

**TEXAS KNIFEMAKERS' GUILD**  
**BEST PRACTICES GUIDE**

**MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1. Eligibility for Membership**

Application for membership shall be open to any person. Membership is granted after completion and receipt of a membership application, annual dues have been paid, and approval by the Board of Directors

**Section 2. Membership Levels**

There are four classes of membership. Except as otherwise provided herein, membership in each class shall be granted by, and at the discretion of, the Board to individuals who fulfill the qualifications set forth below for each class. All members, of whatever class, are bound by the By-Laws, rules and regulations of the Guild. In the event any rule or regulation is inconsistent or conflicts with any provision of the By-Laws, the By-Laws shall control.

1. The **General Membership** category is open to anyone including knife collectors, knifemakers from other states, beginning knife makers, and those makers whose primary interest is assembling kit knives. All who do not wish to submit knives for inspection or who do not pass inspection may be members in this category. Out of state members may vote on issues put forward for a general vote of the membership, but are not eligible to vote on board of director positions, as these positions are dependent on residency within a TKG region. Annual Dues for General Membership is \$40 per 12 month period.

2. The **Associate Sponsor** category is open to knife dealers and suppliers of knifemaking supplies. Members in this category are expected to conduct business with knifemakers in Texas, and may be called upon to support and participate in TKG events, or offer discounts to TKG members. Lone Star Knifemaker members who are also dealers will not be expected to pay membership in both categories. In-state/out of state voting rules apply to associate sponsors. Annual Dues for Associate Sponsor Membership is \$50 per 12 month period.

3. [Added 2023] The **Preferred Supplier** will help the Texas Knifemakers' Guild to generate additional revenue as an effort to support more knife-related events throughout the state without having to raise membership dues.

- a. The Preferred Supplier will support the TKG by:
  - i. Paying monthly dues of \$550
  - ii. Current TKG members in good standing will receive a \$15 Gift Certificate sent via email as well as future members.
  - iii. The Preferred Supplier will display a digital banner on their website and social media to promote the TKG.
  - iv. The Preferred Supplier will send advanced notice of sales and specials via email.
  - v. TKG members can opt out of these emails.
- b. The TKG will support the Preferred Supplier by:
  - i. Displaying a photo or banner on the TKG website and social media to promote the Preferred Supplier.

- ii. Provide email addresses for all paid members at onset of agreement for purpose of receiving gift certificates and the Preferred Supplier newsletter.
  - iii. Provide email address of new members upon joining for purpose of receiving gift certificates and the Preferred Supplier newsletter.
  - iv. Members may opt out of news at any time (they will not receive advance notice of sales, etc. if they opt out).
  - v. Communicate regarding member events and activities to Preferred Supplier to offer opportunities to participate and attend events.
  - vi. Display and distribute promotional materials provided to TKG by Preferred Supplier at all events (if feasible).
- c. Restrictions: Offered only to one vendor per year.
- i. Preferred Supplier status automatically renews annually.
  - ii. Status / Membership can be revoked at any time by a vote of the TKG Board due to not meeting expectations of TKG, negative member feedback, poor ethics, or other 'violations' as determined by the board.
  - iii. TKG board will contact vendor prior to decision to terminate to discuss any issues and offer opportunity for correction if possible.
  - iv. The TKG will announce this new membership level to members via email and Facebook and give current members an opportunity to opt out of receiving emails from Preferred Supplier.
4. **Lone Star Knifemakers** will submit three knives for inspection. Knives for inspection must be handmade, meaning at a minimum that the maker personally ground and polished the blade and installed the handle. Persons who apply for Lone Star Knifemaker but do not pass inspection will be accepted as General Members. The maker must wait at least 6 months prior to re-inspection. Lone Star Knifemaker membership is available to Texas residents only. Annual dues for Lonestar Membership is \$40 per 12 month period. The judging criteria and inspection procedure are as follows:

## 2017 Lonestar Knifemaker Judging Procedure

This document is intended to assist members in presenting and judging knives presented by persons applying for Lonestar Knifemaker status. Our initial goal is to set a moderate bar, not an exceptionally high one. Many knives with some errors will receive a passing judgment. We want to screen out knives with many or serious errors that detract from the overall quality.

The Membership Procedure gives the following instructions.

*Lone Star Knifemakers will submit three knives for inspection. Knives must be hand made, meaning at a minimum that the maker personally ground and polished the blade and installed the handle. Lone Star Knifemaker membership is available to Texas residents only. Criteria for inspection are as follows:*

- *The knives presented must have no major technical errors, such as significant gaps in fit, grossly uneven plunges, edges that are off center, or finished blades that are warped.*
- *Blade finish should be uniform, may be either machine or hand finished, and must have minimal underlying coarser grit grind marks, both on the bevels and the spine.*
- *As a minimum standard, each knife presented must shave hair.*
- *Voting Members of the Knifemakers' Guild and Master and Journeyman members of the American Bladesmith Society will be admitted as Lone Star Knifemakers without submitting knives for inspection.*

Each person applying for Lone Star Knifemaker certification will present three knives for inspection by three Board Members. This is best accomplished at a TKG event or a knife show, but may also be completed by mailing the knives. Pictures of knives will not be judged.

Persons conducting inspections are expected to give constructive feedback on the knives that are examined. Feedback should be given on every knife, regardless of whether knives pass or fail. You are being asked to endorse members for a certification that you currently hold. Do not weaken the overall status of the certification by accepting knives without diligent inspection, or by holding makers to too low a standard. Fill out a score sheet for the knives you inspect, and sign the form. Completed forms will be submitted by the applicant to the TKG secretary once all three forms have been completed. The three inspections need not occur at the same time and place.

Persons who apply for Lone Star Knifemaker but do not pass inspection will be accepted as General Members. The dues difference will not be refunded, and the maker must wait at least 6 months prior to re-inspection. Lone Star Knifemaker membership is available to Texas residents only. Persons who wish to appeal a failing inspection may appeal to the board of directors. The board or its designee will review the three knives, unmodified from previous inspections. The decision of the board or designee will be final.

Knives should not pass if they are not handmade as defined above. Knives should not pass if any one of them does not shave hair on at least part of the blade.

### **Section 3. Removal of Membership**

Evidence of lack of integrity in business practices will be grounds for withdrawal of membership status. Examples include, but are not limited to, presenting assembled or “kit” knives as the maker’s own work, a pattern of significant delays in delivering knife or product orders, taking payment for knives or product without delivering the product in a timely manner, and inability or unwillingness to uphold the knife quality standards of Lone Star Membership. Disciplinary action will be decided by majority vote of the board of directors. The board may choose to speak with the applicant and/or seek more information prior to voting on membership. If the board votes to withdraw membership, the grounds for removal must be specified in writing. Any membership decision decided by majority vote of the board of directors is final. Members whose membership is withdrawn by the board will be entitled to a pro-rated refund of their membership dues.

### **Section 4. Resignation and Termination**

Any member may resign by filing a written resignation with the secretary. Resignation shall not relieve a member of unpaid dues, or other charges previously accrued. A member can have their membership terminated by a majority vote of the board of directors.

### **Section 5. Non-voting Membership**

The board of directors shall have the authority to establish and define non-voting categories of membership.

### **Section 6. Meetings of Members**

Regular meetings of the members (regional and/or statewide) shall be held at least once per calendar year, at a time and place designated by the board of directors.

An annual meeting of the members shall take place at a specific date, time and location, which will be designated by the board. At the annual meeting the members shall receive reports on the activities of the association, and have input to the direction of the guild,s activities for the coming year.

Special meetings may be called by a simple majority of the board of directors. A petition signed by five percent (5%) of voting members may also call a special meeting.

Written notice of each meeting shall be given to each member, by mail, email or posting on the Guild’s official website, not less than two weeks prior to the meeting.

A quorum for a meeting of the members shall consist of at least twenty percent (20)% of the active membership.

All issues to be voted on by the membership shall be decided by a simple majority of those present at the meeting in which the vote takes place, or by a simple majority of electronic voting respondents.

## **ELECTIONS**

A **General Election** will be held every year to elect Board Members as well as poll TKG members concerning proposed changes to procedures or bylaws, upcoming events, and/or budget considerations. A **Special Election** may be held as needed to fill vacant spots on the Board, or for other purposes as deemed necessary by the Board.

The General Election process should begin roughly December 1, and should be concluded by December 31.

The President of the Board will designate a Board Member to the position of Election Chairman. This designee will manage the election process according to the guidelines within this procedure, and in keeping with the TKG bylaws. The Chairman will ask for nominations for Board Members from among the year's current paid TKG Members to be submitted either via email or on the Texas Knifemakers' Guild Paid Members Facebook page at least one week (7 days) before the General Election. Nominees must be paid members in good standing with there being a minimum of two and a maximum of seven nominees per region. Each nominee will have an opportunity to reject the nomination and each paid member will have an opportunity to provide input concerning the nominees. Each nominee must reside in the region for which they are nominated, and will be voted on only by members of that particular region.

The day of the election will be given in advance, once the nomination process is complete. The Chairman will create distinct regional ballots with each ballot containing only the nominees for that particular region, i.e. Region 1 ballot will only have the names of Region 1 nominees, Region 2 ballot will only have names of Region 2 nominees, etc. Each regional ballot may also contain line items that pertain to that region or line items that pertain to the TKG as a whole. These may be either official votes, or informational questions for board consideration. The ballot shall be created using a web voting service such as [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com), [www.electionbuddy.com](http://www.electionbuddy.com), or any other appropriate service. The TKG may, at its discretion, use a free or paid service with any fees paid from the TKG budget. All TKG Officers shall have access to the web voting service credentials throughout the election process.

Once the ballot has been created, the Election Chairman shall send an email to each TKG member containing a link to only their Regional ballot. These links shall not be shared among regions in order to prevent members from voting on the wrong ballot or voting multiple times. No ballots shall be submitted via mail, email, phone, or any other method. Only the ballots submitted via the web service will be counted.

The polls open as soon as the ballots are mailed to TKG members and will be open for a period of 48 hours. Once the polls close, the Election Chairman shall notify the existing Board of Directors of the election results within 24 hours, and the nominees of the results within 48 hours. Having been approved by the existing board and the nominees, the election results shall then be made public via email and/or the Texas Knifemakers' Guild Facebook page in a timely manner.

Newly elected members of the Board of Directors shall be sworn in at the Board of Directors meeting in January of each year.

## **MEETING GUIDELINES**

### **Regular Meetings**

An annual meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held at a time and day and location designated by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors may provide, by resolution, the time and place, for the holding of regular meetings. Notice of these meetings shall be sent to all members of the Board of Directors no less than ten (10) days, prior to the meeting date. Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held at such places designated in the notice of such meeting, within the State of Texas. The Board will empanel new board members and select officers for the year at the annual meeting.

Annual Meetings of the Board of the Directors shall be held at such places designated in the notice of such meeting, within the State of Texas.

Notice shall be given at least 72 hours in advance to the membership via postal mail, email, or Social Media.

### **Special Meetings**

Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by or at the request of the President, or by agreement of a majority of Directors. The person or persons authorized to call special meetings or the Board of Directors may fix the place for holding any special meeting of the Board of Directors called.

Notice of the date, time, and place of any Special Meeting of the Board of Directors shall be given at least 7 business days prior to the meeting by written notice delivered personally or mailed via postal or electronic mail to each director at his/her contact address.

### **Quorum, Vote Required for Action**

A majority plus one of current Directors shall constitute a quorum at any meeting, with at least one representative present from each of the regions. If less than a quorum, but at least one third (1/3rd), of the directors are present at any meeting, from time to time, and the meeting may be held as adjourned, without further notice. Except in cases in which the Articles of Guild or these Bylaws provide otherwise, the vote of the majority of the Directors present at the meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board of Directors. The Directors may vote on items electronically outside of a regular meeting, with vote results recorded in the minutes.

### **Section 4. Organization**

Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be presided over by the President, or in the absence of the President, by a Chairman chosen at the meeting. The Secretary, the President, or the Chairman of the meeting, as the case may be, may appoint any person to act as the Secretary of the meeting in that absence of the Secretary.