

# National Boricua Latino Health Organization Constitution and Bylaws+

July 2008

This document supercedes any previous version.

## CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I – NAME  
ARTICLE II – PURPOSE  
ARTICLE III – OBJECTIVES  
ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP  
ARTICLE V – NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL  
ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS  
ARTICLE VII – ADVISORY BOARD  
  
ARTICLE VIII – HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ARTICLE IX – CHAPTERS  
ARTICLE X - ELECTIONS  
ARTICLE XI – BYLAWS  
ARTICLE XII – AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION  
ARTICLE XIII - DISSOLUTION

## BYLAWS

BYLAW I – ACTIVITIES  
BYLAW II - MEMBERSHIP  
BYLAW III - CHAPTERS  
BYLAW IV - MEETINGS  
BYLAW V – NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS  
BYLAW VI – VACANCIES  
BYLAW VII – RESIGNATIONS AND REMOVAL  
BYLAW VIII – LEAVE OF ABSENCE  
BYLAW IX – COMPENSATION  
BYLAW X – NON-PROFIT STATUS  
BYLAW XI – FINANCES  
BYLAW XII – AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS  
BYLAW XIII – COMMITTEES  
BYLAW XIV – GOVERNMENT  
BYLAW XV - DISSOLUTION

# National Boricua Latino Health Organization

## CONSTITUTION

### ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this organization shall be the National Boricua Latino Health Organization, hereinafter designated as the NBLHO. The NBLHO is a member of the National Network of Latin American Medical Students.

### ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

The purpose of the NBLHO is to address the health needs of the Latino community, as well as to create an environment for academic and social support for Latino students interested in the health professions.

### ARTICLE III - OBJECTIVES

Immediate

1. Recruitment and admission of Latinos who exhibit the potential to benefit their community into the health professions programs.

2. Retaining our members in the health professions programs by supporting academic and social support activities and by fostering close ties among members.
3. Educating ourselves in areas of concern to our communities which may not be part of the health profession or allied health school curricula, such as preventive and community medicine, politics of health care systems, mechanics of urban city primary care, and family practice.
4. Orientation of our members towards actively accepting our principles of unity and aims of our organization.
5. Community involvement for the purpose of strengthening working relationships with community groups and the overall aim of benefiting the community.
6. Support and encourage prospective health professions school applicants throughout the admissions process. Writing and circulating our ideas and fostering the refinement and development of research skills among our members.
7. Encourage the development of courses which better prepare our members to become high quality health care providers serving our community.
8. To educate and sensitize the entire medical community to the specific needs and differences of the Latino regarding health and human well-being.

#### Long Term

1. Improve the health care delivery to Latino communities.
2. Be advocates of the rights of Latino patients.
3. Participate in the planning and implementation of research activities designed to identify the health care needs of our community.
4. Networking with other organizations at the local and national levels to achieve common objectives.

### ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

#### SECTION 1.

The membership of the NBLHO shall consist of individuals whose interests are consistent with the objectives and who meet the requirements for membership as provided by the Bylaws.

#### SECTION 2.

Membership in the NBLHO also provides membership to>NNLAMS.

#### SECTION 3.

Members of any classification may be dropped from membership for non-payment of dues, or for conduct that can cause detriment to, adversely affects the reputation of, or contradicts the objectives of NBLHO or>NNLAMS.

#### SECTION 4.

Any person interested in the objectives of NBLHO or>NNLAMS shall be eligible for membership of a class for which he or she is qualified in accordance with the Bylaws.

#### SECTION 5.

The amount and method of collection of dues of the members shall be as provided in the Bylaws.

#### SECTION 6.

This organization supports the principles of equality, equal opportunity, and equal treatment under the law. This organization opposes discrimination in any form.

This organization is open to all persons, regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, or any other arbitrary method of classification. This organization does and will abide by all governmental regulations relating to equal opportunity and non-discriminatory practices.

## ARTICLE V – NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

### SECTION 1.

The affairs of the NBLHO shall be managed by the National Executive Council, hereinafter designated as the Council, under such rules as the Council may determine and subject to the specific conditions of this Constitution and Bylaws.

### SECTION 2.

The functions of the Council are:

1. To define the specific NBLHO objectives,
2. To establish the strategic plan of the NBLHO,
3. To acquire the resources necessary to execute the strategic plan, and
4. To approve the NBLHO operating plan and make it available to the membership.

### SECTION 3.

The Council shall consist of the following officers: Co-chairs (two), Co-Chair Elects (two), Treasurer, Secretary, Parliamentarian, Membership Chair, Webmaster, and Resident Chair. They shall be elected by the membership of the NBLHO as specified in the Bylaws.

### SECTION 4.

The Council shall develop annual operating plans that execute the strategic plan.

### SECTION 5.

The Council shall take the necessary actions to provide for the day-to-day operations and management of the NBLHO.

### SECTION 6.

The Council members shall serve terms in office as defined in the Bylaws.

### SECTION 7.

The Address of the Executive Council and the National Executive office will be at a specific, designated P.O. Box until further notice. It is the Council's responsibility to notify the House of Delegates of any Address change. This should be submitted to the House of Delegates within thirty (30) days of change of Address.

## ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS

### SECTION 1.

The Co-Chairs shall have general supervision of NBLHO affairs. The Co-Chairs shall preside at the NBLHO meetings and at meetings of the Council. The Co-Chairs shall represent the NBLHO at>NNLAMS meetings. The Co-Chairs shall convene and preside over all meetings of the Council and shall be Ex-officio members of all committees of the Executive Council. The Co-Chairs may also create committees as necessary, subject to the approval of the Council.

The Co-Chairs will be recognized as the spokespersons of the Executive Council. Position statements made by the Co-Chairs will be a result of a consensus of opinion of the Council.

The Co-Chairs will submit annual reports to the House of Delegates and an Annual Report for the entire Organization.

### SECTION 2.

The Co-Chair Elects shall assist the Co-Chairs and shall succeed to the position of the Co-Chairs upon the completion of the Co-Chairs' terms of office.

The Co-Chair Elects shall have a transition period of twelve (12) months during which they will work closely with the present Co-Chairs. The Co-Chair elects will have voting power on the council.

#### SECTION 3.

The Treasurer shall be responsible for the financial affairs of the NBLHO. The Treasurer shall receive all funds paid to the NBLHO and shall approve payment of all bills incurred by the NBLHO as approved by the Council. The Treasurer shall prepare an annual report on the financial affairs of NBLHO.

The Treasurer shall keep and maintain records of all financial transactions of the Executive Council. The Treasurer shall see that all necessary signatures are on file with the banks. The Treasurer will ensure that all deposits are made in a timely manner and are in agreement with the amounts that should have been deposited; pay monies out only upon receipt of a written voucher signed by the Co-Chairs and Secretary or an approved invoice; submit to the membership monthly and annual reports which show all monies collected and deposited, amounts disbursed and balance on hand; submit records for auditing at the end of each year and at any other time designated by the Co-Chairs. The Treasurer shall require up to two (2) signatures on checks, and no bank transfer shall be made without a check being drawn.

#### SECTION 4.

The Secretary shall prepare minutes of all meetings of the NBLHO and the Executive Council, maintain all permanent records and record attendance at each meeting.

The secretary shall ensure that all Constitution, By-laws and resolutions of the NBLHO (both National and Local) are recorded and filed properly. The Secretary shall also record and file reports of all committees and task forces.

#### SECTION 5.

The Membership Chair shall be responsible maintaining a listing of all-current members and chapter contacts, and serves as a contact person for new chapters. The Membership Chair shall provide communication between the Executive Council and the NBLHO membership by maintaining the official NBLHO listserv and acting as the moderator of that listserv.

#### SECTION 6.

The Parliamentarian is responsible for certifying quorum at each meeting of the Council and ensures that all decisions are in accordance with the Constitution and By-Laws of the organization.

The Parliamentarian shall learn Robert's Rules of Order and apply them to the meetings of the Council and annual conferences. The Parliamentarian shall call the roll at each meeting.

#### SECTION 7.

The Residency Chair is expected to maintain a list of the organization's alumni and assist in the identification and recruitment of Latino residents to the organization.

The elected individual must be an intern or resident at the time that individual takes office.

#### SECTION 8.

The Webmaster is responsible for maintaining the official NBLHO website and upgrading the website as needed, as well as maintaining the official NBLHO logo.

### ARTICLE VII – ADVISORY BOARD

#### SECTION 1.

The Advisory Board will complement the Council and the House of Delegates in the delineation of the policies for the Organization.

SECTION 2.

The Council will identify and invite members of its community to serve as advisors in aiding in the creation and implementation of policies for the NBLHO.

SECTION 3.

When expertise from fields other than those of the members of the Advisory Board is necessary, the Council may invite experts to serve as resource persons to the Council and/or to committees on an ad hoc or temporary basis.

SECTION 4.

The advisors shall be selected and named by members of the Council by presenting names and the curriculum vitae of the candidates at the first meeting of the elected Council or as soon thereafter as possible.

SECTION 5.

During the first meeting of the newly elected Executive Council, the Secretary will send a letter to the different NBLHO Chapters requesting candidates for the Advisory Board.

SECTION 6.

Professional advisors shall be designated from the following professions: Medicine, Medical Student, Health Educator, Community Based Health Care Professional, Other Health Care professionals, M.S.W., RN, Lab technician, Mental health Professional, Nutrition, Pharmacy and any other profession deemed adequate by the Executive Council.

SECTION 7.

The Advisory Board shall communicate with the Executive Council least two (2) times per year or more, as deemed necessary.

SECTION 8.

The advisors should attend the National Convention.

SECTION 9.

The members of the Advisory Board shall notify the Council in writing if they are no longer available to participate as advisors.

SECTION 10.

Advisors shall serve a minimum of one year and may be re-appointed on an annual basis.

## ARTICLE VIII - HOUSE OF DELEGATES

SECTION 1.

The House of Delegates is the overall governing body of the NBLHO. It has the ultimate authority and responsibility to govern the organization.

SECTION 2.

Each chapter has the right to two voting representatives at each House of Delegates meeting. If only one representative is present, the chapter shall have only one vote. If no representatives are present from a given chapter, the chapter shall have no votes. If a Delegate must leave the room due to involvement in the election, that Delegate may leave a "proxy" vote with the other delegate from their chapter or with the National Parliamentarian.

SECTION 3.

The National BLHO Delegation will meet at least twice a year. The National Co-Chairs, in accordance with the National constitution and by-laws, shall convene meetings.

SECTION 4.

Elections will take place at the national convention of the House of Delegates as specified in the Bylaws.

SECTION 5.

The House of Delegates shall approve all policies of the Organization, Constitution, and Bylaws and ratify appointments made by the Council.

**ARTICLE IX - CHAPTERS**

SECTION 1.

Any group of at least one (1) student in the health professions wishing to form a chapter may do so as specified in the Bylaws.

SECTION 2.

Chapters may be formed in the northeast region of the United States as described in the>NNLAMS Constitution and Bylaws.

**ARTICLE X - ELECTIONS**

SECTION 1.

Officers shall be elected by the House of Delegates as specified in the Bylaws.

**ARTICLE XI – BYLAWS**

SECTION 1.

The Council shall not make Bylaws in conflict with either the>NBLHO or>NNLAMS Constitution.

SECTION 2.

The Bylaws may be amended by the Council in the manner provided in the Bylaws.

**ARTICLE XII - AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

SECTION 1.

Amendments to this Constitution may be introduced at any level of the organization.

SECTION 2.

Proposed amendments must be clearly stated and forwarded in writing to the Council at least thirty (30) days in advance of the convention. The council will then distribute copies to the general membership.

SECTION 3.

Ratification of the amendment must be approved by two-thirds (2/3) vote of registered members during the subsequent>NBLHO convention.

SECTION 4.

A review and consideration of update to this Constitution and the Bylaws shall be completed as deemed necessary by the Council. The Council may appoint a Constitution Committee and provide guidance for this planned review and consideration of update to the Constitution and the Bylaws.

**ARTICLE XIII – DISSOLUTION OF THE NATIONAL BORICUA LATINO HEALTH ORGANIZATION**

SECTION 1.

The NBLHO shall only use its funds to accomplish the objectives and purposes specified in this Constitution and Bylaws and no part of its funds shall inure to or be distributed to the members, or officers of the NBLHO. On dissolution of the NBLHO, the net assets remaining after payment of all debts shall be used for charitable and educational purposes under Section 501 (c) (3) of the U. S. Internal Revenue Code as it now exists or as may be amended.

SECTION 2.

Dissolution may occur as specified in the Bylaws.

# **National Boricua Latino Health Organization**

## **BYLAWS**

### **BYLAW I - ACTIVITIES**

#### SECTION 1.

The National Boricua Latino Health Organization, hereinafter referred to as NBLHO, shall encourage conferences, workshops, seminars and courses, and may sponsor or cosponsor such events as appropriate.

#### SECTION 2.

The NBLHO may provide its members with a membership listing and will initiate newsletters, bulletins, and utilize electronic communications, to improve the dissemination of information among its members.

#### SECTION 3.

The NBLHO will support and implement the goals and objectives of the National Network of Latin American Medical Students, hereinafter referred to as>NNLAMS, provided there is no conflict with the objectives outlined in this Constitution and Bylaws.

### **BYLAW II - MEMBERSHIP**

#### SECTION 1.

The Membership Chair shall be appointed by the Co-Chairs for the purpose of soliciting applications for membership in the NBLHO and concurrent membership in>NNLAMS.

#### SECTION 2.

The NBLHO is open to individuals, regardless of race, gender, age, or creed, that share a common commitment to the recruitment and retention of Latinos into higher education and the health professions, as well as a commitment to improving Latino health. The NBLHO supports the principles of equality, equal opportunity and equal treatment under the law. The NBLHO opposes discrimination in any form. The NBLHO is open to all persons, regardless of classification.

#### SECTION 3.

The Membership Chair and Council shall comply with the following membership procedure:

1. establish a membership form including pertinent information about prospective members
2. establish a membership fee (dues) on a stated purpose to be determined by the Council
3. members in good standing are defined as those who have paid membership dues
4. members shall receive a token of membership in exchange for their dues
5. membership dues shall go the NBLHO treasury
6. membership lists shall be forwarded to national officers

#### SECTION 4.

Chapters may pay one set of dues for all of its members provided that a membership roster is made available.

Individuals may pay individual dues which may vary according to their classification.

#### SECTION 5.

The classification of members is as follows:

1. Physician and Dentist, actively practicing
2. Other Health Professionals

3. Residents
4. Medical Students
5. Graduate Students
6. Undergraduate Students
7. Other

#### SECTION 6.

The membership year shall be from August to July (one academic year). Each chapter should submit the agreed amount and a roster which includes name, job/specialty/school year, Email address, mail address and phone number to the specific designated P.O. Box no later than November 1 of that academic year. Payment of dues for all active members is required for membership and voting privileges. Only paying members may vote on behalf of their chapter with no exceptions.

#### SECTION 7.

Yearly membership in the NBLHO and the obligation for dues will continue from year to year unless the member's signed resignation is received by the NBLHO, prior to the end of the membership year for which dues have been paid. Any person in arrears for dues for three months shall cease to be a member of the NBLHO.

A member whose resignation was received, or who has been dropped from the NBLHO due to non-payment of dues, may be reinstated as an active member by the Organization upon the member's request for reinstatement and payment of the member's current dues.

### BYLAW III – CHAPTERS

#### SECTION 1.

Any group of at least one (1) interested students wishing to form a chapter of BLHO must submit a copy of their proposed structure, and they must adopt parts I, II, and III of the National Constitution.

Their Constitution should reflect the needs of their particular region and local community. Their constitution should be filed with the National Delegation and be officially recognized by the National Convention.

In the event an undergraduate institution wishes to form a chapter, it must do so under the auspices of a medical school chapter as defined in the NNLAMS constitution and bylaws.

#### SECTION 2.

Specifically, a chapter's constitution is composed of parts I, II, and III of this National Constitution, followed by a structure of their own design, which can accomplish the goals of the National Boricua Latino Health Organization.

#### SECTION 3.

The Executive Council will approve a newly formed chapter subject to ratification by the National Delegates at the next duly convened meeting of the House of Delegates.

#### SECTION 4.

A chapter of the NBLHO must perform the following duties at a minimum:

1. Submit Bylaws consistent with the National Constitution and Bylaws
2. Submit an Organizational Chart
3. Submit a list of Officers
4. Submit a list of Members
5. Submit an official address
6. Select two (2) delegates in accordance with the National Constitution and Bylaws.
  - a. A list shall be submitted to, and filed with the Executive Council.
7. Submit dues in accordance to National Bylaws.

8. Send a representative to all NBLHO and Council meetings.

#### **BYLAW IV - MEETINGS**

##### SECTION 1.

(a) Meeting of the NBLHO general assembly will be held once a year as a minimum. The dates of these meetings and scheduling of any meetings shall be the responsibility of the Council.

(b) All meetings of the NBLHO shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, except where there is a conflict with the Constitution and Bylaws.

(c) At meetings of the NBLHO, a quorum for the conduct of business shall consist of a simple majority of the total delegate membership.

(d) In the case that a chapter cannot send its delegates, that chapter must send to the Council their vote on the submitted resolutions in writing five (5) days before said meeting.

(e) The title, objective, and agenda of this national convention will be overseen by the executive council.

(f) The National Convention shall be held annually, and may not be held at the same site for two (2) consecutive years.

##### SECTION 2.

(a) Meeting of the NBLHO Council will be held monthly as a minimum. The dates of these meetings and scheduling of any meetings shall be the responsibility of the Council.

(b) All meetings of the NBLHO Council shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, except where there is a conflict with the Constitution and Bylaws.

(c) At meetings of the Council, a quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the total Council.

#### **BYLAW V - NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

##### SECTION 1.

Nominations for Officers may be made by any member of the NBLHO in good standing. Nominations may be made orally, via mail or electronic communication prior to and during the annual convention. Nominees must be members in good standing with the Organization in order to run for a position. Nominees should also be prepared to address the House of Delegates during the annual conference.

##### SECTION 2.

The Officers shall be elected by a majority of the House of Delegates at the annual convention. There will be two separate rounds of voting for the Co-Chair Elects with the candidate winning the majority of each round elected. The candidate winning the majority in the first round shall be announced before the second round of voting begins.

##### SECTION 3.

All elected positions are for a one (1) academic year term, with the exception of the Co-Chair Elects. The Co-Chair Elects serve a two (2) year term, the first year serving as Co-Chair Elects and the second year as Co-Chairs. The Immediate Past President will continue as an ex-officio member of the Council for one year.

##### SECTION 4.

All officers and any others in leadership positions must be members of the NBLHO.

## BYLAW VI - VACANCIES

Vacancies, to complete a term of office, shall be filled by nomination of the Co-Chairs and approval of the Council.

## BYLAW VII – RESIGNATIONS AND REMOVAL

### Section 1.

Any member of the Council that wishes to resign must submit a resignation in writing to the Secretary. The resignation must be accepted by the Council.

### Section 2.

Any member of the Council who has not been granted a leave of absence and who is absent for three consecutive meetings, either regular or special meetings, shall immediately cease to be a member and shall be so notified.

### Section 3.

Any member may be removed from the Council by a 2/3 vote of the Council membership at a regular meeting or special meeting convened for this purpose. Notice of such proposed removal and the cause hereof must be furnished to the member who is being challenged and to the entire membership, including the Co-Chairs, no less than twenty (20) days prior to said meeting.

## BYLAW VIII – LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Any member who anticipates not being able to attend more than three consecutive meetings because of illness, temporary absence from the region, or other extraordinary reasons may request a leave of absence for a fixed period of time, and upon a favorable majority vote by the Council, may be granted a leave of absence.

## BYLAW IX - COMPENSATION

The Officers, Advisory Board, and Committee Members shall serve without pay.

## BYLAW X - NON-PROFIT STATUS

The NBLHO shall be organized as a non-profit organization.

## BYLAW XI - FINANCES

### SECTION 1.

The fiscal year of the CC shall be from August 1 to July 31, inclusive.

### SECTION 2.

All instruments for the payment of money by the NBLHO shall be drawn in the name of the NBLHO, and co-signed by either Treasurer or either of the Co-Chairs, of the NBLHO. The co-signing shall, in no event, be done by the same person. All payments must be approved by the Council.

SECTION 3.

The Board shall approve and establish for each fiscal year, a budget of estimated expenditures and receipts.

SECTION 4.

The Treasurer is authorized and empowered on behalf of the NBLHO to receive by devise, bequest, donation, or otherwise, either real or personal property, and to hold the same absolutely or in trust, and to invest, reinvest, and manage the same and to apply said property and the income arising therefrom to the objectives of the NBLHO.

The Treasurer shall also have the power to allocate funds for the purposes of carrying out the objectives of the NBLHO.

SECTION 5.

The newly elected Co-Chair may create an Audit Committee, to conduct an audit of the previous year's NBLHO financial records.

**BYLAW XII - AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS**

These Bylaws may be modified, altered, or amended at any regularly scheduled meeting of the NBLHO by the affirmative vote of a simple majority of the House of Delegates in good standing, but not at any special meeting, unless notice of such intention shall have been included in the notice of such special meeting. Amendments must be submitted in writing to the Council and to members of the NBLHO at least twenty (20) days prior to the meeting at which they are to be voted upon, and must be distributed to the delegates at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting.

**BYLAW XIII - COMMITTEES**

The Council may establish committees such as Publication, National Convention, Constitution and Bylaws, Planning and Development, and necessary standing or special committees on an as-needed basis.

**BYLAW XIV - GOVERNMENT**

SECTION 1.

General policies of the NBLHO shall be controlled by the House of Delegates through its powers to initiate changes in this Constitution and Bylaws, to establish budget policies, and to review the reports of the officers.

SECTION 2.

The determination of operating policies and the control of the affairs, property and funds of the NBLHO shall be vested in the Council, except as otherwise provided by this Constitution and Bylaws.

SECTION 3.

All questions coming before the NBLHO, its governing body and committees, shall be decided by a majority of the votes cast, except as otherwise provided in this Constitution and Bylaws.

SECTION 4.

Ballots shall be used when recommended by the Council in Voting on the NBLHO matters. Unless otherwise specified in this Constitution and Bylaws, vocal or "show-of-hands" voting shall be used in meetings.

SECTION 5.

All individual members not in arrears for dues, and otherwise in good standing, may be present and participate in the discussions or proceedings of any of the regular, annual or special membership meetings, and may vote on all questions and in all elections in such meetings.

SECTION 6.

Each member shall be entitled to one vote on all questions submitted to the membership.

SECTION 7.

Robert's Rules of Order - Revised shall determine the conduct of business in all meetings of the NBLHO, its governing body and committees, except when inconsistent with this Constitution and Bylaws.

SECTION 8.

Policies and procedures defined by the Council require approval by a majority vote of the membership in good standing.

**BYLAW XV – DISSOLUTION OF THE NATIONAL BORICUA LATINO HEALTH ORGANIZATION**

In the event that the House of Delegates of the National Boricua Latino Health Organization considers the dissolution of the organization, the following procedures must be observed:

1. All members of the House of Delegates and the Executive Council must receive notification of intent to dissolve at least sixty (60) days prior to the date of the proposed dissolution.
2. The Executive Council must sponsor hearings on the matter at least thirty (30) days prior to the date in which a vote for dissolution of the Organization is taken. Hearings must be held publicly and participation must not be limited to members of the House of Delegates.
3. A unanimous vote of the House of Delegates in favor of dissolution will constitute sufficient basis for dissolution.
4. The motion presented for a vote in order to dissolve the Organization must contain within its language at minimum the following items:
  - a. Reasons for dissolution of the organization.
  - b. Identification of assets and liabilities
  - c. How the assets will be disposed of and how liabilities will be settled.