

**BYLAWS  
OF THE  
NBLSA PRE-LAW STUDENT DIVISION**

**PREAMBLE**

Pursuant to the authority granted by Article II, Section C, Subsection 2 of the NBLSA Constitution, this set of Bylaws is established to govern and ensure the orderly and efficient operations of the NBLSA Pre-Law Student Division.

Now, therefore, the Division shall be bound to the following provisions.

**ARTICLE I. THE DIVISION**

*Section A. Name and Governing Authority*

1. The name of this division is the Pre-Law Student Division of the National Black Law Students Association (“the Pre-Law Division”), an administrative sub-division under the National Black Law Students Association (“NBLSA”).
2. The organization shall be the governance authority for the officers, committees, and local constituent chapters under its charge, and shall exercise all powers granted by these Bylaws and the extant policies, rules, and pronouncements of the National Black Law Students Association.

*Section B. Objectives and Purposes*

1. The purpose of the NBLSA Pre-Law Student Division shall be to utilize the collective resources of its officers, regional components, constituent chapters, and individual members to:
  - (i) Work to advance the law school application rate and admittance aspirations of Black and minority pre-law students;
  - (ii) Foster and cultivate skills, competencies, and strategies to excel academically in the law school environment;
  - (iii) Instill awareness and commitment to the social, political, and legal issues affecting the community-at-large, through dedicated programming, initiatives, and political/legal advocacy to advance the causes of social justice and equality; and,
  - (iv) Encourage and promote internship opportunities or other exposure to the legislative, administrative, corporate, public interest, non-profit, judicial, and other legal fields; and,
  - (v) Build a community of like-minded individuals committed to the principles and mission of NBLSA.
2. The Pre-Law Division shall be empowered to conduct all necessary and appropriate programming, initiatives, and operations to accomplish

these objectives and others set by resolution of the Pre-Law Division Assembly or the NBLSA General Assembly.

*Section C. Structure and Organization*

1. There shall be a Pre-Law Division Assembly, which shall serve as the legislative body of the Division, empowered to provide programmatic direction, administrative oversight, and provide recommendations to the NBLSA Board of Directors on division corporate matters, and there shall be a National Pre-Law Division Board which shall serve as the programmatic execution and administrative body of the Pre-Law Division.
2. There shall be Pre-Law Division Chapters which shall constitute the primary voting unit of the organization. Each chapter shall be organized within the Regions as may be found within the NBLSA Constitution.

*Section D. Pre-Law Division Membership – Chapters & Individuals*

1. Chapter membership shall consist of duly created NBLSA Pre-Law Student Division chapters located at any accredited collegiate institution within the Regions as defined by the NBLSA Constitution.
2. Eligible individual members of the NBLSA Pre-Law Student Division shall be undergraduate or graduate students matriculating at a college or university at which a chapter of the NBLSA Pre-Law Student Division is located.
3. In the case of a lack of a local Pre-Law Division Chapter, a group of no less than five (5) students may petition the NBLSA Pre-Law Division for the creation of a “chapter-at-large” within the city in which they live. The Divisional Board shall consider the request and make a recommendation to the NBLSA Board of Directors for final disposition.
4. Students who are financial and registered pre-law student members of NBLSA and their local chapter, or have otherwise fulfilled the membership obligations of Article III of the NBLSA Constitution and these Bylaws. Members of the Region shall be afforded the rights and privileges of Article III, Section IV of the NBLSA Constitution, as applicable and appropriate.
5. Chapters and individual members of the Pre-Law Division shall be expected to actively participate in the activities, program, initiatives, and business of the Division.
6. Newly formed chapters, duly recognized by NBLSA, shall be assigned by the National Director of the Pre-Law Division to the Region most geographically appropriate for its proper development as a chapter and participation in Pre-Law Division and National events.

## ARTICLE II. THE PRE-LAW DIVISION ASSEMBLY

### *Section A. Name and Object*

1. The legislative body of the Region shall be the Pre-Law Division Assembly. It shall hereinafter be referred to as “the Assembly.”
2. The objectives and plenary powers of the Assembly shall be to promote the interests and general welfare of the Division, to provide legislative oversight to the Pre-Law Division and its entities, officers, programs, and operations, as well as to regulate and administer the student organization and programming structures of the Pre-Law Division, where appropriate.
3. The Assembly may set other objectives and policies for itself and the Pre-Law Division through appropriate legislation, provided that they are consistent with these Bylaws, and the policies of NBLSA.

### *Section B. Assembly Composition and Voting Membership*

1. The Assembly shall be composed of delegates from each active chapter of the Pre-Law Division, and shall be constituted at the site of the annual Pre-Law Division Convention.
2. For the election of officers, the voting strength of each chapter shall be determined by the number of registered members of the local chapter. Such calculations shall equate to the following voting strength:
  - (i) Ten (10) members or less – **one (1) vote**;
  - (ii) Eleven (11) to twenty-four (24) members – **two (2) votes**;
  - (iii) Twenty-five (25) to forty-nine (49) members – **three (3) votes**;
  - (iv) Fifty (50) to seventy-four (74) members – **four (4) votes**; and,
  - (v) Seventy-five (75) members or more – **five (5) votes**.
3. Voting calculations shall be verified by the NBLSA Director of Membership Development and Division Director of Membership, and shall not be adjusted within thirty (30) days of the opening day of the National Convention.
4. Each attending chapter shall receive one (1) vote on all policy and procedural matters.

### *Section C. Assembly Authority, Powers and Responsibilities*

1. All legislative and oversight authority shall be vested in the Assembly and shall be exercised within the context of the annual meeting of the Assembly or within its committees.
2. The Pre-Law Division Assembly shall be empowered to exercise and/or delegate all authority conferred upon the Pre-Law Division by the policies and procedures of NBLSA.
3. The Assembly shall have the following enumerated powers and authority:

- (i) The Assembly shall be empowered to set the overall policy direction, programmatic agenda, and objectives of the Pre-Law Division, and shall authorize the creation and execution of initiatives, events and programs to these ends.
  - (ii) The Assembly shall be empowered to regulate the operation and administration of the Pre-Law Division, including its powers and its responsibilities, as well as exercise oversight over itself and its officers, where necessary and proper.
  - (iii) The Assembly shall be empowered to regulate its internal operations and procedures, and to nominate and elect Pre-Law Division officers, as necessary and compliant with these Bylaws, for the purposes of executing and furthering its established will.
  - (iv) The Assembly shall be empowered to define the parameters and details of Pre-Law Division officer duties, where not in conflict with or contravening NBLSA policy or these Bylaws.
  - (v) The Assembly shall be the authority on Pre-Law Division disciplinary measures, with power to suspend and remove officers, as well as suspend and expel its members, performing due diligence and affording due process, in doing so.
  - (vi) The Assembly shall be empowered to regulate and direct the actions of the members and officers who are performing actions in the furtherance of Pre-Law Division business, where appropriate.
  - (vii) All powers and authority not explicitly delegated by the Constitution or Bylaws shall be reserved by the Assembly, or by the chapters of the Pre-Law Division, at large.
4. The Assembly shall ensure that all programs, initiatives, and objectives fall within the principles and overall programmatic vision of the Pre-Law Division.
5. The Assembly shall be empowered to delegate, through legislation, any of the powers – in whole or in part – to specific officers or independent boards, councils, commissions, or working groups for specific, particularly defined purposes. The Assembly reserves the right to maintain appropriate oversight and amend, curtail or revoke any delegation of authority.

*Section D.*

*Assembly Composition*

1. For the election of officers, the voting strength of each chapter shall be determined by the number of registered members of the local chapter. Such calculations shall equate to the following voting strength:
- (i) Ten (10) members or less – **one (1) vote**;
  - (ii) Eleven (11) to twenty-four (24) members – **two (2) votes**;
  - (iii) Twenty-five (25) to forty-nine (49) members – **three (3) votes**;
  - (iv) Fifty (50) to seventy-four (74) members – **four (4) votes**; and,

- (v) Seventy-five (75) members or more – **five (5) votes.**
- 2. Voting calculations shall be verified by the NBLSA Director of Membership Development and Division Director of Membership, and shall not be adjusted within thirty (30) days of the opening day of the National Convention.
- 3. Each attending chapter shall receive one (1) vote on all policy and procedural matters.

*Section E. Meetings of the Assembly*

- 1. The Assembly shall meet annually and hold its plenary meeting at the site of the Pre-Law Division Convention, which shall be held jointly with the NBLSA National Convention.
- 2. All meetings of the Assembly and applicable meetings of the Assembly committees shall be recorded in minutes maintained by the Pre-Law Division Secretary.
- 3. Special or Emergency meetings of the Assembly can be authorized in a manner consistent with NBLSA policy, the Pre-Law Division Bylaws or extant Pre-Law Division Assembly legislation, the highest in precedence prevailing.
- 4. For the transaction of Assembly business, a quorum of a one-third (1/3) of the Pre-Law Division's active chapter membership shall be required to be present.
- 5. Only chapters who are present and accounted for at any meeting of the Assembly shall be allowed to vote on any question or in any election before the body. Voting by proxy shall only be permitted in manner detailed by the Bylaws or legislative acts of the Assembly.
- 6. Non-transactional news, reports, or other happenings may be discussed, but not acted upon, in the absence of a quorum.

*Section F. Pre-Law Division Committees*

- 1. The Assembly and the Pre-Law Division Board shall be empowered to establish Pre-Law Division standing and ad-hoc committees to discharge the various decisions and programs of the Pre-Law Division.
- 2. Each committee shall be composed of at least three (3) members of the Pre-Law Division, and shall be headed by a committee chair, who shall be appointed by the Pre-Law Division Chair, wherein such a position is not specifically designated by the Constitution or Bylaws.
- 3. Any active and financial member of the Pre-Law Division shall be eligible to serve on any applicable committee. At no time, shall participation on any Pre-Law Division Committee preclude any individual member of the Pre-Law Division except as allowed by the Constitution and Bylaws.

4. The powers, duties, and responsibilities of Pre-Law Division committees, where not otherwise contained in these Bylaws, shall be stipulated in the Division Rules.

*Section G. Voting*

1. All questions coming before the Division Assembly shall require a majority vote to pass, unless otherwise stipulated by these Bylaws, special rules of order created by the Assembly, or the selected parliamentary authority of the Assembly.
2. The presiding officer of the Assembly shall be not be allowed to cast a vote except where it shall affect the outcome of a tie vote.

*Section H. Parliamentary Authority*

1. The most current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* shall be the parliamentary authority at all official meetings of the Assembly and any subset thereof, and shall be held as Pre-Law Division policy in any case where any superseding document is unclear or silent.
2. The Assembly may adopt rules of order that shall regulate the internal operations of the Assembly, and any subset thereof. Assembly committees, under the direction of the committee chairs, may adopt a more relaxed or informal method of meeting and collaboration, where appropriate.

**ARTICLE III. PRE-LAW DIVISION OFFICERS**

*Section A. Officers of the Pre-Law Division*

1. The elected officers of the Pre-Law Division shall include:
  - (i) The Division Chair
  - (ii) The Division Vice-Chair
  - (iii) The Division Secretary
  - (iv) The Division Treasurer
  - (v) Two (2) Division Members-at-Large
2. The appointed officers of the Pre-Law Division shall include:
  - (i) The Director of the NBLSA Pre-Law Oral Advocacy Competition
  - (ii) The Division Director of Programming
  - (iii) The Regional Pre-Law Division Coordinators
  - (iv) The Pre-Law Division Director of Communications
  - (v) The Pre-Law Division Director of Membership
  - (vi) The Division Parliamentarian

3. The Division Chair, with the advice and consent of the Pre-Law Division Board, may create assistant directors to support the operations of the Pre-Law Division Board or individual members, thereof. The Pre-Law Division Chair, in creating such a position, shall stipulate the specific duties and scope of operations for the position in question and propose it as an action item to the Board.
4. In appointing members of the Pre-Law Division Board, the Pre-Law Division Chair shall devise an application process or other open method of vying for the position which shall be made generally available to any eligible member of the Pre-Law Division.
5. The powers, authority, and responsibilities of the officers shall be stipulated in Division Directives as passed by the Division Assembly or other superseding body.

*Section B. The Pre-Law Division Board*

1. The Pre-Law Division Executive Board shall be the administrative and programmatic body of the Pre-Law Division, having power to create and execute such policies as to further the established objectives, programs, and initiatives of the Pre-Law Division and administer its functions.
2. The Pre-Law Division Executive Board shall also set strategy for achieving established policy and programming objectives of the Pre-Law Division, within the context of these Bylaws, Pre-Law Division policies, and NBLSA policy.
3. The Pre-Law Division Board shall have the following enumerated powers and authority:
  - (i) The Division Board shall have power to establish Pre-Law Division policies and procedures to regulate the operation, continuity, and administration of the Pre-Law Division, as well as to regulate the internal operations of the Board, its committees or any programs executed under its jurisdiction.
  - (ii) The Division Board shall be empowered to interpret and apply the policies of NBLSA and the Pre-Law Division, subject to the oversight of the Pre-Law Division Assembly, the NBLSA Board of Directors, and the NBLSA General Assembly.
  - (iii) The Division Board shall be empowered to make recommendations to the Assembly and communicate with the Pre-Law Division membership as to matters of organizational, academic, and social importance.
  - (iv) The Division Board shall be empowered to administer programming mandated by NBLSA, as well as create, approve, and execute Pre-Law Division programming. The Board shall be empowered to engage chapters for co-sponsorship or other joint efforts, as well as create internal Board committees for the purposes of Pre-Law Division business.

- (v) The Pre-Law Division Chair and Pre-Law Division Board, in coordination with the NBLSA Pre-Law Division Advisory Board, shall be charged with the planning, execution, and preparation of the annual Pre-Law Division Symposium.
  - (vi) The Division Board shall evaluate the progress of the Pre-Law Division, set the overall policy direction, programmatic agenda, and objectives of the NBLSA Pre-Law Division, and shall authorize the creation and execution of initiatives, events, and programs, receiving regular reports from the Pre-Law Division Chair, Pre-Law Division Vice-Chair, and other Pre-Law Division officers in this regard;
  - (vii) The Division Board determines question of interpretation of national and Pre-Law Division policy, subject to the superseding interpretations of the NBLSA Board of Directors or the NBLSA General Assembly, and resolves questions of Pre-Law Division officer and Board member discipline;
  - (viii) The Division Board monitors the financial, operational, and internal business of the Pre-Law Division, including the establishing of fiscal priorities via a Pre-Law Division Budget and making recommendations to the NBLSA Pre-Law Division Committee on allocations for expenditures, subject to NBLSA financial policies and procedures;
  - (ix) The Division Board evaluates and acts upon nominations to vacant positions, as may be appointed from time to time by the Pre-Law Division Chair; and,
  - (x) The Division Board shall exercise all other explicit and implicit authority as granted by the NBLSA Constitution, NBLSA Bylaws, and any acts of the NBLSA General Assembly and/or Executive Board policies to accomplish the purposes for which the Pre-Law Division exists.
4. The Pre-Law Division Chair shall serve as the chair of the Board and shall primarily preside in its meetings.
  5. The voting membership of the Pre-Law Division Board shall be the elected and appointed officers found in Article III, Section A(1) and (2) of these Bylaws. The NBLSA National Chair and NBLSA Director of Pre-Law Affairs shall be *ex-officio*, non-voting members of the Board.
  6. Board-approved subordinate officers may participate in the deliberations of the Pre-Law Division Board, but may not vote.
  7. Teleconferencing or other electronic means of communication approved by the Assembly or by the Pre-Law Division Chair can be held as official meetings of the Pre-Law Division Board, and may be used to conduct voting on discrete, non-adjudicatory, and non-policymaking matters as allowed by Pre-Law Division Board policy.
  8. For the purposes of substantive decisions and nomination confirmations, a simple majority of the Board in the affirmative shall be



the required vote threshold for passage, unless explicitly specified in the Constitution, Bylaws, or Pre-Law Division Assembly legislation.

9. The powers, authority, and responsibilities of the Pre-Law Division Board, not otherwise contained within these Bylaws, shall be stipulated in the Division Rules.

*Section A. Vacancies and Term of Office*

1. In the case of the resignation, removal, permanent incapacitation or any other vacancy in the office of Pre-Law Division Chair, the Pre-Law Division Vice-Chair shall become Pre-Law Division Chair.
2. Should the offices of Pre-Law Division Chair and Pre-Law Division Vice-Chair be simultaneously vacant, the Pre-Law Division Board shall meet within two (2) weeks of the applicable vacancy and the Pre-Law Division Treasurer shall conduct an election for the office of Pre-Law Division Chair. Until such a meeting shall occur, the Pre-Law Division Treasurer shall carry out the functions of the Pre-Law Division Chair.
3. The terms of office for elected Pre-Law Division officers shall commence on April 1 of the year of their election, and shall conclude at 11:59 pm on March 31 of the subsequent year, unless intervened upon by removal, resignation, ineligibility, or permanent incapacitation.
4. The terms of appointed Pre-Law Division officers shall run concurrently with that of the appointing Pre-Law Division Chair from the point of their applicable appointment or confirmation, unless intervened upon by removal, resignation, ineligibility, permanent incapacitation, or other provision of policy, as passed by the Assembly or contained within the governing documents of the organization.

*Section B. Qualifications for Election or Appointment*

1. All Pre-Law Division officers shall be dues-paying members of the NBLSA Pre-Law Student Division, at the time of their election or appointment and for the duration of their term, and shall have had at least one (1) semester of financial membership immediately prior to their election or appointment.
2. All officers shall be in good academic standing with their academic institution and shall show evidence of such standing as the Pre-Law Division Board may require.
3. The elected or appointed officer, in accepting their election or appointment, agrees to fulfill all duties as prescribed by NBLSA and Pre-Law Division policy, the Pre-Law Division Chair, the Pre-Law Division Board, and any other duties incumbent upon an officer of the Pre-Law Division.

**ARTICLE IV. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

*Section A. Pre-Law Division Policy Precedence & Procedures*

1. The Pre-Law Division Order of Precedence for the policies of the Region shall be as follows:

- (i) The NBLSA Constitution and Bylaws
  - (ii) Acts of the NBLSA General Assembly
  - (iii) Duly passed policies of the NBLSA Board of Directors
  - (iv) The Pre-Law Division Bylaws
  - (v) The legislative acts of the Pre-Law Division Assembly
  - (vi) Duly passed policies of the Pre-Law Division Board
  - (vii) The most current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*
2. All actions of the Division, and any subset or authorized agent thereof, shall comply with extant NBLSA policies, including the NBLSA Constitution, Bylaws, resolutions/acts of the NBLSA General Assembly, and actions of the NBLSA Board of Directors. Provisions of these Bylaws found to conflict with NBLSA policy shall be severed, but shall not affect the effect, weight, and force of the remainder of the Bylaws herein.
  3. Rulings of the Pre-Law Division Chair or other presiding officer, within the context of the Pre-Law Division Annual Meeting, Pre-Law Division Board meetings, or Pre-Law Division committee meetings on the interpretation of Pre-Law Division or National policy or parliamentary procedure may be appealed per the dictates of *Robert's Rules of Order* and other extant policies.
  4. No part of these Bylaws may be suspended, set aside, or countermanded, except for policies dealing with procedural rules of order in the plenary or other business sessions of the Pre-Law Division Convention or Pre-Law Division Board meetings, which may be suspended under the provisions of the Bylaws and any rules of order authorized by the provisions of the same.

*Section B. General Policies of the NBLSA Pre-Law Division*

1. The NBLSA Pre-Law Student Division, its officers, or any entity or chapter under its jurisdiction, shall not discriminate based on ancestry, color, race, cultural or ethnic background/identity, economic status, political or ideological beliefs, marital or parental status, national, regional, or ethnic origin, physical disability, religious affiliation, gender, gender identity/presentation, or sexual orientation. Policies, actions, or statements affiliated with such stances are strictly prohibited by recognized entities, affiliates, officers, or members of the Region, and may open the offending person or body to such remedies as may be available under available policy.
2. All officers of the Pre-Law Division shall be required to avoid explicit and implicit conflicts of interest when voting or acting in their official capacities. If such conflicts exist, members shall recuse themselves from action, as appropriate.
3. The Pre-Law Division shall be in active communion with NBLSA, pursuant to the NBLSA Constitution and Bylaws, and shall, when necessary and proper, provide representation to the various boards, working groups, and committees of the organization at large.

4. The Pre-Law Division, its officers, and its agents will comply with all relevant university policies, as well as local, state, and federal laws, while acting in the furtherance of Pre-Law Division business.

## **ARTICLE V. AMENDMENT PROCEDURES**

### *Section A. Notice to Chapters*

1. Amendments to these Bylaws may be put forward in writing to the Pre-Law Division Assembly by the Pre-Law Division Board or an active chapter of the Division. Such amendments shall be submitted to the Pre-Law Division Parliamentarian no later than sixty (60) days prior to the opening of the Pre-Law Division Assembly Meeting. The Pre-Law Division Parliamentarian, in consultation with the Pre-Law Division Chair and Pre-Law Division Secretary, may prescribe the format and method of submission.
2. The Pre-Law Division Secretary shall compile and distribute the text of all proposed amendments to each active chapter of the Region at least thirty (30) days prior to the opening of the Pre-Law Division Convention.

### *Section B. Pre-Law Division Assembly Consideration*

1. For all submitted amendments, the NBLSA Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall review the proposed amendments within thirty (30) days of the due date for amendment submissions. Amendments not having a majority of votes in the affirmative shall not be laid before the full Assembly for consideration.
2. The Pre-Law Division Assembly shall debate and consider any proposed amendments having survived committee scrutiny. A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting delegates of the Assembly shall be required to ratify an amendment.
3. The Pre-Law Division Parliamentarian shall, after the close of the Pre-Law Division Convention and in consultation with the NBLSA National Parliamentarian, amend the Bylaws in accordance with the actions of the Pre-Law Division Assembly and publicly display the newly amended document. They shall have power to adjust the numbering and formatting of the Constitution and correct grammatical errors, if such amendments do not substantively change the language or effect of the Constitution.
4. The Pre-Law Division Secretary shall distribute the newly amended Constitution to the Pre-Law Division Board and all Pre-Law Division chapters. A copy shall be submitted to the appropriate National officers, including the NBLSA National Parliamentarian and the NBLSA National Chair.

### *Section C. NBLSA General Assembly Review & Governing Articles*

1. The NBLSA General Assembly may, at its discretion, review any changes made to the Pre-Law Division Bylaws or any other policies created by the Division. The NBLSA Board of Directors may suspend any

provision found to be in direct conflict with extant NBLSA policy until such time as the conflict can be rectified.

2. The Pre-Law Division shall be empowered to create governance articles to further detail the operations of the Division. Such articles shall be compliant with these Bylaws and extant NBLSA policy.