



Student Animal Legal Defense Fund Sample Constitution and By-Laws

Important Note: *These sample by-laws are meant to be used as an example or template. Feel free to modify them to suit your chapter's or law school's requirements (or write your own). Requirements page in this packet. Required elements are included and noted in this template.*

Article One. Name.

(The Animal Legal Defense Fund [ALDF] requires that affiliated chapters incorporate the name "Student Animal Legal Defense Fund." You can incorporate it here. Ex.: _____ Law School Student Animal Legal Defense Fund, or Student Animal Legal Defense Fund of _____ Law School.)

The name of this organization shall be _____ Law School Student Animal Legal Defense Fund (hereinafter referred to as _____ Law School SALDF).

Article Two. Purpose.

The _____ Law School SALDF is dedicated to providing a forum for education, advocacy, and scholarship aimed at protecting the lives and advancing the interests of animals through the legal system, and raising the profile of the field of animal law. *(This paragraph meets the required element. The following paragraph is an example of some other elements chapters have added to their purpose statement.)*

The _____ Law School SALDF is dedicated to the goals of educating the law school and surrounding community about forms of institutionalized animal abuse, and engaging in projects that combat that abuse. The _____ Law School SALDF is equally dedicated to protecting the lives and advancing the interests of animals through the legal system. The activities of _____ Law School SALDF shall include, but not be limited to: hosting speakers, debates, and conferences on current issues in animal rights and animal welfare law; carrying out research projects for lawyers and organizations promoting animal welfare and animal rights litigation; networking with students at other law schools, colleges, universities, and high schools; conducting

educational events such as information tables and video screenings on pertinent issues; and advocating on behalf of vegetarian/vegan students within our law school.

Article Three. Criteria for Membership.

Membership in _____ Law School SALDF shall be open to all students currently enrolled in _____ Law School, regardless of gender, race, creed, age, color, national origin, physical disability, or sexual orientation. Individual membership in the Animal Legal Defense Fund is encouraged but not required for all _____ Law School SALDF members.

Article Four. Officers.

(In this section you can designate titles and roles for officers, if any, of your SALDF chapter. You may also wish to add a list of each officer's duties within the group. The only requirement for SALDF membership in this regard is that there always be a designated contact person responsible for communicating with ALDF.)

The Officers of _____ Law School SALDF shall be _____. The _____ will be responsible for communicating with the designated contact person at the Animal Legal Defense Fund.

Qualifications for persons who are eligible to serve as officers of _____ Law School SALDF are as follows:

- registration as a student at _____ Law School,
- membership in _____ Law School SALDF,
- attendance at a minimum of two meetings of _____ Law School SALDF,
- agreement to uphold the goals and purposes of _____ Law School SALDF, and to comply with the mission and goals of the Animal Legal Defense Fund.

In the event that an officer, for whatever reason, expected or unexpected, is unable to continue in the capacity of their office, the vacated office shall be filled within two weeks.

Article Five. Elections.

Officers shall be elected each school year by a majority vote of the membership of _____ Law School SALDF, shall serve a term of one year, and may be reelected. In the event that no candidate attracts the requisite number of votes for election, a run-off shall be held between the two candidates with the highest number of votes.

Students interested in serving as officers shall so inform the _____ Law School SALDF no later than one week prior to the election. In electing officers, each member shall have one vote.

Article Six. Meetings.

Regular meetings of _____ Law School SALDF shall be held at least once each semester. Decisions at meetings shall be made by a majority of the members, with every present party agreeing to, dissenting to, or abstaining from every action there decided. A necessary quorum for all decisions shall be at least 51% of all members present at the meeting and must include at least one officer.

Special meetings of _____ Law School SALDF may be called by any number of members, who shall inform the *(insert title of organization officer in charge here)* or the entire membership at least one week prior to the date of the proposed meeting.

Article Seven. Affiliation with the Animal Legal Defense Fund.

(This is a required element of the bylaws. ALDF's intention is to ensure that affiliated student chapters are acting in the interests of protecting animals, that organizational activities are consistent with ALDF's mission, and that ALDF is not directly or indirectly involved in any litigation initiated by a student chapter, or implicated in any policy positions taken, that have not been specifically endorsed/approved by ALDF. It is not our intention to burden chapters with restrictions, but to strike a balance between flexibility for chapters to engage in whatever animal issues appeal to it and protecting ALDF's name and reputation. We encourage questions and feedback from students about this as the relationship between ALDF and SALDF chapters is important to us.)

Activities of the _____ Law School SALDF shall at all times be consistent with the mission of the Animal Legal Defense Fund (hereinafter "ALDF"). No litigation will be initiated, endorsed, or supported in the name of the _____ Law School SALDF, without prior approval of ALDF. All public policy positions taken by the _____ Law School SALDF shall be consistent with the mission of ALDF: "to protect the lives and advance the interests of animals." The _____ Law School SALDF will not purport to speak for ALDF or commit it to any position on any matter of public policy or law on behalf of ALDF without ALDF's prior written consent.

Article Eight. Amendments.

Any two current members shall be entitled to propose amendments. Proposed amendments shall be consistent with these By-Laws, and shall be communicated to the ALDF and all current SALDF officers, who shall schedule a meeting for the purpose of approving these amendments. If the date of submission of these amendments is near the date of a regular or special business meeting, then no additional meeting need be scheduled. A two-thirds majority of all chapter members must vote on any amendments to this constitution.