



By-Laws

By-Laws

Name

Leather Azimuth

Mission Statement

To build pride, unity, and respect for a healthy community that conducts itself to the highest standards by providing educational opportunities, mentorship, service, and demonstrating tolerance and acceptance.

Core Values

Definitions of the core values are as follows:

- I. Loyalty: Bearing allegiance and faith in someone or something, and devoting yourself to that end.
- II. Duty: Fulfilling the obligations you make, or those that are placed upon you. Accomplishing tasks both individually and as part of a team.
- III. Respect: Treating others as they should be treated. Affording others the station in life that they have earned by seniority, diligence, and acquisition of life skills.
- IV. Service: To be helpful and useful to the group, the community, and others.
- V. Honor: Acting, carrying out, and living the values of respect, duty, loyalty, service, integrity and courage in all that you do.
- VI. Integrity: Doing what is right, both legally and morally.
- VII. Courage: Facing fear, adversity, and dangers with steadfast resolve. To stand up for people, acting in accordance with one's beliefs, especially in spite of criticism.
- VIII. Honesty: Fairness and straightforwardness of conduct, adherence to facts, sincerity.
- IX. Perseverance: Continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failure, or opposition: Steadfastness.

Code of Conduct

- We hold ourselves to a high standard. To that end, we have instituted a code of conduct to help guide members in their pursuit of becoming the best people they can be.
- To accomplish our mission, we strive to bring together an assemblage of responsible and active people who engage in events, activities and form relationships through networking. It stands that being one who is a member and displays the colors of the organization, should be held to a higher standard than those who do not subscribe to its core values.
- We seek people of moral character who hold these values as important in their dealings with others. It is what sets us apart from other organizations, regardless of focus.
- Members are expected to conduct themselves, at all times, in a manner that will reflect well upon the organization, themselves, during public and private events, or when wearing or displaying the club's colors. Infringements, transgressions, or violations may result in the termination of membership and rights afforded by the club.
- We seek to have people of substance and stature as contributing members, rather than people whose only purpose in membership is access to Bondage, Discipline, Dominance/Submission, Sadism/Masochism (BDSM) play. Meaningful BDSM activities are

essential to what makes us tick, but when they are coupled with practiced values and educationally skill-based events, it makes for a more balanced and satisfying experience for members.

- We have zero tolerance for illicit drug usage, or lack of sobriety, beyond social levels of drinking. When engaged in BDSM activities, members will be sober. If a member is not fit for BDSM activities they will be expected to excuse themselves from engaging in such activities to protect all involved.
- We strive to be an assemblage of quality people, whose professional and personal lives are beyond reproach, and who hold dear the intimate and erotic nature of the Leather Lifestyle and well-practiced BDSM play.

Dress Code

The roots of the Leather community lie many decades behind us, and are credited to the returning veterans of World War II. Those men had inclinations, not unlike our own, to wear leather as a sign of being socially different than the average man. Many were bikers who congregated in oft-hidden and dimly-lit bars, where their orientation and fetishes were not discoverable by general society. As we entered the 1960s and 70s, being gay became a social issue, reaching critical mass with the Stonewall Riot of 1969. Society was forced to acknowledge that there were men and women in the world; whose needs, views, practices, and orientations were not main-stream.

Wearing leather became more an outward symbol of pride and belonging to a then, still young, but fervent movement to flag others that we were different, and wished to be acknowledged. Admission to most leather bars and facilities required the entrant to be wearing leather in one form or another- boots, chaps, pants, jacket, vest, etcetera. The clientele made the medium rich with the intoxicating look and scent of animal hide on men. It was the way we all thought it would be when each of us first gave the lifestyle consideration and it was good. So it is, in this age of instant gratification, and the collapsing respect for the sheer historical and psychological effects of porting and displaying leather in community spaces.

The dress code will be as follows:

When engaged in a club-sponsored activity, a member will be wearing at least one article of leather in order to display their personal pride in who they are and what they do. The member will be wearing one or more of the following items:

Boots (black preferably)	Harnesses
Leather pants	Gloves
Leather kilt	Cuff
Leather skirt	Collar
Leather chaps	Belt
Leather shirt	Leather shorts
Leather jacket	Leather hats
Leather vest (with colors preferably)	Leather caps

Members shall dress in a manner to positively and professionally represent the group to promote the leather lifestyle. **It is not the leather that makes the person; it is the person that makes the leather.**

It is encouraged that members integrate and wear leather in their daily lives; as a sign of pride in whom and what we are.

We reserve the right to not admit a member to a club activity if they are not in compliance with the above-written dress code.

Patch Requirements

- X. The Leather Azimuth patch shall be worn on the center back of members' choice of garment, in either an eight-inch (8") or ten-inch (10") patch.
- XI. The Leather Azimuth Founding Member patch, for the founding members only, may be worn over the heart.
- XII. Additional patches may be worn as follows:
 - a. The American Flag may be worn by any member. It shall always be the top patch on the front left side.
 - b. Support patches for other leather or lifestyle organizations may be worn by any member on the front lower left side.
 - c. Family patches may be worn by any member on the front lower right side.
 - d. Run pins may be worn by any member.
 - e. All other patches and insignia shall be approved by a quorum of the board.
- XIII. Patches, insignia, logos, intellectual property, technology-related creations, and other club related paraphernalia are club property and will be returned to the club when membership is terminated.
- XIV. Upon a member's death, the patch may be retained by the family but not worn.

Voting

- I. In order to vote, you must be a full member in good standing within the organization.
- II. Absentee voting may be electronically submitted.
- III. A quorum of the eligible voters shall be required.
- IV. All decisions will be made by a 75% approval of the membership in attendance, with a quorum of attendance being required.

Quorum Definition

- I. A quorum is defined as 75% of active membership. A quorum can be attained by electronic means. A quorum is established at call to order.

Officers

- II. The officers of the club will be a President, a Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Communication Director.
- III. The officers will be directors.
- IV. Officers and board will perform the duties in this section:
 - a. **Board Duties:**
 - i. Authorization Fund Disbursement
 - Board Approved Expenditure: The board may approve expenditures up to 25% of available non-committed funds or

\$500 whichever is less. Larger amounts require approval by quorum of membership vote.

b. **President:**

- i. The President shall preside over the meetings of the membership.
- ii. The President shall call regular meetings, board meetings and the annual meeting in accordance with the by-laws, and chair the above meetings.
- iii. The President shall call board meetings and determines who may attend board meetings in addition to the board. (membership, sponsored, petitioners, public, etcetera.)
- iv. The President will serve as the most visible representative of the organization, and is the official representative of the organization at outside functions and to other groups or clubs.
- v. The President shall actively seek out new opportunities and connections for the organization, both within and external to the Leather community.
- vi. The President will be Master of Ceremony.
- vii. The President will help to keep board members on track.
- viii. The President can sign legal documents on behalf of the organization.
- ix. The President shall facilitate forward movement of organization.
- x. The President shall promote mission and values of organization.
- xi. The President will be the face of organization including interacting with other organizations, the kink and vanilla communities, and the media when needed. i.e.: primary spokesperson, public relations, outreach.

c. **Vice President:**

- i. Perform the duties of the President in the absence of the President.
- ii. The Vice President acts as an additional visible representative of the organization.
- iii. In case the President is absent or unable to perform their duties, the Vice President shall assume the duties of the President.
- iv. The Vice President is responsible for overseeing special committees or projects or will assign a project leader who will report the Vice President.
- v. The Vice President, when not acting in the role of President, shall act as Sergeant-of-arms by keeping meetings on time and on agenda, and to maintain order.
- vi. The Vice President shall enforce by-laws in meetings.

d. **Secretary:**

- i. The Secretary shall keep all official records.
- ii. The Secretary shall keep track of the club's legal documents.
- iii. The Secretary shall take minutes at all meetings, writing and/or delegating action regarding all routine correspondence.
- iv. The Secretary shall maintain records of all non-financial Leather Azimuth business.
- v. The Secretary is responsible for recording and tracking attendance of members at meetings.
- vi. The Secretary is responsible for the creation of voting ballots for the annual meeting.

- vii. The Secretary is responsible for counting and tallying votes during the meetings.
- viii. The Secretary is responsible for the creation of the new member packets, including, but not limited to, the signature sheet.
- ix. The Secretary is responsible for the maintaining the membership roster and mailing list.
- x. The Secretary is responsible for maintaining the new member applications and verifying ID/age.

e. Treasurer:

- i. Receive and disburse all funds.
- ii. File all necessary paperwork with government agencies.
- iii. The Treasurer maintains the inventory of accountable property for the organization.
- iv. The Treasurer maintains all financial records and accounts.
- v. The Treasurer maintains all reports pertaining to income and expenditures. Reports will be given at all meetings.
- vi. The Treasurer will receive and disburse all funds on behalf of the organization.
- vii. The Treasurer will maintain all records of income and expenditures.
- viii. The Treasurer will ensure annual filing, reporting, and registration requirements are completed in accordance with federal and state laws for nonprofit associations.
- ix. The Treasurer will oversee all fundraising activities.
- x. The Treasurer will maintain financial standing of all fundraising.
- xi. Treasurer will be a mandatory member of all fundraising committees.

f. Communication Director:

- i. The Communication Director maintains the digital presence of the organization, including but not limited to the website, Fetlife profile/group, etcetera.
- ii. The Communication Director will put communications vehicles in place to create momentum and awareness of Leather Azimuth.
- iii. The Communication Director will disseminate information to the membership at large.
- iv. The Communication Director ensures the public views the organization favorably.
- v. The Communication Director will be responsible for editorial direction, design, production, and distribution of all Organization publications.
- vi. The Communication Director is in charge of enhancing the website.
- vii. The Communication Director is in charge of assigning login names and/or passwords.
- viii. The Communication Director is in charge of making electronic upgrades.
- ix. The Communication Director is in charge of posting documents to website and approving content.

- Any questionable content will require board approval.

II. Elections for officers will be by ballot during an annual meeting/1st Quarter business meeting to be held in January.

- III. Officers will serve for two years or until their successors are elected, and their term of office will begin at the close of the meeting at which they are elected.
- IV. Elections will be staggered with the Vice President and Communication Director will be nominated in 4th Quarter and voted into office at the 1st Quarter business meeting in 2020, 2022, 2024, and so forth. The President, Secretary, and Treasurer will be nominated in 4th Quarter and will be voted into office at the 1st Quarter business meeting in 2021, 2023, 2025, and so forth.
- V. No member may hold more than one office at a time.
- VI. An officer may be removed by a 75% approval of the membership in attendance, with a quorum of attendance being required.

Vacancies

- I. President: In the event of a vacancy in the office of President, the Vice President will become President for the unexpired term.
- II. A vacancy in any office except President will be appointed by the Board of Directors for the unexpired term.

Banking

- I. All payments will be received by the Treasurer in cash only, until banking accounts are established.

Dues

- I. Members will pay annual dues of \$40.00 per annum, due on January 1st of each year.
- II. New member dues will be pro-rated, due within thirty (30) days of initial membership.

Vetting process

- I. Prospective members will be presented to the group by a sponsor.
- II. Prospective members must be at least 18 years old to be sponsored.
- III. The prospective member's sponsor will guide the prospective member through the vetting process.
- IV. Application period shall be a minimum of six months, beginning from the prospective member's initially attended quarterly meeting.
- V. During the application period, the prospective members will be observed, activities assessed, and behaviors reviewed by all members. The burden of all behaviors is the responsibility of the prospective member.
- VI. Prospective members are in no way obligated to play with, or have sexual interactions with, existing members. No existing member will solicit play or sexual interactions with prospective members.
 - a. Established relationship dynamics are exempt from item VI.
- VII. After the application period, and with the recommendation of the sponsor, a vote of the membership will occur. The voting will be conducted in an open format with the prospective member present.
 - a. For the prospective member to be accepted, 75% of the membership in attendance, with a quorum of attendance, is required.

- b. If the 75% approval is not received, the prospective member may come up for a new vote at either of the next two quarterly meetings, at which time a final vote will occur, as determined by the prospective member and the sponsor.
- VIII. Prospective members that failed to attain membership may be sponsored again at a later date.
- IX. Prospective members will meet at least the minimum requirements, addressed in membership guidelines.

Sponsorship

- I. A sponsor must be a member in good standing.
- II. A sponsor shall only sponsor one person at a time.
- III. The sponsor shall be responsible for verifying and presenting the application to the board. This includes that the minimum age requirement has been verified by the Secretary before the meeting begins.
- IV. Each person shall be sponsored individually regardless of their relationship dynamic.
- V. The sponsor will ensure that the prospective member has the opportunity to become familiar with the Code of Conduct and culture of Leather Azimuth. This includes supplying them with information that would allow them to meet their vetting requirements.
- VI. The sponsor must be present when the prospective member is first introduced to the club, and when the vote is taken to add them to the membership.
- VII. The sponsor has the responsibility to address concerns that they have with the prospective member and can withdraw sponsorship at any time with written notice to the Secretary and prospective member.
- VIII. Prior to bringing the prospective member to vote, the sponsor is responsible for verifying —
- IX. that the requirements for membership, as listed in the vetting process, have been met.

Temporary Changes in Membership Status

- I. Inactive/Leave of Absence - a voluntary or involuntary circumstance which causes the member not to be able to perform their duties. Examples of this include, but are not limited to, family issues, deployment, health issues, and work issues. Club privileges are deactivated during this time period.
- II. At the end of 18 months of inactivity, the member will be encouraged to voluntarily end their membership with Leather Azimuth with the understanding that they can re-join the group after attending 1 general meeting and with a simple majority vote at the end of that meeting. Re-prospecting will not be required if the member voluntarily surrenders membership in this instance.
- III. At the end of 24 months, the member will be involuntarily removed from the rolls of the group and may re-prospect if they wish to join at a future time unless a majority vote of the board (for extreme circumstances only) prevails with 4 of the 5 board members agreeing. This will allow a 6-month extension to Voluntary Inactive Membership. At the end of this extension, the member is removed from membership without recourse.

Removing a Member

- I. Membership may be suspended or terminated for egregious misconduct that violates our core values or our mission statement. A quorum of the board is required to **suspend** membership. A quorum of the membership is required to terminate membership for this reason. The member in question will have an opportunity to present information prior to any action being taken.
- II. If legal action on a member is pending for an item that goes against the code of conduct, the member may be suspended until after the legal process has been completed.
- III. If a member has not paid dues for 12 months, their membership will be suspended. If they have not paid dues for 24 months, their membership will be terminated. If a member is suspended for not paying dues, re prospecting will not be required. If terminated for not paying dues, re prospecting will be required.
Note: If a member is unable to pay dues for any reason, it is their responsibility to reach out to a member of the board to request assistance. The Board has the authority to evaluate and help with dues if financial hardship is affecting a member.

Meeting and Event Requirements

- I. At all events and meetings, all attendees must be at least 18 years of age.
- II. Board approval is required prior to holding any Leather Azimuth-sponsored meeting or event.
- III. Meetings and events will be designated as members only, members and prospective members only, or by invitation only.
 - a. At members only events, only patched members are allowed to be in attendance.
 - b. At members and prospective members events, only patched members and prospective members are allowed to be in attendance.
 - c. At invitation only events, members, prospective members, and invited guests will be allowed.
 - d. Special circumstances will be considered by the board, upon request.

Mentorship Program

A mentorship program will be established, encompassing educational events involving local and national presenters. The mentorship program will include both individual and group-based education, including but not limited to, the following courses:

Group:

Introduction to BDSM (BDSM 101)
Consent/Intent
Negotiation (Top/Bottom)
Frenzy (Top/Bottom)
Relationship Types and Dynamics
Healthy Relationship Building
Diversity: Including – “What’s Your Identity, and what does that mean to me, to you and to others?”
LGBTQ/QUITBAG Panel
Fantasy vs. Reality in Play
Fantasy vs. Reality in Relationships
DM Training
Safety
Blood Borne Pathogens/STD
Bottom/Submissive Q&A Panel
Top/Dominant Q&A Panel
Master/slave Q&A Panel
Leather History
Leadership in Leather Panel
Etiquette
Leather Care

Bottom/Submissive/slave:

Bottoming Skills
Mental Bottoming Skills
Emotional Bottoming Skills
Topping your Top
Submission as a Strength
Build a Toy Bag as a Bottom, and Why
Anticipatory Service
Formal vs. Informal Protocols
Tea Service
Table Service

Top/Dominant/Master:

Physical versus Mental Dominance; Sadism vs. Topping
Build a Better Toy Bag
Creating a Scene Space
Flogging
Florentine Flogging
Rope Bondage
Rough Body Play
Canes
Single Tails
Fire Play
Electrical Play
Needles and the Bloody Stuff

Members will work to guide those interested in either mentee or mentor opportunities, connecting participants with those members who have the appropriate skill set and knowledge for both short- and long-term involvements.