

CONSTITUTION GULF COAST BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

ARTICLE I - Name

The name of this body shall be Gulf Coast Baptist Association; hereafter referred to as “the Association”.

ARTICLE II – Objective

SECTION A. Mission: Gulf Coast Baptist Association exists to encourage fellowship and cooperation among the churches and to provide assistance and service to the member churches in fulfilling the Great Commission of Jesus Christ.

SECTION B. Vision: To be a Global Association of churches that are committed to God’s command <Matthew 28:18-20> to expedite God’s plan <Acts 1:8> of reaching and discipling the peoples of the entire world.

SECTION C: Core Values:

These are the guiding principles for accomplishing the mission and vision of Gulf Coast Baptist Association. Our adopted core values are:

Authority of God’s Word: We believe and teach that the Bible is the inerrant, verbally-inspired Word of God, infallible as originally given by God, and that the Bible’s absolute truth and trustworthiness extend equally to all parts of the writings - historical, poetical, doctrinal and prophetic - thus constituting our only standard of faith and practice. <2 Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12, 2 Peter 1:20-21, Matthew 5:18>

World Missions: We are committed to God’s Command <Matthew 28:18-20> to expedite God’s plan <Acts 1:8> of reaching and discipling the peoples of the entire world.

*Spiritual Formation: We value the disciplines of the Christian life, such as prayer, worship, celebration and discipleship development which will produce in us the Mind of Christ.
< Philippians 2:5>*

People: We value people as they are and seek to meet them at their point of need. We acknowledge their uniqueness and diversity and seek to create an association of genuine inclusiveness where grace abounds in the context of biblical authority.

Cooperation: We believe, in order to reach Brazoria County and the world in building the Kingdom of Christ, it is necessary for there to be cooperation between churches, staffs and members. This requires an environment where relationships of support and trust are developed and an understanding that the mission will not be accomplished without interdependence.

Primacy of the Local Church: We value the importance, autonomy and independence of the local church.

Kingdom Mentality: We will challenge churches and leaders to exercise the mind of Christ, particularly in regard to evangelism and missions in Brazoria County and beyond.

Accountability: We are accountable first to God and then to member churches and to ourselves and must continually seek ways to satisfy this responsibility.

Fellowship: We are committed to the encouragement of one another in the advancement of the Kingdom.

SECTION D. Ministry Relationships: As an autonomous association of churches, Gulf Coast Baptist Association will cooperate with the Southern Baptist Convention, the Baptist General Convention of Texas, the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, other Baptist Associations, and other entities of like faith and practices.

ARTICLE III – Authority

SECTION A. The Association is under the authority of Jesus Christ. The Association affirms the independence of its churches; the independence of the conventions to which it relates; and, its own independence to achieve the purposes for which it exists.

SECTION B. This Association shall be deemed as advisory to its member churches, and shall treat its member churches as independent bodies in all matters of internal government, and shall at no time interfere with their rights.

ARTICLE IV – Membership

SECTION A. The Gulf Coast Baptist Association shall be composed of Baptist churches cooperating to carry out the purposes identified in this constitution, giving financial support to the Association, and in doctrinal harmony with the Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1925 or any subsequent revision.

SECTION B. Cooperation in the Association involves participation in the various ministries and meetings of the Association; contributing financially to support the purpose of the Association; and, submitting information for an Associational annual report.

SECTION C. Application for membership in the Gulf Coast Baptist Association is to be made in accordance with the procedures outlined in the by-laws.

ARTICLE V – Annual Meeting

SECTION A. There shall be an annual meeting of the Association at such time and place agreed upon by the Executive Board at a monthly GCBA TEAM meeting. The purpose of the annual meeting is to receive reports, act upon recommendations and authorize the work of the Association for the coming year.

SECTION B. The Association reserves the right to refuse to seat messengers from any church which departs from the principles of this compact by becoming heterodox in faith or disorderly in practice.

SECTION C. Duly elected messengers from member churches will be seated at the Annual Meeting of the Association by vote of the messengers in the first business session. If there is a challenge to the seating of a messenger, it shall be referred to the Petitionary Letters Committee who will report their findings at the next business session of the annual meeting.

ARTICLE VI – Officers

The officers of the Association shall be Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Clerk and Treasurer. The Moderator shall serve as Chair of the Executive Board.

ARTICLE VII – Executive Board

SECTION A. The business of the Gulf Coast Baptist Association shall be conducted between Annual Meetings by an Executive Board. The Executive Board shall have power to act for the Association but shall do nothing contrary to the purpose of the Association. Membership of the Executive Board is specified in the by-laws of the Association.

SECTION B. The Executive Board shall have the power to designate the registered office and appoint the registered agent of the Association pursuant to the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act.

SECTION C. All Executive Board business shall be conducted at the monthly GCBA TEAM Meetings, one of which shall be designated as an annual meeting

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ARTICLE VIII - Administrative Team

The Administrative Team shall be composed of the officers of the Association, the chair of each Ministry Team, the president of the Hispanic Fellowship and other ethnic fellowships. The Moderator shall serve as Chair of the Administrative Team. The Executive Director and other Ministerial staff shall serve as ex-officio members. The Executive Board may provide for additional ex-officio members to the Administrative Team to serve on a continuing, or ad hoc basis.

The Administrative Team shall work with the Executive Director and Association staff in strategy planning, annual calendar planning, budget preparation, and planning the Annual Meeting. The Administrative Team shall serve as an accountability and support group to the Executive Director and Association staff. The Executive Director shall prepare, in consultation with the Administrative Team, the Executive Board Agenda.

The Administrative Team shall provide coordination for the work of the Association being accomplished through the various Ministry Teams, Task Forces and Committees.

The Moderator in consultation with the officers of GCBA shall appoint a Nominating Committee to be elected by the messengers to the Annual Meeting that shall nominate Ministry Team Leaders, Trustees, Chairs and members of Committees, and officers specified in the Constitution, By-laws or Organization Manual.

ARTICLE IX – Trustees

Three (3) Trustees plus one alternate Trustee shall be elected at the Annual Meeting. Trustees serve as legal officers for the Association under the direction of the Executive Board.

ARTICLE X – Staff

An Executive Director shall be called and elected by the Executive Board and shall hold office as long as mutually agreeable. He shall maintain an Association office and employ in consultation with the Executive Board such staff as may be necessary for the functioning of the Association.

ARTICLE XI – Finance

SECTION A. This Association shall be financed by voluntary contributions from the member churches, and other organizations and persons interested in its work. This shall not prevent acquiring funds from additional sources, such as property sales or exchanges of bequeathed income properties, investments and dividends.

SECTION B. All funds shall be managed by the Executive Board of the Association. Generally accepted financial procedures shall be practiced.

ARTICLE XII – By-laws

By-laws that shall guide the operation of the Association shall be adopted by two-thirds (2/3) majority of the messengers of the Association in its Annual meeting.

ARTICLE XIII – Amendments

This constitution may be amended at any regular Annual Meeting of the Association by a 2/3 majority provided the amendment is introduced and considered by an Executive Board meeting prior to the annual meeting.

XIV – Legal Status

SECTION A. The Association shall be duly chartered under the statutes of the state of Texas, and as a Non-Profit Religious Corporation, encompassing all benefits and responsibilities this status provides.

SECTION B. Upon dissolution of the corporation, the assets of the corporation shall be distributed exclusively to Southern Baptist affiliated charitable, religious or educational organizations which would then qualify under the provisions of Section 501c(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

BY-LAWS
Gulf Coast Baptist Association

ARTICLE I - Membership
(Reference Constitution Article IV)

- SECTION A.** Any Baptist Church wishing to enter into a cooperating relationship with the Association shall present a petition to the Petitionary Letters Committee at least thirty (30) days prior to the Annual Meeting date. Upon approval of the Petitionary Letters Committee, the petition shall be presented to the messengers at the Annual Meeting of the Association. Upon approval by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the messengers present and voting, the church shall enter into a one-year provisional membership with the Association. During this one year provisional period the church is encouraged to participate in the work of the Association: financial contributions, attendance at meetings, and provision of an annual report to the Association.
- SECTION B.** Upon recommendation of the Petitionary Letters Committee and a two-thirds vote of messengers present and voting at the next annual meeting, the church shall be accepted into full fellowship of the Association. (Exception: A GCBA church in good standing that petitions on behalf of a new church start or from a recommendation or commendation of a neighboring Association.)
- SECTION C.** Churches are encouraged to participate in the Association by:
1. Participating in mission activities cooperatively planned through the Association.
 2. Send messengers to the Annual Meeting of the Association.
 3. Contribute to the mission budget of the Association.
 4. Actively participate in the meetings of the Executive Board.
 5. Share resources with sister churches within the Association.
 6. Provide an Annual Church Profile report.
 7. Actively benefit from the shared resources of the member churches; such as, consultation, training, mentoring, camps, classes, etc.
- SECTION D.** In the event a church exceeds two years in non-participation in any activities of the Association, the Executive Board may initiate communication with the church as to its intent to remain identified with the Association.
- SECTION E.** Upon written complaint of unsound doctrine by a member church regarding another member church, the Executive Board, after counsel with the church with a goal of redemption, may recommend at the Annual Meeting to withdraw fellowship from the offending church. The letter of complaint must be filed with the Petitionary Letters Committee at least

two months prior to the Annual Meeting. A three-fourths (3/4) majority vote by the messengers is required to exclude a church from membership.

**ARTICLE II – Annual Meeting
(Reference Constitution Article V)**

SECTION A. Each member church shall be entitled to three (3) messengers, and one additional messenger for each 25 resident members up to 200 resident members, and one additional messenger for each 200 resident members thereafter. There shall be a maximum of 15 messengers from each church.

SECTION B. In case of emergency or extreme necessity the Executive Board shall have the power to call an extra session of the Association, or change the time and place of the Annual Meeting.

**ARTICLE III – Executive Board
(Reference Constitution Article VII)**

The Executive Board shall act on behalf of the Association in the Interim between annual sessions.

SECTION A. The Executive Board shall consist of those in attendance at a meeting. Each attending church shall have one vote on any and all business items.

SECTION B. The Executive Board shall meet at a time and place determined by the vote of the Executive Board itself, with the time and place publicized to all members of the Executive Board and to all member churches of the Association.

SECTION C. Fifteen members or more from at least ten churches shall constitute a quorum for a meeting of the Executive Board.

SECTION D. The officers elected at the Annual Meeting shall serve as the officers of the Executive Board. See Constitution, Article VIII

SECTION E. The Executive Board shall have the power to designate the registered office and appoint the registered agent of the association pursuant to the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act.

ARTICLE IV – Rules of Order

The rules of order will be those approved by the Executive Board at the meeting and will comply with these standing rules:

- Moderator will preside at meeting.
- Vice-Moderator will serve as Moderator in Moderator's absence.

- The Board will elect a Moderator for that meeting where the Moderator and Vice-Moderator are absent.
- Order of Business and Rules of meeting will be determined and approved by the Executive Board at its meeting.

ARTICLE V. Officers
(Reference Constitution Article VI)

SECTION A. The Association in Annual Meeting shall elect a Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Clerk and Treasurer. Officers shall assume their responsibility at the close of the Annual Meeting at which they are elected. The Vice-moderator shall succeed the Moderator in case of a vacancy.

SECTION B. The Moderator shall preside at meetings. The Moderator is eligible to serve two successive elected terms of office. He will be eligible to serve as Moderator again after a period of at least two years.

SECTION C. The Vice-Moderator shall preside in the absence of the Moderator and whenever requested by the Moderator. The Executive Board will elect a Moderator in the absence of both the Moderator and Vice-Moderator.

SECTION D. The Clerk shall keep accurate and official minutes of the Annual Meeting and each meeting of the Executive Board.

SECTION E. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the maintenance of accurate and official financial records of the Association.

SECTION F. Officer vacancies shall be filled between Annual Meetings by the Executive Board, with recommendation from the Nominating Committee.

ARTICLE VI – Staff
(Reference Constitution Article IX)

SECTION A. The Executive Director shall give leadership to the Association consistent with the Constitution, By-laws and Policy and Procedure Manual of the Association. He shall serve as an ex-officio member of all Boards, Ministry Teams and committees with power to make recommendations and to enter into discussions of all matters being considered, but without the power to vote.

SECTION B. The Executive Director shall be called and elected by the Executive Board, and shall hold office as mutually agreed. For the employment or discharging of the Executive Director a two-week notification to all Executive Board members shall be given, and a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of those present is required.

SECTION C. Each staff member shall be designated as Ministerial Staff or Ministry Assistant. All Ministerial Staff shall be elected by the Executive Board, upon recommendation by the Executive Director. All Ministry Assistants shall be employed by the Executive Director.

**ARTICLE VII Trustees
(Reference Constitution Article VIII)**

SECTION A. Trustees of the Gulf Coast Baptist Association shall be recommended by the Nominating Committee to the Executive Board and elected at the Annual Meeting. These trustees shall serve until replaced.

SECTION B. Trustees who serve on the Board of the Texas Baptist Encampment shall be recommended by the Nominating Committee to the Executive Board and elected at the Annual Meeting. They shall serve terms as dictated by the Constitution of the Texas Baptist Encampment.

**ARTICLE VIII – Amendments
(Reference Constitution Article X)**

As provided in the Constitution, these By-laws may be amended at any general session of the Annual Meeting of the Association, provided that the amendment is introduced and considered by an Executive Board meeting prior to the annual meeting.

ARTICLE IX – Organization and Policy

SECTION A. The Executive Director shall maintain a current Organization and Policy Manual by which the purposes of the Association shall be administered.

SECTION B. The Moderator in consultation with the Executive Director may create such ad-hoc work-groups necessary to fulfill the purposes of the Association.

**GULF COAST BAPTIST ASSOCIATION
ORGANIZATION AND POLICY
PART I**

INTRODUCTION

This Organization and Policy Manual shall be included in the Annual Association Report directly following the Constitution and the By-laws. The Executive Director in consultation with the Administrative Team shall be responsible for maintaining the Manual, and shall update the Manual according to actions of the Executive Board.

ORGANIZATION

Our Mission: Gulf Coast Baptist Association exists to encourage fellowship and cooperation among the churches and to provide assistance and service to the member churches in fulfilling the Great Commission of Jesus Christ.

Our Vision: Gulf Coast Baptist Association is a GlobalLocal Association of churches that is committed to making disciples, developing leaders and starting churches. Gulf Coast Baptist Association will seek to accomplish this task through an alliance of churches working together to make disciples globally and locally. <Matthew 28:18-20><Acts 1:8>

Our Values: Authority of God's Word, World Missions, Spiritual Formation, People, Cooperation, Primacy of the local church, Kingdom Mentality, Accountability and Fellowship <see GCBA Constitution>

Our Organization: The organization of Gulf Coast Baptist Association shall be composed of an Administrative Team, Ministry Teams, Committees, Task Force Teams, Mission Councils, and Boards/Trustees.

Ministry Team Leaders, Chairs and members of Committees, Trustees, and the officers specified in the Constitution of the Association shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee for election by the messengers to the Annual Meeting of the Association.

Members of ministry teams, and the leaders and members of task force groups shall be recruited by the Executive Director and chair of the ministry team or task force, based on interest, knowledge and skills needed, and shall be approved by the Association Executive Board.

Efforts are encouraged toward full representation of the Association's member churches in completing the staffing of the Association Organization.

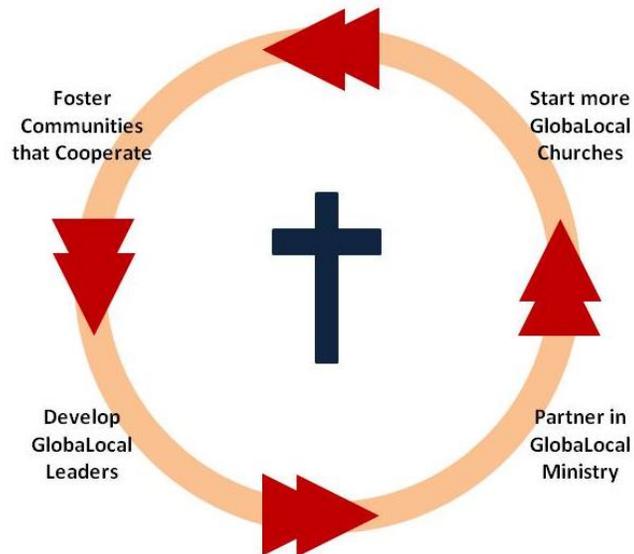
SECTION I – Ministry Teams

The work of the Association shall be accomplished primarily through Ministry Teams, composed of ministers and lay persons. Each Team shall meet at least quarterly and shall report its goals, plans and ministry activities to the Executive Board at its regular

meetings. The Leader or a designated member of each Ministry Team shall serve on the Administrative Team.

1. COMMUNITY

We see those in ministry across our county as one family. As such, we take seriously our role to support, encourage, develop, and care for those on the front line of service. We rebel against the association being a loose confederation of separate entities, and embrace the idea that autonomous churches can also be a united people focused on *The Kingdom* rather than a kingdom.



We believe churches work best when they work in concert with one another, not independently or in competition with one another.

2. DEVELOP LEADERS

We believe discipleship is leaders developing new leaders to be sent out and not held back. We identify those whom God is calling to leadership, train them to work according to their calling, and mentor and coach them so they can be deployed to the field. Wherever their field is, we relish opportunities to care for them as much as if they were living next door.

3. PLANT CHURCHES

We believe that until every person has found a church home, we need to plant more churches. We believe in using any and all innovative means to accomplish this task while staying true to the teachings of Jesus. We believe in multiple approaches, languages, cultures, styles, and locations. We believe in focusing on the field, just as Christ called for chasing after the 1 rather than being satisfied with the 99 at home.

4. GLOBALLOCAL

We see Brazoria County as our most immediate charge and a front door to the entire world. Neither is more important. Therefore we will go to any place or people group in the world to which God calls us, using the best practices here and abroad to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ. As people of the world cross borders and oceans, culturally contextualized ministries will only become more important in the future. We believe the bride of Christ transcends boundaries, and we affirm the idea of GlobalLocal among our highest values.

COMMUNITY

Goal: Communities that cooperate to obey the Great Commission

Strategies:

1. Develop communities of leaders who cooperate around the GlobalLocal mission (Create Environment).
 - Organize in regional groups (bi-vocational, ethnic, affinity).
 - Organize in project groups (unreached people, church starting, etc.).
 - Conduct orientation of new and existing leaders.
 - Make cooperation a part of the orientation for new leaders to GCBA.
 - Intentionally include new people (Mentorship).
2. Discover and communicate the needs and opportunities to individuals through the communities (Communicate News).
 - Hold regular meetings of these communities around meals and at other times.
 - Use numerous new ways to communicate (Online communities, messaging, Facebook, Twitter, texting, and other means).
 - Use GCBA TEAM meetings to communicate information on the activities of the different groups.
3. Provide consistent and effective effort to mobilize and motivate people to be communities that cooperate, forming a “Band of Brothers.”
 - Use GCBA TEAM meetings for motivation and inspiration.
 - Include as many into the fellowship as we can—no “Loner pastors.”
 - Discuss projects and opportunities with the intention of including others.

DEVELOP LEADERS

Goal: New leaders that are sent out and not held back.

What kind of leaders do we need? Leaders that will:

- Participate in GlobalLocal missional activities.
- Participate in church starting as pastors, launch team, mission teams and advocates in existing churches.
- Develop other leaders.

Strategies:

1. Train existing pastors on how to identify and mentor potential leaders.
 - Develop curriculum and offer training in community groups.
 - Develop training in four key areas:
 - Pastoral care.
 - Discipleship processes.
 - Doctrine.
 - Missiology.
2. Train potential leaders.
 - Provide a variety of training opportunities:
 - Immersion training for missional leaders.
 - Cluster of pastors and leaders to expose them to missional principles.

- Residency/internship for church planting.
 - Classes on Christian doctrine and vocational skills.
 - Mentorship and coaching.
1. Conduct ongoing training for existing leaders.

PLANT CHURCHES

Goal: GlobalLocal church plants, wherever God leads.

Strategies:

1. Know the need through up-to-date research.
 - Know Brazoria County.
 - Know beyond.
 - Know and research:
 - Population centers with forward look to county growth.
 - Spiritual conditions.
 - People groups.
2. Develop a pipeline.
 - Define the characteristics of a church planter.
 - Look for God to raise up church planters in the churches as leaders are developed.
 - Accept church planter candidates from within GCBA.
 - Recruit church planter candidates to plant within GCBA.
 - Assess church planter candidates according to:
 - Character—Is he godly? (Integrity and discipline)
 - Calling—Is he called? (Internal call and external call)
 - Competencies—Can he do it? (Experience and skill set)
 - Chemistry—How does he lead? (DISC profile/leadership style)
3. Train the leader in:
 - Pastoral development.
 - Leadership development.
 - Strategic planning.
 - Launch team development.
 - Finances and fundraising.
4. Support the new church through:
 - Prayer.
 - Pocketbooks.
 - Projects.
 - People.
 - Partnerships.

GLOBALLOCAL

Goal: Committed pastors, leaders, and churches around the GlobalLocal vision of disciple making.

Strategies:

1. Create awareness and understanding among all GCBA churches and leaders of the GlobalLocal philosophy.
 - Expose GCBA churches and leaders to the scope of the GlobalLocal philosophy.
 - Conduct orientation for new pastors and leaders.
 - Reach out to existing pastors and mission teams.
2. Create a GlobalLocal mindset within all GCBA churches and leaders.
 - Intentionally commit GCBA resources to train leaders.
3. Create environments so that GCBA churches and leaders can live and grow as GlobalLocal churches and leaders.
 - Intentionally focus GCBA activities to:
 - Identify opportunities to be on mission (Develop sending churches).
 - Facilitate cooperative efforts among churches (Churches working together in accomplishing the mission).
 - Encourage accountability to stay on mission.
 - Remind and reinforce GlobalLocal mindsets and methodologies among GCBA churches.

2. Administrative Team

The Administrative Team shall oversee the administrative functions of the Association, including annual budgeting, finance management, personnel, policies, properties, endowment, and any other fiscal functions essential to the operation of the Association.

- + The Administrative Ministry Team shall consist of the Officers of the Association and Ministry Team Leaders.
- + The Moderator shall serve as Team Leader for the Administrative Ministry Team.
- + The Administrative Ministry Team shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Executive Director.

SECTION II. Committees

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall have six members, each serving a three-year rotating term. They shall be appointed by the Moderator and elected by the messengers to the Annual Meeting.

The Nominating Committee shall nominate Ministry Team Leaders, Trustees, Chairs

and members of Standing Committees; the officers specified in the Constitution, By-laws and Organization Manual.

Petitionary Letters Committee

The Petitionary Letters Committee shall be composed of six persons on a three-year rotating term.

This committee shall examine all letters and credentials sent to the Association for membership or recognition and make recommendations on each at the Annual Meeting. This committee shall provide active watch-care and actively seek to restore participation from churches inactive in Association life.

The Petitionary Letters Committee shall also be responsible for the seating of messengers at the Annual Meeting.

Constitution and By-laws Committee

The Constitution and By-laws Committee shall be comprised of three persons serving on a three-year rotating term. This Committee shall work with the Executive Director and Administrative Team to keep the Constitution and By-laws current.

All proposed amendments to the Constitution and By-laws presented by messengers at the Annual Meeting, or by members of the Executive Board shall be referred to this committee to guide the process for amendment as provided in the Constitution and By-laws.

SECTION III. Task Force Teams

A Task Force Team may be appointed at any time for a special project at the initiative of the Executive Director and Moderator with the recommendation of the Administrative Team and the approval of the Executive Board. When its work is completed, the Task Force shall be dissolved.

SECTION IV. Mission Councils

A Mission Council is a volunteer team consisting of both staff and lay persons involved in mission opportunities both locally and globally. A Mission Council may be formed from within the body of one church or a group of churches working together.

SECTION V. Boards/Trustees

1. Association Trustees

Three Trustees shall be elected by the Association at its Annual Meeting. As directed by the Executive Board, Trustees are to serve as legal agents for the Association.

2. Texas Baptist Encampment – Palacios

Three Trustees from Gulf Coast Baptist Association shall serve the Texas Baptist Encampment in accordance with its Constitution. The Trustees shall represent the interests of the Association, assist in integrating participation of the Association churches in the activities of Texas Baptist Encampment, and keep the churches of the Association informed about the resources and activities of Texas Baptist Encampment.

**GULF COAST BAPTIST ASSOCIATION
ORGANIZATION AND POLICY MANUAL
PART II**

Section I. Personnel Policies and Procedures

The Executive Director, in consultation with the Administrative Team, shall develop an Employee Policy and Procedures Manual for the employees of the Association. This manual shall include policies for vacation time, sick leave, maternity leave, termination, severance pay, overtime, etc. These policies and procedures shall be maintained in a file in the Association office.

Amendments to the Employee Policy and Procedures Manual shall be made as necessary by action of the Administrative Team. Each employee of the Association shall give signature acknowledgment that they are familiar with the personnel policies and procedures of the Association. Changes to the Employee Policies and Procedures Manual shall be acknowledged by each employee of the Association.

The Executive Director shall develop a day-to-day operations manual for the administration of office functions.

The Executive Director shall maintain a personnel file for each employee of the Association. Such file shall include a current job description, performance evaluations, rate of pay and benefits, and other relevant information.

Employee evaluations shall be completed by the appropriate supervisors. The evaluations shall be in the form stipulated by the Administrative Team and shall be completed for consideration of salary recommendations for the annual budget.

Section II Employee Classification

- 1 Ministerial Staff shall include the Executive Director and other Ministers called through action of the Executive Board. Ministerial Staff shall be supervised by the Executive Director in consultation with the Administrative Team.
- 2 Ministry Assistants are employed and supervised by the Executive Director.

Section III. Employee Compensation

Compensation for employees shall be specified in the annual budget approved at the annual meeting. The Administrative Team in consultation with the Executive Director shall recommend an annual salary for each employee for inclusion in the annual budget.

Section IV. **Regular Full-time and Part-time Employee Benefits**

A. Vacations

1. New employees shall work six months prior to their first vacation of one week.
2. Prior years of full-time employment in any Southern Baptist Church or denominational agency, shall be credited toward the following vacation schedule:
 - a) one to five years – two weeks
 - b) six to nine years – three weeks
 - c) ten to fourteen years – four weeks
 - d) fifteen years or more – five weeks

B. Sick Leave

1. Sick Leave with pay shall be allowed according to the following schedule, after the first six months of service.
2. Up to ten days with pay after the first year of service
3. Five additional days sick leave with pay allowed after each additional year of service, to be accumulative.
4. During prolonged illness, compensation shall be determined by the Executive Director and the Administrative Team.

C. Leaves of Absence

Leaves of absence are allowed under the following schedule:

1. Leave with pay up to five days is allowed in each year of service for emergencies such as death or serious illness in immediate family and other reasons beyond the employee's control. Immediate family is defined as husband, wife, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, father and mother of employee and spouse.
2. Leave without pay may be allowed with the approval of the Executive Director. Leave without pay may be made-up in any manner which is mutually satisfactory...

D. Holidays

1. The following holidays shall be recognized: New Year's Day, Easter, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day following, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, and the employee's birthday.
2. When the holiday falls on a non-working day, the employee shall be allowed a day off with pay within the following week, with approval of the Executive Director.
3. The Association office shall be closed between Christmas and New Year's

Day in lieu of Christmas bonuses. The office will open the first work day after New Year's Day.

E. Staff Position Descriptions

Position descriptions of all Gulf Coast Baptist Association Staff are on file in the Association office.

Section V. **Sexual Harassment Policy**

The Gulf Coast Baptist Association affirms its commitment to ensuring a fair and respectful environment for every employee and patron; an environment that upholds Christian values, morals and ethics as mandated by Scripture, and applicable state and federal law.

In keeping with this commitment, sexual harassment of the employees of Gulf Coast Baptist Association will not be tolerated. Sexual harassment may consist of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually oriented conversation, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment of an employee by an employee, employee by a non-employee, or a non-employee by an employee will not be tolerated. All complaints of sexual harassment will be investigated, and if determined to have merit, appropriate disciplinary actions (which may include termination) will be taken. An employee reporting sexual harassment will be protected from any form of retaliation.

Section VI. **Financial Policy**

1. The financial statement of the Association is to be prepared and presented at each Executive Board Meeting. The expenditures shall be reported to reflect amounts expended for the respective period and remaining in each budget classification.

Gifts from churches shall be reported in detail at each Executive Board Meeting and reported to churches quarterly. A separate accounting shall be made for revenues and expenditures, and cash and investment balances in the General Funds, Church/Missions Development Fund and any other funds.

2. Accounting procedures shall be those as generally accepted accounting principles as they may be applicable.
3. Six persons shall be selected by the Administrative Team as "check signers" and serve until replaced.

4. To maintain the trustworthiness of the accounts, the Administrative Team shall receive and review a copy of all financial statements prepared by the Association.
5. The Administrative Team shall schedule an annual outside audit.