



Constitution and Bylaws of Washington Telugu Samithi

ARTICLE ONE – NAME AND MISSION STATEMENT

Section A: Name of the Association

The name of the association shall be "Washington Telugu Samithi", herein-after called WATS. It shall be a not-for-profit organization registered under the laws of the State of Washington and shall exist in perpetuity.

Section B: Mission Statement

Washington Telugu Samithi (WATS) was formed to serve the aspirations of Telugu people in preserving and cherishing their culture in the United States. WATS provides a forum for promoting Telugu literary, cultural, educational, social, and community affairs and humanitarian activities.

Section C: Location of the Association

For official purposes, the headquarters of the association shall be located in the Washington State where it is duly registered.

ARTICLE TWO - OBJECTIVES & PURPOSES

The objectives and purposes of WATS shall be:

1. To preserve, maintain, and perpetuate the heritage of the people of Telugu origin;
2. To assist and promote cultural, educational, social, community affairs and humanitarian activities of the Telugu speaking people;
3. To create opportunities for the cultural exchange, foster friendship and understanding between the people of the United States of America and the people of the State of Andhra Pradesh, India or any other part of the world where Telugu Speaking people may reside, in general.
4. To collaborate, cooperate and assist in the organization of periodic Telugu literary, educational and cultural conferences.
5. To increase the awareness of Telugu speaking people among local US community by participating in local social activities.

ARTICLE THREE - MEMBERSHIPS AND DUES

Section A – Eligibility and Rules

1. Any person who endorses WATS mission and objectives and is eighteen years or older is eligible to be a member by paying the membership dues.
2. The annual membership dues amount and date by which shall be paid are decided by the executive committee in advance for following year.
3. At annual general body meeting of the members, all the memberships including new memberships for the current year shall be ratified.
4. Any increase in excess of 100% on the annual dues for single and the family memberships needs a two-thirds majority of the members present at a general body meeting.
5. Membership is non-transferable and membership dues are non-refundable.

Section B: Types of Membership

1. WATS shall offer the following types of membership: (i) Annual-Family (ii) Annual-Single (iii) Life-Family (iv) Life-Single.
2. For membership purposes, a family shall be defined as member, spouse and their biological or legally adopted children of age 17 years or less. A single membership is for one person only.

Section C: Membership Duration

1. Annual membership expires on the 31st of December each calendar year.
2. There's no expiry date for Life membership.

Section D: Membership Dues

1. Annual dues shall be twenty dollars (\$25) for family membership and ten dollars (\$15) for a single membership.
2. The dues for Life Membership for a family shall be TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY dollars (\$250) and for a single person ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY dollars. Conversion from single to family membership can be done by paying the difference anytime.

Section E: Voting Privileges

1. Each individual member shall be entitled for one vote. Each Family membership is entitled to two votes, one each for the member and spouse.
2. Only members of good standing before April 30th of a year are eligible to vote in the election of officers.

Section F: Revocation of Membership

Membership may be revoked with due notice of a month for conduct considered undesirable against the objectives and purposes of WATS as defined in Article Two provided the following conditions are met:

- The executive committee attempted to obtain an explanation from the member in question and the explanation was considered unacceptable by a two-third majority of executive committee.
- The revocation was approved at least by a two-thirds majority of the members present at a general body meeting.

ARTICLE FOUR – ORGANIZATION

GENERAL BODY

Section A: Composition

The General Body shall be composed of all voting members and shall determine the basic philosophy and set all policies of WATS.

Section B: Rights

The General Body shall have the right to amend the constitution and the bylaws and to elect and recall members of the executive committee.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC)

Section C: Composition

The EC shall consist of at least 7 officers. Only dues-paying members of the general body are eligible to become officers. Additions or changes in the positions must be approved by a two-thirds majority in the executive committee.

Section D: Roles

The roles in the executive committee shall be: (1) The President, (2) Vice President, (3) Secretary (4) Treasurer (5) Cultural Secretary (6) Literary Coordinator (7) Web Master.

President: The President shall be the principal executive officer of WATS and shall preside over all the meetings of the Executive and General Body. The president sets the goals and vision for the executive committee, in accordance with WATS mission. The President may appoint ad-hoc committees and/or sub-committees as and when necessary with the approval of the executive committee.

Vice President: Vice-President shall be the second principal executive officer of WATS and shall preside over meetings of the executive and general body in absence of the president. Vice President's duties include administrative help for cultural events, like venue booking, event advertisement and program management.

Secretary: The secretary shall be the custodian of the Seal of WATS and all records and papers belonging to WATS exempt those that properly belong to the Treasurer; keep minutes of all meetings; maintain a correct list of all members with the help of the Treasurer; and give proper notice of all the General Body meetings to the members of General Body.

Treasurer: The Treasurer shall receive all money for WATS and shall be official bookkeeper of all WATS finances. He/she shall submit the accounts to such examinations as the executive body may direct. The treasurer shall be responsible for the receipt, disbursement, recording and safe keeping all funds of the association. The Treasurer shall pay all bills, which have been approved in the manner prescribed by the Executive Committee. The Treasurer shall prepare the Tax returns and submit to the succeeding Treasurer by February 15th. The succeeding Treasurer shall file the Tax returns with the Internal Revenue Service. The Treasurer shall manage the financial transactions of the association as directed by the Executive Committee and send an annual financial summary statement to all the members either thru mail/e-mail or publish in the annual souvenir or in the website.

Cultural Secretary: The Cultural Secretary shall be responsible for conducting cultural events of the organization as decided by the executive committee. Cultural secretary should take initiative in communicating with participants.

Literary Coordinator: The Literary coordinator shall be responsible for conducting all literary and educational activities as decided by the executive committee.

Web master: The Web master shall be responsible for maintaining and updating the website and its infrastructure as directed by the executive committee.

Section E: Terms

1. All positions of the EC shall be for one year term.
2. Any voluntary resignation requires at least a month's notice to the board.

Section F: Absence of Officers

An EC officer shall lose his/her position in EC if he/she misses three consecutive EC meetings or if he/she does not attend at least half the EC meetings in a quarter unless the absences are excused by rest of the EC.

Section G: Sub Committees and Ad-hoc Committees

The executive committee is empowered to solicit volunteers and appoint members to subcommittees and ad-hoc committees to accomplish such tasks and operations as to realize the objectives of the association, to investigate specific problems, procedures and matters of interest, and to make recommendations to the executive committee.

Section H: Vacancies

The Executive Committee shall take appropriate action to fill any vacancies in the Executive Committee, no later than two months of such occurrence. Any such interim vacancies can be filled by seeking nominations from the general body and filled in by the EC.

Section I: Impeachment

An elected officer may be impeached by any reason by a two-thirds vote in the executive committee followed by a two-thirds vote of total membership in extraordinary general body meeting.

ARTICLE FIVE - FINANCE

Section A: Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the association shall be the period between Jan 1st and Dec 31st of a year.

Section B: Responsibility

The executive committee shall be responsible for the finances of the association.

Section C: Financial Account

A financial account in the name of the association shall be maintained in a bank account operated by the Treasurer and overseen by the President.

Section D: Auditing

Two thirds of the general body members can request an audit of the organization finances at any time.

Section E: Approval Process

All expenditures made by any individual or Individuals on behalf of the association shall require prior approval of the Treasurer. Any reimbursement of expense more than one hundred dollars requires the signature of both Treasurer and President. All reimbursements require a valid receipt as a proof of purchase. Under exceptional circumstances, an expense of \$25 or less may be approved by the EC without a receipt.

Section F: Salary and Officers' Expenses

None of the members of the EC shall receive salary or remuneration of any kind for their services.

Section G: Usage of Association Resources

No part of the net earnings of the association will inure to the benefit of any individual or individuals. However the executive committee at its discretion adopts majority resolutions to grant an honorarium to distinguished scholars, artists, or community members in distress.

ARTICLE SIX - INDEMNITY

Section A: Liability

The EC officers shall not be held personally liable for any actions and decisions taken on behalf of the association.

Section B: Copyrights

The equipment, publications, individual software, web pages developed during the year; photographs taken during the programs (performed by the professional artists) are association's property and can be used in the association's publications with all rights reserved by association.

Section C: Privacy

A member's listing (mailing address, e-mail address, and phone number) shall be used for informing the events only and not used for any purpose which violates his/her privacy, unless explicitly consented by the member.

ARTICLE SEVEN - MEETINGS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section A: Mandatory Meeting

The EC shall meet at least two times a year. Majority of the officers shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business.

GENERAL BODY MEETING

Section B: Annual Meeting

1. The annual general body meeting of the association shall be held at least once a year, on or before last weekend of December and place to be decided and announced by the EC.
2. The notice of the annual general body meeting shall be sent by mail or by email to each member of the association at least two weeks prior to the meeting date.

Section C: Special Meeting

A special general body meeting of the association may be held at the call of the EC or by the written request of minimum 10% of members to the President.

Section D: Quorum

1. A twenty five percent (25%) of the general body members present in person shall constitute a quorum.
2. Each attending general body member may represent other general body members by proxy.
3. If the quorum is not achieved for the announced general body meeting, a subsequent general body meeting can be called by the EC President on a future date for which there will be no need for quorum.

Section E: Executive Committee – Election Rules

1. The election of the members of the Executive Committee shall be held at the time of the annual general body meeting of the association.
2. To ensure fair election process, the voting shall be conducted by secret balloting whenever there is a contest.
3. The individuals, who are contesting for EC officers, can obtain members information from the current EC.
4. Each member of the executive committee shall have one vote.

ARTICLE EIGHT - DISSOLUTION

1. The organization is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and/or scientific purposes under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
2. No part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, trustees, officers or other private persons, except that the organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the purpose clause hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the organization shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of this document, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from federal income tax under section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or (b) by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under section 170 (c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.
3. Upon the dissolution of the organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.

ARTICLE NINE - AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS

The constitution may be amended at a general body meeting by a vote of two-thirds majority of all the members as defined in the QUORUM section above.

ARTICLE TEN – ISSUES NOT EXPLICITLY COVERED

For all issues not explicitly stated in the constitution, the latest version of “Robert’s rules of Order” shall apply.

References for ROR: <http://www.constitution.org/rror>

AMENDMENTS

1. The entire content of ARTICLE EIGHT was replaced with the text specified by IRS for approval of 501(c)(3) application (March 20, 2003)
2. Summary of changes (2/27/2005)

ARTICLE ONE: Name section moved up and mission statement simplified.

ARTICLE TWO: Clause 3 simplified.

ARTICLE THREE: The sections were rearranged, added detail in some cases and simplified.

ARTICLE FOUR: Executive committee positions expanded and removed President-elect position. Content corrected for spelling and grammar. Vacancies and Impeachment sections added.

ARTICLE FIVE: Requirement of annual audit removed, content re-worded for clarity.

ARTICLE SIX: Privacy section added.

ARTICLE SEVEN: content re-worded for clarity, Vacancies section moved to article four. Notice for general body meeting reduced from four weeks to two weeks.

ARTICLE NINE: Amendment requirements simplified.

ARTICLE TEN: This new section has been added.

Throughout the document, all bullet points have been changed to numbers for easy reference. All sections in an article have been ordered in sequence for removing any ambiguity.