

BYLAW

Tigray Community Association

Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area (TCA-WDA)

Preamble

We members of the Tigray Community Association of Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area, hereafter, “TCA-WDA,” are residents who work and live in Washington, D.C, and its metropolitan area. We have formed TCA-WDA, a non-profit organization, to help address members need regarding social, cultural, and other community challenges that are of interest and importance to TCA-WDA members and Tigrayans at large. TCA-WDA members come from the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area, specifically, Washington, D.C., Maryland, and the Commonwealth of Virginia. TCA-WDA members come from Tigrayan-heritage background and represent a cross section of Tigrayan society in the metropolitan area irrespective of religion, gender, or political background or other social denominations.

Vision

TCA-WDA vision is to ensure Tigrayan values, heritage, and national psyche are kept intact and passed on to the next generation. Moreover, our vision is to see Tigrayan lives, and livelihoods are the best they can be, they pursue happiness by chasing their dreams, and give back for the greater good of Tigray and Tigrayans.

Mission

Our mission is to serve, support, and advance TCA-WDA members' interest. Moreover, TCA-WDA mission is to create a social platform and infrastructure where our members are united, organized, motivated, and committed to building a stronger community whereby our children, the youth, and the elderly achieve cohesiveness and harmony through educational, social, economic, and cultural engagements.

Article I: Name

- 1.1 Tigray Community Association of Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area, also known as TCA-WDA is our official organization name. TCA-WDA covers residents in Washington, D.C and its immediate suburbs in the State of Maryland and the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- 1.2 TCA-WDA is a non-profit charity organization formed exclusively for the purposes set forth in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the DC Nonprofit Organization Act.

Article II: Office and Address

- 2.1 The principal office and address of the community is **4304 Rhode Island Avenue, Brentwood, Maryland 20722**.
- 2.2 In the event TCA-WDA grows, the board may open branch offices in various parts of Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area to help serve community needs and achieve TCA-WDA overarching goals.

Article III: Purpose

- 3.1 General Purpose
 - 3.1.1 TCA-WDA works to bring all Tigrayans together by coordinating their resources, knowledge, and ability to solve educational, cultural, social, and economic challenges the community members and their families may face on a regular basis.
 - 3.1.2 TCA-WDA strengthens relations with similar community organizations.
 - 3.1.3 TCA-WDA helps children, youth, and parents adopt and strengthen values that are consistent with Tigray's value-system, heritage, history, national psyche, and culture.
- 3.2 Specific short and long-term purposes:
 - 3.2.1 Strengthening TCA-WDA and open branch centers when the need arises. Some of the goals include but not limited to:
 - a) Standing up offices and its departments
 - b) Setting up after-school and weekend tutoring programs to help children, young people learn Tigray's language, culture, heritage, national psyche, history, and ways of life.
 - c) Helping members keep physical, psychological, and general well-being.
 - 3.2.2 Provide literacy education
 - a) Help educate members on basic American civic education, general American legal systems, and related general rules, and regulations relevant to their daily lives.
 - b) Provide basic Tigrigna, English, and other languages as well as, basic computer and health education training.

- 3.2.3 Provide a financial assistance to an authorized surviving family member in an unfortunate event involving death of a member.
- 3.2.4 Help provide mediation or conflict resolution platforms when conflict or disagreement arises among members.
- 3.2.5 Provide general information on health, education, legal/immigration, jobs, or social services that are relevant and important to members' lives and livelihoods.
- 3.2.6 Conduct research on social and economic challenges of its members and come up with research-based projects/solutions including but not limited to forming federal credit union to serve member needs.

Article IV: Membership

4.1 Member qualification

- 4.1.1 A person with Tigrayan heritage at least 18 years of age who lives in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area.
- 4.1.2 Has signed and submitted the TCA-WDA membership application form.
- 4.1.3 Abides by TCA-WDA bylaw, articles of incorporation, policies, procedures, directives, and assignments from TCA-WDA leadership.
- 4.1.4 Under 4.1.1 a person who pays a one-time membership application fee \$50.00 for a single marital status; and \$100.00 for married couple.
- 4.1.5 Under 4.1.1, a person who pays \$290.00 annual membership due for a single marital status: and \$410.00 for married couple.
- 4.1.6 A member is encouraged to pay annual membership dues at once or twice annually.

Article V: Members Rights and Responsibilities

5.1 Member Rights

A member registered per the TCA-WDA bylaw has the right to:

- 5.1.1 Attend TCA-WDA-summoned meetings including general assembly and express his or her view on agendas of the day.
- 5.1.2 Vote or be elected in any TCA-WDA leadership position
- 5.1.3 Request for updates on TCA-WDA work activities or period performance reports.
- 5.1.4 Receive member benefit in line with TCA-WDA member benefit criteria under 5.1.5.

- 5.1.5 In the event a member passes away, a designated beneficiary may receive a financial assistance. A designated beneficiary is a person declared by a member in TCA-WDA membership form to receive member benefits as prescribed under 5.1.7.
- 5.1.6 Under 5.1.5, a designated beneficiary may receive member benefit provided a member has not defaulted on a six-month consecutive member due payment.
- 5.1.7 In the event a member passes away, a designated beneficiary is eligible to receive a financial assistance for a total amount of \$10,000.00 (Ten Thousand Dollars), under 5.1.5.

5.2 Member Responsibilities

- 5.2.1 Respect TCA-WDA bylaw and other regulations, rules, and procedures that TC-WDA adheres
- 5.2.2 Participate in meetings and fund-raising campaigns TCA-WDA organizes
- 5.2.3 Pay membership application and monthly membership fees.
- 5.2.4 In the event a member passes away, each member donates \$50.00 (Fifty Dollar) to satisfy a member’s financial assistance as prescribed under 5.1.

Article VI: Structure, Power and Duties, Organs, and Officers

The TCA-WDA shall have a congress, board of directors, audit committee, and other committees

- 6.1 Congress or General Assembly are interchangeable per TCA-WDA bylaw
 - 6.1.1 Congress or Assembly represents all TCA-WDA members
 - 6.1.2 Congress is the highest TCA-WDA organ of TCA-WDA. It elects and removes, the board of directors, audit committee, and reviews TCA-WDA report.
 - 6.1.3 Congress approves TCA-WDA annual budget, plan, and big projects
- 6.2 Board of Directors
 - 6.2.1 Consists of 9 to 21 members and are accountable to the congress.
 - 6.2.2 Elects the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and cashier among themselves
 - 6.2.3 Elects heads of the individual committee's chairs from the board members.
 - 6.2.4 President

- a) The President shall be the principal executive officer and official representative of TCA-WDA. He or she shall exercise such duties as customarily pertinent to the office of the President and shall have general and active supervision over the property, affairs of the TCA-WDA, and overall coordination with board directors.
- b) In coordination with the treasurer, he or she opens TCA-WDA bank account in the name of the TCA-WDA.
- c) The President is accountable to the Board of Directors and to the Congress

6.2.5 Vice President

- a) In the absence of the President, he or she performs the duties of the President.
- b) The Vice President is accountable to the president, the Board of Directors, and the Congress

6.2.6 Secretary

- a) Shall be responsible for keeping and maintaining legal documents, stamps, records of Members and Board activities
- b) Takes minutes at Congress and Board of Directors meetings, keep safe signed minutes by Board of Directors members
- c) Sends out meeting announcements and distributes copies of agenda of meetings to each Board member
- d) Is accountable to the president, board of director and the congress

6.2.7 Treasurer

- a) Supervises and ensures TCA-WDA finance and properties are appropriately and effectively managed.
- b) In coordination with the president, he or she opens bank account under TCA-WDA and regularly manages and supervises those bank accounts
- c) Oversees TCA-WDA revenues and expenditures, provides overall supervision to cashier to ensure financial transactions and reports are regularly updated.
- d) The Treasurer is accountable to the president, the Board of Directors, and the Congress

6.2.8 Cashier

- a) Deposits all financial revenues or collections to TCA-WDA bank account, and ensures financial records are properly maintained and preserved.
- b) Is accountable to the president, the Treasurer, the Board of Directors, and the Congress

6.3 Committees

6.3.1 The community will have the Fundraising, Education, Health, Public Relation (Media and Communication), and Culture-History-Art committees

- a) Each committee is led by a designated member of the Board of Directors
- b) Each committee will have additional two competent members nominated by the Board of Directors; if necessary, the Board of Directors can remove them from the committee
- c) When necessary, the Board of Directors can create more committees
- d) Each committee shall develop its guideline, process, short term as well as, long-term plans and implement accordingly upon Board of Directors approval.
- e) In drafting its plan, each committee must indicate the finance, material, workforce, and time the activity plan requires implementing
- f) Prepares necessary documents and forms required for its function and makes it clear to the community members

6.3.2 Fundraising Committee

- a) Organizes different fund-raising events to generate funds for TCA-WDA
- b) Searches for donors and charities and implement various means to generate funds
- c) Is accountable to the President and the Board of Directors

6.3.3 Education and Health Committee

- a) Leads education of Tigrigna, English and other languages, basic computer applications, culture and academic tutoring to members and children of the community members in after school and weekend arrangement
- b) Leads basic health education and advice to community members

- c) Prepares and proposes relevant reading materials
- d) The Committee is accountable to the President and the Board of Directors

6.3.4 Public Relations (Media & Communication) Committee

- a) Creates and maintains TCA-WDA website and other public outreach tools and systems.
- b) Creates awareness of the mission and goals of the community by giving information using various means of communication
- c) Coordinates with Board of Directors to help members or their immediately family in the event they encounter difficult times such as death.
- d) Provides mediation services to members to resolve conflicts and misunderstandings among members, families and with other communities
- e) The Committee is accountable to the President and the Board of Directors

6.3.5 Culture-History-Art Committee

- a) Organizes different forums and events to promote Tigray language, culture, cultural holiday, history, and heritage
- b) Organizes Tigrayan cultural events, literature, and poetry.
- c) Organizes community showroom for the Tigray culture, language, history, literature, artifacts, arts, or photography.
- d) The committee is accountable to the President and Board of Directors

6.4 Audit Committee

6.4.1 Consists of three members elected by the Congress

6.4.2 Audits the finance and property of the TCA-WDA

6.4.3 Monitors the proper implementation of the Bylaw

6.4.4 Monitors member rights are respected according to the bylaw with no discrimination

6.4.5 The Audit Committee is accountable to the Congress

6.5 Board of Directors term of office

- 6.5.1 Term of office for an elected member of Board of Directors shall be two years.
- 6.5.2 A member of Board of Directors is eligible for re-election for one more consecutive term.

Article VII: Termination from Membership

A member shall be terminated from membership if:

- 7.1 A member is in default of monthly membership dues for six consecutive months within a calendar year
- 7.2 A member violates the bylaw
- 7.3 A member refuses to engage in the community activity for no good reason
- 7.4 In the event a member is accused of any wrongdoing, based on solid evidence, the Board of Directors gives a written notice to the accused. The member has a right to a due process, the opportunity to be heard his/her side of the story and respond to the notice of allegation within fifteen business days. The accused can engage the Board of Directors in writing, face-to-face setting, or over a teleconference. If a member fails to respond to a notice of allegation within fifteen business days, the Board of Directors shall render a termination notice to the accused.

Article VIII: Meetings

- 8.1 All meetings are held following parliamentary procedures
- 8.2 Setting agenda for meeting
 - 8.2.1 An agenda can be set either by the president, or by one-third of the Board of Directors, or through a petition signed by at least fifty members of TCA-WDA.
 - 8.2.2 Meeting agendas of the General Assembly will be sent to TCA-WDA members at least two weeks before the scheduled meeting day.
- 8.3 General Assembly Meetings

General Assembly meeting shall be held in person bi-annually, at a time and place chosen by the board. In the event qualifying circumstances such as extreme weather or pandemic or other unforeseen situations, General Assembly meeting can be administered through alternate platforms.
- 8.4 Board of Directors Meetings

The Board of Directors shall meet at least once a month at an agreed upon time, place, and meeting platform.
- 8.5 Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the President, or by one-third of the Board of Directors, or a petition signed by at least fifty TCA-WDA members

Quorum

8.6 Twenty five percent plus one members' presence at any properly announced meeting shall constitute a quorum.

8.7 Vacancies

When a Board of Directors seat is vacated, the Board of Directors along with Audit Committee can fill the seat from the reserve Board of Directors.

Article IX: General Provisions

9.1 Checks

All checks and drafts for payment shall be signed by the president and/or the treasurer; in the absence of the president, the vice-president will perform the duty

Any payment/expenses more than \$500 (Five hundred dollars) or more must be approved by the Board of Directors. Up to \$500 (Five hundred dollars) petty cash can be approved by the president or, in the absence of the president, the vice president will perform the duty.

9.2 Budget year (fiscal year)

TCA-WDA follows the calendar year for its budget year/fiscal year.

9.3 Auditing Books

At least one month prior to each General Assembly meeting, the board of directors shall be ready to be audited by the Audit committee

9.4 Indemnification

The personal properties of any member of the board shall not be subject to payment of the community debts.

9.5 Interpreting the bylaw

Final interpretation of the articles of the bylaw may be rendered by the auditing committee

9.6 Amendment

The bylaw can be amended by two-thirds of the general assembly.

9.7 Dissolution

The community may be dissolved only with a vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the general assembly. Upon dissolution, all its liabilities and obligations will be settled first; then the general assembly of the community with vote of at least two-thirds of the members decide to which similar community organization the remaining property and finance will be donated. Donation shall be made to organization(s) which qualify as exempt organization(s) under section 501(c) (3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code as amended (or corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

This bylaw is adopted as of November 29, 2015

Washington, D.C.

USA

This bylaw is amended for the First time as of October 1, 2017

Washington, D.C.

USA

This bylaw is amended for the Second time as of January 29, 2018

Washington, D.C.

USA

This bylaw is amended for the Third time as of September 23, 2018

Washington, D.C.

USA

This bylaw is amended for the Fourth time as of October 13, 2019

Washington, D.C.

USA

This bylaw is amended for the Fifth time as of February 20, 2022

Washington, D.C.

USA