

LIBERIAN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION  
OF  
KANSAS AND MISSOURI

**LICOKM**



*Constitution*

*"Coming together is the beginning;  
Keeping together is progress;  
Working together as a Liberian Community is our mark of success".*

## **PREAMBLE**

To be a not-for-profit, non-political, non-sectarian entity for the purpose of serving social and community needs of its' members, the Greater Kansas City Community at large and Liberia. It shall foster peace and harmony within the community, and promote educational and cultural programs for the enrichment of the community.

## **Constitution**

### **Liberian Community Organization of Kansas and Missouri (LICOKM)**

#### **ARTICLE I      NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the Liberian Community Organization of Kansas and Missouri (LICOKM). Aforementioned name can be changed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of voting members.

#### **ARTICLE II      PURPOSE**

The purpose of the organization shall be as defined herein and Amenable with a two-thirds (2/3) majority of voting members. the purpose of LICOKM is as follows:

**Section I** To be a not-for-profit, non-political, non-sectarian entity for the purpose of serving the social and community needs of its' members and the greater Kansas City community at large. LICOKM shall pursue all other community activities for which a non-profit organization is permitted, engaged in accordance with the Internal Revenue Service code, Section 501(c)(3).

**Section II** To lay the foundation for all children of American/African ancestries, living in the United States of America, and for the furtherance of the Liberian culture and those ideals which Liberians hold dear.

**Section III** To promote and foster peace and harmony within the organization, the greater Kansas City community, and amongst

fellow members and other organizations; to promote love for the unity and understanding within the organization in the face of diversity; to actively foster and encourage respect for each other, their views, values, and beliefs.

**Section IV** To actively work for attainment of a lasting peace and to promote democratic principles in Liberia; to engage in all legally acceptable and ethically responsible activities to attain this goal.

**Section V** To promote education (formal and informal) in the realms of achieving academic and vocational objectives; to promote cultural awareness within the organization and the greater Kansas City community.

**Section VI** To engage in and actively support, ethically and socially responsible programs to raise funds for the organization.

### **ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP**

Membership of LICOKM shall be open to all people of Liberian and African descent and any other nationality who believe in the ideals of LICOKM and desire to become members. Membership shall be classified as follows:

#### **Section I ACTIVE AND INACTIVE**

Active member shall consist of anyone who is current on their dues and has attended 6 or more of the past 12 general meetings.

Inactive member shall be defined as a member who fails to attend 6 or more of the past 12 general meetings or is not current on his/her dues payment for a period of nine (9) months. Voting privileges shall be suspended from an inactive member. All delinquent dues must be paid in full and the member must attend 3 consecutive general meetings to regain active member status and voting privileges. The General Secretary and Treasurer shall maintain all official documents to substantiate membership and attendance dues payment.

## **Section II MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA**

LICOKM membership shall be subject to, but not limited to, the following: active participation in LICOKM's business and activities, full and current payment of annual membership dues, regular attendance of general meetings, and any other activities defined by the body. All members renewing their membership must pay their annual dues by June 30<sup>th</sup> of the current year. The dues structure for members is as follows: \$30 for a single members and \$50 for husband and wife membership.

## **Section III NEW MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY**

Membership eligibility shall be subject to Article III and all provisions thereof. Anyone satisfying these conditions and willing to become subject to the By-Laws and Constitution of LICOKM shall make his/her desire known to the organization through the membership chairperson. The membership chairperson shall certify that membership criteria have been satisfied and shall admit said individual(s) into membership once the required membership dues have been paid into the treasury. The membership chairperson shall, in turn, introduce the new member(s) to the general body.

## **ARTICLE IV BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **Section I RESPONSIBILITY**

The Board of Directors shall be the governing body of the organization and shall ensure that the officers adhere to the Constitution, resolve major grievances within the organization, and appoint temporary officers to fill vacant positions. The body shall vote on the course of action presented to them by the Board to resolve major grievances.

### **Section II COMPOSITION**

The Board of Directors serves at the pleasure of the membership and shall consist of five (5) members in good

standing. Each director shall hold office for a term of three (3) years or until a qualified successor is elected.

### **Section III ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

Any member of the Board of Directors who fails to attend a minimum of six (6) regular general meetings and two (2) board meetings in a year or is delinquent on his/her dues payment for nine (9) months shall be removed from office by the body. The removal procedures under Article IV, Section IV must be fully implemented to successfully remove a board member. The president shall not have the power to remove a board member. Upon successful removal of the board member by the body, the president shall appoint a successor to fill the unexpired term.

### **Section IV REMOVAL FROM OFFICE – BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Any member of the Board of Directors may be recalled by an affirmative two-thirds (2/3) vote of the eligible members present at any business meeting of LICOKM, provided that notice of said action shall have been mailed to all active members at least ten (10) days prior to such meeting;

Any director who shall be absent from three (3) consecutive regular meetings of the Board of Directors shall be automatically suspended and removed for the balance of his/her term of office, unless he/she shall have a just cause for absence that shall notify the Board of his/her expected absence and the reason thereof. A just cause for absence shall be determined at the sole discretion of the Board of Directors by a majority vote of the board members present at the meeting, and after said director has been given the opportunity to be heard.

### **Section V VACANCIES**

When a vacancy occurs on the Board, the president shall have the responsibility to appoint a qualified member of the organization, who is in good standing, to fill the unexpired term until a scheduled general election is held.

## **Section VI MEETINGS**

Regular meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held bi-annually. Such meetings will be held in June and December. The chairperson will set the agenda and address issues from the officers or the general body.

Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be held at such time as the president or five (5) members of the board shall determine, and such meetings shall be open to the general body.

No notice of regular meetings need be given. Notice of special meetings shall be given orally or in writing.

## **Section VII POWER TO MAKE BYLAWS**

The Board of Directors shall have power to make and amend any bylaws with the approval of the organization, including altering the number of directors. The Board shall not make or amend any bylaw or bylaws altering the qualifications, classifications, or term of office for any member(s) of the then existing board.

## **Section VIII ELECTION**

An election commission shall be appointed by the Board of Directors no more than three (3) months, but not less than two (2) months prior to the election.

## **ARTICLE V OFFICERS**

The principal officers of LICOKM consists of the Board of Directors, President, Vice President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Financial Secretary, and Treasurer. Committee chairpersons as deemed necessary by the body shall be appointed by the president. Person(s) running for office in LICOKM must be an active member in good standing for a period of at least three (3) years. Board of Director's

candidates must be an active member in good standing for a period of five (5) years.

The terms of the officers shall be for a period of two (2) years, except the Board of Directors who shall serve for a period of three (3) years. Elected officers shall be installed into office on the third Saturday in December and officially take office on January 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **Section I PRESIDENT**

The president shall be the chief executive officer with executive powers. He/she shall run the day-to-day activities of the organization; shall delegate responsibilities as he/she deems necessary; shall preside over all meetings of the organization, except for standing and ad hoc committee meetings; shall serve as the chief spokesperson of the organization; shall be member ex-officio of all committees; shall have signatory authority to all financial accounts; the president shall have the authority to appoint all committee chairperson(s); the president shall spearhead all planning efforts for the betterment of the organization, with the consent and approval of the body. Upon taking office, he/she shall present a plan of action to the organization. The president shall have further powers and duties granted to him/her in other articles and sections of this Constitution and bylaws.

### **Section II VICE PRESIDENT**

The vice president shall be next in the line of succession to the president. He/she shall have responsibilities designated by the president and shall assume presidential powers and responsibilities in the absence of the president.

### **Section III SECRETARY**

The secretary shall keep the records of the organization and shall give notice of meetings with the minutes of the last general meeting included. He/she shall keep a current roll of members and inform the finance and membership chairpersons

of any and all changes therein. The secretary shall serve as the information center for the organization. In the absence of the president and vice president, the secretary shall preside at all meetings and shall exercise the general functions of the presidency. The secretary is third in line of succession to the president. The secretary shall take minutes in all general meetings and have signatory authority to all financial accounts.

#### **Section IV ASSISTANT SECRETARY**

The assistant secretary shall serve as secretary in the absence of the secretary; shall have other responsibilities as assigned by the secretary.

#### **Section V FINANCE SECRETARY**

The financial secretary shall be responsible for collection of membership dues and all other inflow of funds to LICOKM. He/she shall record the receipts of funds received and remit these funds to the treasurer within 48 hours for deposit into LICOKM's account. The financial secretary's cash receipts records must be reconciled. These two records shall serve as a check and balance on the inflow of cash only into LICOKM. The financial secretary shall provide monthly cash receipt reports to the treasurer. He/she shall assist in budget preparation and serves as a member on the finance committee.

#### **Section VI TREASURER**

The treasurer shall serve as the chief financial officer of LICOKM, and shall have signatory authority to all financial accounts of the organization. He/she shall be responsible for making deposits and disbursements of funds as authorized by the executive body of the organization. The treasurer shall provide a monthly, detailed financial statement to the organization at its' regular meeting. The treasurer shall have responsibility for budget preparation and shall serve as a member on the finance committee.



## **Section VII FINANCIAL COMMITTEE**

The finance committee's principal responsibility is to develop a budget for the organization and define a path by which the budget target shall be met and to institute financial guidelines that would guide expenditures.

## **Section VIII MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**

The membership committee shall have the authority of executing Article III and all sections thereof of this Constitution. In addition, the committee shall keep records of names and addresses of all members of the organization and all visitors to the organization meetings. The committee shall be responsible for giving awards and recognition to members for outstanding contributions to the organization.

## **Section IX SOCIAL COMMITTEE**

The social committee shall be responsible for all social activities of the organization. The committee shall be responsible to make all negotiations regarding any or all social activities, the social calendar for the year, and any other events.

## **Section X EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

The education committee shall design educational programs geared towards broadening the horizons of members of the organization and their children. Such programs may be, but not limited to, cultural, social, vocational, financial, legal, etc. to promote unity and awareness within the community. The committee shall have the power to solicit and negotiate with outside organizations and agencies seeking scholarships for members of LICOKM and their children. The committee shall designate or nominate recipients of the organization's scholarships and give all candidates an equal and fair opportunity.

## **ARTICLE VI MEETINGS**

Meetings of the organization shall be regular/general, executive and committee meetings.

### **Section I REGULAR/GENERAL MEETINGS**

A regular/general meeting is where all issues pertaining to the organization's business are discussed and, as such, said meeting is open to all members and visitors. The time for a regular/general meeting of the organization shall be held the last Saturday of each month, except for uncontrollable circumstances. ONLY members who satisfy the conditions of Article III are eligible to vote on any issue at these meetings.

### **Section II EXECUTIVE MEETING**

An executive meeting is a meeting called and attended by elected and appointed officers of the organization, known as the executive committee.

### **Section III COMMITTEE MEETING**

A committee meeting is called to discuss organizational issues that are within the purview of the committee. Each committee shall set the time and place to hold its' meetings and shall have the latitude to invite whomever the committee desires to have at its' meetings. The committees shall meet as needed.

## **ARTICLE VII ELECTIONS**

Persons seeking office shall be elected to office by a simple majority vote and shall be by secret ballot. In the event of a majority not clearly obtained on the first ballot, a subsequent ballot shall be held between the top two vote getters. In the event of a 50/50 tie, the chairperson of the ad-hoc election committee shall break the tie.

In the event that all electoral positions (as mandated by the Constitution) are not filled during any general election, those position(s) shall be declared as vacant and shall be filled through appointments by the Board of Directors.

### **Section I PROTESTING ELECTION RESULTS**

To protest an election, you must be an active member of LICOKM in good standing and current on your dues payment. The protest must be written and submitted to the Board of Directors within thirty (30) days after the election. The Board must investigate the protest(s) and report its' findings to the body within thirty (30) days of receipt of the protest.

### **Section II TIME OF ELECTIONS**

Elections shall be held once every two (2) years, on the last Saturday in October, of the year of elections (or soon thereafter), but no longer than ninety (90) days after the officially scheduled election date.

### **Section III VOTING**

No one is eligible to vote except said individual has satisfied the provisions of Article III in general, and Section IV in particular, respectively of this Constitution. Voting shall be by secret ballot.

### **Section IV PROXIES**

There shall be no proxy voting at any meeting of the organization.

## **ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to this Constitution, and any portions thereof, shall be by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the membership present and qualified, at the time of the amendment.

### **Section I AMENDMENT PROCEDURE**

Before an amendment to the Constitution can be entertained, said amendment shall be submitted in writing by the Board of Directors to the Secretary, prior to the next general meeting. The secretary shall present the proposed amendment(s) to the body during the general meeting. Draft copies shall be provided to each member to be reviewed and studied prior to the next general meeting. During the next general meeting, necessary corrections to the draft shall be made by the general body and voted upon.

## **ARTICLE IX BENEVOLENCE GIFTS**

As a non-profit organization, we have to reach out to everyone within our community (and beyond), when it comes to making charitable donations and benevolence gifts. We are hereby recommending the following expenditure guidelines for donations and benevolent gift-giving.

### **Section I ACTIVE MEMBERS**

LICOKM shall provide a benevolence/bereavement gift of two Hundred-Fifty Dollars (\$250) to active, dues paying members of the organization for the loss of their immediate family member. Immediate family shall be defined as husband, wife, biological children, legally adopted children, mother and father.

## **Section II INACTIVE MEMBERS/COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

LICOKM shall provide a donation of One Hundred Dollars (\$100) to families that reside within our community during the loss of their immediate family member. The organization will assist the family in fund raising to ease the financial burden.

## **Section III DISASTER RELIEF**

This organization shall make a donation of One Hundred Dollars (\$100) during local, national, or international disasters, through the Red Cross or other 501(c)(3) organizations, as decided by the Board of Directors.

