

**By-Laws of the Knights of Columbus,**  
**Bergen Chapter**  
**2024 Edition**

**ARTICLE I - Organization**

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be "Knights of Columbus, Bergen Chapter". It shall hereafter be referred to as the CHAPTER.

Section 2. The primary purpose of the CHAPTER is to assist in every way, financial or otherwise, cases of genuine distress amongst the Brother Knights in good standing of member Councils. It shall also consider and promote all matters of general Catholic and patriotic interest and adopt such measures as shall be deemed necessary to promote same and encourage the participation of member Councils in the furtherance of these purposes.

Section 3. The CHAPTER shall consist of two (2) delegates and two (2) alternates of every member Council.

Section 4. The Councils that belong to the CHAPTER shall hereafter be referred to as "Member Councils".

Section 5. Each member Council shall be entitled to a maximum of two (2) votes, by authorized delegates and/or alternates present at the meeting, either in person or by electronic meeting media.

Section 6. Proxy votes are unacceptable on any motion or action.

Section 7. A roll call of council's Delegates and Alternates will be taken when the outcome of a voice vote cannot be ascertained.

Section 8. Any information (meeting dates, schedules, forms, etc.) that is to be posted to the Chapter website shall be approved by the Chapter Chairman.

Section 9. The official Internet presence of the CHAPTER is:  
[www.bergenchapterkofc.org](http://www.bergenchapterkofc.org)

Section 10. Hereafter, the term "mail" shall refer to any communication sent and/or transmitted via the United States Postal Service and/or electronic mail.

## **ARTICLE II – Member Councils**

Section 1. Councils may be admitted to membership in the CHAPTER by a majority vote of the CHAPTER officers.

Section 2. Each member Council shall be assessed annually 70 cents (\$0.70) per member based on the number of members recorded as active members in the Supreme Council reports to the Financial Secretary as of July 1<sup>st</sup> of each year with a maximum per capita not to exceed \$175.00. This sum shall be payable by November 30. Failure to pay such assessment by December 31<sup>st</sup> shall be cause for suspension of member Council.

Section 3. Any member Council suspended by Supreme Council is automatically suspended from the CHAPTER. Subsequently, any member Council reinstated by Supreme Council is automatically reinstated in the CHAPTER.

Section 4. Any suspended Council shall not be entitled to representation in or participation in any benefits of the CHAPTER.

Section 5. Any suspended Council may be reinstated after payment of all arrearages. This must be approved by a majority vote of the CHAPTER officers.

Section 6. If and when a council is reinstated, any CHAPTER benefits lost during the time of suspension are not retroactively reinstated unless approved by a majority vote of the CHAPTER delegates.

## **ARTICLE III – Delegates**

Section 1. DELEGATES: A Delegate shall be a Third Degree member in good standing of the Council that he represents.

Section 2. ALTERNATES: An alternate shall be provided for each delegate. An Alternate shall be a Third Degree member in good standing of the Council that he represents.

Section 3. Delegates and alternates to the CHAPTER shall be certified as such by the member Councils to which they belong and shall hold office for one (1) year.

Section 4. Should a vacancy occur at any time in the representation of a member council, said Council shall provide a successor to fill the unexpired term of the former delegate or alternate within thirty (30) days. The CHAPTER Secretary is to be provided with the name and address of the successor via mail from the Grand Knight.

Section 5. The names, addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses of the delegates and alternates shall be certified by the Recording Secretary of the Council on the form provided by the CHAPTER and returned to the Secretary of the CHAPTER by September 30 of each year. In the absence of an official submission to the CHAPTER Secretary, the Grand Knight and Financial Secretary will become the de facto delegates to the CHAPTER.

## **ARTICLE IV - Officers**

Section 1. The officers of the CHAPTER shall consist of a Chaplain, Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Warden, and three (3) Trustees.

Section 2. The Chairman shall be the chief executive officer of the CHAPTER. He shall preside at all meetings of the CHAPTER. He shall have general charge of the business of the CHAPTER, shall sign and execute all authorized contracts in the name of the CHAPTER, and with the Treasurer shall sign all bonds and shall countersign all checks, notes, drafts, or vouchers for payment of money. In the absence of the Chairman, the designated signatory on the CHAPTER's financial accounts, along with the Treasurer, shall countersign all checks, notes, drafts, or orders for payment of money. (Refer to Article IV, Section 4.) He shall also appoint a Chaplain and a Welfare Committee Chairman.

In case of the Chairman's removal from office or of his death, or resignation, the Vice Chairman shall become Chairman.

The Chairman shall be elected each year as recommended by the Nominating Committee and shall hold office for no more than three (3) terms, consecutive or non-consecutive. The Chairman shall not simultaneously hold the office of President, Bergen Federation.

Section 3. The Vice Chairman shall be vested with all the powers and shall perform all the duties of the Chairman in his absence or as defined in other sections of the By-Laws.

Section 4. The Secretary shall keep all the minutes of all the meetings of the CHAPTER; he shall have custody of the seal and shall affix the same to any instrument authorized by the Trustees. He shall attend to such correspondence as may be assigned to him and perform all the duties incident to his office.

Section 5. The Treasurer shall have the custody and care of all funds and securities of the CHAPTER, and shall deposit the same in the name and to the credit of the CHAPTER in such bank or banks as the Board of Trustees may designate. On written authorization of the Board of Trustees, he shall disburse the money of the CHAPTER by checks. The Treasurer shall be an ex-officio member of the Board of Trustees.

The Treasurer shall furnish to the CHAPTER a bond for the faithful performance of his duties in such sum as the Board of Trustees may designate. In the event of said bond being given by an indemnity company, the CHAPTER therefore shall pay the premium.

The Treasurer shall submit to the CHAPTER a monthly report of current receipts and disbursements and an annual report on the general condition of the finances of the CHAPTER. A copy of the annual report shall be available to any member council who requests it.

After the annual election of officers in June and before August 31, the incumbent Treasurer shall make all arrangements for the Chairman-elect, Treasurer-elect, and designated alternate signatory to be authorized signatories for any and all financial institutions that CHAPTER funds are deposited in.

Section 6. The Warden shall be in charge of the entrance to the meeting room of the CHAPTER and posting the CHAPTER banner. He shall make known if all present are in possession of proper credentials.

Section 7. It shall be the duty of the Board of Trustees to designate the depositories of all the funds of the CHAPTER if there is a change in the financial institution. The Trustees also shall designate the securities in which any of the funds of the CHAPTER shall be invested. Such designation of depositories or securities may be changed by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of all the delegates of the CHAPTER.

It shall be the duty of the Trustees to approve all bills and vouchers presented at each CHAPTER meeting, and in writing to approve their payments by the Treasurer, or reject it. Any bill or voucher rejected by the Trustees may be ordered paid by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of all the delegates of the CHAPTER.

It shall be the duty of the Trustees to audit the books and accounts of the Treasurer at the end of each fiscal year, submit a report of the audit at the first Chapter meeting of the Columbian year, and have the audit made available to the delegates of the member councils.

Section 8. If the office of Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Warden, or Trustee becomes vacant by reason of death, disability, resignation, disqualification, recall, or otherwise, within six (6) months from the end of the fraternal year, the Chairman will appoint a replacement to finish the vacated term, with the approval of the majority of the trustees.

## **ARTICLE V - Meetings**

Section 1. The regular meetings of the CHAPTER shall be held in October, January, April, and June. The CHAPTER meetings shall be open to all Third Degree members in good standing in the Order, who may be granted the privilege of the floor, but who shall possess no vote.

Section 2. Notice of regular meetings shall be sent to each council by mail at least five days prior to each meeting and will be posted to the CHAPTER website.

Section 3. Special meetings of the CHAPTER may be called by the Chairman at his discretion. Special meetings of the CHAPTER may be held for any purpose or purposes whatsoever. The Chairman on the written request of five (5) delegates shall call special meetings, each delegate being a representative from one (1) member Council. The request will state the object of the meeting. No business other than that stated in the request shall be transacted at a special meeting. Notice of special meetings shall be sent to each member council by mail at least five days prior to the meeting and shall state the time, place, and in general terms, the purpose of the meeting.

Section 4. One quarter (1/4) of the member councils that are represented by delegates and/or alternates shall constitute a quorum at CHAPTER meetings. Refer to Article I, Sections 5 and 6.

## **ARTICLE VI – Meeting Agenda/Process**

Section 1. Roberts Rules of Order shall govern the parliamentary procedure at all CHAPTER meetings.

The order of business at all regular meetings of the CHAPTER shall be:

1. Call to Order.
2. Warden's report of membership cards.
3. Opening Prayer.
4. Salute to the flag.
5. Roll call of Officers.
6. Roll call of Councils.
7. Roll call of District Deputies.
8. Reading the minutes of the previous meeting.
9. Reading of bills and communications.
10. Chairman's Report.
11. Treasurer's Report.
12. Trustees Report.
13. Welfare Committee Report.
14. Old Business.
15. New Business. (When an election of officers is held, this is the first item.)
16. Good of the Order.
17. Council Activities.
18. Chaplain's Report.
19. Degree Dates.
20. Host Grand Knight's Comments
21. Notice of Next Meeting.
22. Closing Prayer.
23. Adjournment.



## **ARTICLE VII – Officer and Trustee Election**

Section 1. The Chairman shall appoint a nominating committee at the January meeting. The Committee shall consist of five (5) members, comprised of the following:

- Four (4) current delegates
- The Most Immediate Past Chairman who shall serve as Chairman.

Section 2. Officers shall be elected annually at the June CHAPTER meeting, and except for the Trustees who shall hold office for terms of three (3) years, said officers shall hold office for a term of one (1) year from July 1 until June 30 in the following year or until their successors shall be elected.

Section 3. The slate presented by the nominating committee shall not include any member of the nominating committee.

Section 4. The nominating committee shall present a slate of candidates at the April CHAPTER meeting.

Section 5. Nominations from the floor will be accepted at the April CHAPTER meeting.

Section 6. A majority of eligible members present and voting is required to elect officers. Refer to Article I, Sections 5 and 6.

Section 7. When two (2) or more members have been nominated for the same position, voting for that office will be done by ballot.

## **ARTICLE VIII – Welfare Committee**

The Welfare Committee shall consist of a Welfare Chairman and Vice Chairman appointed by the Chapter Chairman.

Section 1. The following classes of cases are excluded from any participation in the benefits offered by the CHAPTER Welfare Committee.

- A. All diseases arising from an infraction of the Sixth Commandment. (According to the Traditional Catechetical Formula from the Vatican Website.)
- B. Any other cases which in the opinion of the CHAPTER Welfare Committee do not come within the purpose for which the said committee was organized. Such cases must be reported by it to the CHAPTER for action.
- C. All cases involving gambling debts.

Section 2. Cases in need of any form of relief provided by the CHAPTER shall be brought to the attention of the Grand Knight of the Council to which the brother in distress belongs. After investigation by the Grand Knight or by a member appointed by him, the case, if worthy shall be written up on forms provided for this purpose, signed by the Grand Knight and transmitted to the CHAPTER Welfare Committee. The Chairman of this committee shall assign each case a serial number and shall not impart the names of the brother in distress to any one, except as hereinafter provided. If the CHAPTER Welfare Committee approves the application, it shall submit the same at the same regular meeting of the CHAPTER with a recommendation for a specific action. If a case is presented to the CHAPTER and the next CHAPTER meeting is thirty (30) days or more away, then the case will be presented and voted via e-mail. Councils will vote via e-mail and use the "Reply All" feature of their respective e-mail system. On approval by the CHAPTER, a voucher shall be issued to the Treasurer, ordering the drawing of a check or checks. The name of the brother in distress shall appear on the check, but not the serial number.

Section 3. Brother in Distress: Relief of up to but not exceeding \$250.00 per application will be provided. The Welfare Chairman on recommendation of the majority of his committee shall present the case to the Delegates at a regular meeting of the CHAPTER. A majority vote of the Delegates present at a regular meeting is required on a motion directing payment of a relief award.

Section 4. If necessary, a case may be reopened, upon reinvestigation and a recommendation of the Welfare Committee. Upon presentation of a reopened case at a regular meeting a further payment may be authorized on a two-thirds majority vote of the Delegates present and voting. The amount is not to exceed a total payment of \$750.00 per year for a brother in distress per year; the year beginning on the date the case was originally presented to CHAPTER.

## **ARTICLE IX – Dissolution**

Section 1. The Chapter may be dissolved and its affairs wound down when circumstances dictate, including, but not limited to, inadequate financial resources to continue the Chapter's welfare mission, a decline in the number of member councils, etc., or other circumstances/events that make the further operation of the Chapter impossible or impractical.

Section 2. Upon determination that potential dissolution is a viable and/or advisable course of action to undertake, the Chairman will call a Special Meeting, as stipulated under Article V, Section 3. All member Councils are empowered to deliberate the appropriate course of action, with the final vote of DELEGATES AND/OR ALTERNATES to follow, to either accept or reject the proposed motion(s).

Section 3. The Officers and Trustees shall attend to the winding down of Chapter affairs. This shall include, but not be limited to, payment of outstanding invoices and other financial obligations, closing out any administrative or regulatory compliance matters, etc.

Section 4. Upon satisfaction of all financial obligations, any remaining financial assets shall be donated to a qualified 501(c)3 charitable organization. Preference shall be given to a qualified charitable organization affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church.

## **ARTICLE X – Amendment Procedure**

Amendments to these by-laws shall be presented in writing at a regular meeting of the CHAPTER, but shall not be acted upon until the next succeeding regular meeting. Notice of such proposed amendment shall be given to the member councils by mail within two (2) weeks from the date of the meeting at which it is presented. A two-thirds vote of the delegates present and voting shall be necessary for the adoption of such proposed amendments.