



Conference of Court Public Information Officers Constitution

Article I – Organization
Article II – Governing Principles
Article III – Membership
Article IV – Management of CCPIO
Article V – Amendments to the Constitution
Article VI – Governance
Article VII – Dissolution
Article I – Organization

Article I – Organization

Section 1 – The name of this organization shall be the Conference of Court Public Information Officers Inc. (CCPIO), the Association for Court Communicators.

Section 2 – CCPIO is incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation in Kansas.

Section 3 – CCPIO shall use its funds only to accomplish the objectives and purposes specified in this constitution. No part of its funds shall inure to or be distributed to CCPIO members, officers, or directors for their private benefit. CCPIO shall have no power to issue stock certificates, pay dividends, or inure, upon dissolution or otherwise, to the private benefit of any member.

Section 4 – CCPIO's fiscal year shall be from January 1 through December 31.

Article II – Governing Principles

Section 1 – Mission

CCPIO's mission is to provide a forum for court communicators to exchange ideas, information, and best practices in educating diverse audiences about the value of the courts and the rule of law.

Section 2 – Objective

CCPIO’s objective is to provide members and the courts they serve with support and educational resources to implement or improve effective communications programs and practices.

This objective is achieved by:

- Sponsoring or co-sponsoring meetings, workshops, seminars, projects, courses and other educational programs in person and through remote means;
- Serving as a forum for the discussion of problems and successes inherent in the mission of court communicators;
- Maintaining a robust online public presence;
- Providing members with a secure electronic forum to communicate with one another;
- Sharing information as the membership deems appropriate.

Recognizing that integrated communication of ideas, concepts, policies, and procedures is fundamental to the successful work of any court communications professional or court communications office, CCPIO always shall strive to be in concert with the goals and objectives of the Conference of Chief Justices, Conference of State Court Administrators, and National Center for State Courts.

Section 3 – Nondiscrimination

CCPIO membership shall not be denied to any individual – and participation in any CCPIO activity, including but not limited to service on any committee or in any office or position of responsibility shall not be abridged – on account of race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or age. Membership privileges shall not be otherwise restricted except as provided in the CCPIO constitution.

Section 4 – Bylaws

Bylaws are incorporated within this constitution with the intent that no separate bylaws are necessary or shall be adopted.

Article III – Membership

Section 1 – CCPIO membership shall consist of individuals whose interests are consistent with its objective and who meet the requirements for membership as provided by this article.

Section 2 – Membership Categories

(a) Active Members – Active membership shall be open to all judicial branch staff whose duties encompass essential functions of a court communications professional, regardless of job title. This includes the staff of the National Center for State Courts whose duties encompass the above-mentioned duties. Active members may vote on all CCPIO issues, attend CCPIO meetings, access CCPIO members-only electronic communications channels, and hold CCPIO elective office. To the extent an applicant for active membership is not employed exclusively within a judicial branch or the National Center for State Courts, the board shall have discretion whether to grant membership.

(b) Retired members – Retired members may apply to the CCPIO board of directors to qualify as a retired member. Retired members must be granted a waiver by the board to vote on CCPIO issues, hold elective office or access CCPIO members-only electronic communications channels. Retired members are encouraged to attend CCPIO meetings. Retired members shall be subject to periodic board review to ensure accurate membership classification and to avoid professional conflicts of interest.

(c) Life membership – The CCPIO board may award life memberships to those who have supported the mission of court communications professionals in an exemplary manner or to a founding member who has made substantial contributions to the organization and its mission. Life members may not vote on CCPIO issues or hold CCPIO elective office but, upon board approval, may access CCPIO members-only electronic communications channels. Life members are encouraged to attend CCPIO meetings.

(d) Sponsorships – Sponsorships shall be open, subject to board approval, to any individual, unit of government, corporation, association, or organization that supports CCPIO's mission and wishes to contribute financially to its work. Sponsors do not hold membership privileges but will be recognized by CCPIO as deemed appropriate by the board. The board shall review sponsorships periodically to ensure continued suitability.

Section 3 – Membership Dues. Membership dues and due dates shall be recommended by the CCPIO board and affirmed by members as provided in article VI.

Article IV – Management of CCPIO

Section 1 – CCPIO shall be managed by a board of directors under such rules as the board may determine and subject to the specific conditions of this constitution.

Section 2 – The board shall consist of: president, president-elect, membership director, treasurer, secretary, online content manager, and immediate past president. Each

board member shall have an equal vote. The president may invite former past presidents to participate in board discussions, but such former past presidents shall not have a vote in board business.

Section 3 – Board Duties

(a) President – The president shall have general supervision of CCPIO affairs and shall preside at CCPIO meetings and board meetings. The president shall represent CCPIO with other interested persons and organizations, with assistance from other board members or members at large as designated by the president. The president shall serve as CCPIO spokesperson, except as the president may delegate to another board member, committee chair, or member. All requests by media, legislative bodies, or other organizations for comment, testimony or other information regarding CCPIO shall be directed to the president, who either shall respond directly to such inquires or shall designate another board member or other member to respond on CCPIO's behalf. In either event, responses to inquiries regarding CCPIO affairs shall occur in accordance with commonly accepted standards of professionalism.

(b) President-elect – The president-elect shall assist the president and shall assume the president's duties when the president is unable to perform these duties. The president-elect shall succeed to the position of president upon the completion of the president's term of office, or if the president resigns or is unable to perform the duties of the president.

(c) Membership Director – The membership director shall recruit new members and review membership applications and recommendations to determine whether proposed members meet the membership criteria as established in this constitution. The membership director may recommend to the board other appropriate criteria for membership, which, if approved by the board, shall be subject to approval by CCPIO members as prescribed by this constitution.

(c) Treasurer – The treasurer shall be responsible for CCPIO's financial affairs. The treasurer shall receive all funds paid to CCPIO and, upon board approval, shall approve payment of all bills CCPIO incurs. The treasurer is authorized and empowered to receive real or personal property by devise, bequest, donation, or otherwise; to hold such property absolutely or in trust; to invest, reinvest and manage such property and its income; and to apply such property and income to achieve CCPIO's objective. The treasurer shall prepare an annual report about CCPIO's financial affairs and shall submit for board approval an annual budget of estimated expenditures and receipts.

(d) Secretary – The secretary shall prepare minutes of all CCPIO business meetings and board meetings and shall maintain all of CCPIO's permanent records.

(e) Online Content Manager – The online content manager shall oversee CCPIO’s online presence both for external and internal audiences.

Section 4 – Delegation of Duties. The board is authorized to hire a CCPIO secretariat, a contractual position filled by the National Center for State Courts or other appropriate organization or individual as approved by the board. The board may delegate duties of any of its members to the CCPIO secretariat as the board deems appropriate.

Section 5 – Committees.

(a) The board may establish standing and ad hoc committees as it deems appropriate to help carry out CCPIO’s mission.

(b) Standing committees will include: a committee to help recruit and retain CCPIO members; a committee to develop educational programming tied to CCPIO core competencies; a committee to recommend candidates for CCPIO board positions and committees; and a committee to consider changes to this constitution as appropriate.

(c) All committee members shall be active members of CCPIO pursuant to article III, section 2. All committee chairs must have been active members for at least two years.

Section 6 – Procedural

(a) Elections and Terms – Board members shall be elected as provided in article VI. The candidate elected as president-elect shall serve one term as president-elect, a second term as president and a third term as immediate past president. All other board members are elected to one two-year term but may be elected to successive terms in office. All terms shall be two years, expiring at the end of the calendar year.

(b) Qualifications – The standing committee shall be guided by article II, section 3 and article IV, section 3 in ensuring all proposed candidates are willing and able to serve if elected and meet the following minimum qualifications.

(i) All board members and candidates for the board shall be CCPIO active members as defined in article III or retired members to whom the board has granted a waiver to hold office

(ii) Candidates for president-elect shall have been CCPIO active members for at least four years and shall commit to serving the full six years on the board. Candidates for all other board positions shall have been CCPIO active members for at least two years.

(iii) Each candidate shall provide the standing committee with a written biography and statement of candidacy to be shared with the CCPIO membership.

(c) At least 30 calendar days prior to when the vote for approval or disapproval will be conducted, the names of qualified candidates shall be made available to the CCPIO membership along with the board positions for which the candidates are to be considered.

(d) Vacancies to complete a board member's unexpired term of office shall be filled by nomination of the president and approval of the board.

Section 7 – CCPIO board members, committee chairs and committee members shall serve without pay.

Article V – Amendments to the Constitution

Section 1 – Amendments to this constitution may be proposed at any time (a) at the request of a majority of the board or (b) by written petition of at least two-thirds of CCPIO's active members.

Section 2 – Amendments to this constitution also may be proposed as part of a review of this constitution and any bylaws, which should be completed every four years after the date CCPIO is chartered. The standing committee established pursuant to article IV, section 6 to consider changes to this constitution as appropriate shall conduct this planned review and consider updating the constitution and any bylaws.

Section 3 – The committee shall consider any amendments proposed under sections 1 or 2 and, with the advice and consent of the board, make a report of its recommendations to CCPIO's membership. Proposed amendments shall be submitted to the entire membership at least 30 calendar days prior to the date designated by the board on which the vote for approval or disapproval will be conducted. Elections regarding amendments to this constitution shall be conducted pursuant to article VI.

Section 4 – Amendments shall be approved as provided in article VI.

Article VI – Governance

Section 1 – All questions coming before CCPIO, its governing board and its committees shall be decided by a simple majority vote of the active members in good standing and voting.

Section 2 – Policies and procedures defined by the board require approval by a simple majority vote of the active members in good standing and voting.

Section 3 – Meetings

(a) Business meetings of CCPIO members shall be held at least annually and shall be scheduled by the board. These meetings may be in-person or remote. A quorum to conduct business shall consist of 20 percent of the total active members in good standing when the meeting is held.

(b) The board and each of its duly appointed committees shall meet as needed – but at least annually. Such meetings may be conducted in person or through remote means. A quorum to conduct business shall consist of a simple majority of the total board or committee membership.

(c) All board, committee and member business meetings shall be conducted according to the Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure, except when there is a conflict with this constitution.

Section 4 – Voting

(a) For board and committee meetings, voting may be by voice, “show-of-hands” or electronic means.

(b) For member meetings, voting may be by voice, “show-of-hands” or electronic means under procedures established by the board to promote informed, inclusive and fair voting and may be conducted using ballots. When electronic means are used to vote, the board shall make every feasible effort to assure the security of such votes and their counting.

Section 5 – Elections

(a) All elections – whether for open board positions, to approve amendments to this constitution or for any other CCPIO business – shall be opened for voting for a previously announced period of time during a business meeting. Voting shall conclude and votes shall be tabulated during the business meeting.

(b) If no candidate for a particular board position receives a majority of votes, a runoff election shall be conducted immediately, during the annual business meeting, between the candidates receiving the two highest vote totals.

(c) Once votes are tabulated and winners are determined, election results shall be announced, and newly elected board members shall be introduced.

Article VII – Dissolution

Section 1 – Within 90 days of dissolution, CCPIO’s 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.

*(as reviewed pursuant to article V and amended pursuant to articles V and VI;
amendments approved 15 July 2024)*