



Associate Membership Policy

Approved by	Board of Directors	Date Approved	September 2021
Next Review due:	September 2022	Version Number	V2

1. Associate Membership

- a. Organisations that have an association with and support the statement of purposes and values of the VMSA may apply for Associate Membership.
- b. Individual persons that have an association with and support the statement of purposes and values of the VMSA may apply for Associate Membership.
- c. Pay the required Associate Membership fee.

2. Application for Associate Membership

- a. Every applicant for Associate Membership must apply in the form and manner decided by the board members.
- b. After receipt of an application for Associate Membership, the board members must consider the application and decide whether to admit or reject the applicant. The board members need not give any reason for rejecting an application.

3. Subscription fee

- a. At each annual general meeting, the association must determine:
 - i. the amount of the annual subscription fee (if any) for the following financial year; and
 - ii. the date for payment of the annual subscription fee.
- b. The board members may determine that any new Associate Member that joins after the start of the financial year must, for that financial year, pay an annual subscription fee equal to:
 - i. the full annual subscription fee; or
 - ii. a lower amount as decided by the board members.
- c. The board members must notify the Associate Members of the amount and time for payment of the annual subscription fee.
- d. Where the annual subscription fee is not received:
 - i. one month after the due date, the board members may issue a reminder notice to the Associate Member.
 - ii. one month after the reminder notice is sent, the Associate Member's rights will be suspended, including the right to receive notices of general meetings; and
 - iii. two months after the reminder notice is sent, the Associate Member ceases to be an Associate Member.

4. Register

- a. The association must maintain a register of Associate Members setting out the name, address, email address (if any) for receipt of notices and date membership starts and ceases.
- b. The date Associate Membership ceases must be recorded within 14 days of that date and all information other than the name of the person and the date on which the Associate Member ceased to be an Associate Member must be removed from the register.

5. Grievance procedure

- a. Any dispute under the VMSA constitution between a member and an Associate Member another Associate member or between an Associate Member and the association must, unless the parties otherwise agree, be dealt with by the procedure in this rule 5
- b. Any party to a dispute between members may refer the dispute to the board members for determination or mediation.
- c. If there is a dispute between the association and an Associate Member, either party may require the dispute be referred to mediation.
- d. The mediator must be unbiased.
- e. Subject to rule 5(d), the mediator may be:
 - i. a board member.
 - ii. a member; or
 - iii. a third party appointed by the board members.
- f. The mediator will be decided by agreement between the parties to the dispute, or in the absence of agreement within 14 days:
 - i. in the case of a dispute between an Associate member and another Associate member or a member, a person appointed by the board members; or
 - ii. in the case of a dispute between an Associate member and the association, a person who is a mediator appointed or employed by the Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria (Department of Justice) or its successor in law.
- g. Any party to a dispute may appoint any person to act on behalf of that party.
- h. In each dispute:
 - i. the parties to the dispute must have a reasonable opportunity to be heard.
 - ii. due consideration must be given to any statement submitted by a party; and natural justice must be accorded to the parties to the dispute throughout the process.
- i. If the mediation does not result in the dispute being resolved, within a reasonable time as decided by the mediator, or failing this decision, within one month of the party requiring mediation, any party to the dispute may refer the matter to an unbiased decision maker.
- j. A determination made under this rule is final and binding on all parties to the dispute.

6. Disciplinary action

- a. The board members may decide there are grounds to investigate if:
 - i. an Associate member has failed to comply with the rules or any procedures or policies of the association.
 - ii. it is in the interests of the association for an Associate Member to no longer remain an Associate member; or
 - iii. the Associate Member is not supporting the purposes of the association or by act or omission may cause detriment to the association or its reputation.
- b. The board may refuse to deal with a complaint if it considers the complaint to be trivial or vexatious in nature.
- c. The board members may establish a sub-committee or consider the matter itself or refer the matter to a third party, provided the decision maker is unbiased.
- d. At least two weeks before a meeting to consider the issues, the decision maker, must give the Associate Member notice:
 - i. stating the date, place and time of the meeting.
 - ii. setting out the grounds on which the investigation is based; and
 - iii. informing the Associate Member that she or he may attend the meeting and may give an explanation or submission.
- e. The decision maker has 4 weeks to consider the issues and may call for further information and hearings. The decision maker may decide on the appropriate disciplinary action, if any, including a decision to expel the Associate Member. Any decision must be notified to the Associate Member within 6 weeks from the meeting referred to in rule 6(c).
- f. An Associate Member who has received notice under rule 6(c) must not initiate a grievance procedure under rule 5 until the determination under this rule 6
- g. A determination by the decision maker is final and binding on all parties.

7. When membership ceases

Membership ceases if the Associate Member:

- a. resigns as an Associate Member by giving notice to the association.
- b. becomes bankrupt or insolvent or makes any arrangement or composition with her or his creditors.
- c. is expelled under rule 6
- d. has not replied within 2 months of a notice sent to the Associate Member asking to confirm that the Associate Member wishes to remain an Associate Member; or
- e. ceases to be an Associate Member under rule 3

8. Rights, obligations, and liabilities of members

- a. The Associate Members have the right to:
 - i. Receive notice, attend, participate at general meetings; and

- ii. inspect the association's records, including the register of members and Associate Members, in accordance with rule 17.3. of the VMSA Constitution.
- b. The Associate Members are required to comply with this policy and any policies of the association that are applicable to members and Associate Members.
- c. The liabilities of an Associate Member, as an Associate Member, are limited to the amount, if any, unpaid by the Associate Member in respect of any subscription or other membership fee.
- d. The rights of an Associate member are not transferrable and end when Associate Membership ceases.

9. Interpretation

- a. Associate Members are as described in Item 1.
- b. Associate Members may reside outside the State of Victoria.
- c. Associate members do not have voting rights in any meetings including, but not limited to AGMs and SGMs.
- d. The VMSA Constitution is the document titled, "Constitution, Victorian Men's Shed Association Inc.", and approved by VMSA Member Sheds at the Special General Meeting on Friday, September 10, 2021.