

North American Beikoku Shido-kan Karate-do Association



Bylaws

As Amended and Restated Effective January 1, 2017

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PREAMBLE

The following Bylaws are intended to establish requirements and standards for Title and Dan Degree Examinations held by the North American Beikoku Shido-kan Karate-do Association ("Association"). The Bylaws are also intended to provide guidance regarding Kyu Degrees. Finally, the Bylaws are intended to establish the responsibilities and expectations of Shibu ("Branch"), Fuku Shibu ("Sub-Branch") and Jun Shibu ("Converting") dojos.

ARTICLE I: Title and Dan Degree Examinations / In General

- 1.1 **Examination Timing.** Title and Dan Degree Examinations ("Examinations") shall be held three times per calendar year, in March, July and November. The President of the Association—Seikichi Iha, Hanshi, Jyu-dan—is vested with the exclusive authority to set the precise time and date of each Examination.
- 1.2 **Examination Location.** Examinations for ranks beginning with Yon-dan and above must be held at the Hombu Dojo or an alternate location near the Hombu Dojo as designated by the President. Examinations for ranks beginning with San-dan and below may be held at a Branch or Sub-Branch Dojo. All Examinations must be held in the presence of the President.
- 1.3 **Examination Requirements.** Title and Dan Degree Candidates ("Candidates") must meet the following requirements:
 - (a) *Jisugi.* Candidates must pass a practical skill ("jitsugi") examination conducted by the Title and Dan Degree Examination Committee. Rules regarding the Title and Dan Degree Examination Committee are set forth under Article II of these Bylaws.
 - (b) *Enrolled Student Requirement.* Each Candidate must be an enrolled student in a participating Branch or Sub-Branch Dojo.
 - (c) *Dojo Director Recommendation.* Branch and Sub-Branch Dojo owners ("Dojo Directors") must make a favorable recommendation to the Committee on behalf Candidates from their respective dojos.
 - (d) *Pre-Examinations.* It is highly recommended that Michigan-based Candidates attend at least 10 Pre-Examinations conducted by the President. Such informal Pre-Examinations may be conducted before, during or after normal Hombu Dojo class times. Each Michigan-based Candidate shall be given a Pre-Examination attendance card by the Hombu Dojo. It is each Candidate's responsibility to provide this card to the President following each informal Pre-Examination. The Pre-Examination card shall be kept in the Hombu Dojo attendance card box.

It is highly recommended that Branch and Sub-Branch Dojos based outside of Michigan maintain a Pre-Examination process similar to the system described above with the seniors in their area. The President may establish Regional Pre-Examination Committees and designate a Chairman of each such committee to oversee the Pre-Examination process of specific geographic areas.

- (e) *Continuous Membership Requirement.* Members holding the rank of Ik-kyu and above must maintain continuous active membership status in the Association. Dojo Directors are responsible for ensuring their students' compliance with this provision.
- (f) *Age and Continuous Training Requirements.* Candidates must satisfy the age and continuous training requirements set forth under Section 1.4.

1.4 Age and Continuous Training Requirements. Dan Degree Candidates must meet certain age and continuous training requirements in order to be eligible for specified ranks. The requirements for each Dan rank are set forth as follows:

- (a) *Sho-dan (1st).* Age 15 / At least 3 years of Shido-kan training.
- (b) *Ni-dan (2nd).* No Age Requirement / Must complete at least 2 years of Shido-kan training following promotion to Sho-dan.
- (c) *San-dan (3rd).* No Age Requirement / Must graduate from high school and complete at least 3 years of Shido-kan training following promotion to Ni-dan.
- (d) *Yon-dan (4th).* No Age Requirement / Must complete at least 4 years of Shido-kan training following promotion to San-dan.
- (e) *Go-dan (5th).* No Age Requirement / Must complete at least 5 years of Shido-kan training following promotion to Yon-dan.
- (f) *Roku-dan (6th).* Age 35 / Must complete at least 6 years of Shido-kan training following promotion to Go-dan.
- (g) *Nana-dan (7th).* Age 40 / The promotion to Nana-dan is based upon the recommendation of the President of the North American Beikoku Shido-kan Karate-do Association.
- (h) *Hachi-dan (8th).* Age 50 / The promotion to Hachi-dan is based upon the recommendation of the President of the North American Beikoku Shido-kan Karate-do Association.
- (i) *Kyu-dan (9th).* Entrusted to the President of the North American Beikoku Shido-kan Karate-do Association.
- (j) *Jyu-dan (10th).* Entrusted to President of the North American Beikoku Shido-kan Karate-do Association.

1.5 Belt Colors. Dan Degree belt colors are stated as follows:

- (a) Sho-dan Through Roku-dan / Black.
- (b) Nana-dan Through Hachi-dan / Red and White.
- (c) Kyu-dan Through Jyu-dan / Red.

- 1.6 **Certificates.** Candidates who successfully pass an Examination may obtain a certificate recognizing their respective Title and/or Dan Degree. Certificates are furnished exclusively through the Association. Any certificate furnished without the approval of the Association is considered invalid.
- 1.7 **Rank Conversions.** A Title and/or Dan Degree holder from another martial arts style may be eligible to obtain an appropriate Title and/or Dan Degree from the Association if: (a) he or she earns the approval of the Dojo Director of his or her Branch or Sub-Branch Dojo; and (b) he or she passes an Examination. Kyu rank conversions are entrusted to the judgment of Dojo Directors.

ARTICLE II: Title and Dan Degree Examinations / Examination Committees

- 2.1 **Title and Dan Degree Examination Committee.** Examinations shall be conducted by the Title and Dan Degree Examination Committee ("Committee"). The Committee is selected by the President and consists of senior members of the Association.

In order to pass the Examination, Candidates must receive a passing vote from 60% of the Committee. Each member of the Committee may cast one vote.

The President holds the additional position of Chairman of the Committee. The President is vested with the authority to overrule any decision of the Committee.

- 2.2 **Regional Pre-Examination Committees.** The President may establish Regional Pre-Examination Committees as he deems appropriate to conduct formal Pre-Examinations to assess each Candidate's readiness to participate in a final Examination conducted by the Committee. The President may designate a Chairman of each Regional Pre-Examination Committee.
- 2.3 **Examination Guidelines.** The President has established *Guidelines for Evaluating Title and Dan Degree Candidates* ("Guidelines") to provide a framework for the Committee and the Regional Pre-Examination Committees to assess whether a Candidate has met the necessary criteria for promotion within the Association. Such Guidelines are hereby incorporated into these Bylaws by reference and will be treated as an additional provision of these Bylaws.

ARTICLE III: Title and Dan Degree Examinations / Administrative Process

- 3.1 **Candidate List.** Dojo Heads must submit the names of Candidates to the Hombu Dojo no later than 6 weeks in advance of the Examination.
- 3.2 **Application.** Candidates must submit an application and the appropriate fee (by check or money order) to "Seikichi Iha". Checks must be mailed to 2002 Cedar St., Holt, MI 48842 no later than 2 weeks in advance of the Examination. The Association will refund a Candidate's examination fee in the event the Candidate fails the Examination. The Examination fees, which are subject to change without notice by the President, are stated as follows:
- (a) Sho-dan (1st) / \$275 (Includes new obi).
 - (b) Ni-dan (2nd) / \$250.

- (c) San-dan (3rd) / \$275.
- (d) Yon-dan (4th) / \$300.
- (e) Go-dan (5th) / \$325.
- (f) Roku-dan (6th) / \$650 (Includes new obi and Title with Certificate of Rank).
- (g) Nana-dan (7th) / \$700 (Includes new obi and Title with Certificate of Rank).
- (h) Hachi-dan (8th) / \$750 (Includes new obi and Title with Certificate of Rank).

ARTICLE IV: Titles

- 4.1 **In General.** Titles are typically independent of Dan rank, but are included with the Examinations for certain ranks as provided in Section 3.2. Titles are not cumulative; to earn a Title, a Candidate does not need to be certified in the previous Title.
- 4.2 **Shido-in.** An “apprentice or assistant instructor” who has not yet been formally recognized as a Sensei.
- 4.3 **Renshi.** “A person who has mastered oneself.” This person is considered fully capable of opening a Branch or Sub-Branch Dojo. A Renshi “has a name.” He or she is no longer one of the many. A Renshi typically holds the rank of 5th Dan.
- 4.4 **Shihan.** “A Certified Instructor.” This person is recognized as having the ability to oversee an area of Sub-Branch Dojos and is trusted to maintain quality not only by example of his own Dojo, but by those that his students may establish. A Shihan holds the rank of 6th Dan.
- 4.5 **Kyoshi.** “Knowledgeable Person.” He is a senior member who has gained the respect of members from all over as well as his teacher. The Kyoshi is recognized as being able to represent the Hanshi anywhere the Kyoshi travels. The Kyoshi holds the rank of 7th Dan and/or 8th Dan.
- 4.6 **Hanshi.** “Master.” An honorary title given only to the highest ranked of an organization. This Title is granted to someone who has spent their life promoting selfless karate and their teacher’s organization, and has performed these duties extremely well. The Hanshi is the successor to the teachings of the Hanshi’s teacher. The Hanshi holds the rank of 9th Dan and/or 10th Dan.

ARTICLE V: Kyu Degrees

- 5.1 **Kyu Degrees and Belt Colors.** The Hombu Dojo Kyu Degree and Belt Color system is stated as follows:
 - (a) Hachi-kyu / White.
 - (b) Nana-kyu / White (Yellow Stripe).
 - (c) Rok-kyu / Yellow.
 - (d) Go-kyu / Yellow (Green Stripe).

- (e) Yon-kyu / Green.
 - (f) San-kyu / Green (Brown Stripe).
 - (g) Ni-kyu / Brown.
 - (h) Ik-kyu / Brown (Black Stripe).
- 5.2 **Qualifications and Requirements.** The qualifications, requirements and approval of Kyu Degrees are entrusted to the judgment of Dojo Directors.
- 5.3 **Variations.** Variations of the Kyu Degree and Belt Color system as stated in Section 5.1 are acceptable up to Yon-kyu. Variations within these parameters are entrusted to the judgment of Dojo Directors.
- 5.4 **Youth Kyu Degrees and Belt Colors.** Youth Kyu Degrees and Belt Colors are entrusted to the judgment of Dojo Directors. Youth students in elementary school may not progress to beyond Ik-kyu.
- 5.5 **Kyu Degree Certificates and Fees.** Successful Kyu Degree Candidates may receive a certificate signed by the President, which Dojo Directors may obtain through the Association. The fee for youth Kyu Degree certificates is \$5. The fee for adult Kyu Degree certificates is \$10. The President expects that Dojo Directors will utilize official Kyu Degree certificates that are prepared and provided by the Association.

ARTICLE VI: Branch and Sub-Branch Dojos

- 6.1 **Branch Dojo Fees.** Branch Dojos affiliated with the Association must be enrolled with the Hombu Dojo and remit annual, bi-annual, or monthly fees to the Association. Such fees are set by the President and are subject to change at any time. The current monthly fee is \$100, to be remitted by ACH Electronic Payment.
- 6.2 **Sub-Branch Dojo Fees.** Branch Dojos must remit half of the fees charged to Sub-Branch Dojos under their control to the Association. Fees charged to Sub-Branch Dojos are set by Branch Dojo Directors.
- 6.3 **Promotion of the Association.** Branch and Sub-Branch Dojos are expected to actively promote Association membership to all students as well as attendance at the National Training Seminar.
- 6.4 **Seminars.** The President may periodically conduct seminars in the geographic area of one or more Branch Dojos at the expense of such Branch Dojos. These seminars are intended to assist in developing the technique of the students of the Branch Dojos, and to promote Shido-kan in the geographic area of the Branch Dojos. Branch Dojos are responsible for the President's travel costs and lodging, and must furnish a fee set by the President. Dojo Directors are expected to strongly encourage their members to attend these seminars and support the President.
- 6.5 **Sub-Branch Dojos.** A Branch Dojo that maintains a Sub-Branch Dojo is responsible for ensuring that the Sub-Branch Dojo adheres to the provisions of these Bylaws. The Branch

Dojo is also responsible for communicating the decisions of the Association to the Sub-Branch Dojo and must keep close contact with the Sub-Branch Dojo. The Association must approve the founding of each Sub-Branch Dojo.

Sub-Branch Dojos may apply to the Association for promotion to Branch Dojo status. The Committee renders decisions on whether to elevate Sub-Branch Dojos to Branch Dojo status.

- 6.6 **Patches.** Association patches must be purchased through the Association headquarters. Patch pricing for Dojo Directors, which is subject to change without notice by the President, is stated as follows:

- (a) 100 Patches / \$3.00 Per Patch.
- (b) 50 Patches / \$3.50 Per Patch.
- (c) 25 Patches / \$4.00 Per Patch.
- (d) Under 25 Patches / \$4.50 Per Patch.

ARTICLE VII: Jun-Shibu Dojo Conversion Process

- 7.1 **Conversion Process.** Dojos affiliated with another martial arts style may apply to the President to convert to a Branch Dojo of the Association. Branch Dojos are responsible for referring prospective Jun-Shibu Dojos to the Hombu Dojo in order for the Hombu Dojo to facilitate the conversion process. The following subsections outline the conversion process:

- (a) *Initial Hombu Dojo Visit.* Prospective Jun-Shibu Dojos must undertake an initial visit to the Hombu Dojo to be attended by the prospective Jun-Shibu Dojo owner(s), as well as senior students of the prospective Jun-Shibu Dojo. During this visit, the aforementioned representatives of the Jun-Shibu Dojo shall observe class, and meet with the President (and Hombu Dojo sempai) to discuss the Jun-Shibu Dojo conversion process.
- (b) *Second Official Hombu Dojo Visit / Decision to Pursue Association Membership.* After four to six weeks following a prospective Jun-Shibu Dojo's initial visit to the Hombu Dojo, the prospective Jun-Shibu Dojo must decide whether to pursue joining the Association. In the event of an affirmative decision, the members of the Jun-Shibu Dojo will return to the Hombu Dojo and begin to learn the Association's basic curriculum. During the learning process, the Hombu Dojo will continually evaluate the Jun-Shibu Dojo's commitment, progress and character. The Hombu Dojo will also investigate the Jun-Shibu Dojo's background, history and reputation.

Total Conversion Time at this Point in the Process: 4-6 Weeks.

- (c) *Third Official Hombu Dojo Visit / Evaluation.* After four to six weeks following the Second Official Hombu Dojo Visit, representatives of the Jun-Shibu Dojo must return to the Hombu Dojo in order for the Hombu Dojo to evaluate the Jun-Shibu Dojo's progress and to provide additional information regarding the conversation process.

These representatives will then return to the Jun-Shibu Dojo to teach what they've learned to other members of the Jun-Shibu Dojo, and will prepare to host a seminar conducted by the President as described in subsection (d) below. Up until this point, the Hombu Dojo does not expect a commitment from the Jun-Shibu Dojo to formally join the Association if approved by the President.

Total Conversion Time at this Point in the Process: 2-3 Months.

- (d) *First Jun-Shibu Dojo Seminar.* After two to four months following a decision to pursue joining the Association and to learn the Association's basic curriculum, the Jun-Shibu Dojo must arrange, at the Jun-Shibu Dojo's expense, for the President and a senior Association member to visit the Jun-Shibu Dojo and hold a seminar. The seminar will give the President and the senior Association member an opportunity to evaluate the Jun-Shibu Dojo. The seminar will also give the Jun-Shibu Dojo an additional opportunity to observe the long-term advantages of membership in the Association, and to further evaluate whether to formally join the Association if approved by the President.

Total Conversion Time at this Point in the Process: 4-7 Months.

- (e) *Third Official Hombu Dojo Visit / Evaluation.* Two to four months following the seminar held by the President as described in subsection (d) above, representatives of the Jun-Shibu Dojo must return to the Hombu Dojo. At this point, representatives of the Jun-Shibu Dojo continue to progress in their understanding of the Association's curriculum and, if appropriate, may advance to learn higher level kata, kumite and bunkai. Following the visit, representatives of the Jun-Shibu Dojo then relay these additional teachings to other members of the Jun-Shibu Dojo.

At this stage of the conversion process, the Hombu Dojo continues to evaluate the progress of the Jun-Shibu Dojo owner(s) as well as students of the owner(s). Additionally, the Hombu Dojo will have verified the history, background and reputation of the Jun-Shibu Dojo.

Total Conversion Time at this Point in the Process: 6-11 Months.

- (f) *Fourth Official Hombu Dojo Visit / Evaluation.* Two to four months following the Jun-Shibu Dojo's Third Official Hombu Dojo Visit, representatives of the Jun-Shibu Dojo must return to the Hombu Dojo with a **full commitment** to join the Association. At this time, the Hombu Dojo will continue to evaluate the progress and effort of members of the Jun-Shibu Dojo to learn the Association's curriculum. The Hombu Dojo will also finalize arrangements for the President to hold a second and final seminar at the Jun-Shibu Dojo within two to four months of the Fourth Official Hombu Dojo Visit.

Total Conversion Time at this Point in the Process: 10-15 Months.

- (g) *Second Jun-Shibu Dojo Seminar.* Two to four months following the Jun-Shibu Dojo's

Fourth Official Hombu Dojo Visit, the Jun-Shibu Dojo shall host, at the Jun-Shibu Dojo's expense, a seminar conducted by the President and a senior Association member in order for the President to conduct a final evaluation of the Jun-Shibu Dojo.

Total Conversion Time at this Point in the Process: 12-19 Months.

- 7.2 **Conversion Decision.** Following the step described in subsection (g) of Section 7.1, the President shall make one of three determinations stated as follows: (a) the Jun-Shibu Dojo has made sufficient progress to convert to a Branch Dojo; (b) the Jun-Shibu Dojo requires additional time, study and training to convert to a Branch Dojo; or (c) the Jun-Shibu Dojo is not suited to join the Association.

If the President decides that the Jun-Shibu Dojo may convert to a Branch Dojo and join the Association, the Jun-Shibu Dojo owner(s) shall return to the Hombu Dojo with senior students for final instruction and formal induction into the Association.

ARTICLE VIII: Miscellaneous Provisions

8.1 Authority of the President.

- (a) *Interpretation, Amendment and Termination.* The President is vested with the exclusive authority and discretion to interpret, amend or terminate these Bylaws and any of their provisions, in whole or in part, at any time.
- (b) *Waivers and Exceptions.* Notwithstanding the standards, requirements, expectations and responsibilities outlined herein, the President has the exclusive authority to waive any such provision and authorize individual exceptions as the President deems appropriate.

For example, the President may deviate from the conversion process for Jun-Shibu dojos outlined above, and the President may permit Candidates to participate in an Examination even if the Candidate does not fully meet the applicable age and continuous training requirements. (These examples do not constitute an exhaustive list of the President's authority to deviate from the terms of these Bylaws.)

- (c) *Total Authority.* The President is vested with the exclusive authority and discretion to manage the Association in any manner the President deems appropriate and to make all decisions regarding Association-related matters. For example, the President may override decisions of the Committee, delegate authority and responsibility as he believes necessary, render judgments regarding any manner related to the Association, and otherwise conduct the affairs of the Association as the President deems fit.

- 8.2 **Misconduct.** A Title and/or Dan Degree holder who defames the Association or otherwise engages in misconduct as determined by the President may be subject to discipline by the Committee. Such discipline may include deprivation of his or her Title or Dan Degree.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the President reserves the authority to pass judgment on any matter regarding the Association, including matters involving misconduct, regardless of any decision made by the Committee.

- 8.3 **Ratification and Compliance.** Dojo Directors of participating Branch and Sub-Branch Dojos are deemed to have ratified these Bylaws by virtue of their membership in the Association. Accordingly, Dojo Directors are bound to comply with these Bylaws and the direction of the President.