countries other than the USA may be accepted as Associate members. Dues may be required from such Associate members. They shall not have any rights or interest in the property and assets of the Corporation.
- **Membership Dues:** The membership dues for each membership category shall be determined by the Board of Directors and revised from time to time. The deadline for membership in a Calendar year from January 1st to December 31st is October 15th for the purpose of participating in Presidential and zonal elections.

5.4 Benefits of Membership

- Kashmiri Member Directory
- Kashmiri Calendar
- Kashmir Pandit International (KPI) Newsletters
- Magazine KASHEER
- Part of the membership money comes back to the zone for local chapter activities.
- Culture/Language classes for children (Age group 5 to 15 years)
- Provide Youth Camp/Language Course under Kashmir Institute for our Youth (Age group 16+)
- Provide Merit Scholarships for college bound children of paid members
- Organize National Camp and Regional Camps
- Organize lectures, symposiums, and debates
- Promote exchange of Artistes and cultural Activists
- Produce and release music cassette/CD to preserve poetry and music
- Produce books, journals and periodicals to preserve culture
- Maintain two e-groups to promote information exchange, one at Zone level and the other that connects every member in the US
- Maintain two web sites: koausa.org is a repository of information on history, culture, music, and, Kashmir-information.com provides Political Education
- Meet with officials to promote the cause of our community with focus on social and cultural issues
- Support fund-raising for our brethren in India. Some of KOA's special programs structured for KP refugees in India include:
 - Sponsor-A-Child program designed for school going children (Age group 5 to 17 years)
 - Educational Assistance Program for college going children (Age 17+)
 - Support a primary School in Udhampur

Standard Operating Procedures
Rules & Regulations

- Financial assistance to community members for medical and social conditions
- Improve living conditions at the refugee camps
- Provide financial help for National calamities in India



6.0 VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are an essential part of the KOA organization. KOA members who volunteer their skills and time take pride in knowing that they play an important role in an organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for all.

6.1 Volunteering - Members Get Involved

Becoming a KOA volunteer can be a gratifying and memorable experience. Whether your skills are suited for organizing conferences, financial reporting, communicating or maintaining web sites, chances are your local chapter or zone is in need of someone with your expertise. Additional opportunities for involvement include documentation, fund raising, and the development of new products and programs.

As a KOA volunteer, you can take pride in participating in activities that interest you, while expanding your knowledge of the Corporation, gaining valuable management and leadership skills, and connecting with others in your own profession.

6.2 How to Volunteer

Getting started:

- Connect with your local chapter president and/or zonal director
- Learn about the KOA board-approved programs and projects:
<http://koausa.org/programs/index.html>
- Organize a community gathering, like Shivratri and Diwali function, KOA camp, etc.
- Participate in KOA-sponsored conferences and meeting
- Participate in KOA-sponsored surveys, fund-raising, membership drives

Nominated and Appointed opportunities:

- Program Directors and managers for KOA board-approved programs
- Nomination and Election Committee (NEC)
- By-Laws Review Committee (BLRC)
- Membership Drives

7.0 KOA WEBSITES AND FORUMS

The organization owns two official websites:

1. koausa.org

This site carries organizational details, information about executive committee and directors, programs and projects that KOA owns, and zonal information. It also carries information on culture and heritage of Kashmiri Pandits.

2. kashmir-information.com

This carries information about political scenario prevailing in Kashmir, only for educational purposes.

7.1 Copyrights

Kashmiri Overseas Association, Inc. (KOA) respects the intellectual property of others, and asks its visitors to do the same.

All the material, including the audio, video and photographic material existing on this website is copyrighted.

If you would like to use any material from this website, please contact us for appropriate permission.

If you believe that your work has been copied in a way that constitutes copyright infringement, please provide us the following information:

- an electronic or physical signature of the person authorized to act on behalf of the owner of the copyright interest;
- a description of the copyrighted work that you claim has been infringed;
- a description of where the material that you claim is infringing is located on the site;
- your address, telephone number, and email address;
- a statement by you that you have a good faith belief that the disputed use is not authorized by the copyright owner, its agent, or the law;
- a statement by you, made under penalty of perjury, that the above information in your Notice is accurate and that you are the copyright owner or authorized to act on the copyright owner's behalf.

7.2 Disclaimer

Kashmiri Overseas Association, Inc. makes no representations about the suitability, reliability, availability, timeliness, and accuracy of the information, products, services and related graphics contained on the Kashmiri Overseas Association, Inc. website for any purpose. All such information, software, products, services and related graphics are provided "AS IS" without warranty of any kind. Kashmiri Overseas Association, Inc. hereby disclaims all warranties and conditions with regard to this information, software, products, services and related graphics, including all implied warranties and conditions of merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose, title and non-infringement.

In no event shall Kashmiri Overseas Association, Inc. be liable for any direct, indirect, punitive, incidental, special, consequential damages or any damages whatsoever including,

without limitation, damages for loss of use, data or profits, arising out of or in any way connected with the use or performance of Kashmiri Overseas Association, Inc. websites or related services, the provision of or failure to provide services, or for any information, software, products, services and related graphics obtained through the Kashmiri Overseas Association, Inc. websites, or otherwise arising out of the use of Kashmiri Overseas Association, Inc. website, whether based on contract, negligence, strict liability or otherwise, even if Kashmiri Overseas Association, Inc. has been advised of the possibility of damages, web hosting organization and Kashmiri Overseas Association, Inc. are not responsible for the views/opinions/material expressed on this website.

At any stage if you are dissatisfied with any portion of the Kashmiri Overseas Association, Inc. website, or with any of these terms of use, your sole and exclusive remedy is to discontinue using Kashmiri Overseas Association, Inc. website.

7.3 Privacy Statement

We at Kashmiri Overseas Association, Inc. (KOA) recognize that visitors to our site may be concerned about the information they provide to us, and how we treat that information. This Privacy Policy addresses those concerns. This policy may be changed or updated from time to time. If you have any questions about our Privacy Policy, you can contact us at management@koausa.org. We'll be happy to answer your questions or hear your concerns.

Our Policy

We use our best efforts to respect the privacy of our online visitors. At our site, we do not collect personally identifiable information from individuals unless they provide it to us voluntarily and knowingly. This means we do not require you to register or provide information to us in order to view our site.

We only gather personally identifiable data, such as names, addresses, zip/postal codes, e-mail addresses, etc., when voluntarily submitted by a visitor. For example, personally identifiable information may be collected as part of an entry into our guest book. This information is used solely by us in the operation of this site for internal purposes. Our lists are never sold to any third parties. We will only share personally identifiable information with third parties when the person submitting the information authorizes us to share it or we are required to by law.

How Do We Use Cookies?

You should be aware that non-personal information and data may be automatically collected by our website through the use of cookies. Cookies are small text files a Website can use to recognize repeat visitors, facilitate his/her ongoing access to and use of the site, and allow a site to track usage behavior and compile aggregate data that will allow content improvements. Cookies are not programs that come onto your system and damage files. Generally, cookies work by assigning a unique number to the visitor that has no meaning outside the assigning site. If a visitor does not want information collected through the use of cookies, there is a simple procedure in most browsers that allows the visitor to deny or accept the cookie feature. We use cookie technology only to obtain non-personal information from its online visitors in order to improve visitors' online experience and facilitate their visit within our site.

We appreciate your visit to our website and we assure you that if you have shared any personal information with us would be safe with us.

7.4 Terms of Use

Before any member signs on to KOA provided service(s), (s)he shall be required to accept KOA's following established guidelines and Terms and Conditions.

The Kashmiri Overseas Association, Inc. (KOA)'s interactive sections which include the Matrimonial, Calendar, Free e-mail/homepage, Articles, etc. provide a medium of interaction and communication between various users to share and exchange their opinions on a wide variety of topics. It is important that you (referred as you or user interchangeably throughout this section) read and understand the terms and conditions set forth in this section. It is understood that by using these sections you agree to abide by the terms and conditions set forth in this section. The interactive services are provided as a platform for interaction and exchange of ideas amongst the users. The views and opinions submitted by the users not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of neither KOA team, any of its associates nor its staff. The submitter of any item to the interaction section shall be solely responsible for the content he submits. It is solely at the user's own risk, discretion and responsibility that he may use this service. The KOA team, any of our associates and its staff (referred sometimes as we hereafter) assume no involvement in any disputes, controversies, damages or misunderstandings arising due to the information exchanged between users using this service. We are not involved in any transaction/agreement between the users who use the Classifieds section. If there is a dispute between participants on this site, we are under no obligation to become involved.

The information presented throughout the site regarding is not guaranteed to be up to date or precise. It is solely up to the user to verify the correctness of this information. We assume no involvement in any disputes, damages or inconveniences arising due to the usage of information in this site. We disclaim any responsibility in any damage material or mental caused in any matter whatsoever due to the usage of any of our information in any way.

Terms of participation for user submitted sections

All the information posted on KOA's Interaction forums is provided by users using this service. We make no representation as to the validity or veracity of the information submitted by any information provider. The KOA team neither endorses nor does it subscribe to the ideas or communiqué submitted by the users.

- We reserve the right to modify the terms of participation upon our sole discretion at any time and without prior notice to our users. We also reserve the right to modify, change, delete, and add any content to this site, the service (and the site) may be discontinued temporarily or permanently at any time without any prior notice.
- We reserve the right to edit, classify or refuse to publish any material submitted by an information provider. While we take every precautionary measure to prevent inappropriate, inflammatory material we cannot rule-out such stray incidents. We request all the users to maintain proper decorum and let us continue and excel in providing this interaction service to our community.
- Submissions to this web site are on a non-confidential basis and we are under no obligation to refrain from reproducing, publishing or otherwise using in any way the content of any such communications, including any ideas, inventions, or know-how disclosed herein.
- If you participate in a discussion, you are responsible for ensuring that any material you post to the KOA web site does not violate the copyright, trademark patent, or any other proprietary rights of any third party, and is posted with the permission of

Standard Operating Procedures
Rules & Regulations

the owner of such rights. What you submit are solely your own comments and you agree to bear responsibility for them.

- You agree not to use any obscene, offensive or discourteous language or to place on the KOA web site any material that is libelous, abusive, hateful, give rise to civil liability, or otherwise violate any local, state, national, or international law or regulation.
- User agrees that neither of KOA, any of its ancillary units, and the staff shall be liable or held responsible for any direct, indirect damages or losses, inconveniences resulting from any transactions resulting due to the usage of this site.
- User agrees that the usage of this service is solely at his own risk. We do not carry any endorsements or warranty of any service, product or items transacted through this service.
- User agrees that neither the KOA Team, any of its ancillary units, nor its staff shall be liable or held responsible for any direct, indirect damages, losses, inconveniences or grievances resulting from the discussions resulting due to the usage of this service.

If you disagree with any of the above terms please do not use this site. If you have any questions or concerns we suggest that you respond by bringing them to our notice. We also invite you to bring to our attention any material you believe to be inaccurate or inappropriate.

7.5 KOA Forum Guidelines

The Kashmiri Overseas Association owns KOAUSA forum and 10 zonal forums, KOAZone1 through KOAZone10 - all currently hosted by yahoogroups.com. In addition, KOA-board forum is meant for communication between the KOA board members. While as only dues-paid members subscribe to KOAUSA forum, any person believing in KOA's mission can subscribe to his/her zonal forum (residing in that zone).

These groups are to facilitate communication and the participants are KOA members nationwide. This is meant to positively serve the community. The specific guidelines for participating in this group are given below. A member's continued participation as a member of these groups is a confirmation that(s)he is in acceptance of these guidelines. Anyone found violating any of the guidelines could be removed from these groups. To protect the interests of other forum members and for quicker action, member removal or addition decisions will be entirely at the discretion of the moderators of this KOAUSA group.

Code of Conduct for KOAUSA Group Users

- We welcome dialogue between community members, so long as they keep the dialogue civil, respectful, and meaningful and on-topic.
- Re-posting of emails/contents shall not be allowed without prior consent. This includes material from private e-mail and material that is specifically disallowed from being posted on such forums. Various articles may be allowed, if copyright laws are not disturbed. Please note this works in reverse as well, and the member may not re-post material from this group elsewhere without the author's consent.
- Personal information that a member does not want others to have access to shall not be posted on KOA forums, and a member shall avoid posting information about others that is held in confidence with the member.
- People who post for the purpose of causing disagreements and those who post advertisements and/or off-topic/distasteful material repeatedly shall be subject to a

Standard Operating Procedures *Rules & Regulations*

ban. Belittling the KOA organization in any guise may fall under this rule, depending on the circumstances, as assessed by the moderator. Absolutely no Spam shall be tolerated.

- Drawn discussions between individuals are not allowed and shall be deleted. This is not to be authoritarian but merely to preserve the focus of the group.
- No profanity or threats shall be allowed as this group also has entire families as members. The moderators shall delete posts that contain any profanity or threats. First time offenders may be let off with a warning, but continuing to post profanities shall result in a ban from posting or in removal from the group.
- Free speech is not necessarily the same as right speech. All the communications on this forum shall be in the spirit of the above statement. In the spirit of free and open respectful dialogue, please remember never to be disparaging in posts. Insults are counter-productive and will be moderated. This does not mean that the member cannot emphatically state his/her point of view in his/her posts. It does however mean that the member must not insult the character of other participants.
- Excessive and repeated communication on a single topic shall not be allowed. Please keep in mind that diversity breeds strength. Some may disagree with a member's position on a topic. Do not take offense when others disagree. Just move on after a point.
- When replying to posts that do not adhere to the above standards, all the "questionable material" shall be removed/deleted in the member's reply. If not found in line with above guidelines, the moderators may not allow entire post along with the "questionable material" that may have been appended to the member's post.
- If a member accidentally posts something that (s)he later regrets, an e-mail should be sent to the moderator mentioning the specific post details in the removal request.
- Unless otherwise or later necessitated, posts will be automatically forwarded without being moderated to those that choose Individual Email or Periodic Digest options. Also, as per the present settings, these will be available for viewing immediately for those that choose the Web-Only option. This arrangement with all the members is in good faith that no member will attempt to abuse the forum. Given the present settings, the moderators can therefore clean up any regrettable messages from the archives only.
- Individual posts are held to contain the views of those that send the posts and not those of the KOA organization or the moderators of this forum. Participation in this forum is free and on a purely voluntary basis, and neither the KOA organization nor the individual moderators of this group will be liable for any damages to any individual member or group of members or any organization on account of postings to this KOAUSA group. The KOA organization and the individual moderators will also not be liable for their decisions in matters of management of this group such as voluntary/ involuntary un-subscription or removal of members. In case a member disagrees with this policy for any reason, (s)he should unsubscribe or send an email to management@koausa.org with his/her un-subscription request.
- Banishment or removal from this group is usually irrevocable. Once banned, no more interactions may be allowed. The moderators exercise great care before exercising this option, therefore, they will watch out against those who attempt to circumvent this mechanism and re-sign under some other name or alias.
- The violations to this code of conduct shall be reported directly to the moderators.

Standard Operating Procedures
Rules & Regulations

Member feedback and cooperation in maintaining high standards for respectful dialogue on this forum is expected and appreciated.

KOAUSA e-Forum

KOAUSA e-forum will continue to be moderated by yahoo group and is henceforth going to be used ONLY for the following purposes:

- News/information items related to our KP community, but absolutely no discussions, personal views and opinions will be allowed.
- Announcement of meeting of interest to KP community
- Mails from any KP seeking information from the community - responses will not be posted but should be sent directly to the sender.
- KOA President or Secretary as moderators can approve the messages.
- Messages will be approved/disapproved within one (1) day. If urgent, person should contact one of the moderators by phone.
- Announcements with images will be accepted, but no individual congratulatory messages will be allowed.
- Membership to this group is restricted to dues-paid KOA members only
- Birth/death announcements
- Any new subscription needs to be verified by Zonal Director / Chapter President / Secretary / President

KOA Zonal e-Fora

The zonal e-fora **KOAZone1** through **KOAZone10** are meant for dissemination of community and KOA related information to the community in USA and provide the zonal community, KOA Director and/or Chapter President(s) access to the KP community within their own Zone Zone only. Any communication to other zones shall be routed through the respective zonal director or chapter president:

- Local activities at the chapter/zone level
- News related to the community in the particular zone
- Discussions, personal views and opinions will be allowed
- KOA President or Secretary to publish Board proceedings, actions, task updates, membership appeal
- KOA related information/news/announcements via <http://koausa.org/announce/index.html>
- Zonal Director / Chapter President / KOA Secretary / President can add/delete members to the Zone listing.
- All KOA nomination/election related information
- Appeal for funds/donations

The members are encouraged to communicate directly with their zonal director and/or chapter president for information. For details about various KOA zones and zonal

Standard Operating Procedures
Rules & Regulations

representation, please visit:

<http://koausa.org/zones.html>

Any member may post any non-KOA information to any of the KOA-owned forums, as long as these guidelines are strictly adhered to. However, the sender must provide contact information at the bottom of his/her message so that any reader may contact him/her offline.

Violations and Offences

KOA President and Secretary will monitor postings to look for offences. Some of the offences are:

- Violation of the published guidelines are posted in the FILE section of KOAUSA forum and are at: <http://koausa.org/email/guidelines.html>
- Cross-posting of KOA-owned information or discussion onto other yahoogroups/googlegroups/e-mail chains not owned by KOA, and vice versa shall not be allowed. Any KOA discussion, written attacks on the KOA officials on these e-forms not owned by KOA will be considered an offence.
- The KOA-related information being shared through KOA forums is KOA proprietary. No part of this information/publication may be reproduced or discussed in whole or in part, or stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the written permission of KOA on any other forum/e-mail chain not owned by KOA. Action will be taken against those who infringe upon this information.

Members in violation will be warned and depending on the severity of their offence, their writing privileges may be taken away, even resulting in expulsion from the e-fora. This policy is enforced effective immediately and is subject to change at any time that will be communicated to the membership accordingly.

8.0 TRANSITION PLAN

The outgoing administration shall begin transitioning of the following items within three (3) weeks after the incoming administration takes over. At the time of acceptance, the future president shall sign a form that he/she is going to honor this transition document should he/she be elected as President of the organization.

8.1 KOA Websites and e-mail Identifiers

Credentials, registration and hosting details for KOA Websites koausa.org and Kashmir-information.com

- Credentials for KOA-owned forums:
 - KOAUSA Forum: koausa@yahoogroups.com,
 - KOA Board Forum (unmoderated only for Board members): koa-board@yahoogroups.com,
- E-mail ids and phone numbers of all current and past KOA board of directors and all program directors
- Credentials for KOA Zonal Forums (currently unmoderated):
 - Zone 1: koazone1@yahoogroups.com
 - Zone 2: koazone2@yahoogroups.com
 - Zone 3: koazone3@yahoogroups.com
 - Zone 4: koazone4@yahoogroups.com
 - Zone 5: koazone5@yahoogroups.com
 - Zone 6: koazone6@yahoogroups.com
 - Zone 7: koazone7@yahoogroups.com
 - Zone 8: koazone8@yahoogroups.com
 - Zone 9: koazone9@yahoogroups.com
 - Zone 10: koazone10@yahoogroups.com
- e-Mail identifiers:
 - KOA Executive: koaexecutive@yahoo.com
 - President: president@koausa.org (owner of all koausa.org-based e-mail ids)
 - Vice President: vp@koausa.org
 - Treasurer: treasurer@koausa.org
 - Secretary: secretary@koausa.org
 - KOA Management: management@koausa.org
 - KOA BLRC: bylaws@koausa.org
 - KOA NEC: nec@koausa.org
 - Zone 1 Director: zone1@koausa.org
 - Zone 2 Director: zone2@koausa.org
 - Zone 3 Director: zone3@koausa.org

- Zone 4 Director: zone4@koausa.org
- Zone 5 Director zone5@koausa.org
- Zone 6 Director zone6@koausa.org
- Zone 7 Director zone7@koausa.org
- Zone 8 Director zone8@koausa.org
- Zone 9 Director zone9@koausa.org
- Zone 10 Director: zone10@koausa.org
- Website details:
 - KOA Website has resolutions listed on:
<http://koausa.org/resolutions/index.html>
 - Board Meeting minutes at: <http://koausa.org/minutes/index.html>
 - Program descriptions and brochures at:
<http://koausa.org/programs/index.html>
 - KOA Publications downloadable from:
<http://koausa.org/downloads/index.html>

8.2 KOA Documents

Hand over the following documents in electronic and/or hard copy format:

- Copy of 501c(3) certification from IRS
- Copy of IRS EIN letter
- Copy of article of incorporation and KOA seal
- Check the status of the corporation by going to
<http://sdatcert1.resiusa.org/certificate/>
- Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation
- Copy of original by-laws
- Copy of KOA trade name registration with US Patent Office
<http://tarr.uspto.gov/>
- Elections Procedures Document (to be approved by the Board)

8.3 Bank Details

- Transfer seed money equivalent to 50% of current balance within 2 weeks of setting up a new account by the incoming administration.
- Transfer the balance when the account closed by the outgoing administration (no later than end of June of the following year).
- Send complete financial statements, tax returns, ledger, and cancelled and returned checks for the entire duration of term.

8.4 KOA rules and regulations for operational purposes

Board has approved a limit of \$2000 for the President without Board approval for medical emergency purposes and/or disaster relief.

- The President is authorized to approve up to \$2000.00 for medical relief per person with a limit of \$10000.00 per year without specific requirement for Board approval.

In case of the need for advice on medical or other relief issues, the President may appoint an *ad hoc* committee for advice. The committee shall not be restricted in membership but based on expertise in the field.

- The President is authorized to approve up to \$2000.00 per person with an annual limit of \$10000.00 for relief to a community member in distress in the USA or outside USA. The disbursement shall be reported to the board at the next meeting. This authorization will help the President and the executive committee to protect the privacy of the person in need.

After November 1, the outgoing president should not enter into any financial commitment/agreement on behalf of KOA, nor should the board pass any new program that requires expenditure of KOA funds (exception would be some emergencies like legal expenses if the organization and/or officers are sued).

8.5 Miscellaneous Items

- KOA's pending obligations
- KOA Liability Insurance policy information
- List of KOA's contacts outside USA and their contact information
- KOA Liaison in Jammu, India
- Printer/Publisher information
- Vendor for conducting conference calls

Setup a new account with <http://www.freeconferencecall.com/>

9.0 ELECTION PROCEDURES

9.1 Purpose

This document provides instructions/tools/information to the NEC, voters, candidates, and the organization for conducting nomination and the elections for President, Directors, and Chapter Presidents.

9.2 Definitions

9.2.1 Ballot Company – company that specializes in electronic balloting and is contracted by Kashmiri Overseas Association to conduct its elections online via electronic voting.

9.2.2 Electronic Voting (or e-voting) – a process that uses electronic means of casting and counting votes for an election.

9.2.3 Paper Ballot - an official paper on which the names of all candidates are printed. Voters record their choices, in private, by marking the box next to the candidate they select and mail the voted ballot to the NEC in a designated pre-stamped and addressed envelope.

9.2.4 Voter – An individual or family qualified to vote in the KOA election in accordance with the applicable requirements of the Bylaws.

9.2.5 Voter List – A list of all eligible voters qualified to vote in a given election in accordance with the requirements of the Bylaws.

9.2.6 Verified Voter List – Voter List that has been reviewed by the Zone Directors for accuracy based upon the best information available to them at the time of their review.

9.2.7 Confirmed Voter List – The Verified Voter List that has been reviewed by the candidates and approved for election by NEC.

9.2.8 Email Blast – email(s) issued by the Ballot Company to all the voters to verify the validity/accuracy of the voters' emails. The bouncing emails are thus identified and reported to the Secretary. The Secretary is responsible for resolving the bouncing email issues and providing the correct voter emails to the Ballot Company.

9.2.9 The use of *Shall*, *Will*, and *Should*

The use of 'Shall' in this procedure indicates requirement(s), which must be met. The term 'Will' indicates an action(s), which is to be completed. The term 'Should' indicates a recommendation but not a requirement.

9.3 Responsibilities

9.3.1 KOA President shall:

9.3.1.1 Announce the election, identify the offices to be elected, and nominate CNEC for BOD approval.

9.3.2 KOA BOD shall:

9.3.2.1 Approve CNEC and NEC members, unless NEC is already in place.

9.3.2.2 Establish voter eligibility criteria in accordance with the Bylaws.

9.3.2.3 Respond to questions and/or concerns, if any, pertaining to the voter eligibility and qualification issues.

9.3.3 NEC shall:

9.3.3.1 Conduct fair and clean elections in accordance with this Procedure and the applicable requirements of the Bylaws. In the event of any conflict between the requirements of this Procedure and the Bylaws, the Bylaws shall govern.

9.3.3.2 Select the Ballot Company from the recommended list of Companies provided by the KOA Secretary.

9.3.3.3 Approve the Voter List submitted by the Secretary.

9.3.3.4 Ensure that NEC maintains complete independence from KOA, its associates and affiliates for conducting the election.

9.3.4 KOA Secretary shall:

9.3.4.1 Solicit bids from Ballot Companies and provide a list of the recommended bidders to the NEC.

9.3.4.2 Prepare the Voter List in accordance with the voter qualification requirements of the Bylaws and submit it to NEC.

9.3.4.3 Resolve the bouncing email issues and assist NEC to resolve missing information in the Voter List, if any, as identified by the NEC during its review of the Voter List.

9.3.5 KOA shall:

9.3.5.1 Pay all and election expenses, including the Ballot Company fees.

9.4 Requirements

9.4.1 BALLOT COMPANY SELECTION

A Ballot Company shall be selected by the NEC for the election as follows:

KOA Secretary shall solicit proposals from Ballot Companies for each election and provide recommended bidders to NEC. The NEC shall select the Ballot Company on the basis of the cost, past performance and notify the Secretary. The Secretary shall award contract to the selected company on behalf of KOA and in accordance with KOA's procedures. KOA's contract with the Ballot Company shall require that the Ballot Company's written and verbal communications relating to the conduct of the election shall be directed only to the CNEC. Ballot Company shall not communicate with KOA on any election matters other than financial issues related to the management of the contract.

9.4.2 VOTER QUALIFICATION

A voter shall be eligible to vote only if (s)he complies with the voter eligibility requirements of the Bylaws. NEC has no jurisdiction to interpret and/or amend the voter eligibility requirements of the Bylaws. Such authority lies only with the BOD.

9.4.3 VOTER LIST VERIFICATION

The initial voter list shall be prepared by the Secretary based upon the membership status of the individuals and the families. The Secretary shall ensure that the initial voter list complies with the voter eligibility requirements of the Bylaws and the membership deadline set by the BOD. This voter list shall be reviewed by the Zone Directors to ensure, as much as possible, that the voters residing in their respective Zones are correctly listed and that there are no obvious errors and/or omissions. The Zone Directors shall use their best judgment to verify the voter list.

9.4.4 VOTER LIST CONFIRMATION

NEC shall issue the verified voter list to the candidates for their review. After their comments are resolved by NEC, the voter list shall be considered confirmed. The Secretary shall assist NEC, if requested, to resolve the Candidates' comments.

9.4.5 PAPER BALLOTS

9.4.5.1 Paper ballots shall be limited only to those voters (such as seniors) who may not have access to the online voting system. Because of excessive costs and technical issues involved, paper ballots shall not be assigned on the basis of personal convenience, desirability or preference.

9.4.5.2 NEC shall design the paper ballot; sign the original and mail it to the voter by certified mail along with a pre-addressed and pre-stamped envelope.

9.4.5.3 The voter shall mark the box on the NEC-signed original ballot against the voter's candidate of choice and return the original ballot to NEC in the pre-stamped envelope. The return ballots need not to be returned by certified mail. However, the post-marked date on the paper-ballot shall not exceed the deadline.

9.4.5.4 The return ballot shall be considered invalid if any one of the following conditions exist:

9.4.5.4.1 The ballot is signed by someone other than the voter to whom the original ballot was mailed to.

9.4.5.4.2 More than one candidate is voted for the same office.

9.4.5.4.3 The ballot is not signed by the voter.

9.4.5.4.4 The post-marked date on the paper ballot is later than the deadline date.

9.4.5.4.5 The ballot is tampered.

9.4.5.4.6 The ballot is not the original ballot with original NEC signature. Copies of the original ballot are not acceptable.

9.4.6 ELECTION MANIFESTO

NEC shall provide electronic platform for all candidates to post their election manifesto on KOAUSA Forum. Refer to Attachment A.5 for applicable guidance.

9.4.7 COMMUNICATION WITH MEMBERSHIP

NEC shall issue regular communiqués to the membership, as needed. The goal is to keep voters informed of the election milestones, progress, schedule and any major issues that might impact the course of the election process, but not bombard them with an avalanche of e-mails.

9.4.8 MANAGEMENT OF KOAUSA FORUM

In order to provide equal opportunity to all candidates to present their manifestos on KOAUSA forum, NEC shall manage this forum during the election process in accordance with the instructions delineated in Attachment A.6.

9.4.9 CANCELLATION OF ELECTION

NEC has the option to cancel the election if it experiences willful breach of this procedure by anyone, including the candidates, Ballot Company or KOA and its associates and affiliates. Such an action shall be exercised with caution and only if the identified breach of this procedure cannot be remedied to the satisfaction of the NEC.

9.4.10 ELECTION RESULTS

The Ballot Company shall provide the election results to NEC in a timely fashion and the confidentiality of the results shall be maintained until NEC has reviewed the results with the Ballot Company and is ready to announce them to the public. As a matter of protocol, NEC shall first inform the candidates and then simultaneously inform the BOD and post the results on the public forums.

9.5 Election Procedure

The following procedure shall be used to conduct all elections for the KOA President and the Directors. This process is further illustrated on the flowchart in Attachment A.1.

- 9.5.1 KOA President shall promptly notify the membership about the elections to be conducted and the offices to be elected. The President shall nominate CNEC (unless one is already in place) for BOD's approval.
- 9.5.2 BOD shall approve the CNEC and set the membership deadline date for election.
- 9.5.3 CNEC shall select members for the NEC. NEC shall have at least three voting members including CNEC. The Secretary shall not be a voting member of the NEC, but shall act as liaison between NEC and KOA for administrative purposes only.
- 9.5.4 KOA shall solicit bids from Ballot Companies for conducting the election and provide recommended bidders to NEC.
- 9.5.5 NEC shall select the Ballot Company from KOA's recommended bidders and KOA shall award the contract to the Ballot Company.
- 9.5.6 NEC shall develop the election schedule, inform the membership and invite nominations in accordance with Attachments A.2, A.3 and A.4.
- 9.5.7 NEC shall finalize the list of candidates for the election and inform the membership.
- 9.5.8 KOA Secretary shall prepare the Voter List and issue it to Zone Directors for verification.
- 9.5.9 KOA Secretary shall resolve Zone Directors' comments and issue the Verified Voter List to NEC.

Standard Operating Procedures
Rules & Regulations

- 9.5.10 NEC shall review the Voter List and issue it to the Candidates for review.
- 9.5.11 The Candidates shall review the Voter List and provide comments to NEC.
- 9.5.12 NEC shall resolve the Candidates' comments and confirm the Voter List for election.
- 9.5.13 NEC shall issue the Confirmed Voter List to Ballot Company with a copy to the Secretary.
- 9.5.14 NEC shall mail out Paper Ballots to the designated voters and consolidated the Paper Ballot results.
- 9.5.15 Ballot Company shall issue "Email Blast" to verify voter emails. Bouncing emails, if any, shall be corrected by the Secretary.
- 9.5.16 Ballot Company shall conduct the e-Election.
- 9.5.17 NEC shall provide Paper Ballot count to the Ballot Company.
- 9.5.18 The Ballot Company shall consolidate the e-Ballots and the Paper Ballots to calculate the final totals.
- 9.5.19 Ballot Company shall provide the final results to the NEC.
- 9.5.20 NEC shall review the final results, inform the candidates and then announce the results to the membership. NEC shall simultaneously provide the results to the BOD in writing.

9.6 Election Results

- 9.6.1 NEC has the right to order the recount of votes, or a new election if it has reason to believe that the KOA Management, candidates themselves, or any other individual or party has willfully violated the provisions of this procedure with intent to impact or alter the results of the election in favor of a certain candidate or candidates.
- 9.6.2 If the two of the contesting candidates receive exactly the same number of votes, NEC shall order the recount of the votes. If the recount shows that one of the candidates has received more than 50% votes, the candidate shall be declared to have won the election. If the recount shows that the two candidates have received the same number of votes, the NEC shall order a new election unless one of the candidates voluntarily withdraws from the election in favor of the other.
- 9.6.3 If one candidate wins by a narrow margin of less than 3%, the loser candidate has the right to request a recount of the votes. If the recount shows that one of the candidates has received more than 50% votes, the candidate shall be declared to have won the election. If the recount shows that the two candidates have received the same number of votes, the NEC shall order a new election unless one of the candidates voluntarily withdraws from the election in favor of the other.

9.7 Issue Resolution

If there are any issues from the public and/or candidates, they shall be immediately brought to the attention of the NEC. The NEC shall resolve the issues in a timely manner and the NEC's decision shall be binding on all the parties involved.

9.8 Revision

This procedure may be revised by KOA, as and when needed, subject to the approval of the BOD.

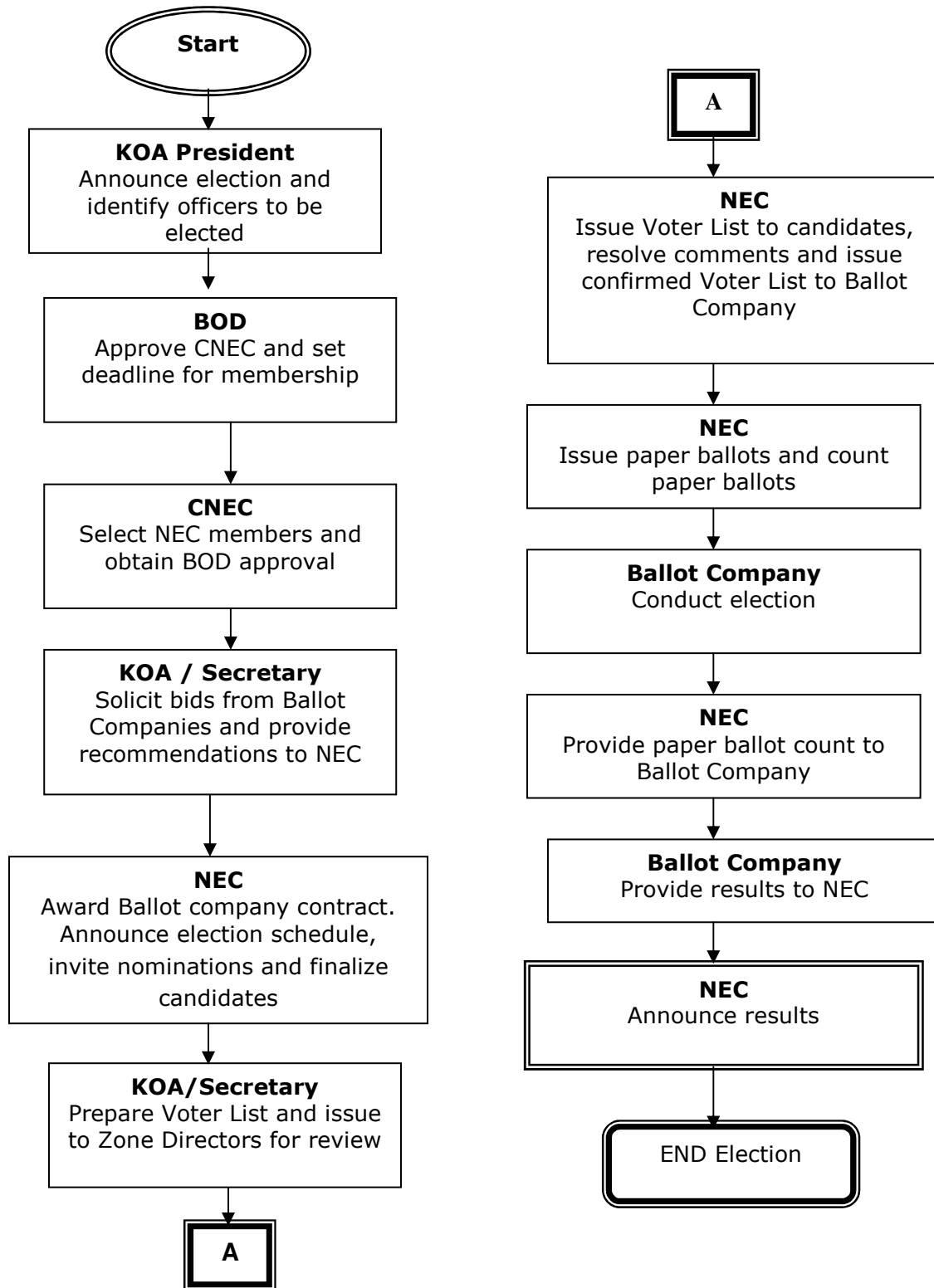
9.9 References

KOA Bylaws

9.10 Attachments

- 9.10.1 Election Process Flowchart
- 9.10.2 Election Announcement
- 9.10.3 NEC Form N
- 9.10.4 NEC Form A
- 9.10.5 Election Manifesto Guideline (NECG01)
- 9.10.6 KOAUSA Guideline (NEG02)
- 9.10.7 Paper Ballot

9.10.1 Election Process Flowchart



9.10.2 Election Announcement
(Page 1 of 2)

XXXX KOA ELECTION ANNOUNCEMENT

(Year)

NEC, the Nomination & Election Committee, is hereby inviting nominations for the following positions for the upcoming KOA election.

- **KOA President**
- **Director Zone _** (List the states for this Zone)
- **Director Zone _** (List the states for this Zone)
- **Director Zone _** (List the states for this Zone)

Membership Deadline for Election: xx,xx,xxxx, 11:59 PM EST
(Date)

Nomination Deadline: xx,xx,xxxx, 11:59 PM EST
(Date)

Nomination Acceptance Deadline: xx,xx,xxxx, 11:59 PM EST
(Date)

NEC Announcement of Candidates (nominated & accepted):
xx,xx,xxxx, 11:59 PM EST
(Date)

Nomination Withdrawal Deadline: xx,xx,xxxx, 11:59 PM EST
(Date)

NEC to Begin Voter List confirmation: xx,xx,xxxx,
(Date)

Conduct Election: xx,xx,xxxx,
(Date)

Announce Results: xx,xx,xxxx,
(Date)

Qualifications:

- A candidate for President shall be a member of KOA in good standing for three consecutive years XXXX-XXXX (NEC to list years). The candidate shall be nominated by at least one "dues-paid" member of the community.
- A candidate for Zone Director shall be a "dues-paid" member in good standing and resident of respective Zone. The candidate shall be nominated by at least one "dues-paid" member residing in the same zone.

Both Nominating and Nominated members shall be "dues-paid" members as of
xx,xx,xxxx, (Date)

Standard Operating Procedures
Rules & Regulations

(Page 2 of 2)

- In the unlikely event of having no nominations from a particular zone for the Director, NEC will have the mandate to nominate at least one person from that particular zone.

Nomination Process:

1. In order to contest elections, a candidate must be nominated by a "dues-paid" member of the community. A candidate may receive multiple nominations for multiple positions (based on their qualifying criteria). Once all nominations are received, NEC will ensure that Acceptance for the nominations is adequately documented, prior to announcing the final candidate list for all contest positions.

A Nominating member shall complete the nomination form (NEC Form N – Attachment 7.3) and send the form to reach NEC as soon as possible but no later than xx,xx,xxxx, 11:59 PM EST
(Date)

2. The form shall be sent to NEC by one of the following means:
 - (a) Complete the form and copy it into the body of your own e-mail and send to xxxxxxxxxxx@yahoo.com (NEC to provide e-mail address)
 - (b) Complete the form, sign and fax to xxx-xxx-xxxx (NEC to provide fax number)
3. The nominating member shall inform his (her) nominated candidate to send nomination acceptance form (NEC Form A) to reach NEC as soon as possible, but no later than xx-xx-xx, 11:59 PM EST. The nomination acceptance form shall be sent by the nominated member to NEC by one of the following means:
 - (c) Complete the form and copy it into the body of your own e-mail and send to xxxxxxxxxxx@yahoo.com (NEC to provide e-mail address), *or*
 - (d) Complete the form, sign and fax to xxx-xxx-xxxx (NEC to provide fax number)
4. **Please note that the cutoff dates and deadlines are very important and will be strictly adhered to, in order to make it a fair election and avoid any confusion of "sent but not received on time" situations. The nominations which are not filled in completely or which do not reach NEC by the above deadline date may be rejected for the election. Nomination acceptance forms which are not filled in completely or which do not reach NEC by the above deadline date may be rejected and the associated nomination cancelled for the election.**

Appeal:

Please make copies of this communiqué and make them available to all those community members who may have either no access to KOA forums or to e-mail. Please forward this message to all those members of our biradari who may have access to e-mail but not to the KOA forums.

Standard Operating Procedures
Rules & Regulations

9.10.3 NEC Form N

XXXX KOA ELECTION – NOMINATION FORM

(Year)

Instructions:

To send your nomination, please do one of the following:

1. Fill in a paper copy of this form, sign and fax to **XXX-XXX-XXXX** (NEC to provide fax number) to reach NEC* no later than **XX-XX-XXXX**, 11:59 PM EST (NEC to list date),
or
2. Complete this form, copy it into the body of your own e-mail and send to XXXXXX@yahoo.com to reach NEC no later than **XX-XX-XXXX**, 11:59 PM EST.

Declaration:

I (your name) _____
Living at (your address) _____
Phone # _____
E-mail address _____

Hereby nominate the following individual for the office of KOA President/Zone Director (Please note, that a candidate for zonal director position can only compete in one zone (based on his domicile state).

	KOA President	Zone Director (State Zone #)
Candidate's Name		
Candidate's Address:		
Candidate's Phone No.		
Candidate's E-mail Address:		

I further certify that:

1. I am a 'dues-paid' member of KOA for the year XX-XX-XXXX (list year)
2. The candidate I am nominating for KOA President/Zone Director and whose name appears above:
 - Has shown the dedication and community spirit worthy of this nomination.
 - To the best of my knowledge, is a current "dues-paid" member of KOA.
 - Has indicated a willingness to run for this office.
 - Will be, if needed, available and willing to participate in an Open Forum debate with other nominated candidates to discuss issues raised by the community. (The candidate will have right to withdraw pending all other nominations for the said office.)
 - My signature below indicates an honest representation of facts and a willingness to comply with the rules as set by KOA and the NEC.
 -

(Print Name)

(Signature) _____ Date

Nomination & Election Committee XX-XX-XXXX (List year)

Standard Operating Procedures
Rules & Regulations

9.10.4 NEC Form A

XXXX KOA ELECTION – NOMINATION ACCEPTANCE FORM
(Year)

Instructions:

To send your acceptance of the nomination for KOA President/Zone Director, please do one of the following:

3. Fill in a paper copy of this form, sign and fax to (XXX-XXX-XXXX) to reach NEC* as soon as possible but no later than XX-XX-XXXX, 11:59 PM EST, **or**
4. Complete this form, copy it into the body of your own e-mail and send to XXXX@yahoo.com to reach NEC as soon as possible but no later than XX-XX-XXXX, 11:59 PM EST.

Declaration:

I hereby accept the nomination for the office of KOA President/Zone Director.

- Candidate for KOA President** **Candidate for Director of Zone _____**
(Please identify zone)

Your Name		
Your Address:		
Phone No.		
E-mail Address:		
Provide your brief introduction (not to exceed 50 words). This data will be used to introduce you as a candidate. Use continuation sheet, if required.		

I further certify that:

- I fully comply with the qualification requirements of KOA Bylaws for the above position for which I am accepting the nomination for.
- I will be, if needed, available and willing to participate in an Open Forum debate with other nominated candidates to discuss issues raised by the community. I will have right to withdraw pending all other nominations for the said office.
- My signature below indicates an honest representation of facts and a willingness to comply with the rules as set by KOA and NEC.
- I have included my bio data (not to exceed 50 words) above, which may be used by NEC to introduce me as a candidate for the office of KOA President/Zone Director.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date _____

* Nomination & Election Committee XXXX (*List year*)

9.10.5 Election Manifesto Guideline (NECG01)

It is probably impossible to conceive of people exercising their democratic aspirations without effective participation in the electoral process. Democracy depends on all contesting points of views being fairly and equitably communicated so that people may make well informed choices. There cannot be a meaningful and rigorous debate of the fundamental issues concerning the community without means of expressing our legitimate views and being properly heard. For the candidates it is important to be able to present his or her sincere and appropriate message to the community and for voters it is their right to receive complete and accurate information without distortion or manipulation. All of this, however, has to be achieved in a civilized, elegant and courteous manner.

With this in mind, the NEC will provide an electronic platform for all candidates to post their election manifesto that will be accessible to the members for information only on KOAUSA forum throughout the election process. Please apply the following guidelines for the manifesto submission:

- The NEC will allow each candidate to provide motivational statement of no more than **1500 words** for the presidential candidate and **1000 words** for the zonal director candidate to be posted on the official KOA website. Any manifesto longer than the required space limit will be truncated by the NEC without regard for its sense. Thus it is critical that the candidates strictly adhere to these criteria.
- All the manifestos should be e-mailed to the NEC (XXXX@yahoo.com) by XX-XX-XXXX (*list date*), to be posted on-line by the NEC on KOAUSA forum simultaneously. Manifestos received after the deadline will not be accepted.
- Manifesto should begin with the "**Position**" for which nominated followed by the "**Candidate's name**".
- Manifesto is a document that sets out what the candidate stands for, what he or she will do if elected, and why voters should vote him or her over other candidates. Attempt should be made to clearly address these points in the manifesto. From these postings, people expects to know, which issues concerning our community have been identified by the candidates and how they plan to tackle them in case they are elected for the said post.
- Manifesto gives the candidate a best chance to showcase his or her ability to take our growing community ahead, and untangle it from the bickering and animosity. NEC implores civility for the candidate in drafting of this manifesto. Please stay away from any tasteless contents and adhere to the standards of objectivity and balance of views.
- Via KOAUSA forum guidelines (**NECG-02**), the NEC will welcome questions from the members that can be addressed to the candidates by the NEC.

9.10.6 KOAUSA Guideline (NEG02)

One of the key elements involved in conducting a fair and clean election for KOA is management of the KOAUSA forum during the election process. Since KOAUSA is the only official forum for the paid KOA members, it is important that the forum is used to help the community members in making informed choices about their candidates and in deciding their individual voting preferences. To do this in a manner that is fundamentally fair to all the candidates, it is vital that KOAUSA forum doesn't permit any particular candidate any undue advantage over other candidates. In the interest of fairness, the forum needs to give an opportunity to each candidate to present his/her election manifesto to the community members. Equally important is that KOA members get an opportunity to ask pertinent questions to their candidates.

Recognizing the necessity of members to use the KOAUSA forum on one hand and the critical need to keep the forum clean and civilized, NEC will manage KOAUSA forum exclusively during the election process under the following set of guidelines:

1. The ability to post on the forum for all (KOA, candidates, and all members) except NEC will be blocked until the election is completed.
2. On behalf of KOA, NEC will post only community announcements such as birth or death in a KP member family, or important community events etc as long as such announcements are not judged by NEC to be a propaganda tool for any candidate.
3. NEC will post election manifestos of each and every presidential and zonal director candidate per NEC's Election Manifesto Guideline (NECG-01).
4. NEC will provide opportunity for KOA community members to anonymously ask pertinent questions to candidates and the candidates in turn will have opportunity to answer the questions. To facilitate this question and answer sessions on the KOAUSA forum, community members will be requested to e-mail their questions to <
KOAUSA@yahoogroups.com
5. Based on the community input in terms of questions/concerns, NEC will formulate representative questions and simultaneously e-mail questions to all the presidential candidates or to competing zonal director candidates (as applicable). All the representative questions that NEC poses to the candidates (based on membership question pool) and the answers from the candidate(s) will be posted on KOAUSA forum.
6. The community members will be requested to **formulate objective questions, which could help the larger community to make educated voting choices**. If a candidate chooses not to answer a question or fails to e-mail his/her answer to NEC within NEC stipulated time, it shall be clearly indicated in our posting on the forum.
7. Questions or challenges by members should not be in the form of **personal attacks**. Any questions/concerns e-mailed to NEC using **insulting or derogatory language** will be automatically deleted and not included in the membership question pool. NEC will reserve the discretion to decide how to frame and post the representative questions.
8. At least one question and answer session will be dedicated to presidential candidates only. For this session, presidential candidates will be requested to e-mail their questions (addressed to another specified presidential candidate) to KOAUSA@yahoogroups.com. NEC will e-mail these questions to the specified candidate for answers. Name and question(s) of a candidate along with the answer(s) and name of answering candidate

Standard Operating Procedures
Rules & Regulations

will be posted on KOAUSA forum. Similar procedure will be used for arranging at least one question answer session between zonal director candidates if more than one candidate is contesting from the same zone. These sessions will not feature candidates who have been already elected unopposed.

9. NEC's representative questions to candidates will not include **any trash talk, mud slinging, innuendoes or insulting personal attacks, or any other activity that would be considered to be counter productive** to our goal of ensuring an honest and upright election with equal opportunity for all candidates to express their positions and views in an environment of decency and good will.

Standard Operating Procedures
Rules & Regulations

9.10.7 Paper Ballot

XXXXX KOA Election

(Year)

Dear Voter:

Please write your name and address below and indicate your choice by placing a check mark against the name of the candidate of your choice. **Only one box must be checked for one candidate.** If you check both boxes, your vote will be invalid. This ballot is valid for one voter only.

This is the original ballot authenticated by the original signature of the issuing authority. This original vote must be returned to NEC in the enclosed self-addressed envelope. Copies of this ballot are not acceptable and will be invalidated.

Voter's Name: _____
(Print full name)

Voter's Address: _____

President (Check only one box)

<i>(NEC to list name of the candidate)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>(NEC to list name of the candidate)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Director Zone___ (Check only one box)

<i>(NEC to list name of the candidate)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>(NEC to list name of the candidate)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Director Zone___ (Check only one box)

<i>(NEC to list name of the candidate)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>(NEC to list name of the candidate)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Ballot authenticated by:

(Original Signature of NEC) _____
Date

(Note: NEC shall list all the candidates and the offices they are seeking election for.)