

**BYLAWS OF
THE ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON CITIES
RISK MANAGEMENT SERVICE AGENCY
(AWC RMSA)**

Amended June 20, 2024

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PURPOSE AND PREAMBLE

In an effort to provide the cities and towns of Washington State with insurance and risk management services, the Association of Washington Cities Risk Management Service Agency (AWC RMSA) was created with the Association of Washington Cities (AWC), a Washington non-profit corporation organized under 501 (c)(4) as its sponsoring entity. The AWC acts as the Administrative Agent, providing the AWC RMSA with contracted administrative services. Each participating Member joins and maintains membership in the AWC RMSA through the signed Interlocal Agreement.

Except where inconsistent with State Law or the Agency's Interlocal Agreement, these Bylaws provide for the governance and regulation of the AWC RMSA herein referred to as "the Agency".

ARTICLE 1 DEFINITIONS

The following definitions shall govern in these bylaws:

- Section 1. "Administrative Agent" – shall mean the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) which provides the contracted administrative services for the Agency.
- Section 2. "Agency" – shall mean the Association of Washington Cities Risk Management Service Agency (AWC RMSA).
- Section 3. "Annual Meeting" shall mean the business meeting of the entire membership, taking place annually.
- Section 4. "Assessment" – shall mean the moneys paid by the Members to the Agency.
- Section 5. "Board of Directors" or "Board" – shall mean the governing board of the Risk Management Service Agency (RMSA) as duly elected by the Members.
- Section 6. "Chief Executive" – shall mean the mayor, manager, or head official of a Member, who carries the primary authority to make executive level decisions on behalf of the Member.
- Section 7. "Claim" – shall mean demands made against the Agency arising out of occurrences which are within the Agency's Coverage Agreement, as developed by the Board of Directors.
- Section 8. "Coverage Agreement" – shall mean the coverage document established by the Board of Directors and intended to address the general claims operations of the Agency.
- Section 9. "Director" – shall mean one of the seven (7) members of the Board of Directors.
- Section 10. "Member" – shall mean any eligible entity which participates in the Agency, pays the annual Assessment and is signatory to the Agency's Interlocal Agreement.
- Section 11. "Operating Committee" – shall mean the standing advisory committee to the Board of Directors.
- Section 12. "Representative" – shall mean elected members of the Operating Committee or appointed members of a Special Committee.
- Section 13. "Special Committee" – shall mean committees of the Agency created by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE 2 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Section 1. The Agency shall be governed by a seven-member Board of Directors. The statutorily granted

powers of the Agency shall rest with the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall have the power to make all Agency governance decisions, including adopting, amending and repealing resolutions, bylaws and coverages.

Section 2. All seven (7) board positions are elected at-large and shall only be open to elected officials from participating Members.

Section 3. Terms

Each Director shall serve a staggered three-year (3) term of office running from January through December.

Section 4. Nominations and Elections

- a. The process to elect Directors to positions with expiring terms shall begin in September of the year preceding the expiration date of the term, with the term of office commencing January 1 and continuing for three (3) years.
- b. Any elected official of any Member may run for a position on the Board of Directors by submitting a completed application to the Agency.
- c. After all candidate applications have been received, ballots shall be provided to each Member pursuant to a secure process approved by the Agency. The ballot shall be completed by the Chief Executive or designee of the Member and shall be securely returned to the Agency, pursuant to the process approved by the Agency.
- d. When the ballots are returned, the results of the election will be reviewed and confirmed by General Counsel. The results shall remain confidential until the ballots are read into the record at a meeting of the Board of Directors in November or December.

Section 5. Vacancies

- a. Vacancies which occur prior to a term expiring shall be filled from candidates whose names are submitted to the Board of Directors, pursuant to section 4 (b). The remaining Directors shall select candidates whose interests and qualifications add to the vision, mission and values of the Agency.
- b. The Agency will notify all Members of the vacancy and interested candidates shall submit a completed application to the Agency for the remaining Directors' consideration.
- c. Following the appointment to the vacancy, the newly appointed Director will immediately fill the vacant Board position and the Director's term will expire with the term of the vacant position.

Section 6. Participation

- a. Each Director shall make every effort to attend and actively participate in all regular and special meetings of the Board of Directors.
- b. A Director shall be automatically terminated if such Director fails to attend three (3) consecutive meetings of the Board without being excused from attendance by the President of the Board of Directors, as noted in the minutes. Proxies shall not be permitted.
- c. A Director shall lose their position on the Board when the Member which the Director represents withdraws or is terminated by the Board of Directors. If the Member withdraws from the Agency, the loss of voting rights shall be effective from the date of the notice of

withdrawal. If the Member is terminated by the Board of Directors, the loss of voting rights shall be effective from the date of the notice from the Agency to the Member of the termination of membership.

Section 7. Officers of the Board of Directors

- a. The Board shall have a President and a Vice President.
- b. The Board shall elect a President and a Vice President at the last meeting of each odd numbered year. The term of office of the President and Vice President shall be two (2) years.
- c. President or Vice President vacancies which occur prior to a term expiring shall be filled at the next meeting by a majority vote of a quorum of the remaining Directors. Following the appointment to the vacancy, the newly appointed Officer will immediately fill the vacant position and their term will expire with the term of the vacant position.

Section 8. Duties of the President and the Vice President

- a. The President of the Board shall preside over and chair all of the regular and special meetings of the Board of Directors. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall act in the President's place.
- b. The President, and the Vice President while acting in the President's place, shall also retain all voting rights.

Section 9. Special Committees of the Board of Directors

- a. This section shall not apply to the Operating Committee.
- b. The Board of Directors, by resolution adopted by a majority of the Directors in office, may create one or more Special Committees and shall appoint the Representatives thereof.
- c. A Special Committee must have at least five or more Representatives, all who shall serve at the pleasure of the Board of Directors.
- d. At least two Representatives of a Special Committee shall be Directors.
- e. All Special Committees and their Representatives shall be governed by the same requirements regarding meetings, notice and waiver of notice, quorum, and voting requirements as are applicable to the Board of Directors.
- f. The Board of Directors may, by resolution adopted by a majority of the Directors in office, terminate a Special Committee at any time.
- g. Each Special Committee Representative shall be reimbursed by the Agency for all expenses incurred for attending any Special Committee meeting or other Special Committee business in their formal capacity as a Representative of a Special Committee.

ARTICLE 3 CLAIMS SETTLEMENT AUTHORITY

The Board of Directors authorizes the Chief Executive Officer of the Administrative Agent to settle any claims which the Agency has authority to settle with total incurred values of up to \$500,000. The Board of Directors further authorizes the Chief Executive Officer of the Administrative Agent to grant levels of claims settlement authority to other Administrative Agent employees at his/her discretion, provided that these levels do not exceed the Chief Executive Officer's own authority. The Board of Directors will retain settlement authority for claims with total incurred values of \$500,001 and up to the reinsurance limit. Settlement authority shall be granted at meetings that have been noticed to members and posted on the Agency's website per requirements established in the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) Chapter 200-100.

ARTICLE 4 OPERATING COMMITTEE

Section 1. Purpose and Intent

- a. The Administrative Agent shall advise an Operating Committee on certain Agency operations.
- b. The intent of the Operating Committee is to provide recommendations to the Board of Directors relative to operational aspects of the Agency, including but not limited to:
 1. Annual Assessment Rating to be charged to the membership
 2. Insurance purchasing and changes to the Coverage Agreement
 3. Annual Budget and Financial Reports
 4. Claims, Loss Prevention and Membership Services

Section 2. Election and Terms

- a. The Chief Executive of any Member may nominate a non-elected official from that Member as a candidate for the Operating Committee.
- b. Once nominated, a candidate shall submit a completed application expressing their interest and describing their qualifications.
- c. Each Member with a representative present at the Annual Meeting shall elect the Representatives of the Operating Committee, by a majority vote. Each Member present may only be represented by one (1) vote
- d. Each Operating Committee Representative shall serve a two (2) year term of office beginning immediately from the date of election at the Annual Meeting and expiring at the end of the second Annual Meeting following the election. Terms for positions 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9 will expire two (2) years from the date of election at an Annual Meeting occurring in an even-numbered year. Terms for positions 2, 4, 6, and 8 will expire two (2) years from the date of election at an Annual Meeting occurring in an odd-numbered year.

Section 3. Vacancies

- a. Vacancies which occur prior to a term expiring shall be filled from candidates whose names are submitted to the Operating Committee. The remaining Operating Committee Representatives shall select candidates whose interests and qualifications add to the vision, mission and values of the Agency and to the role played by the Operating Committee.
- b. The Agency will notify all Members of the vacancy and the Chief Executive of any Member may nominate a non-elected official from that Member as a candidate for the vacancy on the Operating Committee.

- c. Candidates who have been nominated and with interest in serving on the Operating Committee shall submit a completed application to the Agency for the remaining Representatives' consideration.
- d. Following the appointment to the vacancy, the newly appointed Representative will immediately fill the vacant Operating Committee position and the Representative's term will expire with the term of the vacant position.

Section 4. Participation and Termination

- a. Each Committee Representative shall make every effort to attend and actively participate in all regular and special meetings of the Operating Committee.
- b. Any Operating Committee Representative who is absent from three consecutive Operating Committee meetings, without being excused by the Chair of the Operating Committee may be dismissed from the Operating Committee by a majority vote of the remaining Operating Committee Representatives. Proxies shall not be permitted.
- c. A Representative shall lose their position on the Operating Committee when the Member which the Representative represents withdraws or is terminated by the Board of Directors. If the Member withdraws from the Agency, the loss of voting rights shall be effective from the date of the notice of withdrawal. If the member is terminated by the Board of Directors, the loss of voting rights shall be effective from the date of the notice from the Agency to the Member of the termination of membership.

Section 5. Officers of the Operating Committee

- a. The Operating Committee shall elect two Officers, a Chair and a Vice Chair, to conduct the affairs of the Operating Committee. The Officers of the Operating Committee shall be elected at the first regular meeting of every even-numbered year. The term of office for the Chair and Vice Chair shall be two (2) years.
- b. Chair or Vice Chair vacancies which occur prior to a term expiring shall be filled at the next meeting by a majority vote of a quorum of the remaining Committee members. Following the appointment to the vacancy, the newly appointed Officer will immediately fill the vacant position and their term will expire with the term of the vacant position.

Section 6. Ex-Officio Representatives to the Board of Directors

- a. The Chair or designee of the Operating Committee shall serve as an ex-officio member on the Board of Directors, serving as a liaison between the Operating Committee and the Board of Directors. This representative shall have no voting rights during meetings of the Board of Directors.
- b. The Ex-Officio's term on the Board of Directors shall coincide with their term on the Operating Committee.

**ARTICLE 5
MEETINGS OF THE AGENCY**

Section 1. Regular Meetings and Notice

- a. The Board of Directors, Operating Committee and Special Committees shall establish the times and dates for their regular meetings.

- b. Written notice of each regular meeting shall be given to each Director of the Board of Directors and to each Representative of the Operating Committee and Special Committees of the Board. Notice will also be given to the Washington State Risk Manager's Office, and all other Members in the manner provided by the Revised Code of the State of Washington, Section 42.30, known as the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA). Such notice shall specify:
 - 1. The place and time of such meeting
 - 2. Those matters which are intended to be presented for action by the Board or Committee.
 - 3. Such other matters, if any, as may be expressly required by statute or by the Agency's Bylaws or Interlocal Agreement.
- c. All notices of meetings, and the preliminary agenda for those meetings, shall be posted on the Agency's website per requirements established in the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) Chapter 200-100.

Section 2. Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Board, Operating Committee, or Special Committee for the purpose of taking any action permitted by the statute and the Agency's Interlocal may be called at any time by the Board President, Operating or Special Committee Chair or by not less than ten Members. Upon request in writing that a special meeting of the Board, Operating or Special Committee be called for any proper purpose and directed to the Board President, Vice President, Committee Chair or Vice Chair by any person or persons entitled to call a special meeting of the Board, Operating Committee, or Special Committee, the officer receiving such request shall cause notice to be given to the Members that a meeting will be held at a time requested by the person or persons calling the meeting, not less than 24 hours nor more than 60 days after receipt of the request. Notice of any special meeting of the Board, Operating Committee, or Special Committee shall be given in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Section 3. Quorum

To constitute a valid regular or special meeting, the presence by a simple majority of the Board Directors, Operating Committee or Special Committee Representatives is required.

Directors or Committee Representatives may participate in regular or special meetings by means of a conference by telephone or any similar communications equipment, one which enables all persons participating in the meeting to hear each other during the meeting, as well as that of the public, for meetings which are open to the public. Participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at a meeting and for meeting quorum purposes.

Section 4. Minutes

Any action by the Board, Operating Committee, or Special Committee shall be reported in the minutes of the next formal meeting of the Board, Operating Committee or Special Committee. All minutes shall be posted on the Agency's website.

Section 5. Rules of Operation

All meetings of the Board, Operating Committee or Special Committee shall be conducted with guidance from Roberts Rules of Order, except where such is in conflict with the Open Public Meetings Act, the governing Washington Administrative Code (WAC) Chapter 200-100, the Agency's Interlocal Agreement, or these Bylaws, whereupon the latter shall rule over the Roberts Rules of Order.

ARTICLE 6 INSPECTION OF THE AGENCY RECORDS

The accounting books and records, the list of Members, the Board Directors, and Representatives of the Operating and Special Committees shall be open to the inspection of any Member at any reasonable time. Such inspection by a Member may be made in person or by agent or attorney. The right of inspection includes the right to copy and make extracts at the expense of the party requesting such copies.

ARTICLE 7 AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended or repealed by the affirmative vote of a majority of the entire Board of Directors, except as otherwise provided by the Agency's Interlocal Agreement.

Nothing within these Bylaws shall be considered a waiver of the agreements and rights afforded in the Agency's Interlocal Agreement. Should any inconsistencies between these Bylaws and the Agency's Interlocal Agreement exist, the Agency's Interlocal Agreement shall prevail.

ARTICLE 8 MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Annual Meeting of the Membership.

a. Time of Meeting

The regular Annual Meeting of the Members shall be held at such time and at such location as may be determined by the Board of Directors.

b. Notice

Written notice of the time and location of the Annual Meeting shall be given to all Members in the manner provided by RCW 42.30 and no more than 60 days and not less than 30 days before the date chosen by the Board of Directors. Such notice shall specify:

1. The time and place of the Annual Meeting;
2. Those matters intended to be presented for action by the Members; and
3. Such other matters, if any, as may be expressly required by statute or by the Agency Interlocal Agreement.

Section 2. New Member Entities

- a. The Board of Directors will consider the addition of new Members based on the information and recommendations provided by the Administrative Agent, and may consider input from the Operating Committee. Following an approval vote by the Board of Directors, a new Member shall become an active participating Member and the effective date shall commence on the date identified by the Board of Directors, provided the new Member has completed the following:

1. Adoption of a resolution by the Member's governing body, approving both the membership and the Agency Interlocal Agreement
2. Signing of the Agency Interlocal Agreement;
3. Payment of the assessment as quoted.

- b. It shall not be necessary for existing Members to re-sign or ratify the Agency Interlocal Agreement in order to allow the joining to the Agency Interlocal Agreement of new

Members. Once any Member has signed the Agency Interlocal Agreement, it shall represent that Member's agreement to be bound, in the future, to all terms of the Agency Interlocal Agreement, with any new Member whose membership has been approved by the Board of Directors and who has completed the requirements of membership. Thereafter, the new Member shall be considered a party to the Agency Interlocal Agreement to the same extent as all original Members and for all purposes.

Section 3. Withdrawal of Membership

Members wishing to withdraw from the Agency must comply with all of the requirements specified in the Agency's Interlocal Agreement. Upon receipt of a Member's notice of withdrawal, written confirmation shall be sent to the withdrawing Member, confirming withdrawal from the Agency. The Board may, at any time prior to the effective date of withdrawal, choose to accept a withdrawn Member's rescission of their notice of withdrawal, allowing the Member to remain a Member of the Agency.

**ARTICLE 9
COVERAGE DETERMINATION AND APPEAL**

Section 1. Coverage Determination and Appeal

It shall be the duty and responsibility of the Administrative Agent, acting on behalf of the Agency, to make all initial determinations regarding rights to coverage and protections provided in the Coverage Agreement. Such determinations shall be made according to the procedures set forth in this article, and subject to the right of appeal set forth in this article.

- a. Upon receipt of notice of a Summons and Complaint against a Member or person claiming coverage or protection rights under the Coverage Agreement, the Administrative Agent shall, within a reasonable time after receipt of said notice, make a determination of any issue of coverage or right to protection afforded a Member or person.
- b. Upon making a determination of coverage or right to protection under the Coverage Agreement, the Administrative Agent shall notify the affected Member and/or person claiming coverage or protection of his or her determination in writing.
- c. The written determination of coverage to be prepared by the Administrative Agent shall advise the affected Member and/or person of one or more of the following:
 1. Whether the Agency will provide the affected Member and/or person legal counsel for defense of the Summons and Complaint.
 2. Whether the Agency is reserving any rights to make subsequent determinations regarding coverages or protections to be afforded the affected Member and/or person.
 3. Whether the Agency is denying rights to coverage or protection to the affected Member and/or person under the Coverage Agreement for the claims made in the Summons and Complaint under review. In the event that coverage for a claim or suit under the Coverage Agreement is denied to an Agency Member, the Administrative Agent shall inform the Member in writing of the appeal process of these Bylaws.
- d. In the event that the Administrative Agent determines that the Agency should reserve its rights to make subsequent determinations regarding coverages or protections to the Member and/or person, or; determine that coverages or protections should be denied to a Member and/or person, the written notice of such a determination shall also state the reasons for any such reservation of rights or denial of rights to coverage or protections.
- e. In the event that a final determination of a Member's or person's rights to coverages or

protections under the Coverage Agreement cannot be made by the Administrative Agent until after the facts of the Summons and Complaint are determined in a trial in a court of law or other legal forum, it shall be the duty and responsibility of the Administrative Agent to make a determination of any undetermined issue of coverage or protection within a reasonable time following the final judgment of the court or other legal forum responsible for determining the facts of the Summons and Complaint. Such a determination shall be made in writing to the affected Member and/or person and shall contain such necessary information as provided for in this Article.

- f. All written determinations by the Administrative Agent regarding coverages or protections afforded to a Member and/or person named as a defendant in a Summons and Complaint shall be deemed final and binding unless an aggrieved Member and/or aggrieved person files a timely Notice of Appeal of the decision to the Board of Directors in the manner specified in this Article.
- g. The Administrative Agent shall not be obligated to make any determinations of coverages or protections to be afforded by the Agency to a Member and/or person until a Summons and Complaint has been served upon the affected Member and/or person and until the Administrative Agent has had notice thereof. However, the Administrative Agent may, at their discretion, issue tentative written determinations of coverage or protection before a Summons and Complaint has been filed and/or served upon the Member, when it would appear to be in the best interest of the Agency to make such a tentative and advisory determination.

In the event the Administrative Agent decides to make a tentative determination of coverage or protection, and following receipt by the Administrative Agent of a Summons and Complaint, he or she shall remain obligated to provide a subsequent final written determination of coverage or protection issues, as provided in Sections 1 (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), and (f) of this Article.

Section 2. Appeal

Any written determination made by the Administrative Agent pursuant to Section 1. (c) and (d) of this Article denying coverages or protections of the Coverage Agreement to a Member and/or affected person shall be final, as provided in Section (f) of this Article, unless the procedures for Appeal, provided hereafter, are followed by the Member and/or person affected by the denial of coverage or protection. The following procedures for Appeal shall apply in all cases.

- a. Any Member or person aggrieved by the Administrative Agent's written determination to deny coverages or protections under the Coverage Agreement may appeal the decision of the Administrative Agent to the Board of Directors. The Appeal must be initiated by the aggrieved Member or person within thirty (30) days following receipt by the aggrieved Member or person, of the Administrative Agent's written determination denying coverage or protection. If an Appeal is not initiated within thirty (30) days, as provided herein, the Member or person shall be deemed to have waived any further right to appeal the decision of the Administrative Agent.
- b. An Appeal is deemed initiated for purposes of this Article when the aggrieved Member or person, or their legal representatives, serves a written Notice of Appeal upon the Administrative Agent or upon the President of the Board of Directors. The written Notice of Appeal shall include the following information:
 - 1. The name of the aggrieved Member or person initiating the Appeal.
 - 2. A brief statement of facts identifying what determination of the Administrative Agent is being appealed and the reasons why the party appealing feels the decision of the Administrative Agent was incorrect. (A copy of the Administrative Agent's written

determination may be attached by reference to the Notice of Appeal.)

3. The signature of the person or authorized representative of the member initiating the Appeal or the signature of the appealing party's legal representative.
- c. Within thirty (30) days after an Appeal has been initiated, a meeting of the Board of Directors shall be convened by the President of the Board of Directors to hear the Appeal. Notice of the date set for hearing of the Appeal by the Board of Directors shall be sent to the appealing party not later than fifteen (15) days prior to the date set for the hearing. The President of the Board of Directors shall have the authority to set hearing dates for the Appeal and to grant a continuance of the hearing date where good cause for continuance is shown.
- d. The hearing by the Board of Directors may occur when a quorum of the Board of Directors, pursuant to these Bylaws, is present. Voting by the Board of Directors and the procedures for the meeting of the Board of Directors on the Appeal hearing shall be pursuant to these Bylaws. If a Director is an elected official off the Member initiating an Appeal, then the Director shall abstain from participation and from voting on any aspect of the appeal.
- e. The hearing of the Board of Directors on the Appeal shall proceed as follows:
 1. The President of the Board of Directors shall administer the hearing and make all necessary procedural rulings during the hearing.
 2. The appealing party or his or her legal representatives, if any, shall proceed first, explaining the reasons why the party is aggrieved by the decision of the Administrative Agent. The appealing party shall present to the Board of Directors all relevant evidence, testimony, argument and legal authority to support his or her appeal to the Board of Directors. Thereafter, the Administrative Agent and/or the counsel to the Agency may present all relevant evidence, testimony, argument and legal authority in opposition to the appealing party's position. The Board of Directors shall allow one opportunity for rebuttal evidence and argument to each side thereafter.
 3. Following the presentation of evidence, testimony, argument, and legal authority, the Board of Directors may retire into executive session to discuss its consideration of the Appeal. Thereafter, the Board of Directors shall reconvene in public session to consider and vote on any motion made to determine the appeal. The Board of Directors may vote to uphold the decision of the Administrative Agent or to modify or reverse the decision of the Administrative Agent. The decision of the Board shall be reduced to writing and signed by the President of the Board of Directors and a copy thereof sent to the appealing party within fourteen (14) days following the final decision of the Board of Directors.
 4. The President of the Board of Directors may adjourn and reconvene any hearing on an appeal as may be necessary to preserve a fair hearing.
- f. A final decision of the Board of Directors determining an Appeal and not granting the appealing party the full relief sought shall not preclude the appealing party from seeking further, de novo, review of the Administrative Agent's determination and/or the Board of Directors determination in any other legal forum or court. However, no member or person claiming coverage or protection under the Coverage Agreement may maintain any lawsuit or complaint against the Agency alleging any improper or incorrect denial of coverage or protections afforded to the member or person under the Coverage Agreement unless the member or person has first complied with all of the requirements of these Bylaws. Exhaustion of the Appeal process shall be a condition precedent to any subsequent legal action or suit by an aggrieved member or person.

ARTICLE 10
CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND APPEARANCE OF FAIRNESS

All Directors and Committee Representatives recognize that the Agency is a public body subject to state law regarding conflict of interest provisions and the guidelines of the appearance of fairness doctrine. Should situations arise where conflicts of interest or appearance of fairness issues are in question; the affected Director or Representative shall observe the advice of the Agency's legal counsel in a manner consistent with said provisions and guidelines. If an affected Director or Representative disagrees with the advice of the Agency's legal counsel, the Board of Directors may vote by majority to excuse a Director or Representative from a portion, or all of any executive session where a matter of potential legal conflict between the Agency and the Director, Representative, Member or person will be discussed.