

12th South Carolina/4th Michigan Volunteer Infantry, Inc. Constitution

Article I (Name)

1. The name of the Corporation is “12th South Carolina/4th Michigan Volunteer Infantry, Incorporated.”
2. The 12th South Carolina/4th Michigan Volunteer Infantry, Incorporated is a private, non-profit organization. It was registered with the State of Michigan on June 7, 1980 “in conformity with Act 162, Public Acts of 1982.”

Article II (Purpose)

1. To portray and reenact the events, both specific and general, that the 12th South Carolina and 4th Michigan contributed to their respective causes during the American Civil War.
2. To portray and reenact the events, both specific and general, that the Northern and Southern civilians contributed to their respective causes during the American Civil War.
3. To aid fellow members with information and assistance to overcome problems in accurately portraying the Civil War era.
4. To promote authenticity, safety, and good will.
5. To encourage and promote Civil War Reenacting and to help preserve our country’s history through education of the general public.”
6. This organization is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Article III (Membership)

1. Membership is open to anyone 18 years and older who is interested in the purpose of the Corporation provided:

At the end of 1 (one) full year with the corporation and having participated in four (4) full event days, associate members may submit an “Application for Full Membership” to all existing members to petition for full membership with the Corporation if they so desire. After submission of the application, the full membership shall vote on accepting the associate member as a full member or reject the associate member at any general membership meeting. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote is required to acquire full membership, with a quorum of 75% of current dues paying members at the meeting. This meeting shall be in private and

shall take place without the associate member present. During the meeting, full members may debate the qualifications of the associate member until such time as the President or person running the meeting may allow.

Acceptance of the application to become a full member by a two-thirds (2/3) vote allows the member to maintain his or her status with the Corporation with all the rights, duties and obligations of a full member. Rejection of the application will result in a denial of membership to the corporation and a prohibition on participating in events with the Corporation.

Rejected applicants may re-petition the membership for acceptance as a full member after a subsequent one (1) year probationary period provided a majority of the Corporate Board agrees to such a plan. Should the board deny such a re-petition plan, the individual will be prohibited from participating in events with the Corporation indefinitely.

Persons less than 18 years old may be permitted as members provided they are sponsored by a responsible Corporation member and are also subject to the above procedure.

2. Membership is constituted of the following three categories:
 - A. Full Member
 - B. Associate Member
 - C. Honorary Member
3. All membership will include a member's spouse and children.
4. All members joining the unit do so of their own choice and at their own risk.
5. All members must sign a release form, releasing the Corporation and its members from any liability incurred while being a part of the Corporation, military and civilian reenactors, or while participating in any events they may attend.
6. All members are responsible for their own property in and out of an event. The Corporation, the Regiment, or any member of the Corporation are not responsible for lost, damaged, or destroyed items.
7. The rights and duties of a full member
 - A. The rights of a full member
 1. Vote
 2. Participate in reenactments and corporate meetings
 3. Hold Office
 4. Chair Committees
 5. Be a committee member
 6. Enrollment in the online information board

- B. The duties of a full member
 - 1. Participate in four (4) full event days; guidelines established in the Military and Civilian sections
 - 2. Share work load of the Corporation by serving on/or chairing committee or holding an elective or an appointed position
 - 3. Uphold the rules and regulations of this document
 - 4. Pay dues.

Failure to do so can result in the initiation of Article III, Paragraph 9.

8. The rights and duties of an associate member

- A. The rights of an associate member
 - 1. Participate in reenactments and corporate meetings
 - 2. Enrollment in the online information board
 - 3. Be a committee member
- B. The duties of an associate member
 - 1. Participate in four (4) full event days; guidelines established in the Military and Civilian sections
 - 2. Share work load of the Corporation by serving on committees
 - 3. Uphold the rules and regulations of this document
 - 4. Pay dues

Failure to do so can result in initiation of Article III, Paragraph 9.

9. The rights and duties of an honorary member

- A. The rights of an honorary member
 - 1. Participate in reenactments and corporate meetings
 - 2. Be a committee member
 - 3. Enrollment in the online information board
- B. The duties of an honorary member
 - 1. Uphold the rules and regulations of this document

Failure to do so can result in initiation of Article III, Paragraph 9.

- 10. Any member, associate member or honorary member who discredits themselves and/or the Corporation is subject to immediate dismissal by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members at a general membership meeting.

Article IV (Elections)

1. Elections for corporate officers can be held only once a year
 - A. Nominations for corporate officers will open at the Jackson, Michigan event and close 30 days after that.
 - B. All nominations will be turned into the Secretary
 - C. Elections will be held at the December Business Meeting
 - D. New corporate officers will be introduced and installed at the December Business Meeting.

2. Ballots
 - A. Absentee ballots must be submitted to the Member at Large in a sealed envelope and will be opened when ballots are counted at the elections.
 - B. The ballots will be counted by (2) volunteers who are not running for Corporate, Military or Civilian office

3. A simple majority vote is needed to win office. In the case of a tie vote, a coin toss will determine the winner. The coin toss will be administered by any two Board Members whose positions are not the position being decided by the coin toss.

4. Corporate officers and committee chairs will hold their office until:
 - A. They are deemed not responsible in the office
 - B. They voluntarily leave the office
 - C. A successor has been elected
 - D. A replacement should be elected at the discretion of the members

5. Corporate officers will be nominated and elected in the sequence listed in Article V, to be known as the Board of Directors.

- 6(a). The Board of Directors shall be comprised of five Executive officers: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Member at Large.

- 6(b). The Board of Directors shall determine the policies and activities of the Corporation, approve and discipline members, approve the budget, approve all bills, take counsel with committees and have general management of the Corporation.

Article V (Duties of Corporate Officers)

1. President: Shall preside at all meetings and perform all other duties that he or she may be called upon to do.

2. Vice President: Shall assume the duties of President in case of the President's absence and carry on any duties of the office as may be passed on by the president and ex officio member of every committee. The Vice President shall also be responsible for an accurate attendance roster of all meetings.

3. Secretary: Shall take minutes of all meetings, and report minutes at the next meeting. He or she will also be responsible for all Corporate correspondence. In addition, he or she shall prepare ballots for the annual elections.
4. Treasurer: Shall receive all dues, special contributions and grants, keep records of receipts and disbursements, and report the financial condition at all meetings and "The Bugle."
5. Member at Large: Shall be a tie breaker should a tie happen when the board votes on something. Also considered a liaison between the members and the board.
6. A corporate officer may not hold more than one (1) position at a time. Upon election, all previous positions must be turned over to an alternate.

Article VI (Meetings)

1. There shall be a general meeting held at ever reenactment.
2. The meeting day and time shall be determined by the President and will be communicated to the membership either orally and/or in writing.
3. Meetings during the winter months will be held as needed, with one being held at the December Business Meeting and another at a Spring Meeting.
4. A Board of Directors meeting may not be held unless fifty-one (51) percent or more of the Board is present.
5. Roll call must be taken at all Board of Directors meetings and be stated as attended when the minutes are read at the general membership meeting.

Article VII (Dues)

1. Membership dues shall be \$15.00 per year for full members. Honorary members will pay no dues but will require a majority vote of the general membership.
2. The dues shall be set annually by a popular vote of the current membership. These dues are to be used for postage, stationary, phone calls, unit events, unit equipment, or where the membership sees fit.
3. Dues may be paid October 1st of the preceding year, but no later than January 1st of the current dues year.
4. No former member shall participate in any activity or event until their dues are paid in full for the current year.
5. New members joining the Corporation will pay a prorated portion of the annual dues based on the number of months of membership in the Corporation.

Article VIII (Financial Benefits)

1. Any money from any source received by the Corporation will go into the treasury.
2. If the Corporation disbands, each member will receive a share, determined by seniority in belonging to the Corporation. The seniority per year will be decided by the total number of years for all active members divided by the total amount in the Corporation treasury.
3. There shall be a \$50.00 limit on expenditures that does not need board approval.

Article IX (Constitutional Amendments)

1. Amendments to Constitution will be voted on at any regularly scheduled business meeting. A simple majority of votes cast at the meetings will carry an amendment. Issues of amendment must be discussed at a minimum of two membership meetings prior to being voted on. Issues to be voted on will be posted on the online information board.

Anyone unable to attend the events may vote by absentee ballot. Absentee ballots shall be sent to the Member at Large in an envelope marked "Absentee Ballot." These ballots will be opened and counted only at the event during the voting. Results of the vote will be posted on the online information board.

Article X (Committees)

1. The President shall appoint any necessary committee heads as required.

Military Rules and Regulations

Part I Organization

1. 1861-The basic infantry organization of the period was the regiment. The regiment was formed by grouping ten companies of over 100 men each, giving a desired strength of over 1,000 men. Any regiment lucky to march off to war with such strength was certainly not able to maintain it. Battle losses due to disease and other causes reduced each regiment so that none ever again reached its muster strength,

A company in such a regiment would consist of 1 captain, 3 lieutenants, 5 sergeants, 8 corporals and 72 privates. In most cases, positions of rank were decided by popular vote of the unit's members before going off to war.

2. 1995-Each regiment organization chooses a regimental designation, but is organized as a company. Few modern units can boast enough membership to represent a company at original muster, but would rather depict a "veteran company." This organization shows what a company would look like after having lost members to battle and disease. In all

cases, the proper ratio between commanders and troops is maintained.

Part II Camp Duty and Details

There are certain camp duties which must be performed to assure safe, clean, and secure camp operations, and to present an authentic impression to the public. This responsibility will be assigned by the highest ranking NCO present to the Corporals, as events needs dictate. Non-Commissioned officers are to organize and supervise work details, not to do the work themselves. On the other hand, a good NCO leads by example, and never asks someone to do something he would not do himself. The First Sergeant is required to keep accurate records to assure these duties are rotated fairly. Military protocol and respect for rank are to be observed at all times. Maintaining proper camp appearance and image are the ultimate responsibility of the camp commander and he will issue directives as necessary.

Part III Equipment

This section is included to help the new member acquire the proper uniform and equipment to portray an authentic member of the 12th South Carolina/4th Michigan Infantry. New members are cautioned to only buy clothing or equipment after consulting with their “veteran buddy” to make sure they buy the right items first, get the proper quality, and do not spend too much.

1. Clothing

Required uniform items are the first on the list for new members. Both the southern and northern impressions rely upon the “generic” uniform of the Civil War, with little variation. Each new member will have one year to obtain a complete authentic uniform and equipage of either impression; however, the soldier is encouraged to purchase the confederate attire before the federal attire. Before any new member can reenact with the 12th South Carolina/4th Michigan, the individual must be attired in authentic period clothing and equipment as stated below. This authentic attire can be borrowed from fellow members and or the company for the first year. The Commanding Officer or his designate will determine if the individual has made the requirements.

Refusal to comply with these terms may bring about the enforcement of Article III Number 9 of this constitution.

2. Equipment

Refer to the New Members Handbook for a complete list of the authentic and equipage to be used. Any changes to this list in the New Members Handbook have to be reviewed and approved by the Captain and his officers.

Part IV Rank

All military members shall enter the Regiment as a Private and serve as such one full year before becoming eligible to be elected to rank. The promotion of military members shall be accomplished in the following manner:

- A. All promotions will be awarded based on the strength of the regiment and the need for Officers and NCO's in order to portray a well balanced ratio.
- B. Each year, all positions of rank will be filled in accordance with the results of a general election of the military members to be held at the December Business Meeting. The period of rank shall be for the following year with the exception of the Captain and Lieutenant, which shall be for the following two years, voted on during the same year. No soldier shall be eligible to vote in rank elections unless he has attended four full days of officially scheduled events. A full event day is defined as present for morning roll call and participating in all military activities of the day, up to and including the afternoon battle. The records of the 1st Sergeant shall be the final determination of eligibility in voting.
- C. Special elections to fill vacancies may be held at any time during the year as need dictates. Vacancies will be published on the online information board with instructions to interested members to notify the Commanding Officer that their names may be placed on the ballot.
- D. Only soldiers are entitled to vote on positions of rank. At least fifty-one (51) percent of the total membership must vote in order to constitute a valid election, including absentee ballots. Absentee ballots will not be opened prior to the election. Results of the election shall be based on simple majority. In the case of a tie, a coin toss will determine the winner. The coin toss will be administered by any two Board Members who are not eligible for the military position being decided.
- E. All votes shall be made by secret ballot. The election shall be chaired by the President of the Corporation.
- F. No member shall be eligible for the rank of Sergeant or Officer unless he has served one full season as a Corporal.
- G. In order to retain their rank, attendance shall be as follows:

- Officers.....90% of officially scheduled event days
- Sergeants.....90% of officially scheduled event days
- Corporals.....75% of officially scheduled event days
- Privates.....are encouraged to attend at least 50% of officially scheduled event days

An "event day" is defined as present at morning roll call and participating in all military activities of the day up to and including the afternoon battle.

- H. Field command is the responsibility of the Captain. Should the need arise, the Captain may

award brevet rank at a reenactment, specific to that event.

- I. No soldier will be eligible to fight in the day's battle unless he has participated in the required drills/duties/guard mount for that particular day. Exceptions to this rule may be granted by the first commanding officer or his designate.

Part V Demotions

Any rank holder who is found not be performing his duties of that rank may be demoted to Private after the following procedure has been carried out:

- A. The First Sergeant will initiate an investigation into the allegation, including all other NCO's, to determine the extent and causes of the failure to perform. The individual shall be informed of this action by the First Sergeant, and offered the opportunity to resign his rank and voluntarily return to the rank of Private. If such be the case, the matter will be closed and the vacancy opened to a special election.
- B. Upon completion of the investigation, the NCO's will present their findings and recommendation to the Commanding Officer.
- C. The Commanding Officer will call a special meeting of the membership for the express purpose of determining whether the individual shall be demoted.
- D. At least fifty-one (51) percent of the voting military membership must participate in the special election, with a simple majority determining the outcome.
- E. If the vote dictates, the individual will be reduced to the rank of Private and the vacated position will be filled according to Part IV, section C.

Part VI Personal Equipment

1. All members are responsible for obtaining their proper equipment for unit portrayal. All equipment used must be of a Civil War era style and type. All equipment will be approved by the Commanding Officer or his designate before being allowed in camp or used in any regimental function. All members must also supply their own camp equipment, tent, chair, table, cot, blanket, etc.
2. All members are required to supply their own food, powder camps, drink, etc. when at reenactments.
3. All members are required to help in camp and keep their campsites neat and clean before, during, and after events.
4. Proper dress will be strictly enforced while a member is in camp during an event. This applies to both men and women

5. All members will use company uniform regulations and equipment guidelines to conform to the company dress code.

Part VII Unit Equipment

1. Unit property such as tents, flies, cooking utensils, and tools will be the property of the unit to be used by everyone at that event.
2. Unit equipment and property maintenance shall be a shared responsibility among the unit members.
3. The company tent is for everyone's use. Property in the tent is private. Do not remove items unless you own them or have permission from the owner. Parents are to make sure that their children know what to take out of the tent. The tent must be kept clean. Individuals are responsible for waste disposal. Failure to comply to the tent rules will result in restriction of tent use.

Part VIII Firearms

1. Any member can be subjected to training in the use of firearms under the direct supervision of the Commanding Officer or his appointee. New members will not be allowed to use firearms until they have the approval of the Commanding Officer. Any member may lose their right to carry a firearm if they are deemed unsafe by the Commanding Officer. Refusal to comply with these Rules and Regulations may bring about the enforcement of Article III, Number 9 of the Constitution.
2. All first time recruits will not be permitted to use a firearm during any tactical event, national event, or Jackson event until he has gone through 1 (one) event day of training at a smaller, less intense event, where proper instruction has taken place. The first sergeant will see to this and his records will be the final determination in this matter.

Civilian Rules and Regulations

The 12th South Carolina/4th Michigan is organized as a family oriented unit. We know that this may seem out of place for most of the events we attend, but given the historical fact that many of the wives of the men in the original unit visited the unit in their camps quite often, it then becomes part of our living history to have civilians in period dress at campsites.

Part I Voting Rights

1. A Civilian Liaison will be elected into office at the December Business Meeting. This person's main duty will consist of coordinating the Civilian Activities with the Military commander. Nominations for this position will be opened at the Jackson event and close 30 days after that event.

2. No Civilian shall have the right to vote unless four (4) full days of the following events have been attended: officially scheduled events, living history, scheduled civilian meetings.
3. Parades are not included in the eligibility requirements to vote.
4. Only civilians are entitled to vote in elections for civilian positions.

Part II Dress Guidelines

Most of our time is spent in military camp. The appropriate dress for the women is the basic camp skirt and blouse. This should be the first outfit that is purchased or made. Each new member will be given a detailed dress guideline when they join.

Part III Camp Duties and Details

Whether it be military or civilian camp, there are duties that must be performed in order to have a safe, clean, and secure camp in addition to portraying an authentic camp impression. While in military camp we are under the rules that apply to the military. We are just as capable in getting water, firewood, maintaining the fire, etc. as the men. If there is a discrepancy with our impression or of a particular person, the Captain of the Regiment shall approach the Liaison for the Civilians and discuss it with that person.

Part IV Children in Camp

Children who have no active role with the military, ie musicians, will come under the Civilian Rules and Regulations. All children must be supervised at all times by their parent(s) and/or guardian(s). Period dress regulation must be adhered to during spectator hours. No non-period items are to be used during spectator hours, including toys, clothing, food, etc. Children must be taught to stay away from the fire pit and must listen to adults when told to do so.

If a child must be left in camp alone, arrangements should be made prior to the event with a responsible adult to supervise that child. Do not abuse the situation. If the child cannot be supervised at all times, do not bring the child to the event.

The parent(s) and guardian(s) of the children will be held accountable for the actions of their children.

Revision History

June 30, 1995

*Deleted the category of associate member and all language referencing associate member.

*Changed Article VI Item #2 to permit any form of communication to the membership announcing the time, date and location of general meetings while at an event.

*Amendments were ratified at Romeo event on June 3, 1995.

June 14, 1996

*Added under Civilian Rules and Regulations, Part I, Paragraph 4, a line denoting the civilian right to vote.

*Changed Part VIII, Firearms under the Military Section. Eliminated the age requirements and rewrote the paragraph.

*Added a part IV under Civilian Rules to outline the rules regarding children in camp.

August 17, 1997

*Changed Article IV, Paragraph 3 and Part IV, Paragraph D under military to handle tie votes during elections.

*To handle the modifications for 4 full event days, the following was changed: Article III paragraph 7B1, Part IV Paragraph B, Part IV Paragraph G, and Part I Paragraph 2.

*Article IV Paragraph 2A was modified for submitting Absentee Ballots.

*Article IV Paragraph B was modified to have 2 people counting ballots.

*Article IX Paragraph I was modified to handle when amendments can be voted on.

February 4, 1999

*Under Military Rules and Regulations, Part IV, Paragraph B was modified to have the Captain and Lieutenant elected for two years.

August 12, 2000

*Authenticity was added to Article II, section 4.

*Under Military Rules and Regulations, Part III, section 1 was modified to state that the commanding officer or a designate is outfitted to the requirements.

*Under Military Rules and Regulations, Part III, section 2 was modified to include other necessary equipment which is a confederate 7 or 8 button shell jacket or a federal 4 button sack coat, authentic kepi, forage cap, or slouch hat, sky blue federal foot pattern trousers with suspenders, wool socks and authentic brogans.

*Under Military Rules and Regulations, Article IV, section B was modified to define an event day as participating in all military activities of the day, up to and including the afternoon battle.

*Under Military Rules and Regulations, section I was added.

*Under Military Rules and Regulations, part IV, section G was modified to include the definition of an event day.

*Under Military Rules and Regulations, part VIII, section 2 was added.

August 8, 2002

*Under Military Rules and Regulations, part III, changed Paragraph 2 to reference the New Members Handbook for a complete list of equipment.

Summer, 2003

Article III (membership)

Subsection 7 The rights of a full member

Delete 6. Receive a copy of “The Bugle” each month

Add 6. Enrollment in the online information board.

Subsection 8 The rights of an honorary member

Delete 3. Receive a copy of “The Bugle” each month

add 3. Enrollment in the online information board

Article VIII (financial benefits)

Delete sentence in 3. This expenditure is mainly for the monthly production costs associated for “the Bugle.”

Article IX (Constitutional Amendments)

Under 1. Delete “Issues to be voted on will be posted in “The Bugle”. Replace with “Issues to be voted on will be posted on the online information board.”

Delete also, “Results of the vote will be posted in The Bugle” and replace with, “Results will be posted on the online information board.”

Military Rules and Regulations

Under Part IV Rank, section C replace, “vacancies will be published in the Bugle...” with “Vacancies will be published on the online information board.”

2006

Changed Membership qualifications: All incoming members will become “Associate Members” and will not be considered full members until a vote of the general membership.

Changed status from a public to a private non-profit corporation.