



## **MWDIMARA BYLAWS**

### **Article I: Name, Aims and Objectives**

- 1: The name of the Association shall be the “*MW Dirbyaber Idder MA (MWDIMA)*”.
- 2: The aims of the Association are to allow Ethiopians, and people of Ethiopian Origin residing in the Washington Metropolitan area, to practice the mutual assistance and relief “**IDDER**”, a custom inherited from their forefathers.
- 3: The Association fundamentally works as a non-profit organization, based on mutual and voluntary services.
- 4: The Association shall provide its services, based on the traditional sense of Ethiopian brotherhood, regardless of language, gender, color, religion and political affiliation.
- 5: When a member of the Association dies, the Association will consider providing necessary financial support pursuant to policies adopted by the Association.
- 6: The Association shall be run by the members of the community who are committed to volunteering their labor, skills, and spare time.
- 7: The logo of the Association shall display at the center, a mother and father with their son and daughter under the protection of an umbrella. The Association’s Amharic name shall be displayed above the logo, a rainbow arc with the English translation at the bottom. Additionally, the Ethiopian flag will be to the right side of the logo while the American flag will be placed to the left side of the logo. (See the picture of the logo at the top.)

8: The Association shall use the personal address of a designated founding member until a permanent address has been established. The Association shall also have a legal P. O. Box number which is P.O. Box 4418 Arlington, Va. 22204.

9: The Association shall make every reasonable effort to both access and properly utilize community development resources allocated to it as a community organization by Washington DC, Virginia and Maryland authorities, as well as to establish a good working relationship with other similar entities that may assist the Association in furthering its mission as prescribed by these bylaws.

10: Upon the commencement of operations, the Association shall maintain its own website (*dirbyaberidder.com*) and email (*dirbyaberpay@gmail.com*) address as well as strive to adopt new technologies.

## **Article II: Membership and Dues**

1. Residents of the Washington Metropolitan area who are; (i) eighteen years or older at the time of registration; (ii) are Ethiopian-born, U.S. legal residents, naturalized citizens, or Americans, and; (iii) accept the objectives, rules, and regulations of the Association, may be members of the Association.

2: Juveniles under 18 can be registered as members provided that their parents or their legal guardians consent in accordance with the laws of the United States.

3: Any person requesting to become a member of the Association, must fully complete the membership form in person in the presence of a member designated by the Executive Committee.

4: A person may receive the benefits and services of the Association as member, only if they pay the initial one-time registration payment, pay membership dues in a timely manner, and maintain their membership in accordance with these Bylaws. The initial registration payment is \$200.00 USD. The membership dues may be modified from time to time as provided in these Bylaws.

5: An applicant who has filled a membership form will become recognized as a member only when the application is approved by the signature of the Chairman of the Executive Committee and the Secretary of the Association.

6: The Executive Committee may reject any request for membership and shall provide further detail for its determination upon written request from the prospective applicant.

7: The reason for rejection of new membership shall be described in detail in the internal rules and regulations of the Association.

8: Membership in the Association and any benefits of such membership are limited to the individual member and do not extend to any person(s) other than such individual.

9: All members shall promptly pay membership dues to the Association when due . Any notification of dues may occur through text or email, as provided by the member in their registration.

Upon non-payment, the member will be notified (through text or email) and provided with two written warnings via mail. Upon nonresponse of such communication from the Association, the member's membership may be revoked without further notice.

### **Article III: Member's Dues Proceedings**

1: In addition to required dues, member may make contributions to the Association to support the Association's mutual benefit activities upon the death of members. All funds shall be deposited into the Association's bank account.

2: Members shall pay dues and make contributions by Check, Money Order, or via PayPal.

3: The Association shall not accept cash contributions.

### **Article IV: Rights and Obligations**

1: All members of the Association are expected to adhere and endeavor to comply with the following Rights and Responsibilities:

1.1 Attendance at the regular and extraordinary General Assembly meetings where members may express their views.

1.2 To be eligible for election to the Executive Committee or its Sub-Committee, members of the Association shall do each of the following: a) Have continuously been a member for more than at least one year (365 days), b) Have no member dues in arrears or financial obligations to the Association, c) Have not engaged in any conduct that is or would be considered damaging to the Association, d) Obtain the written support of at list five elder members for his/her candidacy.

1.3 Every member has the right to elect any other member of his or her choice.

1.4 Timely payment of member dues and performance of responsibilities as determined by the General Assembly.

1.5 Attendance at Association meetings and participation in social activities convened and organized by the Association.

1.6 Respect and promote the social character of the Association by being a good example.

2. Every member may be requested to fulfill other obligations not specified in this article in advancement of the IDDER's mission as stated in the internal rules of the Association.

3. In order to be eligible to participate in the programs of the Association, members must;
  - 3.1 inform the Association of any changes of address, email, and phone number,
  - 3.2 fill the Travel Form (as applicable)
  - 3.3 have satisfied all past dues.
4. Additionally, all members should keep themselves apprised of rules that the Executive Committee issues in the future to improve the operation of the Association.

#### **Article V: Revocation of Membership**

- 1: Any member who does not abide by the rules and regulation, denigrates the community services of the Association, or does not pay their member dues promptly, may be dismissed from the Association by the Executive Committee.
- 2: A person whose membership is revoked by a decision of the Executive Committee may appeal to the General Assembly by submitting a written letter explaining in detail the reasons for his grievances to the Secretary of the Association within 30 days of such revocation. The decision rendered by the General Assembly on the appeal after careful examination of the issues shall be final.
- 3: Any member who misuses the financial resources or properties as well as any files and other documents of the Association, for personal use, shall be subject to dismissal from the Association by the Executive Committee, along with any other actions the Executive Committee deems sufficient.
- 4: Any member who stays outside the Washington Metropolitan area for more than 6 months, shall be dismissed after receiving in advance one phone call and two warning letters to the member.

#### **Article VI: Organization**

The Association shall consist of the following bodies:

1. A General Assembly
2. An Executive Committee
3. A Mediation and Appeal Committee.

#### **Article VII: The General Assembly**

- 1: The General Assembly is the Supreme Authority, where all members are represented.
- 2: The General Assembly shall hold its regular meeting annually. The Executive Committee may call an extraordinary meeting if the need arises.
- 3: Should 25% of all current members of the Association request an extraordinary meeting of the General Assembly to be convened, a meeting shall be arranged to be conducted upon the receipt of such 25% of requests. Submissions of any request must be in written form and contain the signature of the member.
- 4: The General Assembly shall have the following powers and duties:
  - a) Approve, amend, or revoke the rules and internal regulations of the Association as well as new rules proposed by the Executive Committee.

- b) Elect Executive Committee members to run and represent the Association at all levels, replace members who have completed their terms, and replace them with new members.
- c) Setup an electoral Sub-committee to help in the election process and facilitate the transition.
- d) Shall receive the performance report of the Executive Committee and make the any decisions based on the Executive Committee's findings.
- e) Setup an independent Audit and Asset Comptroller, which shall act as a sub-committee composed of three (3) members, to audit and present the annual financial report of the of the Association.
- f) Approve the budget of the Association as well as make determinations on matters that have not been decided by the Executive Committee.
- g) Hear and render the final determination for members appealing any decision of the Executive Committee to revoke their membership.
- h) Examine the complaints on the management and procedures made by either the Executive Committee or members and take the appropriate action.
- i) Give approval or denial to proposed unions or mergers with any regional or national Associations with similar objectives.
- j) Give directives regarding the introduction of income generating activities other than the regular member dues.

#### **Article VIII: Mission of the Executive Committee**

- 1: The Executive Committee (which shall function as the Board of Directors of the Association) shall be elected by the General Assembly. It shall be composed of seven (7) members as described below:
  - 1.1 A Chairperson
  - 1.2 A Vice Chairperson
  - 1.3 A Secretary General
  - 1.4 A Treasurer
  - 1.5 A Public Relation Officer
  - 1.6 An IT Support Officer
  - 1.7 Legal Adviser
- 2: The Executive Committee shall be accountable to the General Assembly.
- 3: Based on this Bylaw and its rules, the Executive Committee shall represent the members of the Association and perform actions required of it in accordance with the bylaws and rules.
- 4: The Committee shall implement the rules of the Association and the decisions of the General Assembly.
- 5: The Executive Committee may convene (either in-person or digitally) for a meeting once a week. During this time, it shall perform its organizational duties in accordance with the Bylaw.

- 6: The Chairperson may call an extraordinary meeting when the need arises.
- 7: The Chairperson of the Committee shall chair the Committee meetings and ensure that its members perform their duties diligently.
- 8: The Executive Committee shall administer the properties and financial assets of the Association in order to better carryout its duties.
- 9: The Committee may, if it finds it necessary, invite legal, accounting, and IT professionals to attend its meetings to assist in an advisory capacity.
- 10: The Executive Committee shall, as necessary, prepare new internal rules or make amendments to existing ones. It shall present its proposed new internal rules or amendments to next the General Assembly for approval.
- 11: If a member wishes to resign from the Committee, before the end of his term, he/she shall submit a letter of resignation to the Chairperson explaining their reason for departing the Committee.
- 12: If at least two members of the Executive Committee request for an extraordinary meeting to be convened by a written letter and explain the reason for such a meeting, then the Committee shall convene the requested meeting.
- 13: If two members of the Committee are absent from their duty due to resignation (or any other cause) or miss three (3) consecutive meetings, the Committee may replace them with other members of the Association. If more than two members meet the above criteria, then they be shall be replaced at a General Assembly Meeting to be convened within 30 days.
- 14: Any member of the Executive Committee who does not accept and implement the decisions of the Executive committee shall:
  - 14.1 be advised and provided with a verbal warning,
  - 14.2 If the member does not comply and fails to cooperate, the Executive Committee shall dismiss them from Committee membership.
  - 14.3 If it is proven that his/her activities are harmful to the Association, the case shall be presented to the General Assembly that shall take various measures including dismissal from the Association. The General Assembly's decision shall be final.
- 15: A member of the Executive Committee traveling away from the Washington Metropolitan Area shall hand over all files and receipts of the Association required for the execution of the services of the Association to the relevant body and acquire their signature. Upon return his return he shall take back the files and sign for them.
- 16: The Executive Committee members willingly and freely provide their services. Therefore, taking into consideration their voluntary services to the community, they shall not be legally liable for any unintentional mistakes they commit whilst performing their duty diligently for the wellbeing of the Association.

**Article IX: Amendment of the Bylaws and Rules**

1: Except as otherwise required by law, these By-Laws and rules may be amended by the Executive Committee.

2: Any amendment to the By-Laws and rules shall be provided to the members of the Association to review and provide any comments to the Executive Committee.

**Article X: Dissolution of the Association**

1: Where the Association reaches a stage where it cannot pursue its objectives and activities it may be dissolved.

2: Dissolution of the Association shall require recommendation by the Executive Committee (unless the Executive Committee determines that because of conflict of interest or other special circumstances it should make no recommendation) and three-fourths (75%) majority vote of the members attending the General Assembly.

3: All remaining assets upon dissolution of the Association, as presented by the auditing group, shall be distributed to the members of the Corporation prorated in accordance with the aggregate membership dues paid by each member.

