

Returned Peace Corps Volunteers at State

Charter and By-Laws

Article I – Name

1. The name of the organization shall be Returned Peace Corps Volunteers at State (RPCVs at State).

Article II– Objectives

The objectives of RPCVs at State shall be:

1. To encourage the Department of State (DOS) to hire eligible RPCVs.
2. To encourage RPCVs to continue their service to the government by seeking employment within it, and to encourage especially their employment at DOS.
3. To help effectively communicate opportunities at DOS to RPCVs.
4. To facilitate communication and foster a sense of community amongst and between RPCVs and other employees.
5. To afford career development and networking opportunities for RPCVs.
6. To provide a support network and information-sharing tool for employees worldwide who are interested in the work of RPCVs at State.

Article III – Members

Section 1 – Membership

Membership is open to all employees of DOS, regardless of the type of position they hold and regardless of their career track.

Retired FS officers, as well as retired GS officers who were employed by the US Department of State, may participate in RPCVs at State activities and forums, but cannot participate in elections nor serve as an officer. Contractors shall not be excluded as long as their employment is nominally with DOS.

The participation of members outside the DC area and in other time zones should not limit their participation in the RPCVs at State. RPCVs at State members will take steps to ensure that members of the organization, no matter where they are located, will be able to actively participate.

Section 2 - Membership meetings

Meetings will take place as determined necessary by the Executive Committee. At least two weeks advance notice of all meetings shall be given to RPCVs at State Membership.

Section 3 – Eligibility for Executive Committee and Voting

Any DOS employee who identifies themselves as a member of RPCVs at State and submits their name to the group as an official member is eligible to vote in any RPCVs at State election.

Article IV – RPCVs at State Leadership

Section 1

The governing board will be an Executive Committee consisting of nine officers elected by the RPCVs at State membership: President, Vice President of Strategy and Development, Vice President of Public Relations, Policy Director, Professional Development Director, Community Engagement Director, Communications Director, Publications Director, and Membership Director.

An executive committee member will serve for a term of two years; their terms may be staggered to provide leadership continuity

The executive committee will be elected by an at large vote of the RPCVs at State membership. The nine individuals who have received the most votes shall be elected to the Executive Committee. In case of a tie, there will be a run-off vote between the individuals who tied.

Section 2

Appointments to fill vacancies occurring during a term of office shall be made by all the remaining members of the Executive Committee. If the Executive Committee chooses, it may hold an election to fill any Executive Committee vacancy.

Section 3

The Executive Committee shall establish RPCVs at State policies and give direction to RPCVs at State programs and activities. It shall also formulate such rules of procedure as are deemed necessary. Meetings shall be called at the discretion of the Executive Committee. These meetings shall be open to all RPCVs at State members.

The Executive Committee shall meet monthly and correspond periodically.

Section 4

The duties of the Executive Committee shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee will be required to create a voting mechanism for members that complies with the rules of this charter and is accessible to all.

The Executive Committee shall establish a consultative relationship with the Department per the procedures outlined in 3 FAM 5312.

Section 5

The Executive Committee, in consultation with the Office of Civil Rights, shall identify a Leadership Liaison to formalize the relationship between RPCVs at State and the Department of State.

Article V – Electoral Process

Section 1

Elections for the Executive Committee shall take place on February 15th of every odd numbered year. In the case where this is a Saturday or Sunday, a federal holiday, or a day which the Department is closed due to inclement weather or some other emergency condition, the election shall take place on the first Thursday of the week after February 15th.

Section 2 – Voting

A general meeting will take place on Election Day during which any member of RPCVs at State, as defined above, may cast one vote. Voting shall be anonymous, but the Executive Committee shall act as, or appoint in their place, election officers to ensure that individuals vote once only.

If a member is not available to vote in person, they may cast their vote in an email to all of the executive committee members or other pre-defined election official. The executive committee shall make every effort to count all votes as long as the intent of the voter is clear. Voting by email may take place at any time between February 1st and election day.

Article VI – Membership Dues and Accounting

Membership in RPCVs at State is open to all active and retired federal employees and contractors who endorse and wish to support its purpose and objectives. Board members may elect to collect membership fees from the general membership on a voluntary basis for the privilege of voting during General Assemblies; however, contributions are not mandatory to be a member of RPCVs at State.

If the Board elects to collect membership fees, any member running for an officer position on the Board must be a member in good standing. A member in good standing is one who actively contributes to the RPCVs at State fund. Below are suggested yearly contributions at each grade level; these are merely suggested amounts. Any contribution to the RPCVs at State by a member will constitute a member in good standing. Contracted staff should consider contributing according to their salary alignment with the federal pay scale.

- Suggested contribution for GS 09 and below (FS09 to FS05): \$20
- Suggested contribution for GS 11-GS13 (FS04 and FS03): \$40
- Suggested contribution for GS 14 (FS02) and higher: \$60

Associate membership is open to anyone outside of the U.S. State Department who endorses and wishes to support RPCVs at State's mission and vision. Associate members may contribute to the RPCVs at State fund but are not afforded voting privileges and cannot hold elected offices of the Board.

Honorary membership is granted by the Board to individuals selected by RPCVs at State in recognition of their support of RPCVs at State's mission and vision. Honorary members do not contribute to the RPCVs at State fund, are not afforded voting privileges, and cannot hold an elected office of the Board.

Article VII – Governing Rules

RPCVs at State and all of its activities will function in compliance with Department Relationships with Employee Organizations, per applicable Department regulations for Employee Organizations.

Article VIII – Amendments

This Charter and Bylaws may be amended.

An amendment shall be discussed by the Executive Committee. If, after discussion, the amendment is approved by seven of the nine sitting Executive Committee members, the amendment shall be brought to the attention of the membership by general announcement on the RPCVs at State official website and at a general meeting. The meeting shall be announced two weeks or more before it takes place. If a majority of RPCVs at State members present at the meeting vote for its adoption, the amendment shall be adopted with immediate effect.

In the case of conflicting language in this Charter and Bylaws, a construction shall be favored as to give all Articles and Amendments effect, and to avoid absurd consequences. If not such reading can be made, the most recent amendment will control.

No amendment may violate Department of State policy, procedure or regulation.

In the case that the membership shall desire removal of an Executive Committee member, this removal must proceed as an amendment to the Charter and Bylaws.

Amendment I

An election of the Executive Committee may be entirely electronic, for example by email, or through an online vote. As long as there is an email or online option, an in-person event is not required. Notice for the election and the identity of the candidates shall be posted on the RPCVs @ State website a reasonable time before the election is to take place. While the cut off for voting shall be February 15th, the local time of the voter, the Committee is permitted to count some late votes as long as it counts all late votes.

Amendment II

The Charter and Bylaws may be amended by electronic notice and electronic ballot. As long as the length of notice requirements above are satisfied, there shall be no requirement for an in-person meeting.