

By-law and Statutes of The Vietnamese Buddhist Youth Association in the United States of America

I. Introduction

The Vietnamese Buddhist Youth Association (VBYA) is an association that educates the Youths with its clear objective and policy. Built on the most basic education foundation and principles, it combines methodologies from both Western and Eastern education. Therefore, it has By-law (Regulations) and Statutes (Rules) with concrete objectives:

1. Define the hierarchy structure of the organization.
2. Define the members' duties and authorities (competence) from the National, Regional, to the Local levels (units).
3. Form a procedure and an education curriculum, along with the activities for the association.
4. Define the fundamental rules and regulations for the administration and disciplines of the association.

II. Tenor

A. BY-LAW

There are 5 chapters and 20 articles in the By-Law of the VBYA as follow:

CHAPTER ONE

APPELLATION - OBJECTIVE - PRECEPT (PRINCIPLE) - SLOGAN - RULES

Article 1 - Appellation:

The Vietnamese Buddhist Youth Association in the United States of America.

Article 2 - Objective:

- To train the youths to become legitimate Buddhists.
- To contribute in the constructions of the society with the spirit of Buddhism.

Article 3 - Precept (Principle):

- Compassion, Wisdom, Courage for the association, leaders, young adults, and teenagers.
- Harmony, Trust, and Joy for pre-teens (Oanh Vu).

Article 4 - Slogan:

- Diligence for the association, leaders, young adults, and teenagers.
- Good for pre-teens (Oanh Vu)

Article 5 - Law:

- There are 5 oaths for leaders, young adults, and teenagers.
- There are 3 oaths for pre-teens (Oanh Vu).

CHAPTER 2

ORGANIZATION - MISSION - COMMUNICATION - CONVENTION (CONFERENCE) - FINANCE

Article 6 - Organization:

This article defines the formation of the organization, the components of a leader, National Board of Directors, Regional Board of Directors, Local Unit Board of Directors, Former Leaders and Members Division, Sponsors Group, and Board of Religious Advisors (Cố Vấn Giáo Hạnh). It also defines the conditions/requirements to become youth members or youth leaders.

Article 7 - Mission and Communication:

Defines mission of the National Board of Directors, Regional Board of Directors, and of the local Units. Establish the communication protocol of each hierarchy level.

Article 8 - Appellation for Local Unit:

The general appellation is **The Buddhist Youth Association (BYA)**; the Local Unit's appellation is chosen by the Local Unit's Board of Directors then submits to the Regional Board and then the Regional Board will report to the National Board of Directors.

Example: General appellation: The Buddhist Youth Association

Specific appellation: Tu Dam

Must be recognized as: The Tu Dam Buddhist Youth Association

Article 9 - Convention (Conference):

* For the National Board of Directors:

National convention: Once every 4 years

Annually meeting: Once a year

In case of emergencies, the National Board of Directors might convene an Irregular Meeting or Limited Convention.

* For the Regional Board of Directors:

Regional convention: Once every 4 years - Prepare for the National Convention.

Annually meeting: Once a year

In case of emergencies, the Regional Board of Directors might convene an Irregular Meeting or Limited Convention within the Regional Echelon.

* For Local Unit: Board of Directors Meeting:

Once per month to review last month tasks and to define or form a program for next month activities.

Once every 3 months (in lieu of the monthly meeting) to define a program for that quarter's activities.

Annually meeting (in lieu of the monthly or the quarterly meeting): Once per year to go over the activities within that year and prepare for Unit's Anniversary.

Article 10 - Finance:

Defines the terms of how to generate revenue and fundraising for The National, Regional, and Local Unit.

CHAPTER 3

EMBLEM, OFFICIAL SONG, UNIFORM

Article 11 - Emblem:

White lotus with 8 petals on a green background - enclosed in a white circle.

Article 12 - The Official Song:
Sen Trang (White Lotus)

Article 13 - Uniform:
Gray shirt, Navy blue pants, and white pants for the ladies' ceremony uniform.

CHAPTER 4

CONDITIONS OF HOW TO FORM A LOCAL UNIT AND HOW TO BECOME AN OFFICIAL MEMBER - SEAL - MEMBER ID - DISCIPLINE - DISBANDED

Article 14 - Conditions for Forming:

Define a few conditions and rules of how to form a Local Unit Buddhist Youth Association. Mainly, each local unit must have at least two leaders who have gone through a leader training camp.

Article 15 - Seal:

National, Regional, and Local - the National Board selects the pattern and form of the seal.

Article 16 - Conditions for Joining:

- For members from age 7 to 17, the legal guardian must sign the application from the Local Unit. For members from age 18 and above the application must be referred by at least 2 other official members.
- After 3 months of joining the association with good behavior and good morality that person will be allowed to make a vow and wear the white lotus emblem to become an official member.

Article 17 - Membership ID card:

For all official members in the US - the National Board selects the pattern.

Article 18 - Discipline:

The Local Unit Board of Directors will follow the statutes (rules) to form the rules for that individual Local Unit.

Article 19 - Ceasing Operation and Disbanding:

This article defines the items for the process of CEASING OPERATION and DISBANDING of a Local Unit, Region, or National.

CHAPTER 5

AMENDING THE BY-LAW

Article 20 - Amendments of the BY-LAW must be presented and voted on during the National Convention.



B. Statute/Rule

There are 5 chapters, 22 items, and 63 articles in the Statute of the VBYA as follow:

INTRODUCTION CHAPTER

MISSION OF THE LEADERS TO AFFIRM THE STANDPOINT OF THE VIETNAMESE BUDDHIST YOUTH ASSOCIATION IN THE UNITED STATES

CHAPTER 1

LEADERS OF THE VIETNAMESE BUDDHIST YOUTH ASSOCIATION IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Item I: Leader

Article 1 - The Identification: Leaders of the Buddhist Youth Association (BYA) is a key component, the core of the Buddhist Youth Association; they have managed Units and local Chapter, or served as the Regional and/or National Board members.

Article 2 - Official Leader: The following members to be recognized as the official Leaders of the Buddhist Youth Association:

- a.- BYA Originated from Teens Division, who are 18 years or older, have passed So-Thien level and certified from Anoma - NiLien training camp; or
- b.- BYA Originated from Young Adults Division, who are 19 years or older, have participated in the Unit over a year; or
- c.- Adolescent, who are 20 years or older, are invited by BYA or introduced by two Leaders.

All must have:

- a.- Passed a Leader's Study Program - Kien rank.
- b.- Completed and obtained the Loc Uyen training camp certification.
- c.- Taken the 3 Refuges, 5 Precepts, and vowed to be Leaders.

Article 3 - Leaders have five degrees: Beginning, Preparation, Trust, Advance, and Courage

Item II: Beginning Degree

Article 4 - includes 4 conditions to be considered, categorized into the Beginning Degree

- a.- At least a year after vowing date of being Official Leaders.
- b.- Twenty years of age or older
- c.- Have right Morality and Behavior, as well as Mental Sense and Good Will to serve the Association.
- d.- Passed a Leader's Study Program - Kien rank and has the Loc Uyen training camp certification.

Article 5 - Suggested and recommended by local BYA - decided and set up a Degree acceptance ceremony by regional Board of Directors.

Item III: Preparation Degree

Article 6 - includes 4 conditions to be considered, categorized into the Preparation Degree

- a.- Being Official Leader for over 3 years in the Beginning Degree.
- b.- Twenty-four years of age or older
- c.- Have right Morality and Behavior, as well as Mental Sense and Good Will to serve the Association.
- d.- Passed a Leader's Study Program - Tri rank and has the A Duc training camp level I certification.

Article 7 – Suggested and recommended by local BYA - decided and set up a Degree acceptance ceremony by regional Board of Directors.

Item IV: Trust Degree

Article 8 - includes 4 conditions to be considered, categorized into the Trust Degree

- a- Being Official Leader for over 6 years in the Preparation Degree.
- b- At least thirty years of age
- c- Have right Morality and Behavior, as well as Mental Sense and Good Will to serve Association.
- d- Passed a Leader's Study Program - Dinh rank and has the Huyen Trang training camp level II Certification.

Article 9 - Suggested and recommended by local BYA - considered, discussed, and suggested to National Board of Directors by Regional Board of Directors. National Board of Directors issues approval. Regional Board of Directors sets up a Degree acceptance ceremony.

Item V: Advance Degree

Article 10 - includes 4 conditions to be considered, categorized into the Advance Degree

- a- Being Leader for over 10 years in the Trust Degree, with at least forty years of age and twenty years of being Leaders.
- b- Regional or National Board member
- c- Have right Morality and Behavior, as well as Mental Sense and Good Will to serve Association.
- d- Passed a Leader's Study Program - Luc rank and has the Van Hanh training camp level III Certification.

Article 11 - Considered, discussed, and suggested to National Board of Directors by Board of Leaders of Regional Board of Directors. National Board of Directors issues approval and sets up a Degree acceptance ceremony.

Item VI: Courage Degree

Article 12 - includes 3 conditions to be considered, categorized into the Courage Degree

- a- Being Leader for 15 years in the Advance Degree, with at least fifty-five years of age and thirty-five years of being Leaders
- b- Have right Morality and Behavior, have significant achievements to Buddhist Youth Association.
- c- Presented a thesis, approved by the Institute for the Dissemination of the Dharma Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam, or a project, approved by Board of Religious Advisors of The Vietnamese Buddhist Youth Association in the United States of America. (This board is invited By Board of Guidance and Supervising Committee.)

Article 13 - Considered, discussed, and suggested by the Board of National Advance-Degree Leaders. A Board of Courage-Degree Leaders and Board of Guidance and Supervising Committee of the Vietnamese Buddhist Youth Association in the United States of America consider all discussion and suggestion of the

Board of National Advance-Degree Leaders. National Board of Directors issue approval with review of Board of Guidance and Supervising Committee of the Vietnamese Buddhist Youth Association in the United States of America - categorized into the Courage Degree Leaders; and set up a Degree acceptance ceremony.

CHAPTER 2

RESPONSIBILITY - MISSION - COMPETENCY

Item VII: Beginning Degree

Article 14 and 15 - To appoint responsibility and competency for a leader with Beginning Degree.

Item VIII: Preparation Degree

Article 16 and 17 - To appoint responsibility and competency for a leader with Preparation Degree.

Item IX: Trust Degree

Article 18 and 19 - To appoint responsibility and competency for a leader with Trust Degree.

Item X: Advance Degree

Article 20 and 21 - To appoint responsibility and competency for a leader with Advance Degree.

Item XI: Courage Degree

Article 22 and 23 - To appoint responsibility and competency for a leader with Courage Degree.

CHAPTER 3

TRAINING

Item XII: General

Article 24 - Objective and Name of all Leader's Study Programs

- a.- Kien rank - 1 year
- b.- Tri rank - 2 years
- c.- Dinh rank - 3 years
- d.- Luc rank - 4 years

Article 25 - Objective and Name of all training camps

- a.- Training camp Beginning level names: Loc Uyen
- b.- Training camp level I names: A Duc
- c.- Training camp level II names: Huyen Trang
- d.- Training camp level III names: Van Hanh

Article 26 - Appoint members who are in charge and responsible for organizing those study programs and training camps.

- a.- Regional Board of Directors is responsible for:
 - 1.- Study program: Kien and Tri rank

- 2.- Training camp: Loc Uyen - Beginning level and A Duc - level I
- b.- National Board of Directors is responsible for:
 - 1.- Study program: Dinh and Luc rank
 - 2.- Training camp: Huyen Trang - level II and Van Hanh - level III

Item XIII: Training camp Loc Uyen - Beginning level

- Article 27 - Objective
- Article 28 - Participating qualification
- Article 29 - Term + training camp time
- Article 30 - Condition of being certified
- Article 31 - Timeframe of issuing a certificate and certified decision
- Article 32 - Camp rules

Item XIV: Training camp A Duc - Level I

- Article 33 - Objective
- Article 34 - Participating qualification
- Article 35 - Term + training camp time
- Article 36 - Condition of being certified
- Article 37 - Timeframe of issuing a certificate and certified decision
- Article 38 - Camp rules

Item XV: Training camp Huyen Trang - Level II

- Article 39 - Objective
- Article 40 - Participating qualification
- Article 41 - Term + training camp time
- Article 42 - Condition of being certified
- Article 43 - Timeframe of issuing a certificate and certified decision
- Article 44 - Camp rules

Item XVI: Training camp Van Hanh - Level III

- Article 45 - Objective
- Article 46 - Participating qualification
- Article 47 - Term + training camp time
- Article 48 - Condition of being certified
- Article 49 - Camp rules

CHAPTER 4

LEADERS MANAGEMENT

Item XVII: Leaders Management Committee:

- Article 50 - Duty of Leaders Management Committee

Item XVIII: National Leaders Management Committee:

- Article 51 - Define the members

Article 52 - Qualifications
Article 53 - Term
Article 54 - Management

Item XIX: Regional Leaders Management Committee:

Article 55 - Define the members
Article 56 - Management
Article 57 - Term

Item XX: Leaders Internal Affairs Department:

Article 58 - Objective of creating the Internal Affairs Department, and operating procedures.
Article 59 - Internal Affairs Department: Duty and Competency
Article 60 - Jurisdiction

Item XXI: Leaders Permanent Resignation or Temporary Resignation and Resuming from Resignation:

Article 61 - Regulation on permanent resignation or temporary resignation
Article 62 - Regulation on resuming from resignation

CHAPTER 5

SUMMING UP

Item XXII: Modification and Summing Up

Article 63 - Any modification on Statute/Rule must be decided by National Leadership Convention of The Vietnamese Buddhist Youth Association in the United States of America.

