

# **Wisconsin Fire Inspectors Association**

## **By-Laws**

**Revisions**  
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## ARTICLE I

### NAME

The name of this organization shall be: Wisconsin Fire Inspectors Association (hereinafter referred to as The Association). The Association has established itself as a Chapter of the International Fire Marshal's Association, a member section of the National Fire Protection Association and as a Chapter member of the International Code Council.

- A. The Association is a non-profit organization as allowed by the laws of the State of Wisconsin.
  - 1. Any applicable Federal laws, rules, and regulations shall also be applicable.

## ARTICLE II

### PURPOSE

The purpose of The Association shall be to foster the highest standards of Fire Prevention in the State of Wisconsin through progressive Fire Inspections and Public Fire and Life Safety Education. This shall be accomplished in the following ways:

- A. Conduct an annual Conference devoted to improving and standardizing fire inspections throughout the State of Wisconsin. This Conference shall be equally devoted to enhancing and promoting life safety education and provide current safe fire prevention practices and techniques. Said Conference shall offer, but not be limited to:
  - 1. The latest techniques applicable to conducting an effective fire inspection.
  - 2. Updates on all applicable codes, rules, regulations and legal interpretations concerning fire inspections.
  - 3. Provide a forum for code changes that can be forwarded to the appropriate technical code-writing group.
  - 4. Certified instruction of courses designed for the purpose of inspector certification, degree of efficiency and effectiveness, or both.
  - 5. Provide requested assistance, where and when practical, as may be requested by a members or attendees.
  - 6. An Annual Business Meeting, at which time one agenda item shall be the election of officers.
  - 7. Instructional methods and techniques to help improve communication and promote a more effective fire and unified prevention message.
  - 8. Instructional updates on latest tools and methods used for public fire prevention education.
- B. Promote the exchange of ideas and information between members of The Association and:
  - 1. Other members of the Fire Service.
  - 2. Municipal officials and members of governing bodies.
  - 3. Local, state, and federal agencies.
  - 4. All others who may possess an interest in Code Enforcement and Fire Prevention activities and education.
  - 5. Encourage participation in Annual Conference by neighboring State Organizations.

- C. Sponsor and promote legislation that improves the quality of fire and life safety protection and prevention by:
1. Utilizing resources available through the State of Wisconsin or its agencies.
  2. Active participation in the legislative, Administrative Code and rule enactment process.
  3. Communication of the ideas, goals, and forms of fire safety and prevention.
  4. Actively support National Organizations that can effect positive changes on a National scale.

## ARTICLE III

### STRUCTURE

The Structure of the Association shall consist of Officers, an Executive Board, a Board of Directors, Committee and General Membership divided into sixteen (16) Area Associations.

- A. OFFICERS. There shall be a President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, and Executive Secretary / Treasurer, Recording Secretary, and Past President throughout the calendar year. Each officer shall attain office and fulfill the duties as follows::
1. PRESIDENT. A regular member in good standing, elected to a one (1) year term unless reaffirmed by a plurality vote of regular members in good standing attending the Annual Meeting with a maximum of 2 consecutive years. The President shall
    - a. Preside at all meetings.
    - b. Cast deciding vote in the event of a tie.
    - c. Establish all necessary committees and appoint a Chair person(s) of said committees.
    - d. Call for special meetings, or issue such call as might be necessary.
    - e. Carry out directives issued by a majority of the Executive Board, Board of Directors or General Membership.
    - f. Serve as an Ex-Officio member of any and all committees.
    - g. Represent the interests of the Association on all matters.
  2. FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT. A regular member in good standing, elected to a one (1) year term unless reaffirmed by a plurality vote of regular members in good standing attending the Annual Meeting with a maximum of 2 consecutive years. The First Vice-President shall:
    - a. In the absence of the President, assume and perform the duties of the President.
    - b. Accompany the President at meetings of statewide concern.
    - c. Perform any duties assigned by the President on behalf of the Association
    - d. Serve on the Conference Committee and help facilitate the Annual Conference with the Second Vice-President.
  3. SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT. A regular member in good standing elected to a one (1) year term unless reaffirmed by a plurality vote of regular members in good standing attending the Annual Meeting with a maximum of 2 consecutive years. The Second Vice-President shall:
    - a. In the absence of the President and First Vice-President, assume and perform all duties of the President.
    - b. Assist the First Vice-President as a facilitator of the Annual Conference and serve on the Conference Committee.
    - c. Perform any duties assigned by the President on behalf of The Association.

4. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY / TREASURER. A regular member in good standing appointed to an indeterminate term by the President and confirmed by the Board of Directors. The Executive Secretary / Treasurer shall:
  - a. Receive all dues and moneys received by The Association, and keep and maintain accurate records of said dues and moneys.
  - b. Record and maintain a complete list of all members, regular, contributing, and associate, and other pertinent information, in such order as determined by the President.
  - c. Establish and maintain a checking account, using recorded receipts of The Association, for the purpose of paying outstanding debts incurred by The Association.
  - d. Establish and maintain an interest bearing account for deposit of Association funds not required to be on balance in The Association checking account.
  - e. Be assisted in the secretarial duties by the Recording Secretary.
  - f. Shall sit as the Treasurer of the IFMA chapter.
  
5. RECORDING SECRETARY. A regular member in good standing appointed to an indeterminate term by the President and confirmed by the Board of Directors. The Recording Secretary shall:
  - a. Take minutes of all meetings, including but not limited to, Executive Board Meetings, Board of Directors Meetings, Regular General Meetings, and Special General Meetings or as directed by the President.
  - b. Assist the Executive Secretary / Treasurer with the secretarial duties as required or as directed by the President.
  - c. Keep files of minutes of all meetings, assist in the keeping of general files, and perform correspondence duties as directed by the Executive Secretary / Treasurer or other Executive Board Member.
  - d. Shall sit as the Recording Secretary of the IFMA chapter.
  
6. PAST-PRESIDENT. A regular member in good standing who was most recently President will become Past-President. The Past President shall:
  - a. Assist the incoming President with the transition of office or in any other way necessary to ensure smooth continuity for the benefit of the Association.
  - b. Perform any duties assigned by the President on behalf of The Association.
  
7. IFMA CHAPTER PRESIDENT. A regular member in good standing, appointed to an indeterminate term by the President and confirmed by the Board of Directors
  - a. Shall represent the Wisconsin Chapter of the IFMA at the International Fire Marshal's Association Chapter Presidents Meetings and all other IFMA functions, as the Association deems necessary.
  
8. IFMA CHAPTER REPRESENTATIVE. A regular member in good standing who was appointed by the President of The Association for a period of (1) year shall become the IFMA Chapter Representative, providing there are no conflicts with other pre-established positions within The Association. The IFMA Chapter Representative shall:
  - a. Shall be responsible for all required reports (i.e. Chapter Meetings, Chapter Activities, or other information requested by the IFMA).

- B. EXECUTIVE BOARD. The Association shall have an Executive Board whose members consist of the President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, Executive Secretary / Treasurer, and Past President. The Executive Board shall:
1. Develop ideas, proposals, or other business, into agenda items for consideration by the Board of Directors.
  2. Consider business forth coming and / or referred for the purpose of developing a recommendation to forward to the Board of Directors.
  3. Investigate and disseminate information gained, any business which may be of concern to, or have any effect upon, The Association, its officers, directors, membership or Fire Prevention practices in the State of Wisconsin.
  4. Meet as often as is necessary in the most expeditious manner possible, (i.e. telephone), for the good of The Association.
  5. Develop and maintain a Strategic Plan for the Association and update said plan as often as is necessary to ensure all goals are reached.
- C. BOARD OF DIRECTORS. The Association shall have a Board of Directors consisting of: The five (5) members of the Executive Board, the sixteen (16) Area Chairs or less if Areas combine and the Parliamentarian. The Board of Directors shall:
1. Be the governing body of The Association with power to establish rules and regulations necessary to further the cause of The Association as stated in Article II.
  2. Meet as often as is necessary, at least quarterly, to conduct business from its agenda.
  3. Consider business forthcoming and / or referred for the purpose of developing a recommendation to be forwarded to the general voting membership.
  4. Investigate and disseminate all information gained, which may be of concern to, or have any effect upon, The Association, its officers, directors, membership or Fire Prevention/Education practices in the State of Wisconsin.
  5. As part of the Quarterly Business Meeting any IFMA Business shall be discussed.
  6. Provide input into the development of the Strategic Plan to ensure all goals of the plan are realized and that the plan is updated as often as is necessary.
- D. COMMITTEES. The Association shall have Committees necessary for achieving its' purpose as stated under Article II. The President, subject to the nominee's acceptance, shall appoint each committee Chair Person. These Committees shall be:
1. NOMINATING COMMITTEE. A standing committee charged with identifying nominees for elective offices. The Nominating Committee shall consist of:
    - a. At least three Past Presidents if available.
    - b. In the event this criterion cannot be met, the President shall appoint sufficient members to attain the numerical requirements of at least three (3) members in good standing.
    - c. Submit candidates for each elected office to the voting membership attending the Annual Meeting.
    - d. Post candidates in easy view of all voting members.

2. FINANCE COMMITTEE. A standing committee that shall:
  - a. Consist of three (3) members, one of whom shall be the First Vice-President, who shall serve as the Chairperson, a member of the Board of Directors, and a regular member in good standing.
  - b. Meet at least annually, for business and to perform an internal audit of The Association's financial status.
  - c. Assist the Executive Secretary / Treasurer as needed, or as directed by the President.
  - d. Investigate and offer recommendations regarding any and all significant expenditures.
  
3. MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE. A standing committee that shall:
  - a. Consist of three (3) members, one of whom shall be the Second Vice-President, who shall serve as Chairperson: a member of the Board of Directors, and, at-large, a regular member in good standing.
  - b. Develop and implement membership recruitment policies and procedures.
  - c. Assist with marketing strategies and all other efforts as is necessary or requested to promote new memberships and maintain existing members of the Wisconsin Fire Inspector's Association Chapter of the International Fire Marshal's Association and ICC.
  - d. Assist the Executive Secretary / Treasurer with maintaining and up-dating membership lists as is necessary.
  
4. ANNUAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE. This committee shall be responsible for the development, planning and execution of the Public Education / Fire Inspection Conference. This committee shall:
  - a. Shall consist of the First and Second Vice-Presidents who will facilitate the committee.
  - b. Chairpersons shall be appointed by the President, one for the Life Safety Education portion and one for the Fire Code portion to better expedite the conference.
  - c. The remainder of the Annual Conference Committee shall be members in good standing, at least one who represents the host fire department.
  - d. Work with the host facility (hotel), and Fire Department to ensure smooth operation of the conference.
  - e. Develop and implement the programs and agenda; including procuring speakers, instructors and special guests.
  
5. LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE. A standing committee having prime responsibility of:
  - a. Monitoring the State Legislature's activities in the areas of Fire Prevention, Inspection and Education.
  - b. Interpreting and informing the State Legislature' activities in regards to codes or laws which may effect the membership.
  - c. Promoting the ideals of the membership through recommendations of the Areas.
  - d. Such committee shall consist of the President and at least two (2) Board of Directors and two (2) members at-large appointed by the President

6. SOG & BY-LAW COMMITTEE. A standing committee having prime responsibility for:
  - a. Updating, correcting and maintaining the SOG's and By-Laws of the organization as directed by the Executive Board or as may suggested by any member in good standing.
  - b. Consisting of at least two (2) members, one who shall be a member of the Board of Directors, who shall serve as the committee Chairperson, all other members shall be regular members of the Association in good standing.
  
7. STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE. A standing committee having prime responsibility for:
  - a. Communicating updates and corrections to the Board of Directors regarding the plan.
  - b. Providing measurable goals that the plan will achieve and informing the Board as to that progress.
  - c. Secure a marketing strategy (cost approved by the Board of Directors), which addresses membership and corporate membership and updating the marketing plan as is necessary.
  - d. Provide updates to the Executive Board regarding revenue projections so Association sponsored training can be scheduled.
  
8. OTHER COMMITTEES. The President shall appoint such other committees as deemed necessary or as directed by the Board of Directors. Said Committees, upon appointment, shall be given a specific charge and function to perform.

## ARTICLE IV

### MEMBERSHIP

The membership shall be open to all persons interested in Fire Prevention and/or Public Fire Prevention Education. Where any question or conflict arises as to the proper membership being applied for, the Executive Secretary Treasurer shall assign the correct member ship to one of the following:

- A. REGULAR MEMBERSHIP. All persons actively engaged in Fire Inspections and /or Public Prevention Education; representing any municipality, governmental entity, Native American entity, or the military are eligible for regular membership and shall be admitted as such upon payment and receipt of annual dues. Rights and privileges include:
  1. Able to vote on any and all Association business brought to the floor.
  2. Able to serve as an elected or appointed officer.
  3. Able to serve on committees and / or represent The Association as requested by the President.
  4. Able to receive bulletins, communications or other publications issued by The Association.
  5. Shall be encouraged to apply for individual membership in the International Fire Marshal's Association.
  6. A copy of the membership types (Member, Associate Member, Life Member, Honorary Member and Affiliate Member) and qualifications shall be made available to all members.

- B. **INACTIVE CONTRIBUTING MEMBERSHIP.** All persons not eligible for regular membership pursuant to Article IV (A), and who have held a regular membership in good standing, who are no longer actively engaged in Fire Inspection and/or Public Education due to retirement or promotion, are eligible for Inactive Contributing Membership and shall be admitted as such upon payment and receipt of dues. Inactive Contributing Members rights and privileges include:
1. Able to attend all meetings.
  2. Able to hold a position within the Area, up to Vice Chair.
  3. May not hold elected position on the Executive Board or act as a committee Chairperson.
  4. Able to serve on committees and / or represent The Association as requested by the President.
  5. Able to receive bulletins, communications or other publications issued by The Association.
- C. **CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP.** All persons and representing specific industries or interests not affiliated with any Fire Department, shall be admitted as a Corporate Membership. These persons may or may not be involved with Public Education or Fire Inspection. Corporate members do not need any affiliation with any portion of the Fire Service. Corporate members rights and privileges include:
1. Able to attend all meetings.
  2. Able to hold a position within the Area, up to Vice Chair, but may not vote as the substitute for the Area Chair.
  3. Able to receive bulletins, communications or other publications issued by The Association.
- D. **ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP.** All persons not eligible for regular membership pursuant to Article IV (A) shall be admitted as an Associate Member upon payment and receipt of annual dues. Rights and privileges include:
1. Able to attend all meetings.
  2. Able to hold a position within the Area, up to Vice Chair, but may not vote as the substitute for the Area Chair.
  3. Able to receive bulletins, communications or other publications issued by The Association.
- NOTE: Corporate Members and Associate Members shall not have the privilege of holding any Board or Executive Board position nor casting any vote on any matter before The Association.*
- E. **LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP.** Any member of The Association who has exemplified outstanding encouragement, wisdom, and aptitude to the Association and who has maintained membership pursuant to Article IV (A, B, or D), may have their name placed in nomination with the Board of Directors of the Association. Upon review and affirmation by the Board of Directors, the member's name shall be brought forth in General Assembly for confirmation by the body at large. Upon confirmation by the Association membership the nominated member shall have confirmed upon them the title of LIFETIME MEMBER. Rights and privileges include:
1. Membership dues shall be waived.
  2. Able to attend all meetings.
  3. May not hold elected positions on the Executive Board or act as a committee Chairperson.
  4. Able to receive bulletins, communications or other publications issued by The Association.
  5. May hold concurrent memberships as defined in Article IV (A, B, or D) with the rank and privileges as defined within each sub-section.

F. AREA ASSOCIATIONS MEMBERSHIP.

1. The Association shall consist of sixteen (16) Area Associations by Counties as follows:
  - a. Area 1 - Waushara, Marquette, Green Lake, Juneau, and Adams.
  - b. Area 2 - Dane, Jefferson, Green, Rock, Sauk, and Columbia.
  - c. Area 3 - LaCrosse, Monroe, Jackson, Vernon, Trempealeau, and Buffalo.
  - d. Area 4 - Walworth, Racine, and Kenosha.
  - e. Area 5 - Waukesha and Milwaukee.
  - f. Area 6 - Washington, Ozaukee and Sheboygan, Fond du Lac, and Dodge.
  - g. Area 7 - Door, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Calumet, Brown, Outagamie, and Winnebago.
  - h. Area 8 - Florence, Marinette, Oconto, and the Eastern Portion of Forrest.
  - i. Area 9 - Wood, Portage, Waupaca, Marathon, Shawano, and Menomonee.
  - j. Area 10 - Vilas, Oneida, Lincoln, Langlade, and the Western portion of Forrest.
  - k. Area 11 - Polk, Barron, Burnett, and Washburn.
  - l. Area 12 - Chippewa, Clark, Eau Claire, and Taylor.
  - m. Area 13 - St. Croix, Pierce, Dunn, Pepin.
  - n. Area 14 - Sawyer, Rusk, Price.
  - o. Area 15 - Douglas, Bayfield, Ashland, and Iron.
  - p. Area 16 - Grant, Crawford, Richland, Iowa, and Lafayette.

*NOTE: Members may belong to an Area Association adjacent to the one assigned to their geographic area if it is more convenient due to travel distance to attend meetings. The President, upon proper notification, may allow Areas to combine having with a single Chair Person presiding over the combined areas. This Area Chair would have only single voting privileges on all matters before the Board of Directors.*

2. Each Area Association shall:
  - a. Elect its own officers consisting of: Chairperson, Vice-Chair and Secretary / Treasurer.
  - b. Meet at least once quarterly.
  - c. Channel all formal actions taken through their Association.
  - d. Receive moneys from The Association to aid the Area Associations conducting their normal business. An accounting report of these moneys must be presented to the Executive Secretary / Treasurer quarterly. Failure to report Area Association expenses quarterly will prohibit the local area from receiving any additional funds from The Association.

G. MEMBER NOT IN GOOD STANDING. Once a member has been removed as a member in good standing, that individual cannot later become a Regular, Contributing or Associate Member of the Association.

1. Once a member has been notified in writing that they are no longer a member in good standing, they lose all rights and privileges of the Association.
2. A member, as determined by the Executive Board, through their action(s) and / or conduct that brings harm to the Association, will constitute a member not in good standing and will be removed from the membership.

- H. **HOLD HARMLESS.** The Association, in application to, or as a member of any other local, state or national organization shall defend, indemnify and hold harmless any such organization.
1. It is agreed that within the Limits, terms and Conditions set forth by any organization wherein this Association is a member, the Association will defend, indemnify and hold harmless:
    - a. From any claim, demand, suit, loss cost of expense, or any damage which may be asserted, claimed or recovered against of from:
    - b. By reason of any damage to property or bodily injury, including death, sustained by any person whomsoever and which damage, injury or death arises by negligence of:
    - c. Or by their agents, servants, and employees while acting in the course or scope of their employment or membership within this Association

## ARTICLE V

### GENERAL PROVISIONS

The following General Provisions shall govern the operation of The Association and provide for the orderly conduct of any business or endeavor The Association may choose to undertake or pursue.

- A. **ELECTION OF OFFICERS.** The following shall govern the election of officers for the Association.
1. The election of officers shall be held at the Annual Meeting.
  2. The order of election shall be as follows: President, First Vice-President, and Second Vice-President.
- B. **VACANCIES.** Shall be filled in the following manner.
1. **PRESIDENT** - Shall be filled by normal succession for the remainder of the un-expired term.
  2. **FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT** - Shall be filled by normal succession for the remainder of the un-expired term upon appointment of the President.
  3. **SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT** - Shall be filled by appointment by the President, such appointment being confirmed by the Board of Directors, for the remainder of the un-expired term.
  4. **EXECUTIVE SECRETARY / TREASURER** - Shall be filled in accordance with Article III (A)(4).
  5. **RECORDING SECRETARY** - Shall be filled in accordance with Article III (A)(5).
  6. **PAST-PRESIDENT** - Shall be filled by Presidential appointment of the most immediate Past-President for the remainder of the un-expired term.
  7. **BOARD OF DIRECTOR MEMBER** - Shall be filled by normal succession for the remainder of the un-expired term.
  8. **IFMA CHAPTER PRESIDENT** - Shall be filled in accordance with Article III (A)(7), Understanding no other positional conflicts occur.
  9. **(IFMA CHAPTER REPRESENTATIVE** - Shall be filled in accordance with Article III (A)(8), Understanding no other positional conflicts occur.

- C. ABSENCES. Any elected or appointed officer who shall be absent from of all scheduled meetings, not including meetings of Area Associations, without good cause may be removed from office without recourse, and the vacancy shall be filled for the un-expired term as provide in Article V (A) or shall not be eligible for re-imbusement by the Association for lodging expenses at the Board Meeting prior to the annual conference.
- D. MEETINGS. The following shall govern the calling and conducting of all meetings of The Association.
1. Executive Board Meeting - shall:
    - a. Be held as often as necessary in the most expeditious manner possible, including telephonic means, when there is no Board of Directors meeting.
    - b. A quorum is necessary to conduct business and shall consist of at least three (3) members of the Executive Board present.
  2. Board of Directors Meeting - shall:
    - a. Be held as often as is necessary at least semi annually.
    - b. A quorum necessary to conduct business shall consist of at least nine (9) members of the Board of Directors present.
  3. Regular General Meetings - shall be governed by the following:
    - a. The Annual Meeting shall be conducted as part of the Annual Conference.
    - b. The election of officers shall be on the agenda of the Annual Conference.
    - c. A quorum is necessary to conduct business and shall consist of at least Twelve (12) regular members in good standing present.
    - d. General IFMA Chapter Business shall be included and discussed at the Annual Conference for the entire attending membership. When the Association conducts business related to IFMA, they shall comply with and adhere to all applicable requirements and restrictions of the Constitution and By Laws of the International Fire Marshal's Association as such pertain to Chapters thereof. Including, without being limited to, those requirements set forth in Article 7 of the By Laws of the International Fire Marshal's Association or any such successor article thereto.
  4. Special General Meetings - shall be governed by the following:
    - a. A special meeting may be called by the Executive Board, or by a majority of the Board of Directors.
    - b. Notice of a Special Meeting, stating time, place and purpose shall be sent to all regular members in good standing at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of said special meeting.
    - c. Article V (D)(4)(b) may be disregarded if the President declares the Purpose of said meeting is an emergency, and notice is posted in a conspicuous place at least two (2) hours prior to said meeting, and, the declared emergency purpose is the only item on the agenda.
  5. Voting - Every regular member in good standing may cast one (1) vote; by voice, show of hands, or written ballot; on all questions brought to the floor.

6. Conference Location – The location of the Annual Conference shall be selected by a Site Selection Committee appointed by the President. The committee shall select, at a minimum two (2) sites, to be submitted to the Board of Directors for their final vote. The committee shall take into consideration the following when making their selection:
  - a. Support from the host fire department.
  - b. The ability to accommodate the required number of attendees.
  - c. The flexibility to provide miscellaneous support items.
7. Robert’s Rules of Orders (Most Current Printed Edition) shall be the authority on all questions not specifically addressed by these By-Laws.

## ARTICLE VI

### AMENDMENTS

These By-Laws, except Article VII shall not be amended, altered, or repealed except in the following manner:

- A. Any regular member(s) in good standing may submit in writing to the President proposed change(s) with reasons for the proposed change(s).
  1. The President will then take the proposed amendment(s) to the Board of Directors.
  2. The Board of Directors shall consider any proposed amendment(s).
  3. All amendments supported by the Board of Directors shall be presented at the annual meeting for an up down vote by all regular members in good standing.
- B. Amendments may also be proposed by:
  1. Resolution by the Executive Board.
  2. Resolution of the Board of Directors.
  3. Presentation by a special committee appointed by the President for this sole purpose.
- C. Any proposed amendments arising from Article V (B)(1)(2)(3) will be subject to applicable provisions as stated in Article V (A)(1)(2).

## ARTICLE VII

### DEFINITIONS

Additions, deletions or corrections to this article may be made by Resolution of The Board of Directors.

A. Plurality.

1. An excess of votes over those cast for an opposing proposition or candidate.
2. A number of votes cast for a proposition of candidate in a contest of more than two (2) that is greater than the number cast for any other, but not more than half (1/2) the total votes cast.

B. Majority.

1. A number of votes cast for a proposition of candidate that is greater than half (1/2) the total votes cast.

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