

Northern Steppes Bylaws

November 22, 2025

Article 1. Name and Purpose

1. This organization shall be known as Northern Steppes, a realm of Belegarth Medieval Combat Society.
2. The purpose of this organization is to participate in the Foam Sport Belegarth, which includes running regularly scheduled practices and events.

Article 2. Definitions¹

1. **Realm.** This organization, previously known as a *chapter*².
2. **Leadership.** Individuals that fulfill offices and roles defined in *Article 5*.
3. **The Council.** The group of officers defined in *Article 5. Section 2*.
4. **Officer.** An individual belonging to the *Council* that fulfills an office defined in *Article 5. Section 3*.
5. **Role-Holder.** An individual that fulfills a Supplemental Role defined in *Article 5. Section 4*.
6. **Registering.** Becoming a member or renewing membership via *Article 4*.
7. **Members.** *Members of the Realm.* Individuals that have *Registered*.
8. **Participants.** Anyone attending Realm-hosted events, both combatants & non-combatants.
9. **Event.** Any scheduled happening arranged by the Realm: weekly practices, build days, special events, member meetings.
10. **Special Event.** A larger, fighting-based event, where fighters outside of the Realm are explicitly invited, e.g. GotC, Kill-Grill-Chills
11. **Troll.** The check-in set up at special events where participants can pay, sign-in, and get information about the event.
12. **Quorum.** The minimum number of people needed for a vote to be valid.
13. **Simple Majority.** More *Yes* votes than *No* votes with the total number of *Yes/No* votes exceeding quorum.
14. **Consensus Approval.** *Yes* votes exceeding quorum with 0 *No* votes.
15. **Online.** Regarding voting, a group-specific Discord channel, group text, or group chat.

¹Completely new article

²All instances of “chapter” have been replaced with “realm”

Article 3. Rule sets

1. All realm-hosted events shall follow the Belegarth rule set established under the Book of War (BoW), as approved by the Belegarth War Council, with the addition of:
 - 1.1. **Age Limits.** In addition to the BoW rule of age limits, Children ages 12–15 that are approved by the Council after discussion with their parent(s)/guardian(s) may attend on the field practices only with their parent(s)/guardian(s) present after signing a physical waiver.
 - 1.2. **Electronic Wavier.** A fillable electronic version of the Northern Steppes' Belegarth waivers are made available online. These waivers are available only to those ages 18 and up.
 - 1.3. **Rigid Armor.** Rigid metal knee and elbow armor is allowed.
 - 1.4. **Healing Poems.** A poem of Healing must be recited or read aloud. The minimum length of a poem of healing is 180 syllables and must be approved at event check-in.
 - 1.4.1. The healer cannot heal *themselves her/himself*³ or their own equipment.
 - 1.4.2. To heal a person, the Healer must be in direct physical contact with the injured person. The healer may only heal one person at a time.
 - 1.4.3. A healer may not heal a person while either are under direct attack. If the healer or injured person is attacked or distracted, or contact is broken for any reason, the entire healing poem must be read or recited again.
 - 1.4.4. When the healer completes reading the healing poem, all wounds and any items held by the wounded fighter are healed or repaired (i.e. armor, bow, shield, etc)
2. All leadership, members, and participants must abide by the Code of Conduct established by the Council.

Article 4. Membership⁴

1. **Benefits.** While anyone may attend events and use loaner gear, participants may annually register as a *Member* of Northern Steppes and be granted the following benefits:
 - 1.1. Priority use of loaner gear.
 - 1.2. Use of any Council-specified, Member-only loaner gear.
 - 1.3. Voting rights during the annual meeting and other voting events.
 - 1.4. Entrance to all Northern Steppes build days, if not free.⁵
2. **Registration.** Members may not register in the period between the closing of bylaw amendments mentioned in Article 7 and the end-of-voting during the annual meeting. Otherwise, registration happens as soon as dues are paid.
3. **Term.** The Council will decide to implement monthly or yearly terms. Either term expires at the end-of-voting at the annual meeting.

³More inclusive language

⁴Completely rewritten article—main changes are highlighted

⁵Removed GOTC day option

4. **Dues.** The Council will determine the cost of dues, and announce it at the annual meeting.
 - 4.1. To encourage registering at the beginning of a season, the Council may decide to discount the dues prior to a selected date, such as May 1st.
 - 4.2. If dues are unaffordable by someone wanting to become a Member, the Council may approve an explicit amount of volunteering, completed prior to their registration, in lieu of dues. (list specific examples)
5. **Uses.** Usage of funds is decided by the Council with information supplied by the Treasurer, and may include, but is not limited to:
 - 5.1. Event or site reservation costs and fees.
 - 5.2. Props or equipment needed for events.
 - 5.3. Website hosting/maintenance.
 - 5.4. Loaner gear creation, repair, and maintenance.
6. **Removal.** If a Member is banned from the realm, their membership is automatically revoked, with no refundment of dues.

Article 5. Leadership⁶

1. Leadership consists of all Council officers and anyone fulfilling a supplemental role, and all are required to:
 - 1.1. Be members of the realm at the time of their election.
 - 1.2. Remain unpaid volunteers.
 - 1.3. Be clearly identifiable at realm-hosted special events.
2. **The Council** is the main decision-making entity of the realm.
 - 2.1. **Voting.** The Council may vote on day-to-day matters for which there is no clear consensus.
 - 2.1.1. In Council votes, a quorum is three officers, and must include the President or Vice President.
 - 2.1.2. If a quorum is present in person, an attempt should be made to discuss and gather the votes of those not present *Online*, but the voting may happen in person.
 - 2.1.2.1. Otherwise, the discussion and voting should happen *Online*.
 - 2.1.3. All vote results should be announced to Leadership and recorded by the Secretary.
 - 2.1.4. The Council may choose to discuss any issue with Leadership-at-large or Realm Members, but only Council officers may vote.
 - 2.2. **Responsibilities:**
 - 2.2.1. Welcome newcomers to the sport/realm.
 - 2.2.2. Consistently attend realm's events—practices, special events, build days, and meetings—for a recognizable portion of the duration.

⁶Completely rewritten article—main changes are highlighted

- 2.2.2.1. Attending practice a minimum of every other week is imperative to maintain these positions.
 - 2.2.2.2. Prolonged absences are to be allowed only for vacations, illness, and other unordinary circumstances.
 - 2.2.2.3. If an officer does not show at scheduled practice for three consecutive weeks without communicating a written explanation to the Council or the realm as a whole, they are to be dismissed and a replacement is to be selected by the remaining officers.
 - 2.2.2.4. Council officers who work are expected to adjust their schedules such that they can regularly attend practice and fulfill their commitment to the realm.
 - 2.2.3. Have regular access to the internet and email so they are aware of incoming email and group activity on forums (Facebook, Discord, et al).
 - 2.2.4. Have moderating privileges on the forums and are to take responsibility managing as needed.
 - 2.2.5. Meet for at least 15 minutes every month.
 - 2.2.6. Organize an annual meeting as described in Article 6.
- 2.3. **Capabilities**. A *Simple Majority* is required unless otherwise specified:
- 2.3.1. **Create a new supplemental role**, with (a) a title and (b) explicit written responsibilities, and (c) notify realm members.
 - 2.3.2. **Assign any role** (vacant or occupied) for the duration of a special event, as long as (a) that person is a realm member, and (b) special event attendees are notified, either ahead of time or during the special event.
 - 2.3.3. **Appoint any vacant role** with *Consensus Approval*, as long as (a) that person is a realm member, and (b) realm members are notified.
 - 2.3.4. **Vacate any role** (with responsibilities returning to the officer described) with *Consensus Approval*, and notify realm members.
 - 2.3.5. **Appoint any vacant office** with *Consensus Approval*, as long as (a) that person is a realm member, (b) that person isn't already an officer, and (c) realm members are notified.
 - 2.3.6. **Remove an officer** with *Consensus Approval*, notify realm members, and replace the officer via Section 2.3.5.
 - 2.3.7. **Ban a participant** from the realm with a *Consensus Approval*.
- 2.4. **Removal**. If a petition signed by a **quorum of realm members** ~~Abstained signatures are only considered “nay” in this scenario; this is in exception to Article VI Section 1.1.~~⁷ to impeach an officer is presented to the Council, the Council should:
- 2.4.1. Give that officer one month to turn over responsibilities to another officer, ~~at which point that office is considered vacant, and may be appointed via Section 2.3.5.~~
 - 2.4.2. **OR** vote to remove the officer immediately via Section 2.3.6.. If the vote fails, **Section 2.4.1. must be followed.**

⁷Revised quorum definition accomplishes the same goal

2.5. **Resignation.** An officer may resign at any time, and should be replaced via Section 2.3.5.

3. Council Officers:

3.1. President

- 3.1.1. Serve as coordinator of the realm and the Council.
- 3.1.2. Plan for the future of the realm.
- 3.1.3. Outline what needs done for recruitment, event planning, etc. then assign people to do it individually or through committees/teams.
- 3.1.4. Work towards obtaining tax exempt status.
- 3.1.5. Work with the Treasurer to file all tax returns and reports required to maintain tax exempt status.
- 3.1.6. Establish standard operating procedures to:
 - 3.1.6.1. Run the annual meeting
 - 3.1.6.2. Handle the annual election or any other voting matter

3.2. Vice President

- 3.2.1. Fulfill the duties of the President in their absence, or as delegated.
- 3.2.2. Fill the gaps in duties described in these bylaws.
- 3.2.3. Encouraged to also run for a supplemental role.

3.3. Secretary⁸

- 3.3.1. Waiver gathering and tracking.
- 3.3.2. Update realm information as needed.
- 3.3.3. Keep record of former information.
- 3.3.4. Operate Troll at special events, or train someone to do so.
 - 3.3.4.1. Keep a list of people that are able to operate Troll and make Leadership and special event staff aware of them.
- 3.3.5. Take notes/minutes during meetings.
- 3.3.6. Store/update any standard operating procedures.
- 3.3.7. Establish standard operating procedures to:
 - 3.3.7.1. Operate Troll at special events.

3.4. Event Officer

- 3.4.1. Plan and schedule realm events, delegating duties where necessary:
 - 3.4.1.1. Weekly practices
 - 3.4.1.2. Special events, such as:
 - 3.4.1.2.1. Longer day or overnight/multi-day events
 - 3.4.1.2.2. “Kill-Grill-Chill” potluck-type events
 - 3.4.1.3. Build days
 - 3.4.1.4. Annual meetings
- 3.4.2. In collaboration with the Public Relations Coordinator, inform realm members and potential attendees about realm events.
- 3.4.3. The Council is to be consulted on any subgroup sponsorship when budgeting and planning for the realm event.

⁸Created from Quartermaster's responsibilities

3.4.4. Coordinate a presence at other events, and serve as/delegate a campmaster.

3.4.5. Establish standard operating procedures for event-specific tasks, such as:

3.4.5.1. Opening/setting-up.

3.4.5.2. Daily happenings & officer responsibilities during the event.

3.4.5.3. Closing/cleaning-up.

3.5. Safety Officer⁹

3.5.1. Be familiar with the Belegarth Book of War, and all realm-specific rules.

3.5.2. Educate participants on rules and safety, including realm-specific rules.

3.5.3. Head security at special events.

3.5.4. Oversee weapons-check at special events.

3.5.5. Test and approve weapons at practices.

3.5.6. Establish standard operating procedures to:

3.5.6.1. Marshal battles, including the training of volunteers.

3.5.6.2. Check weapons, including the training of volunteers.

4. Supplemental Roles are elected or appointed, and default to a specific Council officer that inherits the responsibilities if the role is vacant. A Council officer or realm member may have multiple roles.

- 4.1. Supplemental role-holders may appoint a shadow to their duties. This shadow may step in as a second in the absence of the primary role-holder.
- 4.2. A realm member may be assigned in an acting capacity for the duration of a special event by the Council via Section 2.3.2. if the role is vacant or the existing holder is otherwise unable to perform their duties.

4.3. Treasurer. Vice President if vacant. Has the following responsibilities:

4.3.1. Accurately record all financial records.

4.3.2. Collect all receipts.

4.3.3. File any appropriate tax information as needed.

4.3.4. Prepare an annual financial report for public release.

4.3.5. Establish and maintain a checking account.

4.3.6. Review and remit payment for debts incurred.

4.3.7. Establish standard operating procedures to:

4.3.7.1. File taxes

4.3.7.2. Reimburse purchases

4.4. Quartermaster . Safety Officer if vacant. Has the following responsibilities:

4.4.1. Be knowledgeable on gear construction techniques.

4.4.2. Maintain loaner gear and replace/repair as needed.

4.4.3. Store or designate an officer to store loaner gear, which should be brought to all fighting-based events.

4.4.4. Attend and lead realm build-days, and in collaboration with the Event Officer, plan them.

4.4.5. Establish instructions for recommended weapon construction.

4.5. Battlemaster . Event Officer if vacant. Has the following responsibilities:

⁹Previously known as Warden

4.5.1. Plan, design, and construct field battles for fighting-based events, in collaboration with the Event Officer.

4.5.2. Assign and coordinate marshals, after marshals are trained by the Safety Officer.

4.5.3. Serve as or appoint a head marshal, who will:

4.5.3.1. Run field battles and rally fighters to the field.

4.5.3.2. Schedule breaks during battles to ensure fighters get adequate hydration, nutrition, and cooling.

4.6. **Public Relations Coordinator.** President if vacant. Has the following responsibilities:

4.6.1. Main point of contact for all realm-level media coverage.

4.6.2. **Have access to and regularly check the realm email account.**

4.6.3. Manage all social media channels officially associated with the realm.

4.6.4. Create and post content on social media platforms.

4.6.5. Oversee outreach campaigns (physical, social media, email, etc) such as:

4.6.5.1. Dues renewal reminder

4.6.5.2. Event announcement & promotion

4.6.5.3. General recruiting

4.6.5.4. Election and voting motions

4.6.6. Work to increase social media followers for the realm.

4.6.7. **Establish standard operating procedures to:**

4.6.7.1. Create content.

4.6.7.2. Launch social media/email campaigns.

4.7. **Webmaster.** Secretary if vacant. Has the following responsibilities:

4.7.1. Maintain the realm website, making any and all changes, as mandated by the Council.

4.7.2. In collaboration with the Event Officer, update special event pages on the website.

4.7.3. In collaboration with the Secretary, maintain an email list for realm members, special event attendees, etc.

4.7.4. In collaboration with the Public Relations Coordinator, facilitate email campaigns.

4.7.5. **In collaboration with the President, communicate voting efforts.**

4.8. **Belegarth War Council Representative (2).** President (primary) and Vice President (alternate) if vacant. Has the following responsibilities:

4.8.1. Represent the realm in the Belegarth War Council.

4.8.2. Attend outside special events in addition to realm events.

4.8.3. Communicate with the Council and act as national liaisons to the realm, facilitating the will of the realm in an unbiased manner.

4.8.4. Must have the means to access the internet at least one per week.

4.8.5. May not serve as a National Belegarth Officer.

4.8.6. Strive to be respondent, communicating any abstains in voting to the Council.

Article 6. Meetings and Quorum

1. A realm member meeting may be scheduled at any time, given that members are notified at least four (4) weeks prior to the meeting.
2. A single annual meeting is required for realm members to elect new leadership.
 - 2.1. The date, time, and location is determined by the Council.
 - 2.2. This should be completed before the end of January each year.
3. During any member meeting, ~~the quorum shall consist of 50% of members plus one (1) Quorum is defined as 75% of the subject in question. This applies to all votes and attendance of meetings. Regarding votes, a vote of “abstain” is not included in the total count of those present for that issue~~¹⁰.

Article 7. Amendments

1. Amendments to this document shall be introduced to the Council in writing, no less than three (3) weeks prior to a member meeting.
2. ~~Amendments should be read and discussed during a member meeting prior to voting, if quorum is present.~~
3. ~~A Simple Majority is required for an amendment to pass. Quorum of those in attendance is necessary for them to pass.~~¹¹

Article 8. Enabling Act

1. This set of Bylaws is officially ratified when approved through the current voting membership.

¹⁰This wording was confusing, and as our membership grows, it may be impossible to get this many people. 50% + 1 is safer, more common, and will prevent minority rule.

¹¹This wording was unclear, as quorum is usually applied to the number of votes needed for a valid vote, not pass/fail status.