



The Statutes of Gratia Plena

The objective of these statutes is to help focus the workers of Gratia Plena to strive as a team with a common endeavor to foster improved mental and spiritual health and wellness in the community through our mission and core values.

Article 1: Name and Mission

Gratia Plena (translated from Latin “full of grace”; see Luke 1:28) exists primarily as a place of mercy and healing for the glory of God, for the flourishing of individuals, marriages, and families and for an increased freedom to love through improved mental and spiritual health. God’s human creation is drawn to live in this way, full of grace, as did our Blessed Mother to whom the Archangel Gabriel’s greeting and salutation was given.

Article 2: Nature of the Nonprofit Organization

Gratia Plena is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organized to provide mental and spiritual health services for mental illness, addiction, marriage and family conflict and the spiritual distress that often accompanies these issues. We also provide training for students of psychology, counseling, nursing, and spiritual direction. Our services are provided in a manner that remains faithful to the teachings, values, and traditions of the Catholic Church.

Article 3: Seat of Governance

The Gratia Plena corporate headquarters is located at 10707 Corporate Drive, Suite 135, Stafford, Texas 77477 in Fort Bend County, which is within the geographic boundaries of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

Article 4: Vision

Our vision is to have Gratia Plena be a professionally run charitable nonprofit organization which strives to overcome multiple common barriers to healing, designed to promote wellness of the whole person to fulfill each person’s natural human vocation to live for the glory of God and for the building of His Kingdom on Earth as it is in Heaven.



Article 5: Core Values

Our four core values apply both to our Gratia Plena workers and to the guests whom we serve:

- Spiritual, Mental, and Physical Health (wellness and wholeness)
- Relational Health (communication, teamwork, and respect)
- Service Excellence
- Ethics, Integrity, and Honesty (being trustworthy, responsible, and accountable)

Article 6: Scope of Services

Guests of Gratia Plena receive mental health counseling and coaching services, spiritual direction services, and nutritional and health guidance from our workers. We seek to not only relieve human suffering in the world, but also to attend to the care of the soul for eternal life in both our guests and workers. All guests are welcome at Gratia Plena, regardless of race, ethnic background, citizenship, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or socioeconomic status. We receive guests according to our competence and experience and refer guests to outside service providers when an issue is outside of our area of training or competence, as our professional and personal ethics dictate.

1. MEMBERSHIP

To maintain a strong Catholic identity, the majority of Gratia Plena workers, students, and Board Members will be Catholic, connected to a parish, and active in their faith practice, but all will be in agreement with the teachings, values, and traditions of the Church, and be able to obtain letters of recommendation from fellow Catholics or Christians who know them well, such as a pastor or spiritual director. We may accept non-Catholics to fill administrative or volunteer positions so long as they are not antagonistic to the Catholic Church or Catholic faith practices. Direct service providers (i.e., counselors, coaches, and spiritual directors) must be actively practicing Catholics and faithful to the teachings of the Church, and sign an agreement in their job offer to practice in this manner.

Gratia Plena workers are comprised of professional staff who are direct service providers, administrative support staff, volunteers, and students. Our Management Team is comprised of the Executive Director, the Business Manager, and our Development Manager. Professional staff who are direct service providers may be licensed, certified, or unlicensed.



The Executive Director of Gratia Plena must be a practicing Catholic faithful to the teachings of the Church. This person supervises the Business Manager and Development Manager, as well as the service provision of professional staff and students. Each student is assigned to a licensed mental health professional who serves as a supervisor and mentor. Our Business Manager supervises administrative support staff and the administrative duties of service providers. Our Development Manager supervises volunteers and oversees business development including human resources duties and functions such as the interview and application process as well as onboarding, as well as offboarding when workers are separating from the organization.

Gratia Plena workers, volunteers, and students attend to their job duties according to their job descriptions, as well as any activities and stipulations outlined in their employment contracts, and the guidelines covered in the Gratia Plena Policy and Procedures document. Students also attend to the responsibilities outlined by their academic programs, as well as the requirements of Gratia Plena specified in our Policy and Procedures document. When licensed or certified, workers comply with state licensing ethics and legal requirements. All workers, volunteers, and students comply with federal HIPAA regulations regarding healthcare privacy and confidentiality. All workers and students are provided a thorough orientation prior to starting work that includes basic confidentiality training.

Just cause for dismissal of Gratia Plena workers, volunteers, or students arises after attempts at remediation have been exhausted. Consideration of probation or dismissal generally arises if workers, volunteers, or students should fail to fulfill their basic job responsibilities or when they repeatedly or seriously violate the policies and procedures of the organization. Workers, volunteers, or students may also be dismissed when serious complaints of bullying or abuse are made by fellow workers, volunteers, students, or guests and are substantiated by internal investigation by the Management Team and/or Board of Directors. Dismissal of workers, volunteers, and students falls under the authority of the Management Team. Dismissal of the Business Manager or Development Manager falls under the authority of the Executive Director. Dismissal of the Executive Director falls under the authority of the Board of Directors. Dismissal from the Board of Directors would occur by vote of the board and would be due to violation of board policies and standards.

Professional development and remedial correction of Gratia Plena workers, volunteers, and students is provided informally in the natural course of ongoing supervision. Repeated deficiencies or violations warrant written correction and sometimes a period of probation, allowing time for reform. Any worker or student being dismissed for just cause retains the right to recourse first to the Gratia Plena Management Team and then to the Gratia Plena Board of Directors and ultimately as described in canon law.



The holistic wellbeing of Gratia Plena workers and students and their human formation is of great importance to the Management Team and Board of Directors. In the hiring process and at orientation onboarding, all workers, volunteers, and students are encouraged to find and engage in regular spiritual direction. Regular ongoing spiritual direction is required for the Executive Director. The Executive Director is also required to offer daily prayers for protection for all workers (past, present, and future), all volunteers (past, present, and future), all students (past, present, and future), all guests (past, present, and future), all Board members (past, present, and future), and all donors and benefactors (past, present, and future). All workers, volunteers, and students are encouraged to regularly participate in the sacramental life of the Church. Workers, volunteers, and students are also encouraged to find ongoing means of professional development in their particular area of work. Gratia Plena attempts to financially and practically support this ongoing professional and spiritual development whenever possible.

2. GOVERNANCE

The Management Team governs the day-to-day functions of Gratia Plena and meets regularly to resolve challenges and to plan development. The Board of Directors provides the ultimate oversight and governance of the organization. The Board meets quarterly and is comprised of at least seven members according to Gratia Plena's bylaws. Board members may have expertise in any of the following areas: healthcare, nonprofit administration, business administration, law, finance, having a family member with mental illness or addiction, and diocesan clergy from the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. Board members commit minimally to three-year terms but may serve longer if they chose and if they are approved to do so by the Board. There are four officers elected from among themselves by the Board: President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. The Executive Director leads the Board meetings. Presentations to the Board are routinely made by all three members of the Management Team at each meeting. Meetings follow the standard Robert's Rules of Order and quorum is determined according to the guidelines in Gratia Plena's official bylaws. In the event of any conflict between these statutes and the Gratia Plena bylaws, these statutes and the laws of the Church will govern.

Workers, volunteers, and students may execute their job duties in any of the Gratia Plena offices and in some cases by working from home, depending on assignment from their supervisor. Regardless of their primary work location, they are governed by and accountable to the Management Team of Gratia Plena and its Board of Directors.

The Executive Director of Gratia Plena or a designee from the Management Team will deliver in person or by US mail, hard copies of the organization's Annual Report and IRS Form 990 to the competent ecclesiastical authority (unless electronic files are preferred).



These documents will name the current Management Team and Board of Directors. The Management Team will also notify by email to the competent ecclesiastical authority, any changes in its membership or leadership. The Management Team and/or Board President will be willing and able to meet with the competent ecclesiastical authority for supervision or oversight whenever asked and will be willing to respond in a timely manner to any and all requests for information about the organization from the competent ecclesiastical authority.

Gratia Plena gives authority to the competent ecclesiastical authority to name a commissioner to temporarily lead the organization when serious reasons warrant it, such as poor administration of the goods of the association or deep division between its members, et cetera.

The Gratia Plena Management Team freely chooses a priest chaplain for the organization, who may be but is not required to be a Board Member or worker. The priest chaplain is approved by the competent ecclesiastical authority. The duties of the priest chaplain of Gratia Plena are as follows: to lead prayer when invited at meetings such as board meetings or staff meetings, to offer guidance on the spiritual formation of its workers, to pray for the organization, its workers and its guests, and to have a role in any worker group retreats or days of reflection.

In addition to quarterly Board Meetings and regular meetings of the Management Team, Gratia Plena holds optional worker meetings by video every week. These informal meetings allow workers to connect with each other regardless of where they may be working in the greater Houston area. In addition, service providers have an optional meeting by video every week to confidentially discuss professional issues and receive peer consultation on our service work with guests. The Management Team may also call mandatory meetings for all workers or certain subsets of workers (such as a meeting of all administrative support workers) as needed and may determine if the mandatory meeting should be in person or by video or some hybrid of the two.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF GOODS

The Management Team makes decisions on purchasing goods and services to support the activities of Gratia Plena. The Management Team also receives donations of goods and services for the support of the organization. These goods and services are distributed to the office location or function that needs them. Workers request the goods and support services they need from the Management Team. The competent ecclesiastical authority has the right to ensure that the goods and services are applied appropriately to the purposes of the association.



The Gratia Plena Management Team ordinarily supervises the distribution of goods and services, but when the Management Team has vacancies or is not functioning effectively, the Gratia Plena Board of Directors may temporarily supervise the distribution of goods and services.

As a US IRS 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Gratia Plena is required by federal law to submit a Form 990 report by May 15th of each year (but may be extended per IRS regulations). Once accepted and posted by the US IRS, this document becomes freely accessible to the public. Gratia Plena traditionally publishes and distributes an annual report. A copy of these two documents will be also submitted annually to the competent ecclesiastical authority for financial oversight. Financial reports are given to the Board of Directors by the Gratia Plena Business Manager at every Board of Directors meeting. These quarterly financial reports may be requested by the competent ecclesiastical authority as needed.

Gratia Plena is subject to the authority of the competent ecclesiastical authority with regard to the administration and distribution of goods and services which have been donated or left to them for pious and merciful purposes.

4. MODIFICATION OF STATUTES

After these statutes have been recognized and/or approved by the competent ecclesiastical authority, any modifications require the recognition or approval of the competent ecclesiastical authority. The Gratia Plena Management Team may propose to modify these statutes when they deem it expedient with the approval of its Board of Directors and then they shall be submitted to the competent ecclesiastical authority for final approval.

5. TERMINATION AND SUPPRESSION AND DESTINATION OF GOODS

The function and existence of the nonprofit organization Gratia Plena may be suppressed by federal or state government, by the Board of Directors, and by the competent ecclesiastical authority if its activity causes grave harm to guests. The function and existence of the organization Gratia Plena may be suppressed by the competent ecclesiastical authority if its activity causes grave harm to ecclesiastical doctrine or discipline or is a scandal to the faithful.

From the inception of Gratia Plena in 2012, the bylaws state that any remaining goods of the organization after dissolution and settling of all debts, would be passed over to Catholic Charities of Galveston-Houston.