

**BYLAWS
of
WABE SELF-HELP ASSOCIATION**

A Maryland Non-profit Association

THE PREAMBLE

WHEREAS the WABE SELF-HELP ASSOCIATION is established with a noble mission to foster social and cultural relationships among Oromo people residing in the Washington metropolitan area.

WHEREAS the WABE SELF-HELP ASSOCIATION recognizes that preserving cultural heritage and strong socio-economic bonds is paramount to the community's well-being and is committed to upholding the socio-cultural norms of our forefathers.

WHEREAS, the Association is dedicated to forging resilient community bonds, irrespective of the geographical locations of its members.

NOW, THEREFORE, in accordance with the above principles, the WABE SELF-HELP ASSOCIATION hereby establishes the following bylaws to govern its affairs and promote the achievement of its noble mission.

ARTICLE I

Name and Address

- 1.1. NAME.** The name of this association shall be “WABE SELF HELP ASSOCIATION”, hereafter referred to as “The Association”. It shall be a nonprofit profit association incorporated under the laws of the State of Maryland.
- 1.2. PRINCIPAL OFFICE.** The principal office of The Association is located at 1110 Chickasaw Drive, Silver Spring, MD, or at such other location as shall be approved by the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE II

Purposes, Mission, And Vision

- 2.1. PURPOSES.** The Association is a non-profit association dedicated to fostering a strong social bond and a culture of brotherhood among its members, encompassing mutual

assistance in times of difficulties, celebrations, and various other occasions. It shall be established and will be operated exclusively in compliance with section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Furthermore, The Association serves as a forum for the collection and equitable redistribution of charitable contributions to aid Oromos, regardless of their geographical location, in the event of natural or man-made calamities.

- 2.2. MISSION.** The Association's mission is to provide comprehensive support to its members, encompassing financial, social, and moral assistance during various social and cultural events, including but not limited to instances of death, sickness, and weddings. In pursuit of this mission, The Association actively engages in efforts to raise financial support, conducts regular meetings, and organizes social events as deemed necessary. The Association also extends its support to newly arrived immigrants within the community, facilitating their seamless integration into the society here in the Washington DC metropolitan area.
- 2.3. VISION.** To see a well established, prosperous, and successful community that is dedicated to preserving and passing down Oromo socio-cultural norms, while also embracing the American dream for future generations.

ARTICLE III

Membership

- 3.1. ELIGIBILITY.** Membership is open to individuals who share a commitment to upholding social norms and willingly adhere to the rules and regulations set forth by The Association.
- 3.2. REGISTRATION FEE.** A one-time registration fee of \$50.00 is required for individuals seeking membership in The Association.
- 3.3. MONTHLY CONTRIBUTION.** To ensure the sustainability and success of The Association, it is required for each member to contribute monthly dues of \$20 to maintain his/her membership.

ARTICLE IV

Duties and Responsibilities of Each Member

- 4.1. ADVANCING THE CAUSE.** Members shall actively contribute to the promotion and realization of The Association's mission and vision.
- 4.2. ADHERENCE TO THE BYLAWS.** Members shall commit to understanding and upholding the bylaws of the Association, always ensuring compliance.

- 4.3. INTEGRITY AND RESPECT.** Members shall exhibit discipline, integrity, and respect in all interactions with fellow members, fostering a positive and inclusive community environment.
- 4.4. TIMELY PAYMENTS.** Members shall ensure the timely payment of registration and monthly contributions and others, contributing to the sustainability and success of The Association.
- 4.5. COMMITTEE ROLES.** Members shall responsibly fulfill any roles and responsibilities assigned within committees, actively participating in The Association's initiatives and activities.

ARTICLE V

Right of the Member

- 5.1. ELECTION AND NOMINATION.** A member shall have the right to actively engage in the democratic process, including voting, and being nominated or elected for various roles within The Association.
- 5.2. PETITION FOR GENERAL MEETING.** A member shall have the right to petition for a general meeting if at least two-thirds of the members sign the request.
- 5.3. VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL FROM MEMBERSHIP.** A member shall have the right to voluntarily withdraw his/her membership, but such decisions do not warrant any entitlement to a refund of registration or monthly contribution fees.

ARTICLE VI

Structure

The Association shall have General Assembly and Executive Committee bodies.

- 6.1. GENERAL ASSEMBLY.** All members of The Association shall be part of the General Assembly.
- 6.2. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.** The Executive Committee shall be composed of the following members:
- ❖ Chairperson
 - ❖ Vice Chairperson
 - ❖ Treasurer
 - ❖ Auditor
 - ❖ Secretary
 - ❖ The Social Affairs and Public Relations Persons

6.3. ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. The executive committee shall be elected by a majority vote during the general assembly meeting.

6.4. TERM LIMIT OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. The term limit of the Executive Committee shall be four years. Elected members can serve for multiple terms as long as their membership in The Association remains valid.

ARTICLE VII

Duties and Responsibilities of the General Assembly

The **GENERAL ASSEMBLY** shall:

- ❖ Hold a bi-annual general assembly meeting.
- ❖ Approve the by-laws of The Association.
- ❖ Amend or change the by-laws as necessary.
- ❖ Examine and approve the annual report from the Executive Committee.
- ❖ Elect or re-elect members of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VII

Duties and Responsibilities of the Executive Committee

The duties and responsibilities of members of the executive committee are as follows:

7.1. THE CHAIRPERSON.

- ❖ Shall serve as the principal executive officer of The Association and perform all other duties as are incident to the office.
- ❖ Shall preside over all meetings and represent The Association on public occasions and in official matters.
- ❖ Shall open a joint bank account with the Treasurer and Secretary.
- ❖ Shall deposit and withdraw money from the bank account along with the treasurer and secretary.
- ❖ In collaboration with the Social Affairs Committee, shall inform members about upcoming social events and activities.

7.2. THE VICE CHAIRPERSON.

- ❖ Shall assist the Chairperson upon request or as needed.
- ❖ In the absence or disability of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall assume the duties and exercise the powers of the Chairperson.

7.3. THE SECRETARY.

- ❖ Shall be responsible for maintaining all records of The Association's activities.

- ❖ Shall act as the presiding officer in the absence of both the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.
- ❖ Shall keep the minutes of all meetings.
- ❖ Shall open a joint bank account with the Treasurer and Chairperson.

7.4. THE TREASURER.

- ❖ Shall collect registration fees and monthly contributions from members.
- ❖ Shall open a joint bank account with the Chairperson and Secretary.
- ❖ Shall keep copies of receipts and maintain financial records.
- ❖ Shall explore and create additional sources of income for The Association.
- ❖ Shall make periodic reports of all the funds collected in the name of The Association.

7.5. THE SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE.

- ❖ Shall be responsible for promoting social engagement and fostering a sense of community among members.
- ❖ In partnership with the Chairperson and Secretary, shall effectively communicate and keep members informed about upcoming social events and activities.
- ❖ Will assign members to provide assistance and services on different occasions.
- ❖ shall plan and coordinate gatherings for members and their families, including annual iftar program, trips and picnics.
- ❖ In the event of misunderstandings between members, the committee, in consultation with other Executive Committee members, will work towards resolving them.
- ❖ shall actively engage in recruiting new members, spreading awareness about The Association's mission, and encouraging participation in its activities.

7.6. THE AUDITOR.

- ❖ Shall audit The Association's finances every six months.
- ❖ Shall prepare a report of the audit findings.
- ❖ Shall provide the Executive Committee and the General Assembly with information regarding the audit findings.

ARTICLE VIII

Occasions Requiring Financial Assistance and Amount

8.1. FUNERAL AND GRIEVANCE.

- ❖ In the event of the death of a member or their immediate dependent family members (spouse, father, mother, brother, sister, or child) in the Washington DC metropolitan area, funeral expenses will be covered by members through a mandatory contribution. Each member shall contribute a minimum of \$200.00.
- ❖ If a member's family member (father, mother, brother, sister or child) passes away in their home country, an amount of \$1000 from The Association budget will be provided to the member as financial support, on the condition that he/she is mourning at an identified residence/location.
- ❖ If a member's family member resides in North America but outside of the DMV area passes away, The Association will provide the member with \$1000 from The Association budget as financial support for mourning or travel expenses, provided that he/she is mourning at an identified residence/location here in DMV Area or travel for that purpose.

8.2. MARRIAGE AND FAMILY REUNION. When a member is getting married or bringing a spouse from abroad and hosting a wedding or family reunion party, Invited member of The Association shall contribute a minimum of \$50.00

8.3. LOSING JOB DUE TO SICKNESS. When a member loses his/her job due to sickness for at least three months, every member of The Association shall make a minimum contribution of \$50.00.

8.4. SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS/FUNDRAISING. In the event of an emergency requiring financial support to assist the Oromo community in Oromia or abroad, the Executive Committee shall convene and determine the amount and types of support needed. They shall seek or organize fundraising from the members and other sources to secure the amount and type of support needed.

ARTICLE IX

Membership Retention

- 9.1. INITIATION.** Membership initiation or re-initiation is subject to approval by the executive committee.
- 9.2. FULL MEMBERSHIP.** A new member who has only paid a non-refundable registration fee will have provisional membership status. He/she must make monthly contributions for six consecutive months or pay the equivalent amount upfront to qualify as a full member. It is important to note that only full members are entitled to The Association benefits.
- 9.3. TERMINATION.** If a full member fails to pay the monthly dues for one year, He/she will be considered to have voluntarily terminated his/her membership. Noncompliance with other clauses of these Bylaws may also result in the termination of membership for the offender if two-thirds of the executive community finds that the offender has breached the Bylaws.
- 9.4. REINSTATEMENT.** If a membership is terminated due to non-payment or non-compliance with association rules and regulations, a member can reapply for reinstatement by paying the full monthly fees for the period in which the membership lapsed and by submitting a written explanation with the application, the Executive Committee will evaluate each application and make final decision regarding the reinstatement claim.

ARTICLE X

Special Rules

- 10.1. PAYMENT FOR EXECUTIVE MEMBERS.** There shall be no compensation or payment to any executive member for holding an executive membership position. However, any member/executive member shall be reimbursed for the expenses incurred while participating in The Association's mission, upon submission of a valid receipt.
- 10.2. MONTHLY CONTRIBUTION WAIVER.** Monthly contributions shall be waived for members of The Association with disabilities, subject to approval by the executive committee.
- 10.3. REINSTATEMENT WAIVER.** Members who have lost a full membership shall apply for a reinstatement membership waiver if the member loses income/ unable to pay, subject to approval by the executive committee.

10.4. OUT-OF-STATE MEMBERSHIP. Out-of-state members who actively participate in The Association and adhere to the applicable bylaws will be granted limited membership status.

- **Membership:** To become a member, individuals must pay a nonrefundable registration fee of \$50 and make monthly contributions of \$10 for six consecutive months, or pay the equivalent amount upfront to qualify as a full member. Only individuals from the State of New Jersey are eligible for out-of-state membership. Future amendments may include consideration for other states.
- **Obligations:** In the event of the death of both in-state or out-of-state members, as well as their immediate dependent family members (spouse, father, mother, brother, sister, or child) residing in the Washington DC metropolitan area, the out-of-state member shall contribute a minimum of \$200.00 towards funeral expenses.
- **Monthly Contributions:** Each member is required to contribute monthly dues of only \$10 to maintain their membership.
- **Benefit:** In the event of the death of an out-of-state member or their immediate dependent family members residing in the State of New Jersey of the United States, The Association will cover funeral expenses.