

Society of Janus Operating Procedures

Adopted by the membership, January 1990; last amended November 2008

I. NAME

The name of this association is Society of Janus (hereafter referred to as "Janus").

II. PURPOSE

We are an educational and support organization for adults who support and are both seriously and personally interested in sexuality based upon a safe, consensual, non-exploitative transfer of power between partners. We call this form of sexuality "S/M", which comes from the word "somasochism". S/M includes terms such as bondage and discipline (B&D) and dominance and submission (D&S). As we define it, which is contrary to the conventional meaning of "somasochism", S/M can and should be a healthy means of self-exploration and self-expression.

We recognize that the words and concepts we use to define S/M are imprecise. In general, we support any form of sexuality that is safe, consensual, and non-exploitative. We refine these principles as we apply them, relying on our own good judgment to make them principles of healthy self-expression.

We believe everyone has a right to think and articulate whatever he or she finds erotically appealing, even if those thoughts concern unsafe, nonconsensual, or exploitative matters and are therefore offensive to us in practice. We believe that the verbal expression of feelings, fantasies, thoughts, and ideas promotes awareness. Awareness, in turn, enhances a person's ability to make free choices in behavior and, thus, to abide by our principles of safety, consensuality, and non-exploitativeness. By contrast, repression of thought and verbal expression leads to acting out: behavior that is likely to be unsafe, nonconsensual, and exploitative. Thus, in our view, it is entirely consistent to oppose unsafe, nonconsensual, or exploitative activity or the promotion of such activity and, at the same time, to support a person's freedom to think and to verbally express whatever a person finds erotically appealing.

We exist as an organization to learn about S/M, to share information among ourselves, to help build the S/M community by providing a supportive atmosphere for ourselves, to get to know and enjoy one another, and to reach out to other interested, friendly groups and individuals. Because we exist in a world that is often hostile to S/M, we pursue our objectives discreetly, carefully protecting the right of confidentiality of all our members.

We do not provide any commercial erotic services. We do not exist for the financial benefit of any group or individual, although we may make charitable donations to groups or individuals. We are not an orgy club, and it is not our purpose to provide sex theater for exhibitionists or voyeurs. We are not a dating service, a social work agency, or a therapy group. Persons who come to us to resolve emotional problems or find life partners are likely to be disappointed. Although many of our members take a great interest in sexual freedom issues, we are not a political action committee or a lobbying group.

We are open to all genders and sexual orientations who share our interest in S/M as we have defined it. As such, we are a diverse group of persons. Many of us have deeply felt views about how our organization should operate. We do not always agree. We believe that the success of our

organization depends upon our ability to respect all our members' views and to make our decisions in a way that we agree is fair.

III. MEMBERSHIP

- A. Requirements.** Members must be 18 or older; have a serious, personal, and supportive interest in S/M; agree to abide by these Operating Procedures; and have paid their dues and fees.
 - 1. Scholarships.** The Business Meeting may approve a partial or complete scholarship for a member's dues. In each case the minutes shall state the reason for the scholarship.
 - 2. Orientation.** Prospective members living within the nine Bay Area counties (Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, Sonoma) are required first to attend an orientation meeting. Orientation permits us to introduce the organization to prospective members and permits prospective members to introduce themselves to us. Orientations are not initiations; they consist of verbal presentation and interaction.
- B. Refusal to Offer Membership.** Janus reserves the right to refuse to offer membership to a prospective member without stating a reason. A person shall be refused membership if, in the opinion of the organization's designated representative(s), he or she is under age; lacks a serious, personal, and supportive interest in S/M; or is likely not to abide by the Operating Procedures. Membership shall not be refused because of an applicant's sex, gender, race, age (if the applicant is at least 18), sexual orientation, physical disability, HIV status, or relationship status.
- C. Non-transfer.** Memberships are not transferable.
- D. Rights of Members.** Control vests in the members, acting in Business Meetings and Special Interest Group (hereafter referred to as "SIG") Business Meetings. Specific rights of members include: to be notified in advance of appropriate Janus events; to attend appropriate Janus events; to speak, make motions, and vote at business meetings; to receive appropriate Janus newsletters and periodicals; to receive copies of minutes and reports submitted to Business Meetings.
- E. Limitations of Members.** Special Interest Groups (hereafter referred to as "SIGs") may create an "Appropriateness of attendance statement" which governs the access of members, non-members and guests to the SIG's events and Business Meetings.

IV. DUES AND FEES

The business meeting shall set membership dues and fees for all appropriate Janus events.

- A. Change of Dues.** Membership dues may not be changed except by a two-thirds vote of a business meeting. Notice for the meeting shall include a notification that a dues change will be considered. Additional dues for SIGs may be created and changed by the SIG Business Meetings.
- B. Nondiscrimination.** All members shall be charged the same membership dues, except that a business meeting may set reduced dues for additional members of a household.

V. CONFIDENTIALITY

- A. Personal Information.** No member may divulge another member's or prospective member's legal name, address, phone number, or the identity and location of a member's employer or relatives, without the express permission of the member or prospective member.
- B. Membership List.** No one shall have full or unrestricted access to the Janus membership

list or membership records except Janus officers when necessary for Janus business.

- C. Use of Pseudonyms.** Any member or prospective member may enroll under an assumed name and use a confidential box number or mailing address.
- D. Recording Activities.** Activities at a Janus function may not be photographed, taped, or otherwise recorded without both prior approval by a business meeting and the consent of all individuals photographed, taped, or recorded.
- E. Communication.** Outside S/M Community. When communicating with individuals and organizations outside the S/M community, members shall not identify a member or prospective member as an S/M person without that person's explicit permission. Moreover, Janus members are expected to keep S/M or sexual information about other S/M-oriented people within the S/M community. Terms in this provision such as "S/M community" and "S/M person" are unavoidably imprecise and will have to be defined by a business meeting on a case by case basis.
- F. Investigation by Outside Agency.** Except where there is imminent danger of serious bodily injury or serious property damage, members may not cause any non-S/M organization, such as the media or a government agency, to investigate Janus affairs, including finances, membership, or activities, without explicit approval by a business meeting.

VI. REPRIMAND OR PENALTY

- A. Grounds.** Grounds for reprimand or penalty include but are not limited to egregious or persistent violations of confidentiality, safety, or consensuality; theft; disruptiveness; incapacity; or unauthorized representation of Janus.
- B. Procedure.** Any member may move to reprimand or penalize another member. A motion to reprimand or penalize must be accompanied by a written statement in which the movant states the reasons for the motion and the evidence in support of it. If by a majority vote the business meeting finds that the evidence in support of the motion is substantial enough to warrant further consideration, the business meeting shall schedule a meeting, to be held within forty-five days, to consider what if any disciplinary action to take. Prior notice, specifying the grounds for the proposed reprimand or penalty, must be mailed to all members ten to thirty days in advance of the meeting. The accused member will be afforded an opportunity to include a statement, to be mailed with the notice. At the meeting, the member charged must be given an opportunity to be heard in his or her defense. Penalty or reprimand requires a two-thirds vote of those present. The penalty may include suspension or revocation of membership.

VII. BUSINESS MEETINGS

- A. Residual Authority.** We govern our organization through Business Meetings. All authority not otherwise delegated by these Operating Procedures remains with the Business Meeting.
- B. Types.** There are four types of Business Meetings: regular, general, SIG, and special. Any member may attend any appropriate Business Meeting.
- C. Notice.** All members shall be sent written notice of Business Meetings seven to thirty days before the meeting is held.
- D. Quorum.** No Business Meeting may begin unless at least six members are present. Thirty minutes after the time that the meeting was scheduled to begin, the moderator shall determine how many persons are present. If at least six members are not then present, the meeting shall be cancelled.
- E. Agenda.** Business Meetings shall have an agenda. It is the duty of the meeting moderator

to set the agenda, and throughout the meeting the moderator shall manage the agenda in accordance with the will of the meeting. Any member may move to change the agenda at any time.

- F. Motions.** Any member may offer a motion. A member who is not present may offer a motion if an attending member agrees to present it. The recording secretary must record each motion for the minutes. Before being debated, a motion must be seconded.
- G. Debate.** The maker of a motion speaks first to explain it and may also speak last to rebut arguments. No one may speak an additional time until all who wish to speak have spoken as often as that person.
- H. Voting.** Every attending member has one vote except the moderator, who may not vote. A Business Meeting may create procedures for absentee voting. There shall be no proxy voting.
 - 1. Definition of vote needed for passage of a motion.** Unless otherwise specified, a motion requires a majority vote to pass. A majority means more "aye" than "nay" votes. Unless otherwise specified, a motion that requires more than a majority vote to pass will pass if the total of "aye" votes is the necessary percentage (for example, two-thirds) of the total of "aye" and "nay" votes. In all these cases, abstentions do not count.
 - 2. Required vote for motion in conflict with an adopted motion.** When a proposed motion conflicts with or seeks to rescind an adopted motion that is less than six months old, and when this conflict is brought to the attention of the Business Meeting before the vote on the new motion is taken, the new motion shall require a two-thirds vote for passage.
 - 3. Voting method.** Voting is by a show of hands unless the meeting adopts a secret ballot. A motion for a secret ballot requires a majority vote.
- I. Recount.** The moderator shall take a recount if, after a vote has been taken but before any new item of business has been put on the floor, any member present at the meeting requests a recount. There shall be no more than one recount per motion.
- J. Reconsideration.** After a motion passes, a member may move to have the motion reconsidered at the next business meeting. The motion to reconsider carries if it receives an affirmative vote of forty-five percent (45%) or if the affirmative vote is two or fewer votes less than the votes against. The notice for the next meeting shall include the text of the motion to be reconsidered. No motion may be reconsidered more than once.
- K. Misconduct at a Business Meeting.** Any member or nonmember who is flagrantly or persistently out of order may by a two-thirds vote be barred from further attendance at or participation in the meeting.
- L. Regular Business Meetings.**
 - 1. Schedule.** Regular meetings shall be scheduled to be held at least once a month.
 - 2. Reports.** The Business Meeting may choose to require officers and committees to give reports.
 - 3. Calendar.** The Business Meeting shall schedule Janus events.
 - 4. Minutes.** The Business Meeting shall correct, amend, and approve minutes of prior meetings.
- M. General Meetings.**
 - 1. Schedule.** At least once each year there shall be a General Meeting. To ensure maximum attendance, General Meetings shall be held on weekends.
 - 2. Agenda.** The primary purpose of the General Meeting is to elect officers. Other matters of general importance to the membership may also be considered. The regular Business Meeting shall set the agenda and provide the membership with notice of it

between ten and thirty days in advance. Any member may make a motion to add to the agenda at the General Meeting.

3. Minutes. Minutes of a General Meeting shall be presented within sixty days to a regular Business Meeting for correction, amendment, and approval.

N. Special Business Meetings. The membership may call a Special Meeting by petition presented to a regular Business Meeting. After the petition is presented, the Membership Secretary will report to the next regular Business Meeting whether a minimum of twenty-five members have signed the petition. If so, that meeting shall schedule the Special Meeting to be held on a weekend within sixty days.

O. SIG Business Meetings. Will be conducted at the discretion of, and according to the rules used to found the SIG. It is expected that these may vary from SIG to SIG. Previous sections of this document referring to Notice, Quorum, Voting, etc. are not intended to apply to SIG Business Meetings which may adopt their own methodologies.

VIII. OFFICERS

A. Mandated Offices. The officers of the organization shall include Coordinator, Business Meeting Moderator, Communications Secretary, Membership Secretary, Recording Secretary, and Treasurer. A Coordinator shall not serve also as a Treasurer, Business Meeting Moderator, or Recording Secretary. The Business Meeting may create other offices.

B. Qualifications and Term. All officers must be current members. Officers shall be elected annually at a General Meeting for a term of one year.

C. Vacancies. The Business Meeting shall fill any vacant offices.

D. Limitation on Continuous Service. If at the time of reelection, an officer has served for more than one year and three months in a given office, the officer may not serve another consecutive term in the same office without a prior separate two-thirds vote of approval of the meeting at which the election is held. If the candidate is listed on an absentee ballot, the ballot shall also contain a separate question as to whether the candidate may serve an additional term.

E. Elections. The Business Meeting may set forth procedures for electing officers.

F. Job Descriptions. The Business Meeting may set forth job descriptions for offices.

G. Recall of Officers. An officer may be recalled for failure to perform his or her duties as described in the job description for that position, or for any reason that a member may be reprimanded or penalized. The Business Meeting shall set forth procedures for recall of officers.

IX. ACTIVITIES

A. Activities Definitions.

1. Members Only. These activities or events are available for members and their guests only. Such events include, but are not limited to, programs, parties, and social events designated as members only by the Business Meeting.

2. Community Events. These activities and events are open to the community at large. Such activities and events include, but are not limited to, programs, parties, and social events not specifically designated as members only by the Business Meeting

3. Co-Sponsored Events. These events are co-sponsored with Business Meeting approval only. Janus may be the majority or minority member in such events, and only takes as much responsibility as approved by the Business Meeting at least fifteen days prior to the event.

4. **Special Events.** This will include public programs and events in general. These events will require Business Meeting approval. Notification of possible non-member attendance at the event must be made to the membership at least fifteen days prior to the event. Notification may be via any media that is distributed to the entire membership. All announcements, ads, listings, and related notices of the event will include said notification. Notification will also be made at the site of the event indicating the public accessibility to said event.
 5. **SIG Event.** These include all events conducted under the auspices of a SIG. They are wholly governed, funded and conducted by the corresponding SIG Business Meeting.
- B. **Guests.** A business meeting may limit any Janus activity to members only. If guests are permitted, they must be 18 years of age or older. All guests must be accompanied by a member. A member may be reprimanded or penalized for the misconduct of that member's guest(s) at an event.
 - C. **Misconduct.** Intoxication, illegal activity, fighting, disruptive noise, harassment, and unsafe or nonconsensual activity, including aggressive cruising, are forbidden at Janus events. The business meeting shall designate a member or members for each event who shall judge whether a person at the event has committed misconduct. If the designated member(s) concludes that a person has committed misconduct, the member(s) has the right to bar that person from the remainder of the event.
 - D. **Non-discrimination.** The fee for an event shall be the same for all members except that the business meeting may set reduced program fees for Janus officers, and allow work scholarships/comps to programs and parties. Every appropriate member has an equal right to participate in the event with every other appropriate member. If, before or after the event, the host permits the premises to be used for social time, all appropriate members will have an equal right to participate.

X. RATIFICATION

Operating Procedures shall go into effect at the first business meeting after ratification. The business meeting shall set forth procedures for the adoption of these Operating Procedures.

XI. SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs)

Special Interest Groups exist to allow a variety of subgroups to be created under the auspices of Janus which serve a subset or superset of members and non-members.

- A. Special Interest Groups are created under the responsibility of the Outreach Director.
- B. When a Special Interest Groups is created, the Outreach Director must move an "Application for SIG Creation" to the Society of Janus Business Meeting for approval.
- C. The Society of Janus Business Meeting may, with 2/3 vote, disassociate from a Special Interest Group.
- D. Special Interest Groups Application must contain:
 1. A Statement of Purpose which can be used to define the appropriateness of attendance for the limitation of members, non-members, and guests to SIG events.
 2. An Appropriateness of Attendance Statement is optional, and if submitted, will clearly define the policies which will govern enforcement of attendance limitations.
 3. The Appropriateness of Attendance Statement may limit access according to filters of appropriateness. The currently acceptable filters are based on: Janus membership, length of Janus membership, age, gender, genetic gender, behavior orientation, sexual orientation, and race.
 4. A list of three Janus members filling the following offices: SIG Director, SIG

Secretary, and SIG Treasurer. Officers must be current Janus members. The same person may not hold two of these officer positions, but may hold other positions which the SIG may create.

- E. In keeping with Janus' pansexual nature, any member, non-member or guest may self-identify as to their gender. However if a SIG is created with a "genetic gender" filter, we ask all members, non-members, and guests to respect that distinction.
- F. If an Appropriateness of Attendance statement is not submitted, it is assumed that the same attendance limitations which govern the general behavior of Janus apply to the SIG.
- G. A SIG must conduct Business Meetings at least quarterly. The SIG Secretary must take minutes of the SIG Business Meetings and provide them to the Society of Janus Recording Secretary and Outreach Director. Highlights from these minutes must be entered into the minutes of the Society of Janus Business Meetings via the report of the Recording Secretary.
- H. A SIG may, at its discretion, elect other officers, create other bodies of rules, create its own legal entities such as bank accounts, web sites, etc. A SIG may create its own logos and brand identifiers which may be derivative of the Society of Janus brand, however these are "on loan" to the SIG which must agree to cease use of them if they become dissociated from the Society of Janus.

XII. AMENDMENT

Amendment is by a majority vote of a business meeting and then by a two-thirds vote of the members voting in a mail ballot. The amendment procedure shall be as follows:

- A. Presentation at a Business Meeting.** A member must first present to a Business Meeting in writing the text of the proposed amendment. The amendment must be seconded.
- B. Consideration by a Subsequent Business Meeting.** Once a proposed amendment has been duly presented and seconded at a Business Meeting, it shall be considered at one of the two next regular Business Meetings. The text of the amendment shall be included in the notice of the meeting.
- C. Statements for and against Proposed Amendment.** The member proposing the amendment, or his/her designated representative, may include in the Business Meeting notice a statement up to 250 words in support of the amendment. If the Business Meeting is aware of any opposition to the amendment, it shall designate a person or persons to write one statement up to 250 words in opposition to the proposed amendment.
- D. Consideration by the Membership.** If the proposed amendment is approved by a majority vote of the Business Meeting, it shall be submitted to the membership for adoption by ballot. The ballot shall include statements for and against the amendment, as described in section C.
- E. Mail Ballots Once Every Six Months.** Mail ballots for Operating Procedure amendments shall not be sent out more frequently than once every six months. Notwithstanding this provision, a Business Meeting may authorize a mail ballot on a proposed amendment if by a two-thirds vote the meeting finds that the amendment is an emergency measure.

XIII. INTERPRETATION

Interpretation of Operating Procedures shall be by a majority vote of the Business Meeting.