



Ethiopian Community Center of Las Vegas, Nevada የኢትዮጵያ ማህበረሰብ ማዕከል በላስ ቬጋስ ኔቫዳ

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Bylaws





Bylaws

Amended for the second time to become
effective on June 26, 2024



Introduction

We, Ethiopians, and Ethiopian-Americans living in Las Vegas and the surrounding areas, have long been away from our homeland. To preserve our history, culture, and values, and to pass them on to future generations, as well as to engage in social, political, and communal activities, we found it necessary to come together and organize ourselves. Thus, prior to the current board, our community proven and registered a nonprofit association under the name "Ethiopian Relief Association of Las Vegas, Nevada" in early 1970s. We have drafted and revised our constitution, bringing us to where we are today.

With the aim of providing extensive and effective services to our community, and being the sole decision- maker regarding the movable and immovable assets and resources of the Ethiopian Community Center, established under the provisions of the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 81.410 and in accordance with the IRS Code Section 501(c)(3), we have revised and approved these bylaws for the second time on June 26, 2024, following the General Assembly meeting of our association.



Chapter 1- General

Article 1:1 **Title:** These bylaws may be referred to as the bylaws of the Ethiopian Community Center in Las Vegas, Nevada, as previously in effect on March 14, 2021, and amended on June 26, 2024, and put into effect at once.

Article 1:2 **Name of the Community Center** the Ethiopian Community Center in Las Vegas, Nevada, will be referred to as "the Center" from now on.

Article 1:3 **Address**
The address of the Center is: 4270 South Cameron Street, Suite 6A Las Vegas, Nevada 89103

Article 1:4 **Interpretation**
Unless otherwise defined by the context, the meanings of the words used in these regulations are as follows:

- ◆ **"Ethiopian" or "Ethiopian-born":** A person born to Ethiopian parents in Ethiopia or another country
- ◆ **"Individual":** A legal natural person.
- ◆ **"Community":** The collective group of Ethiopians residing within the city of Las Vegas, Nevada.
- ◆ **"General Assembly":** The general meeting of the members of the Ethiopian Community Center of Las Vegas, which is the governing body of the Center.
- ◆ **"Plenum":** A meeting where more than 50% + 1 members of the Community Center are present.
- ◆ **"Board":** The body elected by the General Assembly to manage the Center according to the authority given by these bylaws.



- ◆ **"Sub-committee"**: A body established by the Executive Committee for a short or extended period to operate within the supervision of the Board.
- ◆ **"Chairman"**: The Chairperson of the Board elected by majority vote of the Board members.
- ◆ **"Audit Committee"**: A body elected by the General Assembly to examine the financial and administrative performance of the Center and submit a report to the Board and the General Assembly.
- ◆ **"Temporary Electoral Executive Committee"**: The committee elected by the General Assembly & has several key responsibilities during the transition period from the previous board to the new board. These include Leadership Selection, Transition Oversight, & communications with both the outgoing and incoming boards.
- ◆ **"Member"**: A person who supports the purpose of the Center, adheres to its rules and regulations, and has paid the annual membership fee in full. This includes both individuals with or without families.
- ◆ **"Family"**: Spouse and children under 18 years old.
- ◆ **"Regular General Meeting"**: The annual meeting called by the Board.
- ◆ **"Special General Meeting"**: A general meeting called by the Board other than the annual meeting and urgent meetings.
- ◆ **"Urgent General Meeting"**: A meeting called by the Board or community members in response to urgent situations, apart from annual and special meetings.
- ◆ **"Expression of gender"**: Wherever male gender-indicative words are used, female gender shall be treated equally.

Chapter 2 - Basic Principles of the Community Center

Article 2.1 Establishment:

The Center is established according to the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 81.410 and the IRS Code Section 501(c)(3). The Ethiopian Community Center is an established community center where the General Assembly of its members is the sole decision-maker regarding its movable and immovable assets and resources.



Article 2.2 Basic Objectives

- 2:2:1 The Center is independent of political affiliation and nondiscriminatory with respect to religion, respecting the rights outlined by the U.S. government in terms of religious and racial equality.
- 2:2:2 The operation of the Center is based on democracy, with decisions made by majority vote.
- 2:2:3 The working languages of the Center are Amharic and English.

Chapter 3 - Community Center Objectives

- Article 3:1 To foster a culture of cooperation and coexistence among Ethiopians and Ethiopian-Americans living in Las Vegas, Nevada, to address and solve problems collectively.
- 3:2 To coordinate labor and financial support among members in response to natural and human- caused emergencies and problems.
- 3:3 To liaise with government agencies, schools, medical facilities, prisons, employment agencies, and similar entities in Las Vegas, Nevada, to provide necessary assistance to Center members.
- 3:4 To condemn and expose any human rights violations and crimes committed against Ethiopians and their descendants worldwide.
- 3:5 To collect, organize, and issue essential information to Center members, if necessary.
- 3:6 To help members in need according to the bylaws.
- 3:7 To organize various cultural programs that foster close relationships among Center members and introduce Ethiopian culture to the broader Las Vegas community.
- 3:8 To teach Ethiopian history, language, and culture to children born in America, helping them understand their heritage and succeed in economic and social life.
- 3:9 To produce and present a magazine containing useful information and entertainment for the community members.
- 3:10 To celebrate Ethiopian Day annually with various sports competitions.
- 3:11 To promote collaboration with other communities.



Chapter 4 - Community Center Income Sources

- Article 4:1 The annual membership fee collected from the members of the Center is \$20.00 per month or (\$240.00) per year for families and \$15.00 per month or (\$180.00) for individuals.
- 4:2 Income generated from various events, such as Ethiopian Day.
- 4:3 Income or donations received from various institutions and charitable individuals.

Chapter 5 - General Assembly

- Article 5:1 The General Assembly refers to the gathering of the Center's members, including Ethiopians and Ethiopian-Americans who are residents of Nevada.
- 5:2 The General Assembly is the governing body of the Center.
- 5:3 The General Assembly will hold a regular meeting every year in January to provide an annual report on administrative and financial efforts. The General Assembly will also provide feedback to the Board during this annual meeting.
- 5:4 The General Assembly will figure out the amount of the annual membership fee.
- 5:5 At the annual meeting, three-fourths (3/4) of the members may propose to change the Board of the Community Center, either in part or in whole.
- 5:6 The General Assembly shall discuss and approve or amend the budget prepared by the Board.
- 5:7 If there are not enough members present to pass a decision at the General Assembly meeting according to the constitution, the Board has the authority to call a second General Assembly meeting and pass decisions with the members present.

Chapter 6 - Community Center Membership Criteria

- Article 6:1 Any Ethiopian or born to Ethiopian parents, 18 years or older, who accepts the rules of the Center and possesses a valid unexpired Nevada State ID can become a member of the Center.

Chapter 7 - Rights of Members

- Article 7:1 Members are entitled to receive all services offered by the Center.
- 7:2 Any member who has paid the annual membership fee can vote for Board members.
- 7:3 A newly registered member must remain a member for one year to be eligible for emergency financial assistance.



- 7:4 Emergency assistance for newborn children of members is available if the parents have been members for one year and have registered the child within three months of birth. If an emergency occurs within three months of the unregistered child's birth, a birth certificate must be provided to receive assistance.
- 7:5 In addition to the existing membership registration requirements, children up to 22 years old, or under 23 years old if proof of higher education is provided, can be registered under the family membership. This age limit may be lifted in special cases if medical evidence confirms the child's need for family assistance and inability to live independently, allowing them to be included in the family register.

Chapter 8 – Member Obligation

- Article 8:1 Members are obliged to provide their services if requested by the Center.
- 8:2 Members must comply with the rules and regulations of the Center.
- 8:3 All members must pay the annual fee as figured out by the General Assembly.
- 8:4 A new member must register in person with a valid Nevada State ID. Family members must also complete registration in person.
- 8:5 New members must pay a one-time registration fee of \$200 in addition to the annual membership fee.
- 8:6 Members who have not paid their annual fees within three months of their due date is passed, it considered to have voluntarily left the Center. However, He or She re-register within one year of their initial registration, they can continue their membership by paying \$100 and completing a form. If more than one year has passed without registration, He or She can join by paying \$200 and filling out a new member registration form. Members are eligible for emergency benefits only one year after their registration date.
- 8:7 Any member who has not renewed their annual payment will not be eligible for emergency assistance. However, if the payment is made within three months (90 days) after the expiration date, as specified in article 8.6, the member's benefits will be reinstated from the date of payment. The center will not cover any incidents that occurred before the payment was made.
- 8:8 Registrants over 18 years old require a Nevada State ID. Members must notify the Center of changes in their life, such as residential address, phone number, family status, marital status, and the birth of a child.
- 8:9 Payments made by any member are non-refundable.



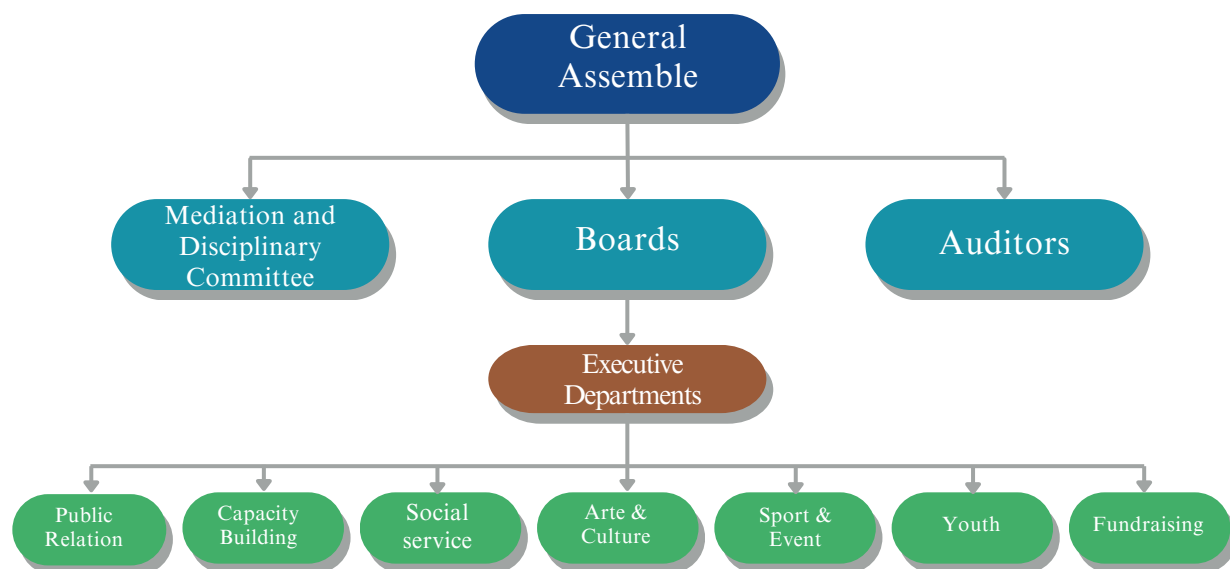
Chapter 9: Election

- Article 9:1 Board members are elected by three electors of the Center during the General Assembly. They are chosen by the members.
- 9:2 The minimum number of candidates is 15 (fifteen) and the maximum is 18 (eighteen). The number of elected board members should be 13 (thirteen). However, if any of the elected board members stop their service for any reason, they will be replaced by one of the remaining candidates.
- 9:3 The elected board members will select 8 (eight) executive committee members from among themselves and will inform the public through local media.
- 9:4 The previously elected board members must relinquish all documents, files, and property pertaining to the Center within 30 days (about 4 and a half weeks) to the new board that was elected. This transfer of the Center property, documents, and files must be conducted with the election committee's presence.
- 9:5 member of the Center must be Ethiopian or of Ethiopian descent to be elected as a board member. They must have been a continuous member of the Community Center for at least 3 (three) years and must have paid their annual membership dues in full.
- 9:6 To be elected as a board member, a candidate must not have any criminal convictions under the laws of the State of Nevada, United State of America. Any member who does not meet these requirements is not eligible for Board membership.
- 9:7 Board members are elected by majority vote.
- 9:8 The term of service for an elected board member is 3 (three) years.
- 9:9 A member may not serve as a board member for more than two terms but may be elected to and serve on a sub-committee.
- 9:10 In the year when the term of the board members ends, the next board members will be elected in October.



Chapter 10: Organization of the Community Center

Article 10:1 The Community Center is led by 13 board members elected by the General Assembly.



Chapter 11: Powers and Responsibilities of the Board

- Article 11:1 A board of 13 members responsible to the General Assembly is elected. Each board member serves each term for three (3) years). The number of board members can be increased if needed.
- 11:2 No compensation will be paid to any member of the board of directors for services as a member of the board.
- 11:3 The Administrative Department of the Board consists of the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary General.
- 11:4 Board members can be re-elected by the General Assembly for a second term after completing their 3 (three) year term but cannot be elected for a third consecutive term. They may be re-elected after a break of two elections.
- 11:5 All issues presented at the board meeting will be decided by majority vote. In the event of a tie, the Chairman's vote will be decisive.
- 11:6 Although the tenure of the board is 3 (three) years, the total number of members will be reviewed and presented to the General Assembly annually.
- 11:7 The board will guide and supervise various sub-committees to achieve the objectives and functions of the Center.
- 11:8 The board can borrow, sign contracts, and make payments in the name of the Center only to carry out its work. However, for expenses exceeding \$5,000.00, excluding regular expenses such as funerals and annual Ethiopian Day celebrations, the approval of the General Assembly must be obtained.



- 11:9 The board cannot lend money or give gifts to other entities without the permission of the General Assembly.
- 11:10 Any Community Center expenses exceeding One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) must be approved by the Board Members and recorded in the board's minutes. Any cost incurred without following these requirements will not be accepted and the board member that executed the transaction will be held liable.
- 11:11 The registration and annual membership fees of the Center will be decided by the board and approved by the General Assembly.
- 11:12 The board will examine and approve the list of responsibilities for sub-committees to ensure they do not conflict with the bylaws of the Community Center.
- 11:13 The board is obligated to convene a General Assembly meeting at least once a year.
- 11:14 The board will elect the next board election committee at the end of the service period.
- 11:15 The board supervises the overall activities of the Center.
- 11:16 The board undertakes any communication to strengthen the Center as permitted by the bylaws.
- 11:17 The board will issue and implement internal guidelines to assist in work performance.
- 11:18 All board members are responsible for providing 2 (two) months of on-the-job training to newly elected board members after completing their 3 (three) year term of service.
- 11:19 The board will select 8 (eight) executive departments from among its members:
- 11:19:1 President
 - 11:19:2 Vice President
 - 11:19:3 Chief Secretary
 - 11:19:4 Head of the Accounting Department
 - 11:19:5 Treasurer
 - 11:19:6 Head of Public Relations Department
 - 11:19:7 Head of Property Department
 - 11:19:8 Head of Social Sector
- 11:20 If the head of an executive department is believed by most board members to have performance issues, He or She will be replaced by another board member.
- 11:21 Using the Center's seal, name, and logo without the board's permission is prohibited and will result in liability under the law.



Chapter 12 - Executive Committee

Article 12:1 The executive departments are responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Center. The roles of each executive department are as follows:

12:2 The main duties of the President

- 12:2:1 The President of the Board serves as the President of the Executive Committee.
- 12:2:2 The President can call and lead executive meetings, as necessary.
- 12:2:3 Develops plans for the growth of the Center in each department and finds a budget for implementation.
- 12:2:4 Stands for the Community Center in dialogues with other similar centers, government, or private institutions.
- 12:2:5 Supervises the Center's expenses and signs checks.
- 12:2:6 Decides costs up to \$1,000.00.
- 12:2:7 Participates in Board decisions with a vote, making the majority vote enforceable.
- 12:2:8 Signs various contracts on behalf of the Center.
- 12:2:9 Performs duties assigned by the Executive Committee, as necessary.
- 12:2:10 Monitors the activities of work units and delegates monitoring to the Vice President as needed.
- 12:2:11 Executes the Board's disciplinary decisions and informs the concerned parties by letter

12:3 The main duties of the Vice President

- 12:3:1 Acts in place of the President when absent.
- 12:3:2 Evaluates members, other individuals, and institutions contributing significantly to the Center's development and presents them to the Board for recognition.
- 12:3:3 Supervises the division of work among different units as assigned by the President.
- 12:3:4 Monitors the discipline of Board members and reports problems to the Board for resolution.



12:4 The main duties of the Secretary General

- 12:4:1 Takes, organizes, signs, and carefully keeps the minutes of the Center's meetings.
- 12:4:2 Prepares and presents agendas for decision-making.
- 12:4:3 Implements decisions made by majority of Board members.
- 12:4:4 Meticulously keeps the Center's work records and various documents.
- 12:4:5 Meticulously keeps the Center's work records and various documents.
- 12:4:6 Signs checks alongside the President.
- 12:4:7 Calls various meetings of the Center using different communication means.

12:5 The main duties of the Head of the Accounting Department

- 12:5:1 Controls the income and expenses of the Community Center and corrects any errors found.
- 12:5:2 Organizes the Center's accounting records.
- 12:5:3 Controls & check the annual fees from members collected by receipt.
- 12:5:4 Facilitates easy and efficient methods for members to make their annual payments.
- 12:5:5 Prepares, maintains, and monitors the use of legal invoices required for the Center.
- 12:5:6 Sends lists of members who have paid and those who have not paid the annual membership fee to the Board every three months.
- 12:5:7 Reports the Center's financial capacity to the Executive Committee every three months.
- 12:5:8 Prepares a budget and presents it to the Executive Committee and creates documents for annual income tax payment.

12:6 The main duties of the Treasurer

- 12:6:1 Collects member fees and various incomes of the Center and deposits them into the Center's bank account.
- 12:6:2 Collects the Center's total bank account income and expenditure receipts and documents and sends them to the Head of the Accounting Department.



12:6:3 Ensures complete documentation for any payments made by the Center and makes payments by check.

12:6:4 Buys all items approved for purchase by the Center's operating board.

12:7 **The main duties of the Head of the Public Relations Department**

12:7:1 Provides information about the activities of the Community Center.

12:7:2 Supervises the preparation of the Community Center's newsletter.

12:7:3 Informs the community about the Center's activities using modern communication means.

12:7:4 Prepares the budget needed for the department's work and presents it to the Board for approval and action.

12:7:5 Advertises the Center's activities in collaboration with other organizations, media, and government bodies, upon Board approval.

12:8 **The main duties of the Head of the Property Department**

12:8:1 Keeps a careful record of the Center's property inherited from the previous head of the Property Department.

12:8:2 Manages the use of the Center's property by members, ensuring proper handover and return.

12:8:3 Controls the Center's property and reports any missing items to the Board.

12:9 **Additional Responsibilities**

Article 12:9:1 From the executive committee members, the Chairperson, Secretary General, and Treasurer are the only one's authorized to control and operate accounts and will sign a legal liability document.

Chapter 13 - Subcommittees

Article 13:1 Public Relations Section

13:2 Capacity Building Unit

13:3 Department of Art and Culture

13:4 Sports and Holiday Preparation Unit

13:5 Juvenile and Youth Department

13:6 Department of Social Affairs



Chapter 14 - Removal from Current Position

Article 14:1 A board member may be removed from their position if a majority of the Board members find them non-compliant with the bylaws of the Center.

Chapter 15 - Types of Misconduct

- Article 15:1 A board member who does not accept the bylaws of the Center and acts to harm the Community Center.
- 15:2 Inability to work with elected Board members.
 - 15:3 Reluctance to fulfill assigned work responsibilities.
 - 15:4 Repeatedly showing disorder and causing disruption in board meetings.
 - 15:5 Spreading false information among Board members.
 - 15:6 Being absent from regular meetings without sufficient reason.
 - 15:7 Creating factions instead of working collaboratively with the selection board members.
 - 15:8 Engaging in false defamation of Board members.
 - 15:9 Sharing confidential Board matters with external parties.
 - 15:10 Disobedience to the joint decision of the Board.
 - 15:11 Disobedience to the majority vote to carry out certain matters by the Board.
 - 15:12 Confirmed actions harming the management board or the Community Center in general.
 - 15:13 If found to have wasted the Community Center's property or used it for personal gain, this action will lead to dismissal following the disciplinary law of the Community Center.

Chapter 16 - Actions Against Misconduct

- Article 16:1 If a board member the first time commits the misconduct listed above, He or She will be given a verbal warning.
- 16:2 If the board members repeat the second time above-mentioned misconduct, He or She will be given a written warning from the Community Center.
 - 16:3 If the board member continues to commit misconduct for the third time, He or She will be removed from the Board.



Chapter 17 - Audit Committee

- Article 17:1 The Audit Committee will consist of three members elected by the General Assembly and responsible to the General Assembly. Board members who have completed their term during the election cannot be elected as auditors.
- 17:2 The chief auditor must have knowledge and experience in accounting.
- 17:3 The committee ensures that the funds and property of the Center are used according to the law.
- 17:4 Monitor the proper interpretation of the center's regulations.
- 17:5 The committee submits the audit report to the General Assembly every year.
- 17:6 The chief auditor can attend Board meetings and follow the proceedings as needed.
- 17:7 The Audit Committee handles managing and tracking the Center's assets including property and finances. If the Audit Committee requests any necessary evidence, the Board is obliged to provide it.
- 17:8 The Audit committee provides written advice to the Board to improve procedures.

Chapter 18 - Mediation and Disciplinary Committee

- Article 18:1 The General Assembly from among the Community Center members elect the Mediation and Disciplinary Committee.
- 18:2 The committee consists of five members.
- 18:3 Their term of service is three years.
- 18:4 The committee is responsible to the General Assembly.
- 18:5 The committee cannot make decisions on the management of the Community Center.
- 18:6 The committee can submit research-based proposals to the Community Center.
- 18:7 The committee investigates disciplinary matters and makes decisions.
- 18:8 If a member who has a complaint about the board's procedure or the election process collects the signatures of $\frac{3}{4}$ of the members of the center and sends evidence to the Mediation and Disciplinary Committee, the committee is obliged to call a general meeting within two months.



- 18:9 Except for reasons of illness or voluntary resignation, any board member who does not perform their duties properly without sufficient reason, shows misconduct, or uses the property of the center for personal benefit will be suspended by a majority vote. If more than one board member is suspended, an urgent general assembly meeting must be called, and a decision made within one month.
- 18:10 If it is proven that the board members or employees of the center have committed an offense due to ignorance or lack of knowledge, they will not be held personally responsible. However, they are responsible for offenses they knowingly commit without authority, either through negligence, malice, or failure to respect responsibilities according to the bylaws.
- 18:11 The center's board members, voluntary service providers, and employees are obliged to maintain the confidentiality of the center and its members. If they are found to have violated this, the center will take legal action as per the laws of the country.

Chapter 19 - Amending the Bylaws

- Article 19:1 This regulation may be amended by the decision of the General Assembly as necessary.
- 19:2 If the bylaws of the center need to be amended, the board prepares a proposal for amendment and submits it to the General Assembly for approval. The amendment will come into effect from the date of approval.
- 19:3 To amend the regulation, most board members must agree to the proposal to be amended.
- 19:4 The article to be amended must be approved by more than half (50% + 1 vote) of the General Assembly members after being presented and discussed.
- 19:5 The article approved by the General Assembly replaces the previous one and serves as part of the bylaws.
- 19:6 Members can also propose amendments.
- 19:7 These bylaws cannot be changed without the approval of the General Assembly.



Chapter 20 - Dedication of Assets

Article 20:1 The properties and assets of the Center are irrevocably dedicated to the purposes and initiatives herein. No part of the net earnings, properties, or assets of the Center, on dissolution or otherwise, shall inure to the benefit of any private person or individual, or any member, director, officer, or board member of the Center. On liquidation or dissolution, all remaining properties and assets of the Center shall be distributed and paid over to an organization selected by board members and dedicated to charitable purposes which has established its tax- exempt status under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3).

Chapter 21 - Indemnification and Insurance

Article 21:1 Indemnification. The Center shall indemnify and hold harmless any director, officer or member of the Center, and his/her heirs and personal representatives, for any expenses actually and necessarily incurred by him/her, or any judgment levied or settlement made, in connection with any action, suit or proceeding in which he/she is made a party by reason of being or have been a director, officer or member of the Center. Such right of indemnification shall not apply to any action, suit or proceeding in which such director, officer or member is adjudged liable for gross negligence or misconduct in the performance of his/her duties as director, officer or member of the Center. In the absence of any adjudication which expressly absolves any director, officer or member of liability of gross negligence or misconduct in the performance of his/her duty in any action, suit or proceeding, the Center shall grant in the indemnification provided herein upon receipt of a written opinion of independent counsel selected by the Center, who shall not be an attorney at law regularly employed by the Center to the effect that the director, officer or members concerned is not legally liable for gross negligence or misconduct in the performance of his/her duty with respect to the particular instance for which indemnification is sought.

Article 21:2 Insurance Bond. The Center may, to the extent that the Board of directors deems necessary, purchase and maintain liability insurance.



Chapter 22 - Miscellaneous Provisions

- Article 22:1 The center is operated free from political, religious, ethnic, and gender discrimination.
- 22:2 No distinction is made between the members of the center.
- 22:3 If the Amharic translation is controversial, the English translation will be adopted.
- 22:4 All previous bylaws from the date of approval of this bylaw will not be accepted.
- 22:5 This regulation will be discussed and approved by the General Assembly starting from June 26th, 2024, and will be in effect from that date.

Ethiopian Community Center of Las Vegas, Nevada

4270 Cameron St Suite 6A Las Vegas, Nevada 89103

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Las Vegas, Nevada

ሰኔ - June 26, 2024

