

# Contents

I. NAME AND JURISDICTION .....	3
II. MISSION .....	3
III. OVERVIEW .....	3
IV. MEMBERSHIP .....	4
1. Categories of Membership .....	4
A. <b>Statewide Member:</b> .....	4
B. <b>Local/Regional Members:</b> .....	5
C. <b>Governmental Partners:</b> .....	5
D. <b>Guests:</b> .....	5
2. <b>Membership Application Processes</b> .....	6
Organizations desiring membership will notify a member of the Executive Committee. ....	6
The Executive Committee will request the candidate organization to complete a Membership Form. (See Attachment 1) .....	6
3. <b>Renewal of Membership</b> .....	6
4. <b>Termination of Membership</b> .....	6
V. MEETINGS .....	6
VI. DUES .....	7
VII. OFFICERS .....	7
A. <b>Election and Terms</b> .....	7
B. <b>Officers</b> .....	8
VIII. STANDING COMMITTEES .....	9
A. <b>Executive Committee</b> .....	9
B. <b>Membership Committee</b> .....	9
C. <b>By-Laws Committee</b> .....	9
D. <b>Ad Hoc:</b> .....	10
IX. VOTING .....	10
X FISCAL PROCEDURES .....	10
XI. DISCLAIMER OF ENDORSEMENT .....	10
XII. AMENDMENTS .....	10
ATTACHMENT 1: GAVOAD MEMBERSHIP .....	12

33 GAVOAD BYLAWS REVISIONS

REVISION NO.	APPROVAL DATE	LOCATION OF CHANGE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE	AUTHOR(S)
January 2024	To be voted by members	Throughout document	Corrected several typos for clarity	Danah Craft, Luis Morales, Jay Mullins
April 2024	To be voted by members	V. MEETINGS	Standardized meetings: Executive Committee, General Membership, and Emergency Meetings Added "renew" to application form	Danah Craft, Luis Morales, Jay Mullins
Marh 2025	To be voted by members	VII. OFFICERS	Addition of Immediate Past-President:	Executive Committee
March 2025	To be voted by members	VIII. STANDING COMMITTEES	a. Eligible members defined b. Each Officer may be elected to only two (2) consecutive terms. A one (1) year break from the role must occur prior to becoming eligible to run again for the same position. c. President and Vice-President's term could be extended for one additional term if no member volunteers to run for the position, with GAVOAD approves.	Executive Committee

# GEORGIA ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN DISASTERS

## BYLAWS 2024

### I. NAME AND JURISDICTION

The name of the organization is the Georgia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (GAVOAD). GAVOAD is the state counterpart to the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD). The jurisdiction is the state of Georgia.

### II. MISSION

GAVOAD is a humanitarian association of independent voluntary organizations who may be active in all phases of disaster. Its mission is to foster efficient, streamlined service delivery to people affected by disaster, while minimizing unnecessary duplication of effort, through cooperation in the four phases of disaster: preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation.

### III. OVERVIEW

GAVOAD is not a competing or exclusionary organization. GAVOAD is intended to be a network for organizations active in disaster. Each GAVOAD member organization will maintain its own identity and independence while closely collaborating with other GAVOAD organizations, government agencies, private entities, and other partners.

GAVOAD respects and values diversity in its board and membership. GAVOAD seeks to create programs and services that meet the needs of the diverse workforce and membership we serve.

GAVOAD accomplishes its mission by adhering to the following principles of National VOAD:

**Cooperation:** Foster cooperation among GAVOAD member organizations at all levels and in all phases of disaster.

**Coordination:** Coordinate the development of GAVOAD policies and procedures, and the implementation of services among GAVOAD member organizations. GAVOAD may also provide links to national and international disaster relief organizations. GAVOAD serves as advocate and liaison between member agencies and the State of Georgia.

**Communication:** Exchange and disseminate information among GAVOAD member organizations, the public, local, state, and federal agencies, with the individual GAVOAD members.

**Collaboration:** Work together to achieve specific goals and to undertake specific projects at disaster sites. We form partnerships during the disaster response.

- Education: provide training and increase awareness and preparedness in each organization.
- Leadership Development: give volunteer leaders training and support to build effective state VOAD organizations.

- 78 • Mitigation: support the efforts of federal, state, and local agencies and governments and  
79 support appropriate legislation.
- 80 • Convening Mechanisms: present at seminars, meetings, board meetings, regional  
81 conferences, training programs, and local conferences.
- 82 • Outreach: encourage the formation of and give guidance to state and regional voluntary  
83 organizations active in disaster relief.

## 84 **IV. MEMBERSHIP**

### 85 **1. Categories of Membership**

#### 86 **A. *Statewide Member.***

- 87 • Statewide membership is available to voluntary organizations that have a statewide focus,  
88 scope, and purpose, and are active in disasters.
- 89 • Must have a disaster program and guidance documents to define and set precedence for  
90 delivery of services to address the needs of people and communities affected by disasters  
91 without discrimination.
- 92 • Agree with the mission of GAVOAD.
- 93 • Apply for membership. (See Attachment 1)  
94 Provide basic agency information for inclusion on database and resource directory.
- 95 • Meet one of the following conditions:
  - 96 ○ Be a not-for-profit organization under IRS Code 501 (c)(3), or;
  - 97 ○ Have a formal agreement with another organization that has IRS 501 (c)(3) standing  
98 that will serve as a fiscal agent.
- 99 • Pay annual dues according to GAVOAD Membership Form. (See Attachment 1)
- 100 • Attending at least 50% of GAVOAD meetings (in person or via conference call).
- 101 • Have voting rights.
- 102 • Eligible to hold GAVOAD office.
- 103 • GAVOAD website privileges including inclusion of agency profile and logo.
- 104 • Access to special training and educational opportunities.

109 **B. *Local/Regional Members:***

- 110 • Focus on a particular area or region within the state [e.g., Community Organizations Active  
111 in Disaster (COAD), local county VOAD, or members of private industry involved in disaster  
112 response]
- 113 • Must have a disaster program and guidance documents to define and set precedence for  
114 delivery of services to address the needs of people and communities affected by disasters  
115 without discrimination.
- 116 • Agree with the mission of GAVOAD.
- 117 • Apply or renew for membership. (See Attachment 1)
- 118 • Provide basic agency information for inclusion on database/resource directory.
- 119 • Pay annual dues according to GAVOAD Membership Form. (See Attachment 1)
- 120 • Attending at least 50% of GAVOAD meetings (in person or via conference call).
- 121 • Have voting rights.
- 122 • Eligible to run for GAVOAD secretary and any standing committees.

123 **C. *Governmental Partners:***

- 124 • May attend meetings and join conference calls but are not included as members of  
125 GAVOAD.  
126
- 127 • Have no voting rights.
- 128 • Are not eligible to run for GAVOAD office.
- 129 • Do not pay annual dues.

130 **D. *Guests:***

- 131 • May attend meetings by invitation only and join conference calls during disasters.  
132
- 133 • Encourage to consider membership in GAVOAD.
- 134 • Have no voting rights.
- 135 • Are not eligible to run for GAVOAD office.
- 136 • Do not pay annual dues.  
137

138 **2. Membership Application Processes**

139 Organizations desiring membership will notify a member of the Executive Committee.

140  
141 The Executive Committee will request the candidate organization to complete a Membership  
142 Form. (See Attachment 1)

143  
144 Upon receiving and reviewing the candidate organization’s application, the Executive  
145 Committee will determine eligibility of the candidate organization using the GAVOAD bylaws.  
146 and announce the new organization to the whole of GAVOAD.  
147

148 **3. Renewal of Membership**

- 149  
150 A. Organizations remain as members in good standing by submitting dues annually.
- 151 B. If guidance documents or delivery of services or resources change, the organization must  
152 submit revised information.
- 153 C. Fiscal Year: January to December.

154 **4. Termination of Membership**

- 155  
156 A. Failure to renew annual dues, within 60 days from the due date, will cause membership  
157 termination.
- 158 B. GAVOAD member organizations may voluntarily withdraw by submission of a letter of  
159 separation to the Executive Committee.
- 160 C. Membership may be terminated by a two-thirds formal vote of GAVOAD members attending a  
161 scheduled business meeting.
- 162 D. Reasonable attempt shall be made by the Executive Committee to contact and encourage the  
163 organization in question before terminating their membership. If the organization fails to  
164 respond to such contact within thirty days or accumulates two additional unexcused absences  
165 in the next twelve-month period, the secretary shall recommend a vote to terminate the status  
166 of the organization.  
167

168 **V. MEETINGS**

169  
170 The meetings of GAVOAD shall be guided by Robert’s Rules of Order except as otherwise  
171 provided for in these bylaws. GAVOAD business meetings are intended for member organizations.  
172 Guests may be invited or approved by the Executive Committee.

173 **A. Executive Committee Meetings**

- 174  
175 1. Executive Committee meetings will be held at least four times a year on a schedule set by the  
176 Executive Committee.

- 177 2. Executive Committee members must attend at least 75% of the committee meetings.
- 178 3. Written notice, including a meeting agenda, shall be sent to all members prior to any business  
179 meeting.

180  
181 **B. General Membership Meetings**

- 182 1. General Membership Business meetings will be held at least four times a year on a schedule  
183 set by the Executive Committee.
- 184
- 185 2. Members must attend at least 50% of general membership meetings.
- 186 3. Written notice, including a meeting agenda, shall be sent to all members prior to any business  
187 meeting.

188 **C. Emergency Meetings**

- 189 1. Emergency meetings to meet the needs of disaster events (or drills) can be called at any time  
190 by the Executive Committee with minimal notice.
- 191
- 192 2. Emergency meetings will be called before or after disaster strikes to facilitate the work of  
193 GAVOAD and will usually be conducted via conference call.
- 194
- 195 3. Emergency meetings are open to members and other agencies with specific response and  
196 recovery responsibilities that affect GAVOAD members.
- 197
- 198

199 **D. Committee Meetings**

- 200
- 201 1. Committee meetings are limited to committee members.
- 202
- 203 2. Technical advisors may attend committee meetings at the request of the chairperson.
- 204

205 **VI. DUES**

206

207 The amount and structure of dues for all membership categories shall be proposed by the Executive  
208 Committee and approved by a majority vote of the members present at the time of vote. The  
209 Executive Committee may adopt policies concerning late or non-payment of dues by members. Dues  
210 are reflected in the membership application. (See Attachment 1)

211

212 **VII. OFFICERS**

213 **A. Election and Terms**

- 214
- 215 1. GAVOAD shall vote on new officers during the last scheduled regular business meeting of the  
216 year in which an officer's term is expiring. New officers begin their term on January 1st.
- 217

- 218 2. An election officer appointed by the president and approved by the Executive Committee will  
219 moderate all elections.
- 220 3. Individuals, not organizations, are elected. Each officer must be an authorized representative  
221 of a member organization.
- 222 4. Any eligible member of GAVOAD (see section IV-A Categories of Membership) may apply for  
223 an officer position by submitting a letter of introduction, a statement of applicable experience,  
224 and a statement of goals and priorities for GAVOAD.
- 225 5. Eligible members are primary and alternate representatives identified by member  
226 organizations.
- 227 6. Eligible members are representatives of member organizations that have participated in at  
228 least 50% of General Membership meetings in the prior year.
- 229 7. No single agency will be allowed to hold more than one officer position.
- 230 8. Unless approved by GAVOAD in an announced business meeting, officers shall serve a two-  
231 year term.
- 232 9. In the event the president cannot complete the term, the vice-president shall become  
233 president. In the event the vice-president cannot complete the term, the position will remain  
234 vacant until the next election. In the event that both the president and vice-president cannot  
235 complete their terms, an emergency meeting of GAVOAD shall be held to fill both positions. In  
236 the event the secretary or treasurer cannot complete his/her term, the president shall appoint a  
237 person to fill the vacancy with approval of the Executive Committee.
- 238
- 239 10. Each Officer may be elected to only two (2) consecutive terms. A one (1) year break from the  
240 role must occur prior to becoming eligible to run again for the same position.
- 241 11. President and Vice-President's term could be extended for one additional term if no member  
242 volunteers to run for the position, with GAVOAD approval.

243 **B. Officers**

244

- 245 1. **President:** Convene and preside at meetings; delegate tasks as pertains to GAVOAD  
246 business; represent GAVOAD to other organizations, agencies, and states; nominate  
247 committee chairs to be voted on by the Executive Committee; appoint a member to serve as  
248 secretary or treasurer in the event of an unexpired term. The president, with consent of the  
249 voting membership, may engage in external contracts.
- 250 2. **Vice-President:** Act on behalf of, in the absence of, or at the request of the president and  
251 becomes president in the event the president cannot complete his/her term.
- 252 3. **Secretary:** Maintain organizational records, correspondence, send notice of meetings, and  
253 keep minutes of meetings.

- 254 4. **Treasurer:** Maintain financial records of the GAVOAD and report to the Executive Committee  
255 and GAVOAD membership at large as requested by the president.  
256
- 257 5. **Member-at-Large:** Participates in the Executive Committee meetings. Provide leadership as  
258 needed.
- 259 6. **Immediate Past-President:** Participates in the Executive Committee meetings. Provides  
260 continuity, leadership and experience to the committee.  
261

## 262 VIII. STANDING COMMITTEES

263 The following Standing Committees will be representative of GAVOAD member organizations.  
264 Additional standing committees may be approved by GAVOAD at a regularly scheduled  
265 business meeting.  
266

### 267 A. Executive Committee

- 268
- 269 1. The Executive Committee shall be comprised of the officers identified in section VII, and the  
270 most recent past president that still represents an eligible organization.  
271
- 272 2. The Executive Committee shall approve or disapprove presidential appointments for unexpired  
273 terms of secretary and treasurer.
- 274 3. The Executive Committee shall make recommendations to and conduct business on behalf of  
275 GAVOAD between regular scheduled meetings of GAVOAD.
- 276 4. The Executive Committee shall operate on behalf of other standing committees as needed.
- 277 5. The Executive Committee will represent the membership interests in the organization and  
278 represent the organization as its legal voice by practicing duty of loyalty, duty of care, and duty  
279 of obedience.  
280

### 281 B. Membership Committee

- 282
- 283 1. The Membership Committee shall encourage organizations to consider membership in  
284 GAVOAD.
- 285 2. The Membership Committee shall encourage retention of member organizations, and their  
286 participation in all aspects of GAVOAD business.
- 287 3. The Membership Committee shall review membership qualifications and make  
288 recommendations as needed to the Executive Committee for inclusion at a regularly scheduled  
289 GAVOAD meeting.  
290

### 291 C. By-Laws Committee

- 292
- 293 1. The By-Laws Committee shall review the By-Laws at least annually.

- 294 2. The By-Laws Committee shall make recommendations to the Executive Committee for  
295 inclusion at a regularly scheduled GAVOAD meeting.

296 **D. Ad Hoc:**

- 297
- 298
- 299 1. Ad Hoc Committees may be created and/or terminated, as needed, by the Executive  
300 Committee.
- 301
- 302 2. The mission, scope, composition, and term of such committees shall be determined by the  
303 Executive Committee.

304 **IX. VOTING**

- 305
- 306 1. Each member organization is entitled to one vote. Each organization determines who the  
307 authorized representative will be to cast that vote.
- 308
2. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted.
- 309
3. Thirty-three percent of eligible voting members present shall constitute a quorum to do  
310 business.
- 311
4. Voting may be conducted electronically or at a properly called meeting.
- 312
5. All voting, except as otherwise provided for in these bylaws, shall pass by simple majority vote.
- 313
6. All votes (formal or consensus reached) will be recorded in the meeting minutes.
- 314
7. An individual may represent more than one organization but has only one vote regardless of  
315 the number of organizations he/she may represent.

316 **X FISCAL PROCEDURES**

317

318

319 Fiscal policies are established by the GAVOAD Executive Committee to set standards and  
320 procedures to be applied when developing financial goals and objectives, making financial decisions,  
321 and reporting the financial status of the organization. In addition, financial procedures required by the  
322 State or Federal Government will be followed to allow for effective management of GAVOAD funds. A  
323 Budget Report will be presented to the membership at meetings and documented in the Minutes.

324 **XI. DISCLAIMER OF ENDORSEMENT**

325

326

327 No individual member or group of members representing GAVOAD shall have authority to endorse or  
328 recommend any product, service, or organization in the name of GAVOAD, or by elected or appointed  
329 title unless so authorized by the GAVOAD Executive Committee.

330 **XII. AMENDMENTS**

- 333 1. Amendments to these bylaws may be made by majority vote during a regular scheduled  
334 business meeting, with at least thirty (30) days' notice prior to the date of the meeting at which  
335 they are to be considered and presented for adoption.  
336
- 337 2. This document shall take effect immediately upon its passage by the membership, and  
338 supersede all constitutions and bylaws previously adopted. Adopted: add date”  
339  
340

341 **ATTACHMENT 1: GAVOAD MEMBERSHIP**



342  
343 **GAVOAD Membership**

344 Please use this form to apply for GAVOAD membership or renew your existing membership. Please read the  
345 membership category descriptions and requirements located on page 2. Check the appropriate boxes below.

346  MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (first time applicants)  MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL  
347 Membership Categories:  STATEWIDE  LOCAL/REGIONAL  PARTNER

Organization Name		Address	
Website		City, State, Zip	
Primary Contact/Voting Member	Phone	Cell Phone	
Primary Contact Email			
Alternate Contact	Phone	Cell Phone	
Alternate Contact/Alternate Voting Email			

348 The Applicant fully understands the Criteria for Membership and represents compliance to GAVOAD with these criteria  
349 and agrees to:

- 350 1. Adhere to and promote the mission and purpose of VOAD as described in GAVOAD BYLAWS,  
351 2. Promote and facilitate ongoing participation in GAVOAD and VOAD activities (by a national or state office and  
352 local chapters/affiliates),  
353 3. Pay annual dues at a level set by GAVOAD, and  
354 4. Provide representation at a minimum of 50% GAVOAD meetings per year,  
355 5. Failure to renew will terminate membership.  
356

357 **RENEWING MEMBERS:** Please indicate your Membership Category. ***Make checks payable to Georgia VOAD***

358  \$75/\$85 Statewide  \$50/\$60 Local/Regional  Partner NEW

359 **APPLICANTS:** See instructions on page 2.

360 *The following duly authorized representative of the Applicant hereby*  
361 *acknowledges that the information contained in this application is true and*  
362 *complete.*

363 Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

364 Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail your check and this form with complete information to:**  
GA VOAD  
PO BOX 870493  
STONE MOUNTAIN, GA 30087

Form must be submitted with payment. A copy of application and all required documents should be emailed to:  
**TREASURER@GAVOAD.COM**

365 Please direct questions to [TREASURER@GAVOAD.com](mailto:TREASURER@GAVOAD.com). Thank you for supporting your GAVOAD.  
366  
367  
368  
369

370 **ATTACHMENT 1: GAVOAD MEMBERSHIP (P2)**

371 **GEORGIA VOAD MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS** There are two designations of membership, partnership, and guest  
372 designation. Membership will be contingent upon the conditions specified below and other such criteria as established by Georgia  
373 VOAD and National VOAD.  
374

375 **STATEWIDE MEMBERSHIP (Annual Dues \$75/\$85)**

376 **A Statewide membership may be granted to any corporation, institution, or other entity pursuant to the following:**

- 377
- 378 (1) The organization shall be statewide in scope and purpose.
  - 379 (2) The organization shall consist of voluntary memberships or constituencies, be a not-for-profit organization (under IRS Code 501  
380 (c) or have a formal agreement with another organization that has IRS 501 (c)(3) standing that will serve as a fiscal agent.
  - 381 (3) The organization shall have a disaster response program and policy for commitment of resources (i.e., personnel, funds, and  
382 equipment) to meet the needs of people affected by disaster without discrimination.
  - 383 (4) The organization shall designate a primary and alternate contact/voting member to GAVOAD.
  - 384 (5) The Organization shall provide basic agency information for inclusion on database/resource directory.

385 **FIRST TIME STATEWIDE APPLICANTS MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING WITH THEIR APPLICATION:**

- 386
- 387 1. A letter of authorization from the Applicant's Board of Directors for Application for Membership, including statements of the  
388 organization's commitment to provide services statewide, and non-discrimination in hiring and in the provision of services. The  
Board President must sign the letter,
  - 389 2. A copy of the Applicant's 501(c)(3) determination letter from the US Treasury Department or a copy of the formal  
390 agreement with fiscal agent verifying representation and fiscal agent's 501 (c)(3) determination letter,
  - 391 3. Names/Titles and contact information of administrative personnel including designated voting representative and alternate  
392 (updated annually),
  - 393 4. A listing of local chapters/affiliates throughout the state,
  - 394 5. A listing of other Statewide or National Members with which the Applicant has previously worked collaboratively,
  - 395 6. Two letters of support from existing GAVOAD members, and
  - 396 7. A written summary of disaster related activities within the state of Georgia.  
397 **DO NOT INCLUDE DUES PAYMENT AT THIS TIME** (You will be contacted once your application has been approved).

398 **LOCAL/REGIONAL MEMBERSHIP (Annual Dues \$50/\$60):**

399 **A Local/Regional membership may be granted to any corporation, institution, or other entity pursuant to the following:**

- 400
- 401 (1) The Organization shall focus on a particular area or region within the state [e.g., Community Organizations Active in Disaster  
402 (COAD), Long Term Recovery Group (LTRG), or members of private industry involved in disaster response].
  - 403 (2) The Organization shall have a disaster program and guidance documents to define and set precedence for delivery of services, to  
404 address the needs of people and communities affected by disasters, and without discrimination.
  - 405 (3) The Organization shall agree with the mission of GAVOAD.
  - 406 (4) The Organization shall designate a primary and alternate contact/voting member to GAVOAD.
  - 407 (5) The Organization shall provide basic agency information for inclusion on database/resource directory.

408 **FIRST TIME LOCAL/REGIONAL APPLICANTS MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING WITH THEIR APPLICATION:**

- 409
- 410 1. A letter of authorization from Applicant's leadership for Application for Membership. The Applicant's Chairperson or President  
411 must sign the letter,
  - 412 2. A written summary of disaster related activities within the state of Georgia.
  - 413 3. Names/Titles and contact information of administrative personnel including designated voting representative and alternate  
414 (updated annually),
  - 415 4. A listing of local chapters/affiliates throughout the state,
  - 416 5. A listing of other Statewide or National Members with which the Applicant has previously worked collaboratively,
  - 417 6. Two letters of support, at least one from an existing GAVOAD member, a letter from a local government official
  - 418 7. A written summary of disaster related activities within the state of Georgia.  
**DO NOT INCLUDE DUES PAYMENT AT THIS TIME.** (You will be contacted once your application has been approved).

419 **GOVERNMENTAL PARTNER/GUEST ORGANIZATIONS (No Annual Dues Required refer to BYLAWS)**