POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1 Contact Information

The Exiles can be contacted by:

Mail: 584 Castro Street, #140, San Francisco, CA 94114
Website: TheExiles.org
Email: info@theexiles.org

2 Membership

2.1 Becoming a Member

To become a member, one must:

1. *Meet the gender eligibility demographic*
2. *Attend an Orientation at which member obligations will be explained. An applicant may provide proof of membership in a reciprocal organization in lieu of attending the Exiles Orientation.*
3. *Sign the Waiver and Liability Release with their legal name*
4. *Pay dues*
5. *Provide a current email address*

2.1.1 Membership Eligibility

The Exiles is a woman- and queer-centered educational organization for all individuals who self-identify as other than cisgender man. Individuals must be over the age of 18 years old and have a positive interest in BDSM. Legal verification of age is required.

2.1.2 Bylaws and Policies and Procedures

1. A copy of the Bylaw and Policies and Procedures will be made available to all prospective members at orientation.
2. Since all changes will be announced in The Lunatic Fringe, it is the responsibility of each member to be aware of and observe them.

2.2 Membership Dues

2.2.1 Membership Categories

There are two categories of annual membership dues:

a. Basic Membership ($40)
b. Economic Equity Membership (Have more? Pay more. Have less? Pay less.)

2.3 Membership Renewals

Memberships will renew on a rolling basis based on when the member joined/last renewed. Automated emails will be sent out 30/14/7 days prior to renewal date for members who have elected recurring payments as well as prior to membership expiration for members who do not elect recurring payments reminding them to renew online.

2.4 Declined Payments

If a check submitted by a member for payment of dues is returned by the bank, that member will be in good standing only if they pay the amount due as well as any fees charged The Exiles by the bank with regard to the returned check within 60 days.

2.5 Annual Review of Membership Dues

The fee schedule for dues shall be reviewed on a yearly basis at the May regularly scheduled business meeting. The fee schedule may be adjusted at that business meeting by a majority vote. However, in no event shall the fee schedule be increased by more than 20% in any given calendar year.

2.6 Membership Benefits

2.6.1 Electronic Membership Card

Each member will receive their own membership card.

2.6.2 The Lunatic Fringe

The Lunatic Fringe is the official newsletter of The Exiles. Except for bylined articles, fiction, signed letters, calendar items, attributed items and ads, all information is presented as policy. No last names (unless program presenters include their own in the program description they supply), home addresses or personal telephone numbers shall be printed.

Each member is entitled to receive the newsletter electronically. Alternative delivery of the newsletter, for example by paper mail, may be offered. Each type of membership is entitled to receive one paper newsletter.

2.6.3 Free Program Entry for Volunteering

General volunteers will receive a pass for one free program entry each time they do work for the Exiles (subject to Volunteer Coordinator's discretion).

2.6.4 Reciprocity with Other Groups

Anyone who meets the membership requirements for the Exiles and who is a member of a reciprocal group may attend Exiles events (other than meetings which are restricted to members) at the member rate. They shall sign the Waiver and Liability Release.

2.6.5 Free Ad in Lunatic Fringe

Members may run free personal or business ads (no larger than 2 x 1 ½), not more than one per month. Business ads must be for the member's own business. Display/classified ads are accepted, and costs per issue are as follows:

a. $10 for business card size, which is 2x3
b. $20 for 4x3
c. $30 for 1/4 page, which is about 3 1/8 x 5
d. $40 for 4x6
e. $60 for 1/2 page, which is about 7 1/4 x 5

2.7 Member Backpatches

2.7.1 Backpatch Eligibility

To become an Exiles patch holder, prospective patch holders must:

1. Be an Exiles member in good standing for at least one year.
2. Positively represent the Exiles in word and deed, and support the club at events

3. Volunteer at a minimum of two Exiles events in a one year period. One of these can be an educational program, but one must be a special event or project
4. Pay a one-time initiation fee

2.7.2 Ongoing Backpatch Holder Requirements

For patch holders to maintain their patches they must:

1. Be an Exiles member in good standing
2. Positively represent the Exiles in word and deed, and support the club at events
3. Volunteer at a minimum of one Exiles event in a one year period

Exiles members who complete the requirements for patch holding will be issued a back patch from the Exiles to be worn, centered, on the back of the patch holder's vest, jacket, or other article of clothing, above the waist. No other large patches may be worn on the back of that article of clothing without the written approval of the Exiles. If the patch is damaged or lost, the member must pay its full replacement cost.

2.7.3 Administration of Patches

1. Directors will vote on prospective patch holders at the next business meeting after the requirements to hold a patch are met, and patches will be awarded at the following program.
2. The club may revoke the patch should any of the requirements for holding it not be met. Patches are the property of the Exiles and must be removed and returned should membership lapse, be revoked, or terminated. The Community Liaison with the support of the business group shall perform due diligence to recover said patches.
3. The Membership Director, Community Liaison, or other Director(s) as designed by the business group, will be responsible for the administration of patch holder activities, tracking of the requirements, and issuance of patches. Exiles branded items and other membership regalia shall be retained in the club archive or such other archive as the Exiles may deem appropriate.

2.8 Revocation of Membership

2.8.1 Revocation of Membership for Cause

Causes include but are not limited to:

a. Disruptiveness - behavior that consistently impairs the orderly functioning of the organization at a business meeting or any Exiles event; behavior that interferes with the enjoyment of an event by others present.
b. Unsafe behavior - behavior that presents a threat to the safety or well-being of others.
c. Unauthorized representation or misrepresentation - No one shall speak for The Exiles or act as an official representative unless they hold the appropriate office or have been expressly authorized to do so.
d. Violation of confidentiality - revealing confidential information about a member to anyone - or using information provided to the organization for other than official business.
e. Theft or misappropriation of Exiles resources.
f. Failure to abide by these Articles and Policies - unwillingness to adhere to the principles and procedures of this organization.

Behavior described above may also result in immediate expulsion from any Exiles event by any two elected or appointed Directors who witness such behavior.

1. *The Exiles values safety, consensuality, and confidentiality. For willful and egregious violation of these Bylaws, and the rules of safety, consensuality, or confidentiality, revocation of membership is mandatory. For other forms of misconduct (such as misappropriation of the Exiles' resources), penalties may include warning, probation, or revocation of membership.*
2. *A member with a complaint against another member that may warrant disciplinary action shall bring the matter in writing to any Director. Any Director who receives such a communication shall notify the Steering Committee promptly and comply with the Policies and Procedures Manual.*

2.8.2 Process of Revocation

Any member may present a possible cause of denial or revocation in writing to the Steering Committee.

1. Special Meeting
   At a special meeting called with fourteen days' notice and attended only by the Steering Committee, the parties, and any witnesses either party may bring, will be heard. The Steering Committee will ask questions and discuss the facts presented. Witnesses will be heard and questioned. At the end of discussion, both parties involved shall leave. All Steering Committee members who have heard the discussion are eligible to vote.
2. Quorum
   A quorum of two thirds of the Steering Committee must be present for a valid vote to occur, and two thirds of them must vote to revoke or deny.
3. Conflict of Interest
   If a Steering Committee member is one of the parties involved, they will not vote, nor be present when the vote is taken.
4. Refusal to Participate
   If a person who is being considered for membership revocation or denial refuses to participate in the special meeting or respond to the allegations being brought against them, then the Steering Committee shall vote based on the facts and testimony it has at its disposal.
5. Consequences of Revocation
   A person whose membership has been denied or revoked shall not be admitted as a guest to any Exiles function nor join the Exiles as a member for a period of 3 years from the date of the revocation or denial. After 3 years the person may apply to have the ban lifted by contacting the Co-Coordinators and, through them, make arrangements to attend a business meeting with their request. The request can be granted by a majority vote of the Steering Committee.

3 Business Meetings

3.1 Frequency

The Exiles shall generally hold at least two regularly scheduled events each month, to include:

1. An educational program on BDSM, kink, leather and fetish-related topics;
2. *A business meeting, open to individuals eligible to be members at which all directors shall report.*

3.2 Quorum

A minimum of 5 voting members is required for any vote in the business group (at a meeting or online) in order to designate the vote as valid.

3.3 Open/Closed Meetings

The business group may decide if business meetings are open to members only or to community members who meet our membership demographic. However, the Co-Coordinators can decide that there is some business that is more private, so can designate all or part of a meeting as 'members only' (all Exiles members welcome) or 'executive session' (only voting members allowed) or 'steering committee' (only Directors allowed).

3.4 Directors Reports

All Directors are required to submit a report from their area of responsibility for every business meeting, either in writing as a part of the agenda or in person. This report is required even if the Director is not attending the meeting.

3.5 Proposals/Motions

Proposals for any Exiles business, including sponsorship, donations, events, reciprocal affiliations proposals, or any other business must be presented in writing to the Business group, and will be discussed at the next business meeting.

3.6 Attendance

If a member is unable to physically attend a business meeting, they may attend by phone, if equipment is available to conference them into the meeting. As long as they are able to hear the proceedings and be heard, they may vote if they have voting privileges.

3.7 Business Meeting Cancelation

Any business meeting may be canceled by majority vote by the Steering Committee with prior notification to the membership.

4 Online Voting for Time-Sensitive/Urgent Issues

If time-sensitive decisions arise outside of the normal business-meeting schedule, an online vote can be called, following these steps:

4.1 Voting Process

1. The requestor will publish a proposal to the business group email list, and request a second.
2. If no second is received, the proposal is dead (but can be re-introduced). If a second is received, the requestor calls for a vote.
3. The requestor must say if the issue is urgent or not. If urgent, they publish a time-and-day deadline of at least 2 full days. If not urgent (but needs to be dealt with before the business meeting), they publish a time-and-day deadline of at least 5 full days.
4. The requestor sends a text message to all eligible voting members, stating that there is an online vote that needs their attention, including the deadline.

5. The requestor sends an email with the result of the voting once the deadline has been reached.

4.2 Voting Eligibility

Anyone eligible to vote as of the end of the last business meeting is eligible to vote online.

4.3 Quorum

The same quorum rules apply: the minimum number of votes must be received by the deadline for the vote to count. If not, the proposal can be abandoned, or reintroduced with a new deadline.

5 Election of Co-Coordinators, Membership Director and Treasurer (Elected Directors)

5.1 Election Process

5.1.1 Elected Directors Qualifications

An Exiles member who has been a member for at least a year, and who has attended a minimum of 3 of the last 6 regular business meetings is eligible to be nominated for the position of Co-Coordinator, Membership Director, or Treasurer.

5.1.2 Nominations

Nominations for the Elected Directors shall be made in February and published in the Lunatic Fringe in March.

5.1.3 Online Voting

Online voting for Elected Directors will be announced in the Lunatic Fringe. Voting will take place in the month of March. Voting will be open for at least one week and will conclude at least three days prior to the April business meeting.

5.1.4 Publication of Results

Voting results will be published in the next issue of the Lunatic Fringe.

5.1.5 Pending Bylaws Amendments

If there are any pending Bylaws amendments, these shall be included in the same ballot as the Director elections. Results of Bylaws amendments are determined as described below

5.1.6 Election Results

In order to be counted in the election, mailed ballots must be received by 5:00pm Pacific Time two days prior to the March program meeting. If the March program meeting is in-person, paper ballots may be brought to that meeting, or completed by paper ballot at the meeting. Online voting will be announced at the beginning of the meeting, and will close by the end of the meeting. Results will be announced to the membership as soon as they are available.

5.2 Elected Directors Job Duties

5.2.1 Duties of Co-Coordinators (2)

1. Manage the administration of the organization.
2. Facilitate the business meetings, including preparing the agenda and obtaining reports from all Directors.

3. Organize monthly programs, including scheduling and communicating with presenters. Provide Newsletter Editor, PR Director, and Web Site Manager with details on upcoming programs as soon as possible, to facilitate publicity and to provide notice if any male(s) will be presenting.
4. May divide their duties between them as they wish.
5. Are elected to a two-year term.

5.2.2 Duties of Membership Director

1. Manages the official means of communication to the membership (excepting The Lunatic Fringe). This includes maintaining any email lists run by the club for members.
2. Maintains records of attendance at orientations in order to validate membership eligibility.
3. Maintains identity information provided to The Exiles by members and prospective members and is responsible for its confidentiality. Provides such information to other Directors as required for the performance of their duties.
4. Provides membership cards and renewal notices.

5.2.3 Duties of Treasurer

1. The Treasurer is authorized to pay expenses approved at business meetings.
2. The Treasurer will put together a yearly budget based on past income and expenditures and projected future income/expense. This budget will be presented to the business group prior to the end of each fiscal year, and voted upon for approval at or before the final business meeting of the fiscal year. If adjustments are requested or required, they must be brought before the business group and approved by a majority vote. Adjustments include request for payment of amounts above the budgeted sum for an individual category.
3. Collects, disburses, and accounts for all funds belonging to, owed to, or owed by The Exiles.
4. Maintains and reconciles The Exiles' bank accounts.
5. Ensures that the accounts shall have several members authorized to sign.
6. Ensures that even if not supported by the bank, checks for non-routine expenses over $200 are signed by two signers.
7. Processes all financial transactions (expenses and deposits, statement reconciliations) within one month of receipt, or by the due date, whichever is sooner.
8. Reimburses authorized expenditures incurred by members on The Exiles' behalf, only upon presentation of receipts for same.
9. Completes all licensing, tax, and other legal requirements in a timely manner.
10. Insures that funds are kept available to pay foreseeable upcoming expenses, such as room rent for programs, newsletter printing and mailing, voice mail service, supplies, etc.
11. Provides a financial report at each business meeting, including the total balance in all accounts and any other details about the finances of The Exiles requested and/or needed to facilitate financial decision-making at the meeting.
12. Provides financial information about The Exiles to the membership when requested.
13. Leads the budget committee, which is responsible for proposing and having accepted a budget for each fiscal year. This should be completed by end of the previous fiscal year.
14. Prepares a year-end report, presented at the first business meeting of the following fiscal year and printed in the next Lunatic Fringe published after that meeting.

5.2.4 Audit of Records

The Membership and Treasurer documentation (membership database, Quickbooks files, bank and PayPal accounts) shall be reviewed when a new Director takes over, to be sure the record-keeping is in good order. During the first year of responsibility for a Director in these positions, the documentation shall be reviewed every quarter, and yearly after the first year. This review will be conducted by a Co-Coordinators, who is encouraged to get assistance from someone who has previously done the job and is therefore knowledgeable about how the documentation should be done. The results will be written up and kept in the club business documents. The results will be discussed at the next business meeting following the review, and action taken if there are issues.

6 Appointed Directors

6.1 Appointment Process

6.1.1 Appointed Directors Qualifications

Anyone who has been an Exiles member for one year, or has qualified to become a voting member at business meetings, is eligible to be nominated for or to be appointed to any position other than Co-Coordinator, Membership Director, or Treasurer.

6.1.2 Appointment Timing

The Elected Directors shall appoint additional Directors (the “Appointed Directors”), each for a one-year term running from May 1 through April 30.

6.1.3 Appointment Confirmation

The Business Group must confirm the appointments by a majority vote at the April business meeting.

6.2 Appointed Directors

The Appointed Directors may include the following positions:

- Recorder
- Newsletter Editor
- Outreach/PR Director
- Orientation Director
- Doorkeeper
- Community Liaison
- DEI Director
- Accessibility Director
- Web Site Manager
- Volunteer Director

6.2.1 Job Duties

6.2.1.1 Recorder:

1. Takes minutes of business meetings, which will include date and time, reports presented, motions made and their disposition, and attendance. These minutes are to be presented to the business group within a week of the meeting, after which corrections may be offered. Once approved, the minutes are then kept on file permanently by the Recorder.
2. Prepares a summary of the minutes to be printed in the following month's Lunatic Fringe.

3. Maintains an inventory of all property purchased by or donated to The Exiles. All members who have use or custody of such property are to keep the Recorder informed.
4. Keeps records of The Exiles activities, including a master file of business meeting minutes and Directors' reports, newsletters, posters, palm cards, flyers and other publications, and all other written artifacts of the group that do not contain confidential information.

6.2.1.2 Newsletter Editor

1. Prepares a monthly edition of The Lunatic Fringe and mails it to all members on or before the first day of each month.
2. Collects material for the newsletter: from Directors in the form of articles, reports, program announcements, and minutes; from members in the form of articles, or letters to The Exiles or to The Lunatic Fringe; a report on the previous month's program; calendar listings, news and announcements of interest excerpted from mail sent to The Exiles; classified, personal and display ads; short fiction or poetry submitted by members shall be printed as space allows.

6.2.1.3 Outreach/PR Director

1. Arranges visibility activities such as e-blasts, social media postings, listserve postings, press releases, and calendar listings for Exiles events, information booths at appropriate public events and newsletter exchange with similar groups.
2. Arranges advertising, such as display ads, inserts, flyers, and palm cards, for conferences and other events of interest to the Exiles.
3. Assists the Orientation Director by handling notice of scheduled orientations.

6.2.1.4 Orientation Director

1. Conducts the Orientation required before anyone may become a member.
2. Manages materials and handouts supplied to orientation attendees and new members.
3. Determines if an organization offers an Orientation that is equivalent in breadth and depth to the Exiles Orientation, for the purpose of determining eligibility for reciprocity.

6.2.1.5 Doorkeeper

1. Opens the space before programs begin.
2. Checks the membership card of each member and collects the member door fee.
3. Verifies the age, obtains the legal signature on the Waiver and Liability Release, and collects the door fee from each non-member.
4. Completes the Door Report and gives it, along with the money collected, to the Treasurer or their designee.

6.2.1.6 Community Liaison

1. Provides security at the door for Exiles functions.
2. Controls and, if necessary, closes admission when the presenter begins the program and again after any intermission.

6.2.1.7 Website Manager

1. Maintains and manages the official Exiles website.
2. Updates website content in a timely manner.
3. Maintains a record of all website-related accounts and their passwords, and keeps this information available to the Co-Coordinators

6.2.1.8 Volunteer Coordinator

1. Recruits interested volunteers for Exiles program and outside events where the Exiles have a presence, such as conferences and street fairs.
2. Maintains database of volunteers and helps to fill needed positions as determined by the business group.
3. Assists Co-Coordinators in planning the annual Volunteer Appreciation Party.

7 Steering Committee

7.1 Composition of the Steering Committee

Together the Elected Directors and Appointed Directors shall make up the “Steering Committee”.

7.2 Steering Committee Meetings

The Steering Committee will meet at least once every calendar year. Additional meetings may be called by the Co-Coordinators as needed.

7.3 Directors Benefits

7.3.1 Benefits for Appointed Directors

Appointed Directors, in good standing, will receive free membership and free entry into programs. At the six-month mark of their duties, they will additionally receive a free canvas backpatch.

7.3.2 Benefits for Elected Directors

Elected Directors will receive all benefits of Appointed Directors, plus up to $100 assistance per term for travel expenses and/or paid registration for one leather conference (with educational content).

7.4 Director Term Limits:

No Director shall serve more than a total of four consecutive years (or five, if having served as Co-Coordinator) as a Director. After not serving as a Director for at least twelve months, a member shall be eligible to run in the next election cycle or to be appointed a Director again. In the event that there are no eligible volunteers to run as a Director, this limitation may be waived by the super-majority of the Steering Committee in order to ensure the on-going sustainability of the organization.

7.5 Duties of Directors

7.5.1 Attendance at Business Meetings

A Director is required to attend at least eight (8) of the regularly scheduled business meetings each calendar year. If a Director misses two (2) consecutive business meetings, without communicating with the Steering Committee, they may be removed from office.

7.5.2 Eligibility to Vote at Business Meetings

All Directors are eligible to vote during their term of office, regardless of attendance.

7.5.3 Delegation of Duties

A Director may delegate responsibilities of their office (excluding voting privileges), and is urged to mentor an assistant or convene a committee to share the workload and get more members involved. However, it is the Director's responsibility to meet the obligations of the office.

7.6 Steering Committee Code of Conduct

All Directors shall adhere to the Steering Committee Code of Conduct as specified in the Policies and Procedures.

7.7 Ensuring Continuity

At the end of their term, each outgoing Director is responsible for ensuring the continuity of leadership, by transitioning leadership pursuant to the Policies & Procedures.

8 Programming

8.1 Admission for Programming

8.1.1 Admission Fee

Door fee for programs shall be $20.00. Members shall pay $10.00 upon presentation of their membership card. Free admittance will be extended to the evening's presenter(s) and up to two assistants.

8.1.2 Waiver

All attendees at the Exiles' events shall sign a Waiver and Liability Release.

8.1.3 Reciprocity

Anyone who meets the membership requirements for the Exiles and who is a member of a reciprocal group may attend Exiles events (other than meetings which are restricted to members) at the member rate. They shall sign the Waiver and Liability Release.

8.2 Presenter Compensation

8.2.1 Presenters may choose one of the following:

a. One-quarter page ad in The Lunatic Fringe
b. An Exiles t-shirt and/or pin (based on availability)
c. A $50 honorarium

8.2.2 Anyone providing interpretation services

Will be given free membership in the organization, and free water at programs.

9 Event Policies & Code of Conduct

9.1 Event Policies

9.1.1 No cameras or recording devices of any kind shall be permitted at any Exiles function without prior written permission from the Business group, except those held in a place where access is not under the group's control and open to the public. An exception may be made to allow the audio tape recording of business meetings for ease of transcription. A vote to approve such may be taken on the motion of the Recorder.

9.1.2 Sign Language interpreters may be requested for any of the Exiles programs and events.

10 Contestant Sponsorship

10.1 Contestant Sponsorship Eligibility

10.1.1 Membership & Volunteer Work

Currently a member and have either two years of total membership (need not be contiguous, and can include Outcasts membership) in good standing, or have volunteered at least twice in the last 6 months, or be a current Exiles Director.

10.1.2 Educational Component

The stated mission/goal of the contest/title must have an educational component. (For example, International Ms. Leather "will act as a mentor, a role model and a spokesperson".) This is important because the title must foster our mission as an educational organization.

10.1.3 Positive Representation

The requestor goal must be to promote BDSM education during their title year, have a public demeanor and attitude that would represent the Exiles in a positive light.

10.2 Duties of Sponsorship

Once granted sponsorship, the contestant agrees to:

1. Wear Exiles-branded items at leather events attended between the granting of the sponsorship and the contest;
2. Wear Exiles-branded items regularly during contest-related events when possible;
3. Include the Exiles as a sponsor in their contestant bio information;
4. Wear Exiles-branded items at leather events attended during their title year when possible;
5. If the contestant does not compete in the contest, except due to injury or illness, the Exiles may request the return of any contest fees paid by the Exiles.

10.3 Duties of Sponsor

Once sponsorship is granted, the Exiles will:

1. Include an announcement in the newsletter and/or social media;
2. If budget is available, and if there is a program book, place an ad mentioning the sponsorship;
3. Provide financial sponsorship for $50-$200 towards contest-related travel expenses and/ or registration fees.

10.4 Process for Requesting Sponsorship

10.4.1 Submit a Request in Writing Before Business Meeting

Submit a request via email to the Exiles Co-coordinators (cocos@theexiles.org) at least one week prior to the next Exiles business meeting (generally the second Sunday of the month). The written request for sponsorship should include:

1. Statement about why they want sponsorship by the Exiles;
2. A summary of their volunteer work for the Exiles;
3. An outline of their proposed platform.

10.4.2 Attend Business Meeting

The contestant must attend the business meeting, present their sponsorship request in under 5 minutes, and answer questions

1. After the presentation (and any questions), the contestant must leave the business meeting while the group discusses and votes on the proposal. The Business Group will vote on the sponsorship, following the standard voting procedures.
2. If there are questions that cannot be answered at the business meeting, the Business Group may table the proposal.

11 Amendments to Policies and Procedures

11.1 Policies may be changed over two business meetings

1. An eligible member moves to change and an eligible member seconds it;
2. The proposed change appears in the minutes printed in The Lunatic Fringe.
3. At the following meeting it is discussed, and shall pass if a majority of eligible voters vote yes.