

# **Seiwakai USA Policies and Procedures Amended**

## **誠和会米国**

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**I: Membership** – Seiwakai USA is Non-Profit Corporation, and membership is open to all students without regard to race, gender, age, sexual orientation, or national origin.

A. **Seiwakai USA Membership** consists of an elected Board and other Members in Good Standing.

B. **The Board** (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and three Directors) must be Members in Good Standing. The duties, responsibilities, and term of office of the Board are delineated in the Seiwakai USA Bylaws.

**C. Members in Good Standing**

1. Must hold the grade of Shodan or above in Seiwakai International.
2. Must be members of Seiwakai International and the Japan Karatedo Federation Goju Kai. (Membership cards are verification of this.)
3. Regularly attend one or more of several seminars taught by the President or a Vice President of Seiwakai International.
  - a. USA/Pan American training seminar
  - b. Seiwakai International training seminar in Japan,
  - c. Seminars sponsored by Seiwakai USA member dojos
  - d. Goshukan Canada Seminar
  - e. Seiwakai Mexico Seminar
  - f. Certificates of attendance will serve as verification.
  - g. Dojo Instructors are encouraged to bring students to any and all of these Seiwakai Seminars
  - h. Zoom Seminars taught by the President or a Vice President of Seiwakai International can also fulfill this requirement.
4. Must be current with all Seiwakai USA dues/fees.

**D. Member dojos**

1. Member Dojos' instruction must be consistent with the Seiwakai International syllabus.
2. Neither Member Dojos nor their instructors may increase the fees or add additional fees to any Seiwakai USA event, Seiwakai International event, Seiwakai International certificates, or grading fees.
3. Member dojos are authorized to promote their students to any kyudansha grade, junior black belt grades (below 15 years of age), and Dojo black belt grade (provided that there is the intent to grade for that dan grade with Seiwakai International within a reasonable period of time.)
4. Member dojos assume all day-to-day activities, internal grading fees, and dues of their students as they see fit.
5. Member Dojos may also instruct in supplementary arts such as kobudo, jiu-jitsu, etc.

E. **Member-at-Large** is a designation which is available for Members in Good Standing who are not part of a Member Dojo. To become a member-at-large, a request must be sent to the Board of Directors, which must be approved by a majority vote. The annual fee for membership shall be \$50 annually which covers both the member at Large fee and the annual membership dues/fee. (See I.H.2 &3)

F. **Voting Members** are Members in Good Standing who are Sandan or above in Seiwakai International. They elect the Board and may also vote on issues that the Board brings before them. A list of voting members will be maintained by the Board.

G. **Members in good standing use of Seiwakai USA Trademarked Material**

1. Seiwakai USA is a Non-Profit Corporation, and as such has Trademarked its name and logo.
2. All dojo members in good standing may use the trademarked name and logo for the purpose of branding, advertising, and promoting their dojo after first notifying the Board.
3. Unauthorized use of Seiwakai USA trademarked material by individuals and dojos who are **not** members in good standing shall be subject to legal recourse.

H. **Members' Dues/Fees Structure**

1. **Member Dojo** \$100/year and includes head instructor's membership dues/fee
2. **Sandan and above** \$25/year
3. **Shodan and Nidan** \$10/year
4. **Hardship** – Dojos and/or individuals experiencing economic hardship may request assistance from the Board.
5. **Payment of Dues/Fees** – Notice of all membership dues/fees (dojo and individual) will be sent out by the Treasurer of Seiwakai USA by March 15<sup>th</sup> of each calendar year, and they are to be paid by April 15<sup>th</sup> of each calendar year (as per Seiwakai USA Bylaws). A grace period of 30 days may be granted by the treasurer if the dojo head or member contacts the treasurer asking for additional time.
6. If dues are not paid by April 15, and if the dojo head has not contacted the Seiwakai Treasurer requesting additional time, a late fee of 20% may be imposed.
7. These dues/fees are to be deposited by the treasurer in an account and in a manner consistent with the Seiwakai USA Bylaws.

## II. Expenditures of Members' Dues/Fees.

- A. Expenditures of dues/fees are to be used specifically for the benefit of all Seiwakai USA members and dojos including but not limited to:
  - 1. Website creation and maintenance
  - 2. Newsletter software and expenses
  - 3. Branding and marketing materials
  - 4. Membership fees for three (3) JKF Goju Kai Regional Dojo (See II.D)
  - 5. Maintenance of our Non-Profit Corporation status
  - 6. Trademarking of our Non-Profit Corporation's name and logo
  - 7. Other expenditures that benefit all Seiwakai USA members and dojos
- B. Any other expenditures and operating expenses of Seiwakai USA shall be considered on a case-by-case basis and voted on by the Board.
- C. All expenditures of more than \$100 require Board approval. A simple majority is needed to approve.
- D. All member dojos in good standing are also members of their JKF Goju Kai Regional Dojo – East, Central, or West. Each dojo's JKF Goju Kai Dojo membership is with the dojo closest to your location. (See 2.A.4 above)

## III: Shinsa Panel and Shinsa Policies

- A. **Yudansha Promotions** must be conducted by a Shinsa panel that meets the requirements of Seiwakai International and is approved by Seiwakai USA.
- B. **Shinsa Panel Qualifications** – Under most circumstances there are at least five (5) members on a Seiwakai Shinsa panel. A Shihan or Sensei is qualified to serve on a Shinsa panel if they are at least two dan grades higher than the person testing. (E.g., a sandan can serve on a shinsa panel for a shodan, and a godan can serve on a shinsa panel for a sandan. This may be waived or altered by Vassie Naidoo Shihan or another officer or director of Seiwakai International.)
- C. **Shinsa Panel** – All qualified Seiwakai USA Shihan and Sensei shall serve on Shinsa panels of **only** those candidates for Shodan and above who are members in good standing, and are members of Dojos in good standing, or a Member-at Large in good standing with Seiwakai USA or other Seiwakai national organizations.
- D. **Members who are not in good standing** may apply for grading with the following stipulations.
  - 1. All delinquent and current dues and fees must be paid to be eligible to grade.
  - 2. The applicant must wait the amount of time that the member and/or dojo was not in good standing with Seiwakai USA or other Seiwakai national organization **plus** one additional year.

3. This may be appealed to the Board if extenuating circumstances have prevented the payment of dues/fees. This includes but is not limited to financial hardship, health issues, work demands, school demands, and living abroad.
- E. **Time and age requirements for Dan grades** must be met (unless waved by a Seiwakai International officer or director).
1. Shodan – minimum of 3 years of training (minimum of age 15)
  2. Nidan – minimum of 2 additional years of training after Shodan
  3. Sandan – minimum of 3 additional years of training after Nidan
  4. Yondan – minimum of 4 additional years of training after Sandan
  5. Godan – minimum of 5 additional years of training after Yodan
  6. Rokudan – minimum of 6 additional years of training after Godan (minimum of 35 years of age)
  7. Nanadan – minimum of 7 additional years of training Rokudan (minimum of 42 years of age) Grading is by invitation only.
  8. Hachidan – minimum of 8 additional years of training after Nanadan (minimum of 50 years of age) Grading is by invitation only.

#### **IV: Disciplinary Procedures for Individual Members in Good Standing**

- A. All members of Seiwakai USA (including Board of Directors members) may be disciplined for any action which is deemed by the Board to be inconsistent with the standards of Seiwakai International.
- B. Allegations may be brought before the Board by any member in good standing and shall require documentation.
- C. The decision whether to discipline and/or terminate the membership of an accused person shall be made by the Board within 30 days of receiving allegations, viewing supporting evidence, and hearing from both parties. The decision will be determined by a Board vote requiring a 5-member majority.
- D. **Major Infractions** are subject to discipline up to and including termination from the Seiwakai USA and Seiwakai International. These infractions include but are not limited to:
  1. **Repeated** examples of attacks on the character of other Seiwakai International members on any social media platform.
  2. **Repeated** examples of behavior on any social media platform that harms the prestige of Seiwakai.
  3. Serious criminal behavior
  4. Child abuse
  5. Sexual abuse
  6. Sexual Harassment

7. Any **legal conviction** for child abuse, sexual abuse, or any felony is cause for immediate dismissal.
  8. Failure to comply with a formal Board reprimand for a Lesser Infraction may result in immediate dismissal and termination of the membership in Seiwakai USA of the guilty party.
- E. **Lesser Infractions** – Allegations of lesser infractions may be brought before the Board by any member in good standing and shall require documentation. These infractions include but are not limited to:
1. Continually and willfully ignoring protocol required in a Japanese Karatedo organization.
  2. Disparaging the character of other Seiwakai International members on any social media platform.
  3. Behavior on any social media platform that harms the prestige of Seiwakai.
  4. Disparaging the character of any Seiwakai USA board member for faithfully performing the duties of their office.
  5. Irresponsible behavior on any social media platform.
  6. The Board may vote to reprimand the accused and require cessation of lesser offensive actions.
  7. Failure to comply with a formal Board reprimand for a Lesser Infraction becomes a Major Infraction and may result in immediate dismissal and termination of the membership in Seiwakai USA of the guilty party.
- F. Decisions of the Board in disciplinary matters must be approved by an official of Seiwakai International (officer or director) and thereafter may not be appealed.
- G. Members who are terminated on disciplinary grounds from Seiwakai USA will also be terminated from Seiwakai International.

## **V: Disciplinary Procedures for Member Dojos**

- A. Member Dojos may be disciplined or terminated for:
1. Non-payment of annual dues for more than one year.
    1. Continually and willfully ignoring protocol required of a Japanese Karatedo organization.
    2. Teaching other than Goju-Ryu Karatedo as taught by Seiwakai International as their **primary** martial art. (Also see I.G.5)
    3. Failure of the Dojo Head to comply with Section III.

**VI: Procedures for Accepting New Dojos, Instructors, and Yudansha for Seiwakai USA Membership.** Seiwakai USA is a Karatedo organization with the highest standards and is open to Dojos seeking a high standard of martial arts

education and advancement. The following membership requirements shall be observed.

#### **A. Application for Membership**

1. The Head Instructor shall send a letter of intent to join Seiwakai USA including Instructor's bio with training and grading history.
2. Photos or copies of the Head Instructor's Yudansha promotion certificates, names, and ranks of Dojo Instructors and/or Assistants, if applicable.
3. The Head Instructor shall provide a copy of Letter of Resignation from previous Kai (organization).

#### **B. Requirements for Newly Accepted Dojos**

1. Seiwakai USA respects and acknowledges all incoming Yudansha current ranks, however they must re-test for Seiwakai ranking after a minimum of one year of membership.
2. It must be noted that in rare instances, after grading, the rank awarded may be lower than the rank held upon joining.
3. The new Dojo will adapt its katas and basics to the Seiwakai methodology.
4. Instructors, Yudansha, and senior students are expected to attend the annual (November) Seiwakai USA Training Seminar at the USA Hombu Dojo, or another seminar as stated in Section I.C.3
5. Yudansha members shall join Seiwakai International and the JKF Gojukai. Kyudansha age 15 years and older shall be encouraged to join Seiwakai International.
6. Pay the \$100 annual dojo membership dues/fees upon acceptance, and each year thereafter.

### **VII. Seiwakai USA, Seiwa Kai International, and the JKF Goju Kai**

#### **A. Seiwakai USA**

Seiwakai USA is the national representative for Seiwakai International and is a registered non-profit corporation. You must be a member in good standing of Seiwakai USA to test for any dan-grade in Seiwakai International and JKF Goju Kai. Your dojo's annual membership fee (or your member-at-large fee if applicable), and your annual membership fee must be paid to grade with Seiwakai International. Other Seiwakai international branches work similarly.

## **B. Seiwakai International Membership Cards**

Seiwakai International membership cards are available to all students who join a Seiwakai USA dojo. It is within the discretion of the dojo head or Chief Instructor to determine when a student should be issued a membership card. However, it is recommended that the membership card issue no later than 6<sup>th</sup> kyu – green belt level. To obtain a membership card, the chief instructor of the Seiwakai dojo must request the card from the Vice President of Seiwakai International or the individual designated by Seiwakai International (hereinafter “Designee”) by submitting to the Designee a membership card application along with two passport-size photographs of the applicant and the associated fees. The Designee in turn sends the application and photographs to Seiwakai International in Japan within a reasonable time from receipt of the application. The cards will be recorded, stamped and returned to Designee within a reasonably practicable time period. Upon receipt of the card, the Designee will then forward the card to the chief instructor who made the request.

## **C. Seiwakai International Dan-Grade Certificates**

Only members of Seiwakai International may test for dan-grading. A test application and associated testing fees must be filed with The Vice President of Seiwakai International or his designee (hereinafter (“Designee”), who will retain the application until testing is complete. Shortly after successful testing, the Designee will forward the information to Japan to the Seiwakai International Headquarters to request issuance of a certificate. Within a reasonably practicable time, Seiwakai International will record the test information, issue a signed certificate, and forward the certificate to the Designee. Upon receipt of the certificate, the Designee will then promptly forward it to the student’s chief instructor.

## **D. Japan Karatedo Federation Goju Kai**

1. The Japan Karatedo Federation (JKF) was established in 1964 to organize and oversee all styles of traditional Japanese Karatedo. This organization is part of Japan’s Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.

2. Seiwakai International is an Official Affiliate Member of the JKF Goju Kai and seeks to preserve and perpetuate the style of karate that was first developed in Okinawa, Japan by Mr. Chojun Miyagi.

**E. JKF Goju Kai Membership Cards and Dan Certificates**

You must be a member of Seiwakai International to become a member of the JKF Goju Kai and must hold a dan grade in Seiwakai to test for that same dan grade in the JKF Goju Kai. In other words, you cannot hold a higher dan-grade in the JKF Goju Kai than you do in Seiwakai. An application for JKF membership must be submitted in advance of a JKF Shinsa. JKF Goju Kai membership cards and dan certificates are processed according to JKF policies and procedures and will be issued upon application within a reasonable time.

**F. Dan-grade Transfers for Seiwakai International and the JKF Goju Kai**

If a member holds a dan grade with her/his country's National Governing Body or equivalent for karate (e.g. the USANKF, Karate Canada, or Federación Mexicana de Karate) the member may apply for a dan grade transfer of an equivalent grade (up to Godan) in Seiwakai International and the JKF Goju Kai. To transfer rank to Seiwakai USA, the member must test before a Seiwakai panel and a JKF Goju Kai panel and pay all testing fees from Shodan to the dan-grade s/he is seeking. Receiving the equivalent dan-grade of the member's national certificate is not guaranteed. The Seiwakai/JKF panel may award a lower dan-grade than the requested transfer dan-grade

**VIII: Amending of Seiwakai USA Policies and Procedures.** These Policies and Procedures shall be reviewed by the Board of Directors every three years and may be amended, revised, or deleted as the Board sees fit to improve Seiwakai USA and its operations.

- A. Proposed amendments to the Seiwakai USA Policies and Procedures shall be sent to Dojo Heads and Members-at-Large for a review period of two weeks. The Dojo Heads and Members-at-Large shall disseminate the revision(s) to all members in good standing of their dojo.
- B. After comments or objections are received and addressed, the Board shall vote on each proposed change to the Seiwakai USA Policies and Procedures and each change shall be approved or denied by a simple majority vote by the Board.

C. The Revised Seiwakai USA Policies and Procedures shall be made available to all members in good standing. Dojo heads and members-at-large will be emailed a copy of the revision(s) and it is their responsibility to disseminate the revision(s) to all members in good standing of their dojo.

**IX. Primacy** – All Seiwakai Policies and Procedures are designed to supplement and to be consistent with the letter and intent of the Seiwakai USA Bylaws. In the case of a contradiction or discrepancy, the Seiwakai USA Bylaws take precedent.

**X: Approval and Adoption of Seiwakai USA Policies and Procedures**

These 2025 Amended Seiwakai USA Policies and Procedures have been reviewed and approved by a majority vote of the Board of Directors on this 9<sup>th</sup> day of April 2025.



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President of the Board