

Association of
Firearm and Tool Mark Examiners



POLICY LETTERS

INDEX

- [POLICY #1 Suggested Guidelines for Annual Banquet](#)
- [POLICY #2 Travel Reimbursement \(Adopted into Policy #5 5-21-11\)](#)
- [POLICY #3 Time Requirement for Elevation of Member Status \(Archived 12-3-05\)](#)
- [POLICY #4 Interpretation of Points for Distinguished Membership](#)
- [POLICY #5 Travel and Lodging Reimbursement](#)
- [POLICY #6 Annual Seminar Host Committee Oversight](#)
- [POLICY #7 Journal Shipping Expense](#)
- [POLICY #8 Committee Report Submission](#)
- [POLICY #9 General Membership Notification](#)
- [POLICY #10 Annual Training Meeting Fees](#)
- [POLICY #11 Publication of Applicant Names](#)
- [POLICY #12 Regional Meetings](#)
- [POLICY #13 Membership Effective Date](#)
- [POLICY #14 Release of Member Information](#)
- [POLICY #15 Member Application Records](#)
- [POLICY #16 Committee Responsibilities and Records](#)
- [POLICY #17 Distribution of Policy Letters](#)
- [POLICY #18 Software Possession](#)
- [POLICY #19 Minutes](#)
- [POLICY #20 Subscriber Status](#)
- [POLICY #21 E-Vote Policy](#)

[POLICY #22 Maintenance of Digital Copies of AFTE Journals](#)

[POLICY #23 Publication of Announcements](#)

[POLICY #24 Distribution and Use of the Membership Directory \(Roster\)](#)

[POLICY #25 Records Management Program](#)

[POLICY #26 Reciprocal Agreement with American Academy of Forensic Science \(AAFS\)](#)

[POLICY #27 Agreement with Forensic Technology Inc. \(FTI\) for the annual presentation of the
Goddard Award](#)

[POLICY #28 Permission to Reprint AFTE Journal Articles](#)

[POLICY #29 Release of Association Technical Procedures and Training Manual and Glossary](#)

[POLICY #30 Hardship and Bereavement Donations](#)

[POLICY #31 Use of HelmsBriscoe for Annual Training Seminar](#)

[POLICY #32 AFTE Participation in the Organization of Scientific Committees \(OSAC\)
Particularly the Forensic Science Standards Board \(FSSB\)](#)

[POLICY #33 Use of the AFTE Logo](#)

POLICY #1

Suggested Guidelines for Annual Banquet

1. Prior to dinner the President will:
 - 1.1. Determine if any ministers, priests or other clergy are in attendance to deliver the invocation. Any member(s) who passed away during the year should be remembered.
2. After Dinner the President will:
 - 2.1. Provide opening remarks and welcome everyone
 - 2.2. Introduce the guest speaker (if applicable)
 - 2.3. Recognize any special or prominent guests (if applicable)
 - 2.4. Present awards as follows:
 - 2.4.1. Walter J. Howe Member of the Year Award
 - 2.4.2. Steve Molnar Key Person of the Year Award
 - 2.4.3. AFTE Scholarship Awards
 - 2.4.4. Distinguished Member(s) Award (if applicable)
 - 2.4.5. Emeritus Member(s) Award (if applicable)
 - 2.4.6. Outgoing Officer(s) Award
 - 2.4.7. Host Committee Recognition Award
 - 2.4.8. President's Recognition Award (if applicable)
 - 2.5. Provide President's Speech/Remarks
 - 2.6. Introduce the Incoming President
3. The Incoming President will:
 - 3.1. Present a plaque to the Outgoing President and present any additional awards (if applicable)
 - 3.2. Provide speech/remarks on upcoming year
 - 3.3. Officially close the Business Meeting

***Note:** The Secretary coordinates with the appropriate Board Member and Committee Chair to ensure that the correct plaques are ordered far enough in advance to be presented at the banquet. The Secretary is responsible for the acquisition of the various award plaques to be given at the annual banquet. If any award recipient is not present, other arrangements for acceptance of the award on behalf of the recipient should be made.*

***Note:** The Board of Directors recognizes the dedication and work of the host committee and in so recognizing will allot funding not to exceed \$500 towards recognition plaques for the host*

committee members. Any plaques purchased beyond this approved amount will be the responsibility of the host committee.

Note: *The Program Chair along with the Host Committee shall be responsible for officiating the raffle, preferably at some occasion during the week of the training seminar prior to the banquet or after the official close of the annual banquet.*

POLICY #2

Travel Reimbursement

(Adopted into Policy 5 May 21, 2011)

POLICY #3

Time Requirement for Elevation of Member Status

(Archived 12-3-05)

POLICY #4

Interpretation of Points for Distinguished Membership

1. Regular AFTE members may apply points obtained for AFTE Seminar contributions, attendance, or Journal contributions towards Distinguished Membership status. Provisional and Associate members may accumulate points; however, may not apply points received towards Distinguished Member status until they have reached Regular Member status.
2. A maximum of two (2) Annual Seminars may be claimed toward Distinguished Membership with one (1) point awarded to a Member per Annual Seminar.
3. When a Provisional, Regular, or Associate Member presents a paper or poster at an Annual Seminar or publishes a paper in the AFTE Journal with the same content, they may only receive point(s) towards Distinguished Membership for one (1) of the contributions. The Member may decide which of these contributions is to be credited.
4. Two (2) points will be awarded for the publishing of a paper in the AFTE Journal that provides an in-depth discussion of a specific topic or subject matter that relates directly to the science of firearms and toolmark identification and/or its application. One (1) point will be awarded for a case or technical report that is not as detailed or comprehensive such as an interesting case, new product, etc.
5. Refer to Bylaws Article III, Section 2, sub-section C for further clarity and point distribution.

POLICY #5

Travel and Lodging Reimbursement

1. The following named officers within AFTE will have their airfare*, room, and early basic registration, ground transportation (with documented tip up to 20%), airport parking, mileage (to/from airport or to the conference location, if not flying), baggage fees for one regular checked bag (unless otherwise approved), and hotel shipping/storage fees for association related items paid for only while in attendance at any executive meeting and/or training conference:

*Airfare: Basic or Main pricing or the equivalent. AFTE will not pay for first class upgrades or early/priority boarding, however, the BOD member can add these options on and personally fund the upgrades separately. If a BOD member can show the treasurer a cost benefit to an additional upgrade or pricing level not specified, then that BOD member can book with treasurer's approval.

- 1.1. President
- 1.2. 1st Vice President
- 1.3. 2nd Vice President
- 1.4. Secretary
- 1.5. Membership Secretary
- 1.6. Treasurer
- 1.7. Immediate Past President
- 1.8. Both Members-at-Large

2. The following named members within AFTE will have their airfare and room paid for only while in attendance at the yearly training seminar:

- 2.1. AFTE Journal Editor
- 2.2. AFTE Webmaster
- 2.3. AFTE DVD Sub-Committee member or their designee which will be responsible for recording the technical program.

3. Room reimbursement is for the named officer only. If an officer must leave the meeting before the scheduled termination date, anyone else that is not an officer occupying that room must assume financial responsibility.

4. In the event that any of the above named officers, who in their official capacity and acting on behalf of the Association have incurred any debts, they shall be reimbursed.

5. Any of the above named officers who may have their way paid by their departments in full will not be reimbursed. If they are partially paid by their department then AFTE will pay the balance. (e.g. your air fare is paid by your department, AFTE will pay only for your room and vice versa).
6. If a meeting is necessary for committee work, AFTE will pay for the airfare and nightly lodging upon Board approval.
7. Any member who has their way paid to the annual meeting, executive meeting or committee meeting by AFTE, will purchase their ticket far enough in advance as to ensure a reduced travel rate. If one fails to do this, they will be responsible for the difference in airfare, at the discretion of the remainder of the Board. If money is needed ahead of time in order to purchase tickets, the Treasurer will be contacted to forward the necessary money.
8. Hotel rooms should be booked early enough to secure the reduced conference rate for the Board Member or above named officer. If the reduced room rate is not secured due to late travel plans, AFTE will not pay the increased cost of the room. AFTE will reimburse for the amount that the room would cost on the reduced rate only.
9. Elect positions for the Treasurer, Membership Secretary, and Secretary will be allowed to attend Mid-Year meetings. Travel costs will be covered by AFTE for the Elect position for the Mid-Year meeting only as this is the best time for training, experience, and continuity of job duties. The same travel reimbursements as the BOD will apply to the Elect position.

POLICY #6

Annual Seminar Host Committee Oversight

1. It shall be incumbent upon the First Vice President to contact the Chair of the host sponsoring the Annual Training Seminar at which they shall preside as President; then work with the Host Committee Chair through their tenure on the Board of Directors. The effort will be to support the goals of the committee and to bring the Annual Training Seminar to a successful end and at a reasonable cost to the membership. This same Board member will follow up until a final report is submitted that contains the elements as outlined in the Host Committee Planning Manual. It will be the practice of the Host Committee to return any surplus funds back to the AFTE Treasurer. Exceptions to this must be approved by the AFTE Board of Directors.

2. The Host Committee must, at a minimum, be aware of and research the following:
 - 2.1. Tax exempt status of their state
 - 2.2. Special Event Insurance
 - 2.3. Speaker indemnification
 - 2.4. All Steering Committee Documents
 - 2.5. Use of HelmsBriscoe for hotel services (see Policy Letter #31)
 - 2.6. Use of HelmsBriscoe ResourceOne (R1) for registration management (see Policy Letter #31) (added 4.1.22)

POLICY #7

Journal Shipping Distribution

1. Effective 1991, all member dues, other than United States and Canada currency, shall reflect an additional amount to cover the cost of shipping the Journal out of the United States. This will become effective with the 1991 dues.
2. Effective 2003, AFTE Member Journals mailed within the United States will be shipped at media rate. AFTE Members with "ship to address" outside of the United States will receive their Journals mailed at letter-post rate, often referred to as Airmail Rate, at no additional cost to their membership dues.
3. Subscribers with "ship to addresses" outside of North America will be billed at a higher rate to defray or cover the additional cost of the letter post or Airmail rate.
4. Effective 2019, applicants accepted as Associate members will only be provided with an electronic Journal subscription. Associate Members will not receive a hard copy option for receiving the Journal.
5. Effective 2019, applicants accepted as Provisional Members will have their Journal subscription default to electronic version. However, the member can opt in for hard copy Journals by changing their profile settings on the AFTE website.

POLICY #8

Committee Report Submission

1. As assigned by the current organizational chart, committee chairs or their designee shall provide a report to the assigned Board member at least one (1) month prior to the mid-year and year-end Board of Directors meetings.
2. The report format shall be directed by the Secretary. As assigned, the appropriate Board member should ensure the committee chair has received a report template or formatting instructions.
3. Prior to publication to the membership, either in the Newsletter or verbally at the business meeting, the Board will ensure review of the information intended for release.

Revision history: re-formatted; Point 1 updated to align with current Board assignment practices (4.1.22)

POLICY #9

General Membership Notification

Membership notification will be done by separate mailings regarding issues that have time deadlines. Timeliness issues shall include, but are not limited to, dues matters and Bylaws changes. Beginning in 2004, the AFTE Newsletter may be used for such notification.

POLICY #10

Annual Training Meeting Fees

All attendees will pay a registration fee. The exhibitor's fee and registration may be equitably combined to allow one (1) person to take advantage of the meals and other functions.

POLICY #11

Publication of Applicant Names

The names of all applicants (Provisional, Regular, Technical Advisor, and Associate) will be made available to the general membership by way of the AFTE Journal or AFTE Newsletter to invite timely comments from the membership that may be used in consideration by the Board of Admissions. A period of 45 days will be allotted for comments to be received and provided to the Board of Admissions for review.

POLICY #12

Regional Meetings

1. AFTE members throughout the world meet regularly in regional groups or forensic discipline meetings to share information. AFTE recognizes the need for members to meet regionally and encourages such meetings; however, AFTE does not sponsor or control these meetings.
 - 1.1. Use of the AFTE name, acronym, or logo for these regional meetings creates legal implications that could affect insurance and liability for AFTE.
 - 1.2. Therefore, the use of the AFTE name, acronym, logo, or likeness of, will not be permitted by the Board of Directors. Failure to comply violates trademark laws and members involved may be censured.
 - 1.3. Any questions regarding this can be directed to the current Board of Directors.
 - 1.4. The regulations of this Policy Letter are not to be confused with Policy Letter #33.

POLICY #13

Membership Effective Date

The effective date of Membership status shall be the date when the application process has been completed, as determined by the Membership Secretary, and forwarded to the Chair of the Board of Admissions, the Secretary and the President.

POLICY #14

Release of Member Information

1. This policy is designed to ensure that the Association balances the right to privacy of individuals, with respect to their personal information, and addresses the need of the Organization to disclose personal information in the course of carrying out business.
2. As the Association is an international organization, this policy will not be governed by any one specific state or country's legal interpretation. For the purposes of clarity, the Association will define personal information, as set forth by the US Federal Trade Commission (FTC), as *data that can be linked to specific individuals, and includes, but is not limited to, such information as name, postal address, phone number, e-mail address, social security number, and driver's license number.*
3. The Association will implement measures, such as limited access and records management/destruction policies, in order to safe guard personal information.
4. Inquiries regarding an individual's membership status may include the following information for release: Membership status (e.g. Regular, Distinguished, etc.) and effective date of membership status, date membership application was received, committee participation (both current and past), certification status and/or dates of certification, and current employment contact (as provided in the most current membership roster). All other written or verbal personal information provided to the Board of Admissions (BoA) in an individual's application, such as, but not limited to, date of birth, home address, location and length of training, references and recommendations, is considered confidential and will not be released per the Association Bylaws Article VII, Section 5.
5. Personal information collected through Association sponsored training seminars may be released by the Association, on a limited use basis, to appropriate professional individuals under the guidelines outlined in Policy Letter # 24.
6. Personal information maintained in the Association's membership directory has implied permission to be released for purposes of direct contact, by members or professional inquiries.
7. To the maximum extent possible, records will be maintained by the Association Secretary in the individual member's electronic file, regarding inquiries of Association members. Upon written request by a member, requests made for their personal information may be provided.

POLICY #15

Member Application Records

1. An audit trail of correspondence is historically essential to AFTE. It is significant to have such records when inquiries are made about individuals who are members and even for those whose applications have been rejected. Therefore, each applicant for AFTE shall have an individual file created by the Association Secretary from the original applications sent by the Membership Secretary.
2. It shall be the responsibility of the Membership Secretary to send each AFTE applicant a letter or email identifying the point of contact while that individual's application is being processed. All categories of membership actions (upgrades to Regular, Provisional, Technical Advisors, and Associate) will be treated the same. At a minimum, the letter should contain an explanation of the application process and how long the applicant might expect before official notification is received. The Membership Secretary shall provide the Association Secretary with a copy of this letter and all correspondence in order to complete that individual's file. If the applicant is rejected, a copy of the President's letter notifying the individual that they have been rejected will also be forwarded to the applicant's file.

POLICY #16

Committee Responsibilities and Records

1. When new committees are established, the President creating the committee shall articulate his desires with respect to the goals of that committee. It shall be the responsibility of the person accepting chair duties to prepare a written statement delineating the committee's responsibilities and direction as they understand them. The statement shall be forwarded to the President within thirty days for his/her review. Assuming no modifications are necessary, the President shall forward this document to the Association Secretary. The Secretary shall create a folder for each committee. Any official communications related to the committee's activities shall include a copy to the Association Secretary for inclusion in the committee file.
2. A copy of this policy letter will be given to each committee chair.
3. The Senior Member at Large is responsible for gathering the committee rosters. When changes are made to the rosters the information will be distributed to the Web Master, AFTE News Editor, AFTE Editor, Historical Committee Chair and the AFTE Secretary. When committee reports are received by board members, the roster on the report should be checked against the website for accuracy.

POLICY #17

Distribution of Policy Letters

It shall be the responsibility of the Second Vice President to ensure that new incoming member(s) of the Board of Directors are provided with a copy of all policy letters before the next meeting of the Board.

POLICY #18

Equipment and Software Possession

The individual provided with Association equipment / software is responsible for taking all reasonable precautions to secure these items in such a manner that they are not subject to theft or damage. Loss, theft or damage to AFTE items must be reported to the appropriate member of the Board of Directors immediately. Replacement or repair due to damage, loss or theft that occurs outside of use for Association business will be the responsibility of the individual to which the items were assigned; however, if the damage, loss or theft occurs during the course of AFTE business, repair or replacement cost will be covered by the Association. Repair or replacement will be at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

AFTE shall purchase computers, printers, scanners and software for use by the Association officers, the Editor, the Webmaster and appropriate committee chairs / members for the purpose of conducting Association business.

- All software purchased by AFTE will remain the property of AFTE and shall be registered in AFTE's name. For the purposes of licensing, the mailing address of the Association Treasurer shall generally be used. Any outgoing Association officer or chair shall pass their copies of Association-owned software to their successors.
- Individuals assigned equipment and software are responsible for the protection of Association data and will be provided an appropriate username / password for device protection.
- Purchased computers shall have appropriate virus protection installed.
- Individuals assigned equipment and software are responsible for updating / maintenance of installed software.
- Individuals receiving equipment and / or software items from the Association shall be provided a copy of this policy letter. Acknowledgement of the receipt of the policy letter shall imply it has been read and understood.

POLICY #19

Minutes

1. It remains the responsibility of the Association Secretary to prepare the minutes of the Board of Directors meetings and the Annual Association business meeting. The minutes are critical historical recordings of the Association's business. To ensure the record is complete, the minutes will contain, at a minimum, all motions, a brief synopsis of discussions relevant to the motion and the results of votes on those issues.
2. As an aid to the Secretary, one Member-at-Large will be designated by the Secretary to assist in whatever capacity he/she deems appropriate to ensure the activities of each meeting is thoroughly captured.
3. The Secretary shall prepare a draft report of these meetings and provide them to the Board of Directors not more than forty-five days after the adjournment of such meetings.
4. Each member of the Board of Directors, will review the draft reports and notify the Secretary within fifteen working days of any omissions, errors or the need for clarification. Each Board member will be provided with a copy of any adjusted report. If no corrections are received by the Secretary, the report can be considered "official". The Secretary will notify the members of the Board when the minutes are to be considered "official".
5. The minutes of the Annual Association business meeting should be published in the first AFTE Newsletter following the annual conference and becoming official.

POLICY #20

Subscriber Status

A subscriber is not a category of membership. To alleviate any confusion, it shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer and Secretary to coordinate maintaining the subscription roster. The subscription application form shall notify subscribers that a subscription to the AFTE Journal does not carry with it any membership status.

POLICY #21

E-Vote Policy

1. At the discretion of the President, all correspondence regarding issues being addressed by the Board will be documented via e-mail or the Board of Directors' private "Board Room" forum on the AFTE web site. The Secretary will maintain a file of all motions and related e-discussions made and e-votes taken.

2. The voting procedure will be the following:
 - 2.1. The President will call for a motion from a member of the BOD.
 - 2.2. The motion will be seconded by another member of the BOD.
 - 2.3. The President will call for any discussion by a termination date. The termination date must allow for sufficient time for discussion, or replies from each member of the BOD, at the discretion of the President (changed 12/6/12).
 - 2.4. Should any member of the Board feel at any time that discussion is inadequate through electronic media, he/she may request that the discussion and/or vote on the issue be held until the next BOD meeting.
 - 2.5. When the termination date is reached, the President may call for any further discussion, proceed to call for a vote, or table the discussion until the next BOD meeting.
 - 2.6. At each Board meeting, any e-votes made in the time period since the last Board meeting will be ratified and the results of that ratification will be recorded in the minutes.

POLICY #22

Maintenance of Digital Copies of AFTE Journals

The AFTE Journal Editor will maintain and also provide digital copies of each Journal to the Historian and the webmaster.

POLICY #23

Publication of Announcements

1. Publishing announcements beyond the scope of AFTE business will consist only of a basic announcement on the website and/or in the Newsletter for a relevant school or training. The announcement in fifty (50) words or less may include:
 - 1.1. Course Description
 - 1.2. Point of contact (name, telephone number, fax, or URL)
 - 1.3. Fee (if applicable)
2. No graphics will be allowed.
3. Material will be restricted to AFTE related subjects.
4. If there is a tuition charge for such training a nominal fee may be assessed at the Board's discretion.

POLICY #24

Distribution and Use of the Membership Directory (Roster)

1. It is the obligation of the Association to operate in such a manner as to protect the privacy of its members through the control of a member's personal information (Policy #14) and the membership directory (roster). In support of this obligation, the Association roster, as property of the Association, may be distributed or provided only within the following circumstances:
 - 1.1. The membership roster has been made available through the Association's web site, accessible through the "member's area" (password protected). The names included on this roster are provided for member's professional application and should not be distributed by an individual without permission.
 - 1.2. A one-time usage of the roster may be provided to members who are engaged in survey research projects that would directly benefit the scientific advancement of the forensic field of firearm and toolmark identification. The approval will only be provided after a positive recommendation from the Research and Development Committee and a majority vote of the Board of Directors. In such instances, the webmaster will send out the mass email and the researcher(s) agrees to share the research findings with the Association.
 - 1.3. The roster may be released to other professional associations on a reciprocal exchange basis. In such instances, both associations will agree in writing not to resell the other's listings nor use it for any purpose other than those explicitly agreed upon in the reciprocal exchange.
 - 1.4. An email blast may be provided to applicable "for profit" forensic interests. This service will be restricted to those whom the Board of Directors determines by a majority vote are a benefit to the membership. In such cases, the email blast will be provided at a minimum cost of fifteen hundred dollars (\$1,500) to be deposited into the Scholarship Account. All "for profit" users will provide the contents of the email blast to the webmaster, and the webmaster will send out the email to the membership.
 - 1.5. The list of attendee's registration information for the current year's Annual Training Seminar may be provided to registered vendors/exhibitors. Vendors/exhibitors who are provided with the attendee list will be required to sign a "one-time use/non-sharing" agreement maintained by the Secretary.
 - 1.6. The member roster will not be released for any purpose, other than those listed above, without direct approval from the Board of Directors, and will only contain the member's Journal mailing address and/or email address.

- 1.7. AFTE members may request their names be removed from the mailing list provided to individuals or groups outside of the Association by providing a written request addressed to the Secretary.

POLICY #25

Records Management Program

1. As a matter of good business, organizations should implement and follow sound record management practices. The Association's records provide evidence of operation and offer accountability to its members. In order for this program to be both effective and legal, the records management program must contain a records retention and disposition schedule (retention schedules). Implementation of this program will ensure, at a minimum, the safeguarding of privacy, assistance for making informed decisions, and historical documentation of the Association's actions. Additionally, the retention schedule will reflect the length of time that records have administrative, legal, fiscal, or historical value. The schedule will be updated as needed.
2. A record, for this program's purposes, will be defined as information that documents transactions or activities by or with any officer or representative of the Association. Sources of records may include, but are not limited to, paper, electronic (voicemail, email, etc), disks, photographs, or recordings. The production of a record means that it must be available for appropriate access throughout the retention period. However, this does not imply that all records are for public viewing. Working files are considered records of day-to-day activity of the Director's or the committees. Records that become closed will either be permanently destroyed or become archived for historical significance.
3. Methods of Destruction: the nature of the information contained within the record, as well as its format, will dictate the method by which it can be destroyed. When records contain identifying or sensitive information, the disposition must ensure total destruction. This may be accomplished through shredding, pulping, burning, electronic shredded, or magnetic media degaussing. Records that do not contain identifying information may be destroyed by placing in the trash, recycling, or electronic deletion.
4. Working files of all Association committees will be maintained by the Committee Chair who will act as the Committee's custodian of records. (see also Policy #16) At the expiration of their term, the records shall be delivered, at the expense of the Association, to their successor. If there is no designated successor, the records will be transferred to the Records Officer (Secretary) or other named designee. The Records Officer will also serve as the liaison for the Association in overseeing the records management program and will coordinate the legal disposition, including the destruction of obsolete records. Archived records will be indexed and securely maintained in the Association's official storage facility. Archived records may be made available, upon request, to any member of the Association in order to conduct official business.

- 4.1. Membership records include application files, promotion application files, and their supporting documents. These records will be electronically archived by the Association's Secretary. Paper versions of these records will be permanently destroyed; however, the Membership Secretary may choose to maintain them as archived files (see also Policy # 15). Additional electronic and/or paper copies of a member's file, as held by a member of the Board of Admissions or Advisory Committee, will be permanently destroyed once the record becomes archived.
- 4.2. Nominating Committee records will be considered working files for one (1) year from the election. After one (1) year, these files will be considered archived. Additionally, the biographical information of the nominees and the officer slate, as put forth by this committee, will be archived within the Association annual meeting minutes and official Association publication.

Note: All Board of Admission and Nominating Committee deliberations are confidential and will be maintained as such. (Association Bylaws Article VII, Section 1 and Article VIII, Section 5.

- 4.3 Emeritus member applications, processed by the Advisory committee, will be forwarded to the Secretary for archiving purposes. Additional paper and/or electronic copies held by the committee will be permanently destroyed once the record is archived.
- 4.4 Fiscal records, to include such items as bank statements, cancelled checks, and scholarship distributions have a varying length of retention. These records should be maintained for the required period and then permanently destroyed. An index of the destroyed records will be maintained as an archived record.
- 4.5 Minutes of the Association's Board of Directors mid-year and end-of-the year meetings and the annual business meeting will be recorded and distributed to the Association's membership as defined by Policy Letter #19. These minutes will be archived as historical records; the storage format may include, but is not limited to, electronic and paper. Note: mid-year and end-of-year committee reports are recorded and archived as a portion of the Board of Director's and annual business meetings.
- 4.6 The records of the Certification Committee are considered confidential and will be securely maintained by the Committee Chair. A member's certification standing is not considered information, as defined by Policy # 14, subject to release during a membership inquiry.
- 4.7 Digital copies of the Association's Journal, Newsletter, and Annual Training Conference will be maintained by the Association's Historical Committee, as defined in Policy # 22.

- 4.8 Photos will be maintained by the Association's Historical Committee, as defined in the Committee position duties.
- 4.9 Applications and correspondence relating to the selection of the Association's scholarship recipients should be maintained by the Committee Chair for a minimum of two (2) years; after which they may be permanently destroyed. An index of destroyed records should be maintained with the Records Officer as an archived record and updated as necessary.
5. The single exception to the above policy is the maintenance of the Association's Ethics Committee files. Files on open cases will be securely maintained by the Committee Chair. At the end of the Chair's term, all files will be transferred, at the expense of the Association, to his successor. Finalized ethics cases will be sealed by the Committee Chair and transferred to the Association's Records Officer for secure storage. Access to sealed files will only be available to the Ethics Committee Chair or other persons authorized, in writing, by the Committee Chair or Board of Directors. All other file copies held by other committee members will be permanently destroyed after the case is finalized.
6. At this time, Illinois State regulations do not specify a minimum record retention period; therefore, the retention times provided have been designed to meet the provisions of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act and federal income tax regulations. Paper records may be converted into electronic files for retention purposes, after which, the paper version can be permanently destroyed. The Associations' corporate and member records, including working records at a board or committee member's place of business or residence, on their personal computer, cell phone or PDA may be subject to a document discovery request in the event of litigation. In the event of litigation or an investigation, all routine document destruction will be immediately halted and will not resume without the written notice from the Association President.
7. In addition to the previously outlined retention requirements, the following schedule attempts to address the retention of specific documents. Documents that may fall outside the guidelines of this policy should have their retention and destruction reviewed by the Records Officer.
8. Electronic records and paper records will be treated in the same fashion. Electronic record backups will be performed routinely.

<i>Document Description</i>	<i>Retention Period</i>
Equipment depreciation	Life of asset + 3 years
Trademark/copyright registration	Permanently
Association minutes	Permanently
Incorporation documents (Charter, Bylaws, etc.)	Permanently
Training seminar vendor contracts	1 year
Member applications/correspondence (to include, but not limited to, upgrades, outside inquiry, etc.)	Permanently
Training seminar exhibitor & attendee registration	1 year
Bank statements (host committee)	3 years from meeting close date
Investment account statements	3 years
Tax returns	Permanently
Bank statements (Association general funds/working account)	6 years
Board of Director's travel reimbursements	6 years
CPA audit reports	Permanently
Member certification records	Permanently
Cancelled checks (for important payments)	Permanently (should be stored with papers i.e.; taxes, purchase of property, corporate pertaining transaction, registration, etc.)
Litigation correspondence	Permanently
Expired insurance policies	3 years from expiration date
Scholarship distributions	1 year from distribution date
Purchase orders (i.e. printing, postage, non-equipment committee expenses, etc.)	1 year from payment date
Investment account statements (monthly or quarterly)	3 years
Investment account annual summary statement	Permanently

POLICY #26

Reciprocal Agreement with American Academy of Forensic Science (AAFS)

1. This policy letter delineates the agreement made in March 2004 between the AFTE 2003-2004 Board of Directors and the American Academy of Forensic Science (AAFS) Board of Directors regarding cost for attendance at their respective annual training seminars and provision of a membership booth near the exhibitor area at respective annual conferences. The AFTE Board member working with the Chair of a training seminar is responsible to notify the Seminar Chair of these provisions, and appropriate information should be included in the registration form for the conference.
2. The AFTE Board of Directors agreed to the following:
 - 2.1. Member registration rates are available for AAFS members at the annual AFTE Training Seminar with the reverse true for AFTE members at the annual AAFS conference.
 - 2.2. AAFS will provide AFTE a booth outside of the exhibitor area for distribution of membership information at their annual conference and AFTE will provide the same for the AAFS at the annual AFTE conference.

POLICY #27

Agreement with Forensic Technology Inc. (FTI) for the annual presentation of the Goddard Award

1. This policy letter delineates the agreement made between the AFTE 2003-2004 Board of Directors and Forensic Technology Inc. (FTI) regarding the evaluation of nominations for and official presentation of the Goddard Award. The AFTE President will be responsible for notifying the Training Seminar Chair of this arrangement.
2. The AFTE Board of Directors agreed to the following:
 - 2.1. Provide two (2) members of the Board, the President and the Senior Member-at Large, to assist with the review and evaluation of applications received by FTI for the Goddard award.
 - 2.2. FTI, at its discretion, may make arrangements on a yearly basis with the President and the host committee to be placed on the banquet program to make the award presentation.
3. Forensic Technology has ceased this annual presentation. The Board of Directors retired this Policy Letter effective April 1, 2022.

POLICY #28

Permission to Reprint AFTE Journal Articles

Requests for permission to reprint items previously published in the Association's Journal, will be reviewed by the Editor. Requests will need to be made, to the Editor, in writing (electronic form is acceptable). The Editor will review the request and determine if permission will be granted for reprinting. For profit requests, such as use for classroom materials, will be limited in nature and must also have Board of Directors approval. All approved reprints will have the Association's Journal recognized in the reprint with the original publication source.

POLICY #29

Release of Association Technical Procedures and Training Manual and Glossary

1. The Association, responding to the need to standardize and unify terminology within our discipline, formed the Standardization Committee in 1977. From this committee came the first publication of the Association's Glossary in 1980. Further recognizing changes within the forensic community and the need for uniformity, the Association's Procedures and Training Manuals were issued in 2001 and later revised over time. These documents were developed by a consensus process. They are open for peer review and are reviewed / updated as necessary; the content and revisions are managed by the current Standardization and Training Committee.
 - a. With the establishment of the Organization for Scientific Area Committees (OSAC), a need to make the Glossary a public document was identified. This was officially accomplished through the Association's web site in 2020. (added 4.1.22)
2. The consensus process has involved member input through direct dialog, annual training seminars, business meetings and Board of Directors dialog. The resultant Training and Procedures Manuals and Glossary were established and available for the membership in order to provide cohesive and standard practices within the forensic firearm/toolmark identification field.
3. Membership to the Association will afford an individual access to digital versions of the Training and Procedures Manuals through links on the Association's web site. The assignments and practical exams portion of the Training Manual are the only portions not available to the members or publicly (password protected). In order to receive access to the practical examination key and assignments section, an individual must contact the Chair of the Standardization / Training Committee and indicate they are currently an approved trainer; an access password will be provided electronically.
4. Electronic versions of the Association's manuals can be obtained, for non-profit purposes, by external parties. A request for documents should be made to the Association Secretary or Standardization / Training Committee Chair. The request should include, at a minimum, the requestors professional affiliation and purpose for requesting the documents. At the discretion of the Secretary or committee chair, requests may be put forth to the Board of Directors for discussion and vote on material release.
5. All requests should be appropriately recorded and archived following the Association's records management policy as contained in Policy Letter # 25.

Revision history: “Glossary” removed from documents listed in sections 3 and 4; 1 a added (4.1.22)

POLICY #30

Hardship and Bereavement Donations

1. The Board of Director's recognizes that there are times when tragedy strikes our membership and the normal sickness and distress fund is inadequate to properly demonstrate the organization's commitment to its members.
2. Based on this fact, the Board of Directors may at its discretion, make a donation to an appropriately set up fund, to help aid the member or the member's immediate family.
3. This donation shall not exceed \$1000.00
4. This donation should only be made in the direst of circumstances and may not be given multiple times to the same individual or fund(s).
5. This donation shall only be disbursed after a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

POLICY #31

Use of HelmsBriscoe for Annual Training Seminar

1. As of May 14, 2014 the Board of Directors has decided to use HelmsBriscoe for its meeting procurement.
2. Those individuals wishing to host a meeting should use HelmsBriscoe to assist them in obtaining hotel bids. This will save valuable time, and the Association will benefit from HelmsBriscoe's purchasing power and industry relationships which often times translates into better availability and pricing.
3. In entering this agreement with HelmsBriscoe it was understood and agreed upon that this service would be provided at no cost to the Association and, therefore, no contract with HelmsBriscoe was signed.
4. HelmsBriscoe will do the legwork, research the hotels, and free up the Host Committee to focus on all the other aspects of the training seminar.
5. It will be understood that HelmsBriscoe will be responsible for securing the hotel contract only. The Host Committee that is awarded the bid will be responsible for all other planning and coordination of the training seminar excepting the services outlined in Point 7 below.
6. HelmsBriscoe will act as the Associations' liaison during the training seminar to ensure that the hotel contract is met.
7. At the mid-year Board meeting in December 2019, the Board of Directors agreed to add an additional partnership with HelmsBriscoe by using their ResourceOne (R1) department for all seminar registration services.
 - a. These services include, but are not limited to, the registration website development and management, on-site support for attendee needs, certificate preparation, and on-site assistance with hotel / meeting space during the seminar.
 - b. Costs for the R1 services shall be contracted with the Board member over the training seminar and are generally paid to R1 during the registration process.
 - c. A detailed, final seminar expense report will be received from R1 during the account close out process.

Revision history: Point 7 added and grammatical update to Point 3 (4.1.22)

POLICY #32

AFTE Participation in the Organization of Scientific Committees (OSAC) Particularly the Forensic Science Standards Board (FSSB)

1. The FSSB shall provide overall direction to the OSAC. Current bylaws for the OSAC state specifically, "Membership resides with the individual and not his or her agency or organizational affiliation with the exception of the six (6) positions on the FSSB representing professional forensic science organizations". One of these positions is specifically reserved for an AFTE member.
2. The AFTE Board of Directors will be responsible for staffing an AFTE member on the FSSB.

They may do this by one of several methods:

- 2.1. Post to the entire membership via the forum, the vacancy, and request nominations or volunteers to serve.
- 2.2. The Board of Directors may select key candidates for evaluation.
- 2.3. The Board of Directors may appoint a past President for consideration.
3. Any individual considered for nomination to the FSSB shall be evaluated via Curriculum Vitae, participation in AFTE, and professional references.
4. Any individual sent forth to the FSSB for consideration will be finalized by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.
5. Members of the FSSB serve for a term period of three (3) years and can be reelected for a second term by other members of the FSSB. However, any AFTE member serving on the FSSB can be removed by the Board of Directors "for cause" at any time. "For cause" may include but is not all-inclusive:
 - 5.1. An ethics complaint lodged against the member.
 - 5.2. Membership lapse via AFTE dues.
 - 5.3. Insufficient participation on the FSSB as defined by their Bylaws/Charter and Terms of Reference.
6. The AFTE member assigned to the FSSB shall prepare a mid-year and an annual report which outlines the work of the FSSB. This report shall be delivered to the AFTE President 30 days prior to these scheduled AFTE Meetings.

POLICY #33

Use of the AFTE Seal/Logo

The Association of Firearm and Tool Mark Examiners (AFTE) restricts the use of the official AFTE seal/logo (to include the stylized interlocking AFTE script and comparison microscope light path diagram). This seal/logo (below) is reserved for official AFTE business and is limited to use by certain members as outlined below. Outside of official Board of Director's usage and approval, those using the seal/logo must adhere to the outlined rules.



Seal/Logo Usage

1. Individuals and organizations in the applicant phase are not allowed use of the seal/logo.
2. The seal/logo will not be used in any way that is inaccurate, misleading or unauthorized. The Board of Directors will maintain discretion of usage to ensure that AFTE is not brought into disrepute.
3. The seal/logo will only be used on stationery, advertising and literature (in any medium, including electronic media and websites) as an indicated professional affiliation.
 - 5.1. Stationery excludes business cards.
 - 5.2. Use of the seal/logo is permissible if advertising attendance as a vendor at an Annual Training Seminar.
 - 5.3. Reproduction of the seal/logo will ensure all features are clearly distinguishable and without distortion.
 - 5.4. Unless used as a single affiliation, the AFTE seal/logo will not be placed in isolation from other professionally affiliated logos / seals / symbols.
 - 5.5. The seal/logo may only be used as an indication of professional affiliation on literature related to activities for which the individual or organization has been vetted for Association membership.

6. The use of the seal/logo is strictly prohibited on any certificate other than those generated by the AFTE for official business of the Association.
7. The AFTE seal/logo shall not be used in any way to suggest that the Association has certified, endorsed or approved any product, process or services offered.
8. The AFTE seal/logo shall only be used by individuals that have gained Regular, Distinguished, Technical Advisor or Emeritus Membership within the Association.
 - 8.1. Use by an individual shall not be in a way to suggest that the Association has certified, endorsed or approved an individual's work product.
9. Upon withdrawal from membership of the Association (at any level), the use of the AFTE logo shall immediately be discontinued (in any medium, including electronic media and websites).