## MISSION

*North Middle Tennessee VOAD is a humanitarian association of independent voluntary organizations who may be active in all phases of disaster. Its mission is to foster efficient, streamlined service delivery to people affected by disaster, while eliminating unnecessary duplication of effort, through cooperation in the four phases of disaster: preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation.*

## NAME AND RELATIONSHIPS

* 1. North Middle Tennessee VOAD is an official regional-level affiliate of the Tennessee Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (Tennessee VOAD), an affiliate of the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (National VOAD).
  2. North Middle Tennessee VOAD is recognized by Tennessee VOAD as an official VOAD body. North Middle Tennessee VOAD must name a representative and alternate to participate in Tennessee VOAD routine scheduled business meetings.
  3. North Middle Tennessee VOAD is not intended to be a competing operational entity but an inclusive coalition of existing agencies active in disaster. Each member organization maintains its own identity and independence yet works closely with other agencies to improve services and eliminate duplications.

## VALUES & GUIDING BEHAVIORS

* 1. **Cooperation** – To create and foster a climate of cooperation at all levels and in all phases of disaster, to promote active assistance between members engaged in relief efforts and avoid duplication of assistance.
  2. **Communication** – The regular sharing of information about member organizations— their capacities, accomplishments, and commitments. VOAD members try to maintain good channels for sharing information, listen carefully to each other, and deal openly with concerns.
  3. **Coordination** – VOAD members are committed to work together and not competitively toward the goal of effective service to disaster victims. They seek to match services to need. Through planning and preparation, they equip member organizations to behave in a coordinated fashion in time of disaster.
  4. **Collaboration** – VOAD members dedicate themselves to work together to achieve specific goals and to undertake specific projects at disaster sites. They form partnerships during disaster response.
  5. **Education** – To provide training and increase awareness and preparedness in each organization.
  6. **Mitigation** – To support the efforts of member agencies and local government agencies to reduce future adverse effects of disaster through planning and preparedness.

## MEMBERSHIP

* 1. Members include representatives of organizations that are members of National VOAD; other local, regional, and state voluntary organizations; local government agencies; and other interagency disaster collaborative groups. An organization will be defined as one Member irrespective of multiple agency representation within the represented VOAD region. The membership of North Middle Tennessee VOAD is comprised of two tiers of membership as set forth in the following paragraphs:
     1. **Full Members**: Full members are organizations that are nonprofit and tax- exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. They have a disaster response program and policy for commitment of resources (i.e., personnel, funds, and equipment) to meet the needs of people anywhere in North Middle Tennessee affected by disaster, without discrimination as to race, creed, gender, or age.
     2. **Affiliate members**: Affiliate Membership may be granted to any organization or business (including government agencies or nonprofit organizations that are not 501(c)(3) exempt) with disaster planning and operations responsibilities or capabilities, but do not meet the requirements for full membership.
  2. Membership Term: The term of agency membership shall be perpetual, except as set forth in the following paragraph.
  3. Membership Application Procedures
     1. Organizations requesting membership will apply by letter and application to the Membership Committee, care of the Secretary (see Executive Committee roster) describing their intended commitment to the North Middle Tennessee VOAD. Candidate organizations are encouraged to attend North Middle Tennessee VOAD meetings during the pendency of their application.
     2. The North Middle Tennessee VOAD Membership Committee will determine category eligibility of the candidate organization using the North Middle Tennessee VOAD bylaws and present the application for discussion at the next business meeting.
     3. The North Middle Tennessee VOAD Members will vote after the application is presented and discussed to extend or deny an offer of membership to the candidate organization.
  4. Membership List:
     1. The Membership Committee of North Middle Tennessee VOAD shall maintain an accurate and current list of the names and contact information of the members of North Middle Tennessee VOAD. Such list shall be available for inspection at any and all meetings of Members of North Middle Tennessee VOAD.
     2. Each member agency or organization shall provide to the Membership Committee, for placement on the official list of voting members, the names, and addresses of the persons appointed to represent it and to vote for it at meetings of North Middle Tennessee VOAD.
  5. Responsibilities of Membership:
     1. The leadership of a North Middle Tennessee VOAD member organization must be committed to sending knowledgeable representatives to attend North Middle Tennessee VOAD meetings.
     2. The Member representative must have access to the resources of their organization to serve the needs of disaster victims. North Middle Tennessee VOAD member organizations are encouraged to designate one alternate to attend North Middle Tennessee VOAD meetings.
     3. The leadership of a North Middle Tennessee VOAD member organization shall designate the primary representative and one alternate representative in a letter to the Membership Committee. This does not limit the number of representatives that can attend North Middle Tennessee VOAD meetings or Committee Meetings.
     4. North Middle Tennessee VOAD strongly encourages all members to complete IS-288: The Role of Voluntary Agencies in Emergency Management online training at [http://training.fema.gov.](http://training.fema.gov/) This course facilitates an understanding of our Partner member agencies and the VOADs overarching role in disaster.
     5. All members pay annual dues as established by the Executive Committee.
     6. North Middle Tennessee VOAD member organization is requested to sit on one of the standing committees.
     7. If a member cannot attend a meeting, a representative from the organization must communicate to the Executive Committee that their agency will not be in attendance for an excused absence.
  6. Membership Termination:
     1. Membership may be terminated after written notification to the organization.
     2. The membership of any Member Agency may be terminated at any time by a majority vote of the Executive Committee for the following reasons:
  7. Any agency membership may be terminated if that member agency fails:
     1. to pay the annual membership fee to North Middle Tennessee VOAD and/or
     2. to have organizational representation attendance at 50% consecutive meetings of the membership of North Middle Tennessee VOAD and/or
     3. to abide by Article II of the North Middle Tennessee VOAD bylaws

## VOTING

* 1. Qualifications
     1. Each Full Member organization is entitled to one formal vote
     2. Members present at a properly noticed meeting shall constitute a quorum to do business.
     3. All voting except as otherwise provided for in these bylaws shall pass by simple majority vote.
     4. All votes (formal or consensus reached) will be recorded in the meeting minutes.
     5. If for some reason there needs to be an immediate vote of the North Middle Tennessee VOAD, voting may be done through email or by proxy.
     6. An individual may represent more than one member organization however an individual has one vote regardless of the number of organizations he/she may represent.
  2. Officer Elections:
     1. Eligibility: Individuals holding an office must be from a Full Member organization. Individuals, not organizations are elected; however individual organizations are limited to having one representative serving as an officer in any election term.
     2. Procedure for nomination: Any member of the North Middle Tennessee VOAD may nominate officers. Nominations must be seconded to be accepted.
     3. Election of Officers: A list of the accepted nominees must appear on the agenda for the second to last meeting of the odd numbered year.
     4. Formal voting for officers takes place at the last annual meeting of the odd numbered year and is open to all Full Members of the North Middle Tennessee VOAD.
     5. Terms of Office: Terms of office are for two consecutive years and begin with the first meeting following the election.
     6. Filling Vacant Positions: When an officer’s position is vacated, the Chairperson shall call for nominations for individuals to serve the unexpired term and will hold an election no later than the next business meeting.

## OFFICERS

* 1. The Executive Committee consists of the following officers:
     1. Chairperson (may not serve more than two consecutive terms)

Function: presides at meetings, acts as spokesperson and represents North Middle Tennessee VOAD, delegates tasks as pertains to North Middle Tennessee VOAD business, nominates committee members to be voted on by the EC, convenes meetings and provides leadership and is the Tennessee VOAD Liaison. The Chairperson with the consent of the voting membership may engage in external contracts.

* + 1. Vice-Chairperson (may not serve more than two consecutive terms)

*Function - Acts on behalf of the chair in the absence of or at the request of the Chairperson.*

* + 1. Secretary (may not serve more than two consecutive terms)

*Function - Maintains organizational records, makes notifications, and keeps minutes of meetings.*

* + 1. Treasurer (may not serve more than two consecutive terms)

*Function - Maintains financial records of the North Middle Tennessee VOAD*

## STANDING COMMITTEES

The following Standing Committees will be appointed per the bylaws. Committees shall be representative of the North Middle Tennessee VOAD member organizations. Specific committee definitions, objectives, goals, and duties for each committee will be established by majority vote of Full Members. Ad hoc committees can be created as needed by a two thirds (2/3) vote of membership.

* + - Membership Committee
    - Disaster Response/Recovery Committee
    - Executive Committee

## ARTICLE VII: MEETINGS

* 1. North Middle Tennessee VOAD may designate any place within North Middle Tennessee as the place of meeting for any general meeting. Any special meetings, or emergency meetings may be called by the Executive Committee and may be held anywhere within North Middle Tennessee. If so designated and with enough advance knowledge, any meeting may be held via telephone, conference call, web meeting or by the use of other such technology.
  2. Committee Meetings:
     1. Committee meetings are limited to committee members.
     2. Technical advisors may attend committee meetings at the request of the chairperson.
     3. All work conducted by a committee must be submitted to the Executive Committee for review and dissemination to members.

## ARTICLE VIII: BUDGET AND DUES

Dues to North Middle Tennessee VOAD from local agencies will be set by majority vote of the Executive Committee. Notification of any change in the annual dues will be made available to the agency by the Treasurer at least two months prior to the effective date of the change. Funds received by North Middle Tennessee VOAD from any source will be maintained with a separate accounting from the Treasurers agency.

## ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS

All proposed amendments to the By-Laws must be submitted to the Executive Committee, who shall distribute copies among the entire membership for general discussion before a formal vote by the Full Members.