

Constitution and Bylaws

The ORGANIZATION OF LIBERIAN WOMEN IN MINNESOTA(OLWMN)

Est. 2013



**Empowering Women”
Together, We Break Barriers and Build a Resilient Sisterhood**

EDITION #1, V.1

MISSION:

“Empowering Women” Together we break barriers and build a resilient sisterhood

VISION:

A future where women, united and empowered, drive and inspire positive change

MOTTO:

"Stronger Together, United in Purpose"

OUR CORE VALUES:

Integrity and Respect - committing to honesty, transparency, and ethical behavior in all activities and communications.

Solidarity - fostering unity and mutual support among members, giving back.

Compassion & Service -prioritizing, demonstrating empathy, kindness, and genuine concern for the well-being of individuals and communities we serve.

Diversity & Inclusion - promoting and embracing diversity in all forms and creating an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and respected.

Resilience - encouraging the ability to overcome challenges and setbacks collectively and individually.

Innovation and Creativity -encouraging creativity and embracing new ideas and approaches to solve problems and improve outcomes.

ARTICLE I - NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION

Section-1: The organization shall be called **The Organization of Liberian Women in Minnesota** (OLWMN). The organization is established exclusively as a Non-Profit Public Charitable Entity.

Purpose: OLWMN is a nonprofit organization and shall be operated exclusively for educational and charitable purposes within the meaning of section 501C3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, corresponding section of any future federal tax code. OLWMN will educate, teach basic skills, coordinate and provide aid to women and girls locally and globally.

Located at: 11468 Market Place Dr. N, suite #600-1037, Champlin MN 55316

ARTICLE II – OBJECTIVES & POWERS

The Organization of Liberian Women in Minnesota (OLWMN) shall have the power to pursue its objectives.

In order to fulfill its Purpose/Objectives, the organization shall:

- Empower women through education, mentorship, socialization, and community involvement.
- Raise and distribute funds primarily (solely) for charitable endeavors or non-profit purposes utilizing food sales, membership dues, donations, and other fundraising events.
- The organization of Liberian Women in Minnesota is dedicated to serving women and children globally.
- We will assist schools, clinics, and other underserved and underprivileged communities by providing resources to empower said communities.
- We will provide both monetary and tangible resources to empower women and children.
- Resources could be but not limited to school equipment, skills, time, clothing, medical equipment, and resources that are needed by the community being served.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - Admission for Membership

Any person who satisfies the following criteria shall be eligible for membership:

- Any woman of Liberian descent by birth and naturalization who is 35 years and above who desires to promote and respect the Vision, Mission, Objectives and Core Values of the Organization.
- A prospective member shall join after meeting the requirement and approval of the membership committee.

Section 2 – Active Membership

- Members must be current with yearly dues by April 30th of the calendar year.

- Members must attend (8 out of the 12 meetings yearly). Meetings could be in person or virtual.
- Members must chair or serve on a committee involving community events, outreach and others as identified by the organization.
- New members will be required to pay five months of yearly dues and registration fees upon joining the organization.
- Members must be active for six months before receiving any benefits.
- Active members must participate in Volunteer Activities, Events and WhatsApp group chats by uplifting & celebrating with others.
- If a member is up to date with their dues, but is inactive (not volunteering, not attending meetings, non-WhatsApp participation) without a known/official reason given to the Membership /Outreach Chair sister, the member will be removed from the group chat after a year of inactivity.

In Active Membership

- If a member lapses with paying their dues and any other related payments (Mandatory, where applicable), the financial team will reach out to the member for further inquiry. The team shall document and report findings to the Executive Team for further review if needed.
- The member will be given a time frame to become current with their dues and related payments. When the time frame given by the executive team lapses, and the member has not become current, the member will be taken out of all OLWMN chat rooms.
- When a member is out of the chat room, the member cannot receive benefits. The member has a year to be out of the chat room from the day the member was removed.
- If the member returns within a year and pays all outstanding balances (on their dues, bereavement, mandatory payments where applicable), the member will be reinstated in all OLWMN chat rooms and then becomes eligible for all benefits after 90days of active membership.
- If the member does not return within the year period, the member must return as a new member.

ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS

Section 1 - Elected Officers (Executive Leadership Team)

- a. Shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Chaplain shall be elected by eligible members
- b. The Executive Committee shall consist of the elected officers.
- c. The Administrative Leadership Team shall consist of All Elected officers, Chair sisters and Co-Chair sisters of standing committees. This committee runs the day-to-day affairs of the organization.
- d. Elected officers (President, Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Chaplain) can make decisions on behalf of the organization as deemed necessary.
- e. Decisions must be reported to all members within 24-48 hours. Communication could be via chat groups, email, or by another written means. Communication cannot be verbal.

Section 2 - Eligibility for Office

Members must meet all provisions and obligations according to the constitution and bylaws. In addition, be an active member in good financial standing (up to date with their annual dues and all Financial Obligations where applicable) to be eligible to run for office.

Section 3 - Election of Officers

- The election commission shall present to the membership a proposed list of nominees at the August general meeting, the proposed list will be generated by written interest and, or members recommendation.
- The election of officers shall take place at the October general meeting. If more than one candidate is running for an office, the election shall be conducted by a written ballot provided by the Election Commission.

- Ballots shall be counted by the Elections Committee and winning candidates shall be announced on the same day.
- Elected officers shall be installed immediately following the elections in October and assume their duties upon installation.
- The elected officers shall hold offices for a term of two years after being installed.
- Prospective candidates cannot be contacted prior to September 1st. The proposed slate of officers shall be kept confidential until presented to the general membership at the September general meeting; nominations will be taken from the floor and then closed.
- Nominations received at the September general meeting shall be announced in the October general meeting and voted upon at that meeting.
- The election committee shall consist of five members to be nominated by the membership at the August general meeting.
- Election results must be certified by all members of the election commission.
- The committee shall be dissolved immediately after the election.

Section 4- Duties and Powers of the President

- The President shall facilitate and or appoint a facilitator for all general meetings.
- The President shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.
- The President has the appointing power and the sole authority to make decisions in the best interest of the organization.
- In the absence of the Treasurer and Financial Secretary, the President shall have the authority to countersign checks/ disburse payments upon approval of the Executive Committee.

Section 5 - Duties and Powers of the Vice-President

- The Vice-President will assist the President in her duties and assume the duties of the President in her absence or inability to serve.
- Under the direction of the Vice-President a committee will review the by-laws and constitution as recommended.
- The Vice-President where applicable shall function as the Organization's official spokesperson in the absence of the President.

- The Vice President shall serve as Ex-officio member of all Standing committees

Section 6- Duties and Powers of the Secretary

The Secretary must execute the following concerning minutes:

- The Secretary shall keep comprehensive minutes of all general and Executive Committee meetings. Information should be saved electronically and hard copied.
- Corrected copies of all minutes must be archived monthly in OLWMN's database.
- The Secretary shall have minutes available and read at all general meetings.
- All archived records of OLWMN will be turned over to the incoming leadership at the end of the two years term. Inventory will be taken and documented.

Section 7 - Duties and Powers of the Treasurer and Financial Secretary

The Treasurer shall execute the following duties:

- The Treasurer shall keep all monies received by the organization.
- The Treasurer shall keep accurate records of all monies received and disbursed including receipts, bank statements, and other financial records.
- The Treasurer shall disburse funds upon approval by the Executive body.
- The Treasurer shall deposit all monies into the organization's account within 48 business hours of receipt with the exception of holidays/weekends.
- The Treasurer shall be present at meetings and events to collect funds.
- The Treasurer shall notify the Financial Secretary of all monetary transactions within 24hr of receiving funds.
- Outside of scheduled monthly meetings, in case of an emergency, disbursement of funds must be approved by the Executive Committee.
- The Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall be responsible for notifying a committee chair sisters if they are over budget.

The Financial Secretary shall execute the following duties:

- The Financial Secretary shall keep accurate electronic records of all monies received and disbursed including receipts, bank statements, and other financial records.

- The Financial Secretary shall notify the general body monthly and quarterly of the organization's financial standing.
- The Financial Secretary shall notify committee chairpersons to submit their annual budget for the calendar year by the October general meeting.
- The Financial Secretary must give a full financial report after an event.

Section 8 - Duties and Powers of the Chaplain

- The Chaplain shall serve as the ex-official to the outreach committee.
- The Chaplain shall organize the annual prayer breakfast in collaboration with the executive body and general body.
- The Chaplain shall provide emotional and spiritual support to members in need.
- The Chaplain shall host/ coordinate/organize monthly or quarterly fast and prayer.
- The Chaplain, in collaboration with the Outreach committee, shall coordinate Sisterly and community-based visits as needed.

Section 9: Board of Directors

The board will consist of 5-7 members to be appointed by the executive leadership team.

Board's Responsibilities:

Mission and Strategy: The board is responsible to help guide the organization's mission and strategic direction, ensuring that all activities align with the organization's charitable purpose.

Fundraising: The board is responsible for ensuring that the organization has the resources it needs to fulfill its mission, including approving fundraising strategies, and monitoring fundraising activities.

Legal Compliance: The board is responsible for ensuring that the organization complies with all applicable laws and regulations, including those related to tax-exempt status, charitable solicitation, and nonprofit governance.

Public Relations and Advocacy: The board is responsible for representing the organization to the public, as well as advocating for its mission and goals.

Evaluation and Impact Assessment: The board is responsible for evaluating the organization's programs and activities to ensure they are effective in achieving the organization's mission.

Section 9 - Re-election of Officers

Officers may be re-elected to an office but may not exceed two consecutive terms in that office. Officers may run for office after 10 years if they have served two terms. The terms do not have to be consecutive.

Section 10 - Vacancy of Office

Vacancy of an elected office may be filled at the discretion of the Executive Committee or membership vote when such a vacancy occurs before the end of the term for that office.

Vacancy of the President office shall be filled by the Vice-President.

Officers not performing their duties as specified in the constitution will be given 2 (verbal warnings within a six-month period; and one written warning if there is a repeated offense. The verbal warnings will be documented to keep accurate records. The fourth offense will result in dismissal from office.

ARTICLE V - MEETINGS

Section 1 - Regular Organization Meetings

Regular general Organization meetings shall be held once a month on the 3rd Weekend Sunday from 4:00 PM to 6:00PM. The time of the meeting could change based on the availability of the group or other unforeseen events.

The monthly general meeting may be rescheduled by the President with a majority vote of the Executive Committee. Prior notification to the general membership is necessary.

Section 2 - Special Meetings

The Executive Committee may call a special meeting of the Organization with written notice to the membership within 24 hours.

Section 3 - Electronic Meetings

Regular and Special Meetings of the organization may be held by electronic means (such as E-mail, Text messages, Telephone conferences, etc.) subject to the following: (zoom, google meet)

- The Secretary or President shall Send out notice for electronic meetings.
- The Secretary will keep records of all actions taken as a result of electronic meetings.

Section 4- New Leaders Meetings

- The new leaders' meeting shall be at October's meeting during which a Turning Over Process shall be completed.
- All reports, documents, and properties belonging to the organization shall be submitted to the newly Elected President & Corp of Officers by the outgoing executive and administrative teams. Inventory shall be taken and documented.

Section 5- Quorum

30% of members present at a meeting shall constitute a quorum. Currently there are 80 due paid members, a quorum will be 22 members. If there is no quorum, the meeting will not be held.

ARTICLE VI - STANDING COMMITTEES

The Standing Committees shall be: Public Relations, Membership, Ways and Means, Outreach, Grievance/Council of Elders and Strategic Planning Committees. Each Committee may have a minimum of Five and maximum of nine members.

Section 1- Duties of Public Relations committee

Communication Department: Post and communication updates and publications concerning the organization.

- Website: Post and updating events and all pages at least quarterly.
- Newsletter: Create and update newsletter monthly.
- Build external relationships with other organizations
- Work with Ways and Means Committee
- Plan and direct activities to solicit and maintain funds for special project
- Manages all social media outlets (Facebook, YouTube, Instagram).

Section 2-Duties of Ways and Means committee

- Submit a calendar of events for the calendar year by the end of December.
- Identify programs in accordance with our objectives.
- Ensure that all identified programs are implemented
- Coordinate and execute plans in collaboration with ad-hoc committees

Section 3 -Duties of membership committee

- Keep accurate records of membership including but not limited to addresses, phone numbers and email addresses.
- Conduct membership drive/ twice a year (Spring & Fall, March & September)
- Vet and approve membership
- Membership funds and documents collected MUST be submitted to the secretary and the financial department/team within 72 hours

Section 4 -Duties of Outreach Committee

- Shall proactively reach out to members who are bereaved, ill, hospitalized, celebrating graduations, birthdays or special events.
- All outreach related announcements should come from the outreach committee\committee proxy.
- Individual members should not conduct the function of outreach.
- Shall coordinate all visits with members who are experiencing difficult life stressors (Deaths, Illness, as determined by the leadership committee).

Section 5- Strategic Planning Committee/Project

- Formed to assess the long-term goals of the organization, this committee works on drafting strategic plans, organizational reviews, and setting objectives for future growth.

Section 6- Grievance Committee/Council of Elders

- This committee shall comprise of all past presidents and some elders of the organization. Primary responsibilities will be to ensure members respect the Core Values, Mission and Vision

of the Organization. Where applicable, they may Handle Challenges not limited to but may include: Addressing and resolving disputes, complaints, or irregularities in an election process.

Section 7-ADHOC POSITIONS/COMMITTEES

- The Adhoc committee shall consist of the Elections and other special committees/Positions established by the executive committee.
- The Adhoc committee shall consist of five members to be nominated by the executive committee.
 - I. **Elections Committee-** The elections committee ensures that the nonprofit remains democratic, transparent, and accountable to its members. It helps maintain trust and supports the organization's long-term stability and credibility.
 - II. **Community Ambassador-** focuses more on outreach and advocacy and shall serve as a representative who actively promotes the mission and values of the OLWMN within the community. The role involves: **Advocacy:** They are advocates for women's empowerment, helping to spread awareness about issues such as gender equality, access to resources, and the fight against domestic violence and abuse. **Outreach:** Engage with local women, organizations, and businesses, forming relationships that help to mobilize support for various causes related to women's empowerment. **Event Promotion and Engagement:** may be responsible for promoting events, campaigns, and initiatives, encouraging participation from the community, and raising awareness of the organization's efforts. **Fundraising and Volunteering:** may also assist with fundraising efforts, mobilizing resources, and recruiting volunteers to support the organization's projects.
 - III. **Her MAJESTY-The QUEEN of OLWMN-** symbolizes leadership, resilience, and unity in breaking societal barriers The role involves: **Inspiration and Symbolism-** serve as a symbol of resilience, empowerment, and overcoming adversity. She embodies the values of the organization and acts as a source of inspiration for other women. **Ceremonial and Honorary Duties:** The Queen may preside over special events,

ceremonies, and gatherings, representing the strength and unity of women in the community. **Mentorship and Role Modeling:** As a respected leader, the Queen serves as a mentor to younger women, helping to inspire confidence, leadership, and the pursuit of personal goals. **Community Engagement:** The queen engages with various segments of the community, representing the organization at public events and encouraging participation in initiatives aimed at empowering women.

ARTICLE VII – HANDLING OF THE ORGANIZATION’S FUNDS

- All the organization’s funds should be collected by the Treasurer and or the Financial Secretary or a designee.
- All funds collected by the Treasurer and or the Financial Secretary or designee must be deposited into the organization’s bank account before disbursement.
- Each event must be planned, implemented, and funds accounted for and deposited into the organization's bank account within 48 hours. An unofficial financial report must be made to the general membership after 72 hours of an event. The official report will be reported at the general monthly meeting.
- No member of the organization shall use their own money to fund the organization without executive approval. Individuals will not be reimbursed.

ARTICLE VIII - MEMBERS BENEFIT DUE TO DEATH OF A FAMILY MEMBER

In the event of the death of an immediate family member of an OLWMN’s member (husband, biological child(ren), a donation of \$3,000.00 will be given to the member. The member must be in good financial standing with their dues and any related financial obligations to receive the donation. The member must also be in good attendance standing. Every Member MUST pay the assigned amount given at the time.

If a member loses a biological parent (mother or father), the member will receive a donation of \$1,000.00. The member must be in good financial standing with their dues and any related financial obligations to receive the donation. Every Member MUST pay the assigned amount given at the time.

If there are siblings who are members of OLWMN, in the death of a biological parent, each member will receive \$1,000.00. Each member must be in good financial and attendance standing to receive the donations.

If a member of OLWMN loses a sibling (biological only), a donation of \$5.00 MUST be paid by every member and the full amount of what is collected must be given to the member as a donation.

ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

Amendments to the bylaws shall be accepted by a 2/3 majority vote of the membership present. Written notice must be given to all members of the proposed amendment and the date of voting.

STANDING RULES

1. Dues shall be \$120.00 annually; Must be paid by April 30th of the current year.
2. New members Fees--\$75(registration @ \$25 & five months of dues @ \$50)
3. Proxy voting shall not be allowed
4. All active members in good financial standing shall have the right to vote in an election.
5. Past officers shall remain in an advisory capacity for newly elected officers for 30 days or as needed by the new administration following the installation of the new officers.
6. In the event of the death of a member a donation of \$3,000 will be given to the family.
Every Member MUST pay the assigned amount given at the time of the death.
7. Each member Must pay the amount of \$5 to buy a gift for a member during these celebrations upon OFFICIAL INVITATION from the member (baby and wedding shower, birthdays, Graduations). The member must be active and in good financial and attendance standing.
8. New members do not qualify for benefits until after Six Months of being active within the organization. New members must also be in good financial and attendance standing. Exceptions may apply.

9. Upon dissolution of the Organization, all assets of OLWMN will be donated. The organization's leadership and stakeholders at the time will determine how and to whom the donation will be made.

It is the responsibility of every member to read, understand, and abide by this document which is subject to Amendments as Needed.

Respectfully Submitted by the Constitution Review Committee 2024:

1. Mrs. Edwina Taye Willie-Chair Sister
2. Dr. Prudence McCabe Tokpa-Co-Chair Sister
3. Mrs. Princess Nyanfor Wilson-Secretary
4. Mrs. Folonso Crawford-Member
5. Ms. Dorothy Logan-Member
6. Mrs. Aletha Wah Sumo-Ex- Officio

Approved By:

Mrs. Famatta V. Zeon



President, OLWMN

REVIEWED, AMENDED, & ACCEPTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS:

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8TH, 2024

