



## **Golden State Ferret Society Bylaws**

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**Golden State Ferret Society Bylaws**

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### Revision History

Changed By	What was Changed	Dates	
		Changed	Ratified
Philip Gilbert	Incorporated Kimberly's formatting / grammar Changes	06/08/07	
Philip Gilbert	Formatting changes – Cleaned up document format	07/10/07	09/01/07
Philip Gilbert	Updated Tax payer ID number.	02/24/08	
Philip Gilbert	Updated bylaws as voted on at the March 4 2008 meeting	03/05/08	03/04/08

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## Overview

Organization Name	Golden State Ferret Society
Type of Organization	Loosely organized social club
Founded	11/12/1996
Mail Address	P.O. Box 2856 Fremont, CA 94536-0856
Website	<a href="http://goldenstateferretsociety.org/">http://goldenstateferretsociety.org/</a>
Tax ID Number	931-22-1071 (11/12/1996 SR CHA)
Non-Profit Status	No

## Missions Statement

The Golden State Ferret Society is a (non-profit filing pending) group dedicated to the health and well being of the domestic ferret and the people who love them. The organization provides education, ferret rescue, legalization information, as well as social activities and support for those interested in these wonderful animals.

## Charter

The Golden State Ferret Society is concerned with the education of the populous and ethical treatment of domesticated ferrets. This includes, but is not limited to, participating in educational activities, rescue, emergency treatment and transportation (out of state) of animals as defined by federal and state laws.

## Ethical and Morals

At all times the Golden State Ferret Society endeavors to operate within the highest moral and ethical standards. Each officer is committed to these standards and makes every effort to see that they are met. The only activity that is within the control of the club is the club meetings. All other activities are the responsibility of individuals who happen to have gathered at a club event.

## Fund Raising Events

Any individual or group of individuals will take it on themselves to raise funds. It is their personal choice to contribute the funds to any club or organization including Golden State Ferret Society

## Social Events

Any individual or group of individuals may decide to gather for a social event (Christmas Party, Pool Party, Dinner, etc.). They may or may not invite others that they have met through the club.

## Fiscal Responsibility

1. Funds disbursements greater than \$ 200 will require two offences of the organization signatures. One of the two must be the acting treasurer. The second can be any other officer.
2. Fund requests can be made by any member or organizations.
3. Fund use must be in-line with the club's fiscal, moral and ethical policies
4. Fund allocations will first go to events that directly support the ferret loving community
5. All allocations over \$ 200.00 must be voted on by the membership
6. Reports will be presented at each meeting of the following:
  - a. Funds received
  - b. Standard disbursements
  - c. Exceptional disbursements
  - d. Request for social, fundraising, veterinary and transportation needs
7. Accurate records (reports) are archived for 36 months (starting in June 2007) and are available for review by any member in good standing.

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## ***Funds Allocation***

For all funds raised, through donation or dues, the following base of usage will be followed. The club reserves the right to funds as needed to meet current circumstances and/or emergencies.

10%	Administration	office materials, meeting location, bank accounts, etc.
5%	Web	Hosting fees
40%	Emergency Veterinary care	Within federal and state legal standards
15%	Education –	Status, treatment and needs of domesticated (all regions) and Black Footed ferrets (endangered, Colorado only)
15%	Transportation	Within federal and state legal standards
15%	Social events and membership sponsorships	

As the name implies, Golden State Ferret Society's primary focuses is on actions within the state of California. Financial support of originations and/or individual, as defined in the by-laws, shall be limited to area within the state of California.

## ***Funds Reserve***

When ever possible a reserve of \$ 500.00 will be maintained in the clubs account. This reserve will be available for emergency services only.

Clarification: When allocation elative (non emergency) funds, the approved funds can not take the cash balance below \$ 500.

## ***Funds Disbursements Approvals Policy***

All funds disbursements, regardless of value and class must be ratified by or during the first scheduled meeting after the disbursement was approved.

Fund allocations approved by an executive or multiple executives, between meetings, become the sole responsibility of the executive (executives) to cover until they are ratified at the next meeting,

## ***Emergency Services***

Emergency services relate to any service that is needed during the rescue of an animal, where delays in the service will result in an immediate threat to the animal's life.

- ✓ Can independently approve funds
- + All marked required for approval

<b>Funds Needed</b>	<b>Maximum Between Meetings</b>	<b>President</b>	<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Treasure</b>	<b>Secretary</b>	<b>All Members</b>	<b>Ratification % of Approvers</b>
<= \$ 250	\$ 500	✓	✓	✓	✓		66% Exec
<= \$ 1000	\$ 1000	+	+	+	+		Membership
> 1000	\$ 1000					✓	Membership

Any on-gong medical treatments (procedures, medicines, etc.) must be approved by the membership. Any one of the elected officers can veto (override) the voting member decision to fund on-going treatments.

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## Elective Disbursements

All non-emergency funds disbursement, including but not limited to:

- 1) Social events
- 2) Donation to rescue organization and/or shelters
- 3) Education services or events
- 4) Funds to cover fund raising cost

- ✓ Can independently approve funds
- + All marked required for approval

Funds Needed	Maximum Between Meetings	President	Vice President	Treasure	Secretary	All Members	Ratification % of Approvers
<= \$ 100	\$ 100	✓	✓	✓	✓		66% Exec
<= \$ 250	\$ 250			✓			Membership
> 250	\$ 500					✓	Membership

## Elections

### Timing

- 1) Elections will be held at the November club meeting each year
- 2) Nominations for required and optional officers must be presented to the club and noted by the Executives no later than the November meeting.
- 3) Voting will take place at the November club meeting.
- 4) New officers will be installed during the first general meeting in January.
- 5) Unless otherwise voted on by the members each meeting will take place on the first Tuesday of the month.

### Voting

- 1) Votes can only be cast by members in good standing. For a definition of members in good standing, see the Members section in the club bylaws.
- 2) All voting members must be over the age of 16 unless they are a ferret, then over 3 months.
- 3) Votes must be cast no later than outlined in the preceded section (timing) of this document
- 4) Votes may be cast
  - a. In person: the preferred method
  - b. By mail to the club secretary, or Vice President if there is no standing secretary
  - c. By proxy – A voting member can delegate their vote to another voting member. This is the least preferred method, as disagreements may arise on the true intention of the votes.

### Pre-requisite Requirements to Hold an Office

The following pre-requisites must be met by members nominated and/or elected into an office of the organization.

1. Nominees must be known to the organization as a whole and have been members in good standing for 1 full year prior to being elected into office.
2. Must have a 70% attendance record for normally scheduled general meeting of the organization
3. Nominees must make it publicly known if they hold a similar position in any other organization

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## **Term Limits**

- 1) Offices can be held by the same person for a maximum of two consecutive terms.
- 2) This must be followed by a sabbatical of at least one term. After the sabbatical the same office can be held for another two terms.
- 3) During a sabbatical period, the person can hold any office other than the one they are taking a sabbatical from.

## **Officers**

Following are the required (executive) and optional officers for the club. In all cases the following requirements must be met:

- 1) Anyone holding an elected office to the club must be a member in good standing
- 2) An elected officer who holds a similar position in another organization must abstain from voting on matters that directly have a focused impact on the other position.

For example, if the President held a similar position in a Nevada rescue center, the President would be expected to abstain from voting on donations for that rescue center.

- 3) When running for an office, the candidate must be willing to commit to attending 80% of the club meetings, 50% of the club fund raisers and 25% of the social events when able not due to medical or other emergency reasons.
- 4) Meeting and complying with all of the items above is the responsibility of each officer. The club is not equipped nor does it desire to monitor anyone's conscience

## **Required Club Officers**

The following positions are required in order for the Golden State Ferret Society to operate:

### **President**

Responsibilities

- 1) Chair Meetings
- 2) Primary spokesman for the organization
- 3) Communicates formal commitments on behalf of the organization
  - a. Works with the secretary to draft and approves club correspondence
  - b. Signs all thank you and club correspondence
- 4) Approval of emergency rescue cost, in compliance with the organizations Funds Disbursements Approvals Policy

### **Vice President**

Responsibilities

- 1) Chair meetings when president is not available
- 2) Should the president permanent or temporary, be removed from service, the vice president takes on the president's responsibilities
- 3) Manage (create or have created) organization literature
  - a. Literature includes, leaflet, public information, signs
- 4) Approval of emergency rescue cost, in compliance with the organizations Funds Disbursements Approvals Policy

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## **Treasurer**

### Responsibilities

- 1) Report on current financial state at each scheduled meeting
  - a. Account balances
  - b. Recent deposits and payments
  - c. Expected and/or approved pending cost / income. For example, fund disbursement planned and approved for a future date
- 2) Make the most recent financial report available to any Golden State Ferret Society executive, member or Government agency
  - a. Requires a formal written request
  - b. Most recent refers to the report from the last schedule general meeting, or any date there after
- 3) Maintain all financial accounts
  - a. Write checks
  - b. Keep historical records; payments, deposits, receipts) for 7 years or as defined by state and/or federal tax law.
- 4) Maintain / Organizations P.O. Box
  - a. Pay fees
  - b. Collect and disburse mail
- 5) Approval of emergency rescue cost, in compliance with the organizations Funds Disbursements Approvals Policy

## **Secretary**

### Responsibilities

- 1) Keep and publish meeting minutes
- 2) Manage (create or have created) club correspondence
- 3) Keep membership roles
- 4) Manage (track, store) organization documents with the exception of tax documents
  - a. These include bi-laws, Non-Profit documents, correspondence history
- 5) Approval of emergency rescue cost, in compliance with the organizations Funds Disbursements Approvals Policy

## ***Additional Offices***

The following positions will be filled at the discretion of the executive officers, based on need, current positions and the advice of the members at large.

## **Rescue Coordinator**

### Responsibilities

- 1) Manage and report on rescue activities
- 2) Maintain a history of rescue activities, including:
  - a. Dates
  - b. Background Information
  - c. Cost incurred
  - d. Final result – Sent out of state to which shelter or to be adopted by “who”
- 3) Maintain and have ratified by the members the organizations rescue policy

## **Fundraising Coordinator**

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This role is not limited to funds. The coordinator looks for and coordinates both financial and non-financial donations. All financial donations received will be used in compliance with the organization's bi-laws. Non-financial donations will be converted to financial donations or used directly in rescue or sheltering of animals. Non-financial donations may include:

- 1) Materials needed for a fund raising activity. Examples: Embroidered shirt or frame photos for future sale or auction.
- 2) Pet food to be donated to a shelter
- 3) Pet blankets or toys to be used in rescue operations

### Responsibility

- 1) Help coordinate fund raising activities
- 2) Report at scheduled meetings
  - a. On current and planned activities
  - b. Funds raised and cost incurred
  - c. Disposition of non-financial donations. Planned for sale, sent to a shelter, etc.

### **Responsibility Reassignment**

- Should an officer become unable to meet their commitments, their responsibility will be reassigned as defined below.
- Should the replacement be unable to meet the combined responsibility, the acting president will take on the responsibilities.
- If an officer cannot be found to take on the responsibilities, at the next scheduled meeting temporary replacements will be nominated and a vote taken. The replacement will remain in office until a permanent replacement can be found and voted into office.
- The officers, including any temporary replacements, will make a proposal for permanent replacements. The recommendations will be presented to the members at the next scheduled meeting for ratification.

<b>Vacated Role</b>	<b>Replacement</b>	<b>Type</b>
President	Vice President	Permanent
Vice President	Rescue Coordinator	Permanent
Treasurer	Secretary or Assistant Treasurer	Permanent based on Member Vote
Secretary	Treasurer	Temporary
Rescue Coordinator	President	Permanent
Fundraising Coordinator	Vice President	Permanent

### **Removing Elected Officers**

Under extreme conditions it may become necessary to discipline or remove an elected officer. These can occur under one of the following cases:

#### ***Cause for Action***

- Un-ethical behavior, as defined in these bylaws
- Misappropriation of funds. This includes the refusal to accept responsibility for the fund approved by the individual but not ratified as defined in the bi-laws [Funds Disbursements Approvals Policy](#)
- Blatant misrepresentation of the organization goals, objectives and views. The only case of this is where an individual, after a vote by the members on a subject, continues to present a contrary view as the club's.
- For medical or mental reasons, the individual is unable to fulfill their commitments to the organization.
- For any reasons, the individual is unwilling to fulfill their commitments to the organization.

#### ***Who Can Take Action***

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Any member in good standing can call for action. The following steps need to be followed:

Member is to be taken as member in good standing or the Golden State Ferret Society.

- 1) A member will bring the offense to an elected officer. The officer will determine the scope of the offense and propose an action.
- 2) If a formal action is needed, the elected officers will meet to review the case and determine an action. This is done during a closed door meeting of the elected officers.
- 3) The member who raised the offense will be informed of the action taken.
- 4) Only after the elected officers have reviewed and determined what actions to take can a member take the offense to the complete membership. If member feels that they must raise the offense to the full membership, they must contact the president or vice president to schedule a closed door meeting of members in good standing. During the meeting both the member and officer in question will have 30 minutes to state their case. The case presentation will be followed by a formal ballot vote.

## Available Actions

In all cases, a vote that goes to the members in good standing is the final arbitration and is binding. The member who raised the issue and the officer in questions must refrain from voting.

The following actions are available.

Action	Description	Vote results % required to take action	
		Executives	Members
Verbal Warning		25%	60%
Written Warning		50%	75%
Sanction	The individual will keep their position but will be blocked from representing the club or voting for a fix time.	75%	90%
Impeach	The individual is required to resign their position.	90%	100%

## Membership

Golden State Ferret Society is an open public organization that takes the privacy of our members very seriously. As such the club keeps very limited records of its membership

The club will keep members phone numbers, email, name and membership status on record. Should a member want to share additional personal information with another member (or members), this will be done on a personal basis, outside the boundaries of the club.

## Members at Large

It is understood that not everyone will want to be a formal member of the club but would like to be keep current on news and participate in club events. To meet this need the club recognizes anyone who asks to be included as a member at large.

Members at large are not required to keep their dues up to date.

## Members at Large are Entitled to:

Add to the club knowledge and contribute at meetings. The more voices heard the better decisions the club can make.

1. Add topics to club meetings
  - a. Recommend changes to the bylaws
  - b. Nominate Officers for elections
2. Recommend community needs for financial support.
3. Voting on all topics with the **exception** of:

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- a. Club offices
- b. Bylaw changes
- c. Distribution of funds
4. Access, on a one-time basis, to any discounts the club has arranged with other organizations, stores or veterinary services, within the boundaries of club discount policy.
  - a. In case of an emergency, club officers can grant an extension to this rule, within the boundaries of club discount policy.
  - b. All exceptions must be brought up at the next club meeting.
5. Access to the club newsletter when/if it is published in either hard or email format.
  - a. The club prefers email as this saves on mail and materials cost.

### **Members**

As where members at large are not required to pay club dues, members are required to pay yearly dues as outlined below.

In addition to the benefits received by the members at large, members in good standing are entitled to:

1. Full voting rights including:
  - a. Club offices
  - b. Bylaw changes
  - c. Distribution of funds
  - d. The ability to vote by mail or proxy
2. Full access to all club discounts as according to discount policy
3. Ability to run and hold a club office

### **Members in good standing**

Members in good standing have their club dues recoded and up to date with club officers.

### **Dues**

1. Yearly dues are \$20.00
2. Dues are due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January
3. Any dues paid between January and December 31 will be applied to the current year
  - a. Unless the member has already paid the current dues, in which case the dues will be applied to the following years
4. Request for exception to this policy should be brought up to the treasurer and subsequently voted on by the club officers.

### **Veterinary Discount Policy**

Discounts at a veterinary clinic(s) are tied to the club account. In line with fiscal responsibility, any charges incurred and/or use of discounts must comply with the following policy.

1. All charges are the responsibility of the ferret owner.
2. An officer of the club must approve "use" of any veterinary discounts tied to the organizations name/account.
3. Shelter or rescued ferrets; in line with state and federal guidelines, can receive emergency treatment charged to the organizations account. Decisions for (emergency or on-going) treatment of an animal are to be governed by the "Emergency Services" section of the bi-laws.

### **Bylaw Changes**

1. Bylaw changes can be proposed by all members
2. Changes must be proposed and voted on bi-annually

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3. Bylaw changes will be compliant with non-profit filing

### Dissolving the Club

Under state and federal tax codes non-profit organizations must have a formal procedure for the dispersal of funds and capital assets (computers, desk, etc.) owned by the organization. Assets can not go to an individual or a for profit organization. Assets must be delivered to a non-profit organization with the same or similar goals. Optionally the assets can be delivered to the federal or state governments.

Though the Golden State Ferret Society does not hold a non-profit status, the club has elected to follow this tax code guideline.

The decision to dissolve the club will be the result of a court mandate or a vote by members in good standing. The vote must:

1. include 90% of the members in good standing
2. include 100% of the club officers
3. must obtain a 80% approval vote

Should the club ceases to exist, due to the end of its charter, lack or interest in the membership, or changes to the legal systems it operates under, all assets will be delivered to the following rescue organization(s).

Organization / Address	Primary Contact	Type of organization
Support Our Shelters 100 Walsh Road Lansdowne PA 19050  (610) 626.6647 <a href="mailto:sharon@supportourshelters.org">sharon@supportourshelters.org</a> <a href="http://www.supportourshelters.org">www.supportourshelters.org</a>	Judith White Sharon Bearden  <b>Board Members</b> Judith White Ela Heyn Sharon Bearden	Non-profit organization created to help offset the cost of caring for ferret incurred by shelters.  <b>Status</b> 501(c)3 non-profit charity - EIN# 23-3062176

If the preceding organization(s) cannot be reached, the standing executive officers will identify and make contact, within 60 days of the decision, to dissolve the club.

### Privacy Policy

1. The club will never sell or otherwise transfer membership information to any private, public or government body unless forced to do so by a court order
2. In the event that the club is forced to disclose membership information, every effort will be made to make direct and immediate contact with each member stating the issue and expected actions related to the court order.
3. By policy the club will retain members in good standings name, email, phone number and dues status only.