

Five bylaw amendments have been proposed for NCRA members to consider at its next Annual Business Meeting.

NCRA VOTER'S GUIDE

2026 PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENTS



The following serves as official notice that amendments to NCRA's Constitution and Bylaws have been proposed and will be considered during and voted upon following the next Annual Business Meeting of the membership, on July 16 at the Hyatt Regency Bellevue in Bellevue, Wash. Voting on amendments will be held electronically with a voting period of 24 hours. All voting members are advised to ensure that NCRA has a current email address in the database by July 8.

NOTES:

For your reading ease, the language to be added is *italicized*. Language to be stricken is indicated by ~~strikethrough~~.

To review the full text of the Constitution and Bylaws as well as the proposed changes, visit [NCRA.org/bylaws](https://www.ncra.org/bylaws).

DATES TO KNOW

- JULY 8** Deadline to verify your email address
- JULY 16** **Discussion of Bylaws:** NCRA Annual Business Meeting, July 16, 2026, Hyatt Regency Bellevue
- JULY 16** Voting starts within 2 hours of the close of the Annual Business Meeting
Voting remains open for 24 hours

AMENDMENT 1 FELLOWS

This amendment is submitted by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee.

RATIONALE

The term “accumulated” appropriately addresses the need to account for non-continuous time frames. The suggested changes in i) through v) were meant to clarify the minimum standards for the distinction of Fellow by placing a more distinct and explicit focus on NCRA.

Constitution and Bylaws: Article X—Academy of Professional Reporters and Council of the Academy of Professional Reporters

Section 2—Fellows

- a) Election as a Fellow is a professional distinction that shall be conferred only by the Board of Directors upon a person of extraordinary qualifications and exemplary professional practice who serves as a credit to the profession of verbatim stenographic reporting and/or stenographic captioning. A candidate for Fellow shall ~~be a continuous Registered Member with at least~~ *have accumulated* fifteen (15) ~~years or more years of Registered Membership and at least fifteen (15) years of professional~~ *years of professional* experience and shall have attained distinction as measured by performance. Such performance shall include three (3) or more of the following:
- i) Publication of important papers, articles, books, or other written materials dealing with verbatim stenographic reporting and/or stenographic captioning, *or other professional or-related subjects, with preference given to works published through or recognized by NCRA or its affiliated association publications.*
- ii) Creative, innovative, or technological contributions *that enhance to the enhancement of* the profession of verbatim stenographic reporting and/or stenographic captioning, *particularly those that advance the mission, visibility, or standards of NCRA.*
- iii) Significant and distinguished service to the profession *through as an* active ~~participant~~ *participation* on a minimum of three (3) NCRA committees within the last fifteen (15) years *demonstrating sustained commitment to NCRA’s goals and initiatives.*

- iv) Contributions in such areas as teaching, editing of publications, ~~other~~ board or committee service, *mentoring, or educating education on-of* the ~~general~~ public that have served to enhance or promote the verbatim stenographic reporting and/or stenographic captioning professions *especially through NCRA programs, events, or collaborations.*
- v) Attainment of the Association’s Registered Merit Reporter, Registered Diplomate Reporter, or qualification in the Speed or Realtime Contest *which reflect excellence within NCRA’s credentialing framework.*

AMENDMENT 2 ALTERNATIVE AMENDMENT PROCEDURE

This amendment is submitted by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee.

RATIONALE

The bylaws lack clear guidance on amendment timelines, carryover procedures, floor amendments, and signatory membership requirements. Clarifying these provisions in this new paragraph will promote consistency and transparency in the amendment process.

Constitution and Bylaws: Article XVIII—Amendments

Section 4—Alternative Amendment Procedure

Any amendment which has not been filed with the Executive Director and of which written notice has not been given within thirty (30) days may be submitted at the annual business meeting and shall be adopted upon receiving a unanimous vote by all those Voting Members who are present and voting at the annual business meeting at which a quorum is present. Such amendment shall then be voted upon under the provisions of Article XVIII, Section 2 above.

Any amendment introduced at the annual business meeting pursuant to this section that fails to receive a unanimous vote of all Voting Members present and voting shall be deemed not approved and shall not advance. Any subsequent consideration of such amendment shall require resubmission in accordance with the requirements of this Article, including all applicable notice and signature requirements.

AMENDMENT 3

AFFILIATED UNITS

This amendment has been proposed by:

René N. White, RPR, CRR, Houston, TX
Christy Cortopassi, Flower Mound, TX
Kelly Hanna, RMR, CRR, CMRS, Houston, TX
Jeeyeon (Jean) Kim, RPR, Los Angeles, CA
Mary Pierce, Huntington Beach, CA
Suzanne Stone, RPR, Las Vegas, NV
Libby Stewart, RPR, Las Vegas, NV
Tammy M. Breed, Draper, UT
Debbie Dibble, FAPR, RDR, CRR, CRC, Woodland, UT
Vickie Larsen, RMR, West Jordan, UT
Paula Kugelman, Chesterfield, VA
Leslie Etheredge, RMR, Chesterfield, VA
Holly M. Draper, RPR, Spokane, WA
Amy Rostad, RPR, Kirkland, WA
Phyllis Carver Lykken, FAPR, RPR, Yakima, WA

RATIONALE

The current ten percent (10%) threshold was established at a time when NCRA membership numbers and state participation levels differed significantly from today's landscape. Reducing the threshold to five percent (5%) better reflects the present composition and distribution of membership while promoting broader representation within the National Congress of State Associations (NCSA).

Lowering the threshold:

- *Encourages engagement in states with strong but proportionally smaller membership bases.*
- *Allows for more equitable recognition of states that meaningfully contribute to national membership totals.*
- *Supports greater collaboration and responsiveness between national leadership and state associations.*
- *Modernizes the affiliation structure to align with current membership realities.*

This amendment does not alter the requirement that affiliated units be approved pursuant to Article XVI, nor does it change governance safeguards. It simply adjusts the eligibility threshold to ensure the structure remains practical, inclusive, and representative.

Article XVI – Affiliated Units

Section 3(c)

- c) Only one affiliated unit may be recognized from any one state, with the exception of states wherein the number of NCRA members exceeds ~~ten percent (10%)~~ **five percent (5%)** of total NCRA membership.

AMENDMENT 4

CLVS

This amendment has been proposed by:

Tammie Foreman, RPR, CRR, Sherwood, AR
John Wissenbach, RDR, CRR, CRC, San Francisco, CA
Michelle Kirkpatrick, RDR, CRR, CRC, CRI, Breckenridge, CO
Jason Meadors, FAPR, RPR, CRR, CRC, Fort Collins, CO
Leeann Steller, RMR, CRR, Denver, CO
Adam Miller, FAPR, RPR, CLVS, CRI, Wilmington, DE
Leslie Lucas, RPR, CLVS, Naples, FL
M. Jane Weingart, FAPR, RMR, Waukegan, IA
Donna Urlaub, FAPR, RDR, CRR, Chicago, IL
Kathleen Grove, RPR, CRR, CLVS, Wheaton, IL
Greg Weiland, RDR, CRR, Chicago, IL
Karen Tyler, RDR, CRR, CRC, Shreveport, LA
Joshua Edwards, RDR, CRR, CRC, New York, NY
Jo Ann Betler, FAPR, RDR, CRR, CRC, CLVS, CPE, Huntington, WV
Kathy J. Davis, RMR, CRR, CRC, Fort Gay, WV

RATIONALE

In Purpose 1, of the Purposes of this Association, unrepresented CLVS members do NOT want to be seen as an alternative reporting method. CLVS candidates are bound by the NCRA Code of Professional Ethics as Certified Legal Video Specialists are. As such, CLVSs and CLVS candidates cannot compromise the duties and ethical responsibilities of the certified shorthand reporter's role without compromising their own duties and ethical responsibilities as Participating Members and Associate Members of NCRA, and without risk of losing their NCRA membership/certification title.

In Purpose 3, the CLVS members are complementary to verbatim stenographic reporters in ensuring that the public good is best served. COPE 1 states that "A CLVS shall maintain the integrity of the legal video profession." This includes recognizing that the stenographic record is the official record.

In Purpose 5, the CLVS members feel that they can assist in contributing to the proper technical research that ensures the verbatim stenographic record and video record remain lawful as well as ethical.

Purpose 8, to cooperate for the benefit of the public.

CLVS members are bound by NCRA ethics, and their very profession is driven by the actions, support, and promotion of their CLVS professional position in the court reporting and legal and judicial communities by the NCRA leadership. NCRA-certified court reporters and NCRA-certified videographers are to work in tandem and in harmony towards common ethical and professional agendas of our leadership. It is only fitting that CLVS members of NCRA are also able to vote on that leadership.

Currently, CLVS members are Associate Members with annual dues of \$197. As Participating Members, CLVS annual dues would be raised to \$330 annually. There are currently 211 CLVSs. This dues increase could potentially increase the NCRA budget by over \$28,000 annually, with other CLVS candidates possibly being more motivated to become Participating Members in the near future. We believe the increase in revenue for NCRA as well as the potential increase in overall NCRA membership numbers can only strengthen our professional positions in the industry.

Constitution & Bylaws: Article III-Membership

Section 3-Participating Members

- a) Any person who is skilled and primarily engaged in the verbatim stenographic reporting and/or stenographic captioning of proceedings by the use of symbols, manually or by stenographic machine, as an official court or legislative reporter, freelance reporter, CART captioner, or broadcast captioner shall be eligible to become a Participating Member. *A legal videographer who has earned the Certified Legal Video Specialist certification shall be eligible to become a Participating Member.*

CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS

Constitution & Bylaws: Article III-Membership

Section 7-Associate Members

RATIONALE

With the change to Section 3, the verbiage “or who has been certified by the Association as” should be removed. When a person has not been certified as a CLVS, they shall remain an Associate Member with no privileges. When they have obtained their CLVS, they shall then pay as a Participating Member and can no longer remain an Associate Member.

Any candidate whose testing timeframe has expired will not be considered as actively pursuing their CLVS certification and shall not be allowed to continue as an Associate Member.

- c) Any person *actively* seeking to become *or who has been certified by the Association as* a Certified Legal Video Specialist (CLVS) shall be eligible to become an Associate Member.

Constitution & Bylaws: Article III-Membership

Section 9-Privileges

RATIONALE

With the change to Section 3, CLVS Participating Members should be added to item b. This allows CLVS Participating Members to be allowed to vote and/or make or second motions at such meetings.

- b) All Members may attend meetings of the Members and participate in any debates at such meetings. Only Participating Members who are verbatim stenographic reporters and/or stenographic captioners and Registered Members who are verbatim stenographic reporters and/or stenographic captioners, *as well as* Retired Members, Retired Lifetime Members, and Honorary Members who have been verbatim stenographic reporters and/or stenographic captioners, *as well as Certified Legal Video Specialist Participating Members*, shall be eligible to vote and/or make or second motions at such meetings or to vote by electronic mail or other means of electronic transmission as specifically authorized under Article IX (“Voting Members”).

RATIONALE

The second sentence from item d should be removed. There should not be any nonmember CLVSs.

- d) Only Members in good standing holding NCRA certifications, who maintain their certifications as required by the Board of Directors, may use the NCRA certification designations associated with his/her certifications. *The only exception is nonmember Certified Legal Video Specialists who have maintained his/her certification as defined by the Board of Directors.*

AMENDMENT 5 VOICE WRITERS

This amendment has been proposed by:

Jennifer Porto, Long Beach, CA
Michelle Caldwell, Aptos, CA
Sarah J. MacDevitt, RPR, Pittsburg, CA
Chris DeGrazio, Fort Pierce, FL
Ninette Butler, RMR, CRR, CRC, Orlando, FL
Candace O’Barr-Jones, Jackson, MS
Jennifer Billstein-Miller, RMR, CRR, Deptford, NJ
Joshua Edwards, RDR, CRR, CRC, New York, NY
Michele Eddy, RPR, CRR, CRI, North Ridgeville, OH
Allie Hall, RDR, CRR, CRI, Sapulpa, OK
Christopher Reho, RPR, Cypress, TX
Cynthia Bragg, RPR, Bristol, VA
Traci Mertens, RDR, CRR, CRC, Alexandria, VA
Elizabeth Harvey, FAPR, RPR (Ret.), Seattle, WA
Nicole Bulldis, RPR, Vancouver, WA

RATIONALE

The profession of stenographic reporting has evolved over time through the use of shorthand systems designed to capture the spoken word and produce an accurate verbatim record.

Historically, shorthand reporting was performed using pen-based shorthand systems. With technological advancement, stenographic machine writing became the dominant shorthand method used by professional reporters.

Today, additional shorthand input methods exist that similarly rely on a trained reporter’s skill to translate spoken language into written text in realtime, including voice writing using a stenomask and speech recognition software individually programmed and operated by the reporter using their own voice.

This amendment clarifies that stenographic reporting refers broadly to the creation of the verbatim record through verifiable shorthand-based systems operated by a trained reporter.

The purpose of this amendment is to modernize the definition of stenographic reporting while preserving the Association’s longstanding mission of promoting the professional standards, ethics, and competencies required of stenographic reporters.

*This amendment does **not** alter the Association’s commitment to the promotion of stenographic reporting as a professional discipline and does **not** include digital or electronic recording systems that rely primarily on audio capture rather than shorthand input by a trained reporter.*

By clarifying the definition of stenographic reporting within the Constitution and Bylaws, the Association ensures that its governing documents accurately reflect the evolving methods by which trained professionals produce the verbatim record while maintaining the standards and identity of the profession.

Constitution & Bylaws: Article II-Purposes

Definition: In the context of this document, stenographic verbatim reporting and/or stenographic captioning refers to that reporting technology by the use of symbols, manually or by stenographic machine.

Definition: In the context of this document, stenographic verbatim reporting and/or stenographic captioning refers to that reporting technology by the use of a stenographic machine or by using a soundproof voice recording device.

The purposes of this Association shall be:

1. To assume responsibility for leadership and enlightenment of verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporters and/or stenographic/*voice* captioners and of the public regarding the special competency, importance, and value of verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporters and/or stenographic/*voice* captioners, and to promote verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting technologies by the use of ~~symbols, manually or by stenographic machine,~~ *a stenographic machine or by using a soundproof voice recording device*, over alternative reporting methods.
2. To promote a broader understanding and acceptance of the verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporter and/or stenographic/*voice* captioner as an integral part of the judicial process.
3. To apply the knowledge and experience of verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporters and/or stenographic/*voice* captioners, working in cooperation with the bench and bar, toward the upgrading and improvement of the criminal and civil justice system in order that the public good may best be served, and to promote a broader understanding within the profession of the responsibility of a verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporter and/or stenographic/*voice* captioner to participate actively in the achievement of this objective.
4. To encourage, establish, and maintain high standards of professional education, competence, and performance of verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporters and/or stenographic/*voice* captioners.
5. To conduct and promote lawful and proper technical and business research to enhance the services of verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporters and/or stenographic/*voice* captioners.
6. To promote lawful and proper professional ethics, as well as compliance with all applicable laws, including antitrust laws, for verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporters and/or stenographic/*voice* captioners.
7. To stimulate and encourage the establishment and maintenance of appropriate training and educational facilities and programs for persons interested in the profession of verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning, and to promote verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting as a successful career.
8. To cooperate with federal, state, and local governments, their agencies, and other organized groups for the benefit of the public and the verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning professions.
9. To conduct educational seminars and conferences relating to verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning.
10. To further the exchange of professional knowledge and to disseminate, by all appropriate means, to the extent permitted by law, accurate knowledge and information with respect to the verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning professions.
11. To advance the interests and general welfare of the verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning professions.
12. To promote and encourage development of realtime reporting skills and ethics to provide communication access pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act.

13. To do any and all things that are lawful and appropriate in the furtherance of these purposes.

CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS

Constitution & Bylaws: Article III-Membership

Section 3-Participating Members

- a) Any person who is skilled and primarily engaged in the verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning of proceedings by the use of ~~symbols, manually or by stenographic machine,~~ *a stenographic machine or by using a soundproof voice recording device* as an official court or legislative reporter, freelance reporter, CART captioner, or broadcast captioner shall be eligible to become a Participating Member.

Section 5-Student Members

- a) Any student confirmed to be enrolled in a verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning program or a scoping program shall be eligible to become a Student Member.

Section 6-Honorary Members

- a) Any person who has attained high rank in the reporting profession as a practitioner of the art of verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning, as an author of verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning literature, or as a benefactor of the profession, but who is not in the active practice of verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning, upon recommendation of the Board of Directors may be elected an Honorary Member by two-thirds (2/3) of the Voting Members at the annual business meeting (as defined herein).
- b) Honorary Members who have not been verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporters and/or stenographic/*voice* captioners shall not vote.

Section 7-Associate Members

- a) Any Participating or Registered Member in good standing, on retiring from the active practice of verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning, shall be eligible to become an Associate Member.
- b) A teacher of verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning, or anyone connected in an official capacity with a school or college conducting a verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning course, shall be eligible to become an Associate Member. Such persons need not meet the requirements for skill in the art of reporting of proceedings.
- d) Any person interested in the preservation, support, and advancement of the field of verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning, but not in any way actively engaged in the verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning of proceedings, who is not otherwise eligible for membership, shall be eligible to become an Associate Member.

Section 8-Retired Membership

- a) Any Participating or Registered Member in good standing prior to January 1, 2018, who has paid Participating or Registered Member dues for a period of thirty (30) consecutive years (twenty (20) consecutive years for those Retired Lifetime Memberships approved

prior to July 21, 1993] and is no longer engaged in verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning shall be eligible to become a Retired Lifetime Member.

- b) Any Participating or Registered Member in good standing after January 1, 2018, who is no longer deriving income in any manner from the verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning professions, shall be eligible to become a Retired Member.

Section 9—Privileges

- b) All Members may attend meetings of the Members and participate in any debates at such meetings. Only Participating Members who are verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporters and/or stenographic/*voice* captioners and Registered Members who are verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporters and/or stenographic/*voice* captioners, as well as Retired Members, Retired Lifetime Members, and Honorary Members who have been verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporters and/or stenographic/*voice* captioners, shall be eligible to vote and/or make or second motions at such meetings or to vote by electronic mail or other means of electronic transmission as specifically authorized under Article IX (“Voting Members”).
- c) Only Registered Members who are verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporters and/or stenographic/*voice* captioners or Retired Members and Retired Lifetime Members who have been verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporters and/or stenographic/*voice* captioners or Honorary Members who have been verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporters and/or stenographic/*voice* captioners shall be eligible to hold an elective office of the Association.

Constitution & Bylaws: Article V—Board of Directors

Section 2—Composition and Eligibility

The Board of Directors shall be composed of the President, President-Elect, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, the Immediate Past President, and six (6) Directors. The Executive Director shall be an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors without voting rights. The Board of Directors may appoint other ex-officio members of the Board without voting rights. Only Registered Members who are verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporters and/or stenographic/*voice* captioners or Retired Members and Retired Lifetime Members who have been verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporters and/or stenographic/*voice* captioners or Honorary Members who have been verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporters and/or stenographic/*voice* captioners shall be eligible to hold an elective office of the Association.

Constitution & Bylaws: Article VIII—Nomination and Election of Officers and Directors

Section 1—Qualifications of Nominating Committee

- b) Each of the eight (8) Registered Members shall have had at least five (5) years of continuous Membership in the Association immediately prior to appointment to the Nominating Committee and shall have served on the board of an NCRA-affiliated verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning organization or served on a minimum of two (2) verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting association committees prior to appointment to the Nominating Committee.

Constitution & Bylaws: Article X—Academy of Professional Reporters and Council of the Academy of Professional Reporters

Section 2—Fellows

- a) Election as a Fellow is a professional distinction that shall be conferred only by the Board of Directors upon a person of extraordinary qualifications and exemplary professional practice who serves as a credit to the profession of verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning. A candidate for Fellow shall be a continuous Registered Member with at least fifteen (15) years of experience and shall have attained distinction as measured by performance. Such performance shall include three (3) or more of the following:
 - i) Publication of important papers, articles, books, or other written material dealing with verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning, professional, or related subjects.
 - ii) Creative, innovative, or technological contributions to the enhancement of the profession of verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning.
 - iii) Significant and distinguished service to the profession as an active participant on a minimum of three (3) NCRA committees within the last fifteen (15) years.
 - iv) Contributions in such areas as teaching, editing of publications, other board or committee service, or education of the general public that have served to enhance or promote the verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning professions.
 - v) Attainment of the Association’s Registered Merit Reporter, Registered Diplomat Reporter, or qualification in the Speed or Realtime Contest.

Constitution & Bylaws: Article XVI—Affiliated Units

Section 1—Authorization

There shall be affiliated units of the Association when in the opinion of the Board of Directors such units are in the best interest of both the verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning professions and the units involved as a means of encouraging and promoting more effective cooperation and coordination of activity in the profession. Such affiliated units shall be and remain completely autonomous and independent of the Association.

Constitution & Bylaws: Article XVI—Affiliated Units

Section 4—Affiliation Policy

- a) A state association is eligible for affiliation if (1) it evidences through its constitution and bylaws or a statement of purposes that it espouses and embraces the purposes and precepts promulgated in the Constitution and Bylaws of the Association and all applicable statutes, including antitrust laws and (2) a majority of its members are either verbatim ~~stenographic reporters, voice writers, or stenographic captioners~~ *stenographic/voice reporters or stenographic/voice captioners*.
- d) The Association shall have no obligation to affiliated units other than to cooperate to the extent practicable in serving the verbatim stenographic/*voice* reporting and/or stenographic/*voice* captioning professions. Members who are members of affiliated units shall not be entitled to any services not provided by the Association to other Members.