

REVISED CONSTITUTION OF THE PRESS ASSOCIATION OF JAMAICA

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

1. Short title and commencement.

This Document shall be referred to as the Constitution of the Press Association of Jamaica.

2. Interpretation, objects and application.

JOURNALIST – *Any person engaged in the gathering, editing, processing and dissemination of news and other public information in accordance with the established principles, values and ethics of the profession of journalism.*

PRESS ASSOCIATION OF JAMAICA- Herein referred to as the Association.

THE EXECUTIVE OF THE PRESS ASSOCIATION OF JAMAICA – Herein referred to as the Executive Council

Section 1

The Association is dedicated to the best interest of democracy and press freedom in Jamaica. It is organised and operated exclusively for the furtherance of the education and professional status of its members.

Section 2

The Association shall be known as the Press Association of Jamaica.

Section 3

The Association shall:

- a) Foster a high standard of journalism in Jamaica by means of improving the journalistic education of its members and in the furtherance thereof, make awards, give scholarships, bursaries and/or grants and other encouragement to such members and to the community at large.
- b) Maintain and improve the professional development and welfare of its members.
- c) Safeguard and protect the rights and privileges belonging to and the facilities usually accorded to the Press in all democratic countries.
- d) Showing recognition to members of the Press for meritorious work in journalism and to members of the community and/ or representative groups of the community for meritorious work on behalf of the community.
- e) Promote activities in the interest of the public welfare.

Section 4

MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Press Association of Jamaica is open to any person employed in the gathering of news for any entity organised and operated to disseminate news to the public. The Association shall also accord membership to persons whose jobs complement the work of journalists. These media practitioners are:

- i. Public Relations Officers
- ii. Information Officers (Outside Media Houses)
- iii. Specialist News Readers
- iv. News Correspondents/Stringers
- v. Talk Show Hosts
- vi. Opinion Writers (staff and freelance)
- vii. Graphic Artists
- viii. Soundmen
- ix. Commentators
- x. Technical Editors

CATEGORIES OF MEMBERS

Journalists and media practitioners, who perform jobs which are complementary to journalism, are eligible for membership in the Press Association of Jamaica in the categories which follow:

- a) ORDINARY MEMBERSHIP is open to persons who have been practising journalism for at least two years. Media practitioners who have practised as a journalist for at least two years before moving into areas which are complementary to journalism may be accorded ordinary membership.
- b) ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP is open to persons who have been practising journalism for no less than one year and media practitioners who perform jobs complementary to journalism.
- c) STUDENT MEMBERSHIP is open to students enrolled in an accredited programme of media and communication and/ or journalism in Jamaica for at least one year.
- d) SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP is open to all persons who desire to retain links with the Association after changing professions; visiting journalists who will be in Jamaica for less than two years.

- e) HONORARY MEMBERSHIP may be extended to managers and/ or proprietors of current publications (local or foreign) and persons who have been or are identified with journalism or literature in the island.
- f) Honorary, Associate, Special and Student members shall not be eligible for Office. Honorary and Associate Members may however, be appointed as Legal Advisor if they are qualified.
- g) LIFE MEMBERSHIP shall be accorded to members present or past who have practised journalism for at least 25 years and have made significant contributions to the field of journalism. The accordance of such membership shall be within the purview of the Executive.
- h) An Honorary President may be appointed by the Executive Committee.

Section 5

COMPOSITION OF THE EXECUTIVE

The Executive shall consist of no less than nine and no more than 11 officers elected by the Annual General Meeting. A legal advisor shall be appointed as advisor who shall serve on the executive council. Five officers of the Executive shall form a quorum.

No member of the Association who has had less than five years active experience in journalism locally or overseas, or in any of the categories specified in Section 4 hereof shall be eligible for office.

The Executive may appoint a paid administrator carry out the functions of the Association.

OFFICERS OF THE PAJ

- a) Officers of the Association shall be:
 - i. President
 - ii. First Vice President

- iii. Second Vice President
 - iv. Secretary
 - v. Treasurer
 - vi. Assistant Secretary/ Assistant Treasurer
- b) All officers and members of the executive shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Association. The term of office for Members of the Executive shall be two years. All Members of the Executive shall hold office until the second ensuing Annual General Meeting to be held before the end of July each year. The President can serve no more than two consecutive terms.
- c) In the event of the death or resignation of a Member of the Executive, a successor will be appointed by the Executive Committee to serve the remainder of the term of office of that member.

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

- a) The President shall preside at all meetings of the Association and of the Executive Committee.
- b) The President shall enforce strict observance of the Constitution, sign all orders for the payment of moneys and perform such other duties of that office.
- c) The Vice Presidents shall assist the President in the performance of his or her duties and in the absence of the President shall perform, in order of seniority, the duties of that office.
- d) In the absence of the Vice Presidents the members present at a meeting shall elect a chairman from their number and he or she shall preside.
- e) The Secretary shall deal with all correspondence: receive all moneys paid to the Association, hand such moneys over to the Treasurer without delay and receive a receipt, and shall perform all such other duties as may properly concern the office.
- f) The Treasurer shall receive all moneys of the Association from the Secretary at the close of each meeting where moneys are collected or as soon thereafter as possible. He or she shall forthwith lodge such moneys to the Association's account in a bank

which the Executive shall select. The Treasurer shall keep proper accounts and produce them when called upon by the Executive Committee.

- g) The Assistant Secretary or Assistant Treasurer shall assist these officers Secretary in the performance of their duties as required.

Section 6

POWER TO RECALL

The positions of Officers shall be subject to recall, if in the opinion of the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting the persons holding those positions are no longer able to do so because of one or a combination of the following:

- a) Poor performance
- b) Actions which bring the Association into disrepute
- c) Manifest poor mental health
- d) Bankruptcy

INITIATING A RECALL

- a) Any paid-up ordinary member may initiate a recall.
- b) At least 30 days Notice of Intention must be given to the Secretary, in writing.
- c) The Notice must be accompanied by a petition of at least 25 per cent of paid-up members of the Association.
- d) A Special General Meeting must be held to consider the petition for recall, providing the incumbent's term does not end within six months of the receipt of the petition for recall.
- e) The Secretary shall give notice of the special meeting consistent with the provisions for holding all meetings as prescribed by this Constitution.

CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH A RECALL IS PROHIBITED

A recall may not be commenced if:

- a) The incumbent has not held office during his or her current term for more than 90 days.
- b) A recall election has been decided in the incumbent's favor within the last three months.
- c) The incumbent's term of office ends within three months.

Section 7

FEES

- a) All members shall pay on annual membership fee. The fee is determined by the Executive Committee and ratified by the Annual General Meeting.
- b) Life and Honorary Members shall not be subject to annual fees.
- c) All fees shall become due on the first day of July each year. Members whose fees have not been paid within thirty (30) days after the due date shall be deemed and declared non-financial and shall be ineligible to receive the benefits or to be accorded the privileges of the Association.
- d) A non- financial member may be re-instated on application to the Executive Committee provided his application is accompanied by the full amount of the arrears.

Section 8

MEETINGS

Meetings of the Association shall be:

- a. Annual General Meetings for the purpose of receiving the annual reports of the Secretary and Treasurer, electing the Executive Committee, appointing auditors and the Legal Advisor. Annual General Meetings shall be summoned and held before the end of July each year save where in the opinion of the Executive Committee it is impracticable due to unforeseen circumstances or lack of quorum. The Annual General Meeting can be postponed for no longer than 30 days.

- b. Special General Meetings at the instance of the Executive Committee or at the written request of not less than 25 paid up members of the Association which shall be summoned by the Secretary to be held within 30 days of the date of receipt of such request.
- c. Emergency Meetings may be summoned when necessary by the Executive Committee. Seven clear days notice shall be given to members of all emergency meetings.

At all meetings 25 per cent of all paid- up members in good financial standing shall form a quorum.

Section 9

VOTING RIGHTS

Voting for each post on the Executive Committee shall be by secret ballot.

A member who casts a vote in an election in accordance with the constitution shall have that vote counted.

1. All paid- up Ordinary Members:
 - a) are entitled to a vote at the Annual General Meeting and to elect or recall members of the Executive Committee.
 - b) are entitled to a vote at a Special General Meeting to elect or recall members of the Executive Council
 - c) are entitled to a vote on resolutions.
 - d) shall have the right to vote at all meetings of the Association each member having one vote. Voting for each post at the Annual General Meeting shall be by secret ballot. All Life Members are accorded the same voting rights as an ordinary member.
 - e) Student, Special and Honorary members are not accorded voting rights.

Associate Members do not have the right to vote or recall of members of the executive.

SECTION 10

TRUSTEES

- a) Three Trustees shall be nominated by the Executive Committee and ratified by the Annual General Meeting.
- b) No person shall be eligible to be a Trustee unless he is a member of the Press Association of Jamaica.
- c) The Trustees shall act in accordance with the advice of the Executive Committee and shall have the power to hold for and on behalf of the Press Association of Jamaica, assets in whatever form.

Section 11

ROLE OF THE TRUSTEES

The Trustee shall:

- a) act in the best interest of the Association
- b) take decisions about the future of the Association
- c) ensure the organisation remains sustainable
- d) give advice on future challenges and prepare the Association to face them
- e) ensure the Association is working within the law
- f) advise the Executive Committee
- g) monitor to ensure the Association is meeting objectives
- h) ensure the Executive Committee is working effectively and efficiently

TENURE OF TRUSTEES

- a) The positions of trustees shall be reviewed every three years.
- b) A Trustee shall vacate office if he or she, in the view of the Annual General Meeting expressed by a simple majority, acts in any manner prejudicial to the best interest of members of the Press Association of Jamaica.

Section 12

AFFILIATION

The Association may, on the decision of the Annual or Special General Meeting, seek affiliation with other Association or groups of Association, local or foreign.

Section 13

BENEVOLENCE

This Association may afford benevolence to its members or their dependents in deserving cases.

Section 14

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- a) A Disciplinary Committee shall be established to deal with cases of misconduct.
- b) Internal matters of dispute may be submitted to arbitration
- c) The Executive Committee shall have the power to suspend or expel

Section 15

DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION

This association shall only be dissolved by the vote of not less than seven eighths of the financial members present and voting at the Special General Meeting called for the purpose.

In the event of dissolution, the assets of the association shall be disposed of by the Committee appointed at such a Special General Meeting, and shall be donated to charity.

Section 16

AMENDMENTS

This Constitution shall not be amended except, at a Special or Annual General Meeting, and notice of the proposed amendment shall be given in writing to all members not less than 30 clear days before such meetings. No resolution from such amendment shall be carried except by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting.

APPENDIX

- a) The Executive Committee shall have the power to discipline members. On the vote of three-fourths thereof, it may expel any member from the Association.
- b) It shall be proper for the Association to receive gifts, donations, bequests, etc.

CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Daraine Luton – Chairman

Leroy Brown

Durant Pate

Marilyn Facey

Gareth Manning

Naomi Francis

Janice Budd