**South Central Jurisdiction of the**

**United Methodist Congress of the Deaf (SCJ-UMCD)**

**By-Laws**

**Article I**

**Names, Territory, and Principal Office**

**Section 1: Name**.

The name of this organization shall be known as the South Central Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Congress of the Deaf (SCJ-UMCD) herein after referred to as SCJ-UMCD.

**Section 2: Territory.**

The primary service area of SCJ-UMCD shall be defined in the most current edition of the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church. The geographic bounds are encompassed by the States of Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, Kansas, and Nebraska. Also included is the Four Corners Navajo Reservation. (At time of writing the names of the annual conferences within the geographical bounds of SCJ-UMCD are: The Louisiana Conference; The Texas, North Texas, Rio Bravo, Central Texas and Northwest Texas conferences; The New Mexico Conference; The Four Corners; Oklahoma Conference; The Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference; The Arkansas Conference; The Missouri Conference, and The Great Plains Conference).

**Section 3: Principal Office.**

SCJ-UMCD office resides with the president of the SCJ-UMCD, or as determined by the officers of the SCJ-UMCD. In the event of a vacancy, the SCJ-UMCD office will be determined by the Executive officers of the United Methodist Congress of the Deaf. As a component entity within the United Methodist Congress of the Deaf, our principal office is registered through the:

General Board of Global Ministries - Health

The United Methodist Church

c/o Joan Young, 14th floor

475 Riverside Drive

New York, NY 10115

Phone: 212 870-3871 Fax: 212 870-3624

[www.gbgm-umc.org](http://www.gbgm-umc.org)

**Article II**

**Purpose**

**Section 1:** SCJ-UMCD celebrates and promotes Christian leadership and discipleship within the Deaf community in its geographic boundaries, and consistent with the overall aims of the United Methodist Congress of the Deaf.

**Section 2:** SCJ-UMCD shall use the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church as guidance in conducting its business, only if the By-laws of the United Methodist Congress of the Deaf do not offer any clear direction.

**Section 3:** SCJ-UMCD affirms the authority of Scripture in matters of faith.

**Article III**

**Membership**

**Section 1:** Members of SCJ-UMCD are those who share the goals of SCJ-UMCD as stated in Article II Purpose and are current in their dues to the SCJ-UMCD. One may be a member of UMCD without being a lay or clergy member of the United Methodist Church.

**Section 2:** Voting Members. Voting members of SCJ-UMCD are those who meet all of the requirements of Article III Section 1, and, are lay or clergy members of the United Methodist Church.

**Article IV**

**Committees**

**Section 1:** There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of the President, Vice-President, Secretary and the Treasurer.

**Section 2:** There shall be a Nominations Committee consisting of members of the Executive Committee and two at-large voting members of SCJ-UMCD. The nominations committee shall be chaired by the Vice-President.

**Section 3:** The President, and officers of SCJ-UMCD may establish standing and ad hoc committees whenever the need arises.

1. The President shall have the power to appoint committee chairs and to appoint committee members subject to the approval of the Board. Much important work of SCJ-UMCD is done by its Committees.
2. The President is an ex-officio member of all committees.

**Article V**

**Board Members**

**Section 1:** The Board shall consist of the following officers:

1. President
2. Vice-President
3. Secretary
4. Treasurer
5. Any chairs of standing and ad-hoc committees as determined by the President.

**Section 2:** During Board meetings, only Board members shall have voting privileges, the President voting only in case of a tie.

**Section 3:** The Board members shall serve terms of four years and shall not serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

**Section 4:** The President of the United Methodist Congress of the Deaf shall be an ex-officio member of the SCJ-UMCD without vote.

**Section 5:** Past Presidents of SCJ-UMCD shall have ex-officio membership on the Board without vote.

**Section 6:** A representative from the United Methodist Committee on Deaf and Hard of Hearing Ministries (UM-DHM), as agreed upon by the UMCD President, SCJ-UMCD President and the chair of the UM-DHM committee, shall have ex-officio membership on the Board without vote. It is preferable that the representative from UM-DHM reside within the boundaries of SCJ-UMCD.

**Article VI**

**Vacancies on the SCJ-UMCD Board**

**Section 1:** If a vacancy occurs between conferences of SCJ-UMCD, the Board is empowered to fill the vacancy until the next conference of SCJ-UMCD. At the next conference of SCJ-UMCD, an officer will be elected to serve a full four-year term. The person selected by the Board to fill the vacant position in the interim shall be eligible for election to that position.

**Section 2:** In the case of the death or resignation of a President, the Vice-President assumes the duties of the President and completes the term of office.

**Article VII**

**Qualifications of Officers**

**Section 1:** The officers of SCJ-UMCD must be members in good standing in the United Methodist Church and voting members of SCJ-UMCD.

**Section 2:** The officers must be of sound character, competent, and mature in judgment and experience.

**Section 3:** At least two of the officers of the Executive Committee shall be Deaf, Late-Deafened, Hard of Hearing or Deaf-Blind.

**Section 4:** A person nominated for office must be a member of SCJ-UMCD and have attended one UMCD conference or the SCJ-UMCD conference, previous to the SCJ-UMCD conference at which he or she is nominated.

**Article VIII**

**Election of Officers**

**Section 1:** Officer’s terms are for four years, unless shortened or lengthened by two years to preserve a staggered term of officers. Elections will be held once every two years during the biennial (once every two years) conference of the SCJ-UMCD on odd-numbered years. Special elections to fill a vacancy between biennial maybe held by permission of the UMCD President and can be held by those SCJ-UMCD members present at a UMCD conference. Officer terms are staggered so that at no one time will the entire Board composition be voted upon.

**Section 2:** The Nominating Committee shall prepare a slate of nominees for approval by the SCJ-UMCD Board. The nominees will be introduced at the meeting of SCJ-UMCD conference, held every other year on years ending with an odd number.

**Section 3:** The Treasurer and Secretary (who is in charge of keeping the membership database up to date) shall determine the correct listing of voting members. Members who are unable to attend the SCJ-UMCD conference and who wish to vote, shall give at least a two (2) week notice, prior to the first day of the SCJ-UMCD Conference, to the Secretary of SCJ-UMCD of their intent to vote absentee. An absentee voter may receive a ballot by e-mail. If an e-mail address is not available, then an absentee ballot may be mailed to the voting member. The absentee voting deadline shall be set by the Nominating Committee.

**Section 4:** The Nominating Committee shall oversee the collection and counting of the ballots under the supervision of the Vice-President. Impartial observers will be involved in each step of the process, from collecting ballots at the SCJ-UMCD conference and ballots emailed or mailed, to the counting of ballots in order to ensure that the election is conducted with the highest integrity and honesty**.**

**Section 5:** In the event of a resignation of an Officer between general meetings of SCJ-UMCD, the Board is empowered to fill the vacancy until the next general membership meeting of SCJ-UMCD (or UMCD Conference). If the SCJ-UMCD president office is vacant and not filled by the SCJ-UMCD Board, the President of UMCD has the authority to appoint a person as an Interim SCJ-UMCD President. This Interim President of SCJ-UMCD will serve until the next SCJ-UMCD conference. The Interim SCJ-UMCD president may be eligible to run for election.

**Article IX**

**Duties of Officers**

**Section 1:** The President shall function as chief executive officer of SCJ-UMCD and shall:

1. Preside at all business meetings of SCJ-UMCD
2. Communicate with the President of UMCD.
3. Work with the SCJ-UMCD officers and the UM-DHM representative on promoting ministries with the Deaf within the geographic bounds of SCJ-UMCD.
4. Liaise with the office of the South Central Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church, to build awareness of Deaf ministries in the South Central Jurisdiction.
5. Officially represent SCJ-UMCD at the South Central Jurisdictional Conference of the United Methodist Church, usually held during the third weekend of July following the General Conference of the United Methodist Church.
6. Maintain contact with the membership of SCJ-UMCD through regular postings on SCJ-UMCD social media and other forms of mass communication.
7. Be an ex-officio member of all SCJ-UMCD committees.

**Section 2:** The Vice-President shall perform all the duties of the President in case of the absence of the President and shall:

1. Work closely with the President on all matters related to SCJ-UMCD.
2. Shall receive information concerning activities concerning Deaf ministries within the South Central Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church.
3. Shall be the Chairperson of the Nomination Committee.

**Section 3:** The Secretary shall keep a record of all regular and special meetings of SCJ-UMCD and shall

1. Provide all Officers with a copy of minutes of all meetings.
2. Correspond in relation to any business of the SCJ-UMCD when requested to do so.
3. Be responsible for notification of all meetings and elections
4. Assist the President in keeping current a directory of Deaf ministries in the South Central Jurisdiction.
5. Consult with the Treasurer in keeping an updated membership list.
6. Discharge all other duties usual to the office Secretary.

**Section 4:** The Treasurer shall be responsible for the financial affairs of UMCD-SCJ and shall

1. Collect dues and donations from members and other monies, giving appropriate receipts.
2. Have the responsibility to write and sign all checks for SCJ-UMCD, but only upon receiving written authorization from the President.
3. Assist the Chair of the UMCD Endowment Fund in promoting contributions to the UMCD Endowment Fund.
4. Provide the Board and membership with an accurate financial statement when requested, and to give a financial statement report to the SCJ-UMCD biennial conference.
5. Consult with the Secretary in providing a list of members who are in good standing (paid their dues).
6. Discharge all other duties usual to the office of Treasurer.

**Article X**

**Conferences/Meetings**

**Section 1:** Conferences/meetings of the SCJ-UMCD shall be held in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. The biennial conference (a general membership meeting) of SCJ-UMCD shall be held once every two (2) years on years ending with an odd number (or as determined by the Executive committee of UMCD).
2. Any member of SCJ-UMCD may propose to host the succeeding SCJ-UMCD conference. A proposal may be offered on behalf of a United Methodist Church within the bounds of SCJ-UMCD. It is preferable that the proposal have the support of the host church pastor. The proposal should be made during an SCJ-UMCD conference and be accepted by a majority vote of the voting membership present at the SCJ-UMCD conference.
3. The host church of the biennial conference of SCJ-UMCD may set the date in consultation with the SCJ-UMCD Board.
4. All conferences shall be accessible to persons who are Deaf, Late-Deafened, Hard of Hearing or Deaf-Blind.
5. The SCJ-UMCD Board has ultimate authority to confirm the site for the upcoming biennial conference and an alternative meeting site in the event the primary site should fail to host the conference. It is encouraged that SCJ-UMCD conferences be rotated among the annual conferences within the SCJ-UMCD boundaries.

**Section 2:**  The agenda of the general business meetings shall be as follows:

1. Invocation
2. Roll Call
3. Reading of the minutes
4. Treasurer’s Report
5. Reports of Officers and Committees
6. Unfinished Old Business
7. New Business
8. Adjournment and Benediction

**Section 3:** Two –thirds (2/3) of the members of the Board must be present to constitute a quorum for Board meetings. Board meetings can be conducted in person or via email.

**Section 4:** In case of questions regarding procedure of any SCJ-UMCD meeting not otherwise covered in the By-Laws, the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church and Robert’s Rules of Order shall determine parliamentary procedure.

**Section 5:** SCJ-UMCD conferences should be designed to be attractive to the Deaf community, to provide for Deaf Christian leadership development, to encourage Deaf missions, to share effective means of evangelism among the Deaf, and to model ways of Deaf Bible study and worship.

**Articles XI**

**Finances**

**Section 1:** The fiscal year shall be from June 1st through May 30th.

**Section 2:** There shall be annual fee for membership dues set by the Board.

**Section 3:** SCJ-UMCD shall establish and collect its own dues and collect dues on behalf of the United Methodist Congress of the Deaf. A financial statement and listing of SCJ-UMCD members shall be submitted to the Treasurer and Secretary of UMCD at least once per year. On years when the UMCD Conference is held, a financial and membership report should be submitted within 30 days of the UMCD Conference. On years when the SCJ-UMCD conference is held, a financial and membership report should be submitted 30 days before the SCJ-UMCD Conference meets.

**Section 4:** Standard accounting procedures shall be used. If financial records are maintained on a computer system, backup procedures shall be utilized as established by a designated person and approved by the Executive Committee.

**Section 5**: Within two (2) months after the end of the fiscal year an audit of the financial records of SCJ-UMCD shall be made by an auditor familiar with standard accounting procedures appointed by the Executive Committee. The auditors shall not be current or outgoing officers. The audit need not be certified.

**Section 6:** The Treasurer shall provide a financial report at regular Board meetings and a full financial statement at the biennial conference/general membership meeting and complete any necessary financial paperwork required by the Internal Revenue Service.

**Article XII**

**Resignation and Removal of Officers**

**Section 1:** Any Officer who wishes to resign must submit a letter of resignation to the President at least thirty (30) days prior to the effective date of resignation. In the event that the President resigns, the letter must be submitted to the entire Board.

**Section 2:** Any vacancy created through resignation shall be filled by procedure outlined in Article VIII Section 5.

**Section 3:** The Board may declare the position of an Officer vacant and may remove such Officer for cause on the occurrence of any of the following events:

1. The Officer has been declared of unsound mind by an order of the Court.
2. The Officer has failed to attend the last three meetings for the Board.
3. The Officer has committed a chargeable offense under the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church (paragraph 2702).
4. The Officer is no longer a member of the United Methodist Church.

**Article XIII**

**Dissolution**

**Section 1:** In the event SCJ-UMCD dissolves, any and all money, assets, and liabilities shall be transferred to the Treasurer of UMCD. Disbursement of the SCJ-UMCD funds will be determined by the Executive Committee of UMCD. Funds may be returned in the event SCJ-UMCD is reconstituted.

**Article XIV**

**Amendments**

**Section 1:** These By-Laws, all or in part, may be amended, altered, suspended, or repealed by a majority vote of the voting members meeting during a called or biennial conference of SCJ-UMCD. Changes to the By-Laws may be made by a 2/3 vote of SCJ-UMCD Board, but are subject to ratification by a majority vote of voting members present at the next SCJ-UMCD conference.

**Article XV**

**Publication of By-Laws**

**Section 1:** These By-Laws should be accessible to the public on the UMCD website.

**Section 2:** These By-Laws may be available in American Sign Language upon request to the SCJ-UMCD Secretary.