

# SAORADH CONSTITUTION

## Saoradh Constitution

### Section 1

#### 1.0 Name

1.1 The name of the Party shall be Saoradh.

#### 2.0 Principles

2.1 The Sovereignty of the Irish nation is inalienable and indefeasible.

2.2 The territory of the Irish nation consists of the island of Ireland, its waterways, airspace, islands and seas.

2.3 The right of the Irish people to public ownership and unfettered control of all national resources and wealth-producing instruments.

2.4 The Irish people retain their right to national self determination free from foreign interference and impediment.

2.5 All of the children of the nation are born free and equal and therefore entitled to the fullest measure of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity.

#### 3.0 Objectives

3.1 To effect an end to Britain's illegal occupation of the six counties.

3.2 To effect an end to the partitionist institutions of Stormont and Leinster House.

3.3 To establish a 32 county Irish Socialist Republic based upon the constitutional principles of sovereignty, self-determination, public ownership, democracy, liberty, equality, and international fraternity.

3.4 To ensure the equal distribution of the nation's wealth and wealth-producing resources via public ownership of the means of production, and guarantee equal influence and control over all spheres of economic, social and political life.

3.5 To end all Irish involvement in those institutions and alliances, domestic and foreign, which infringe upon the sovereignty and independence of other nations and peoples and replace such actions and alliances with ones based upon the principles of international co-operation and solidarity.

3.6 To actively promote the revival of widespread, everyday usage of the Irish language across Ireland, and to encourage a deeper understanding and appreciation of Irish culture in contemporary Ireland.

3.7 To effect the release of all Irish Republican Prisoners.

#### 4.0 Means

4.1 By preparing and organising Saoradh for a successful revolution.

4.2 By the organising of effective local and national political campaigns aimed at highlighting the social and economic injustice inherent in the joint global system of capitalism and imperialism and the promotion of an Irish Socialist Republican alternative.

4.3 Through the building of alliances with other groups and individuals both nationally and internationally who share objectives similar to those of Saoradh.

4.4 By assisting and promoting working class-based initiatives and campaigns where participation in such activities is deemed to be in accordance with our strategic national objectives.

4.5 Through the contesting of elections where the contesting of such elections is deemed to advance our national objectives. This shall be based upon a clear strategic analysis of the prevailing conditions and balance of forces. (Participation in elections to Westminster and the partitionist institutions of Stormont and Leinster House can only be permitted on an abstentionist ticket).

#### 5.0 Revolutionary Party

5.1 Republicans can justifiably feel that the formation of a political party will lead to reformism as this has been the republican experience to date. It is the Party's revolutionary duty to safeguard the revolution and to ensure that this never happens again.

5.2 Saoradh shall be revolutionary in both its ideology and its deeds. We shall strive at all times for ideological consistency, clarity, organisational cohesion, strategic direction, tactical purpose and unity. The onus is on the party membership to build consensus and unity.

5.3 Saoradh shall fight for its political analysis and strategy in all its struggles and in doing so win the confidence of the people. This requires a high level of political activism and cohesion, unity in action and revolutionary democracy. The politics of the party must be carried into practice by all members.

5.4 The making of a revolution is a continuous struggle and process; of which time for self-criticism, reappraisal, and self-examination are necessary and a fundamental

requirement. The Party needs a meaningful and properly structured discussion on a collective basis and openness devoid of egotism.

5.5 Honesty built from comradeship and commitment permits frank discussion and from such discussion long-term and short-term objectives along the path the party wish to follow will be established and tasks will be allocated.

5.6 The point of collective leadership founded on the above points must be encouraged at every level and within every sphere of party political activity.

## 6.0 Membership

6.1 Membership of Saoradh shall be based upon the principals of universal equality and shall be open to any person over sixteen years of age, who agrees with the principles of Saoradh, who is willing to work towards the achievement of Saoradh's objectives, and to abide by Saoradh's code of conduct and its attendant disciplinary proceedings.

6.2 Membership of Saoradh can be granted by the National Executive alone.

6.3 Membership of Saoradh can be revoked by the National Executive alone, following the implementation of Saoradh's disciplinary procedures as laid out in section three of this constitution.

6.4 The National Secretary of the National Executive shall be responsible for maintaining an accurate list of all members.

6.5 Members of Saoradh cannot be members of other political parties.

6.6 Participation in Westminster and the partitionist institutions of Stormont and Leinster House is strictly forbidden.

6.7 Members shall not actively encourage, assist, or show support for any party or individual intending to participate in Westminster or in the partitionist institutions of Stormont and Leinster House.

6.8 No member of Saoradh shall make any statement either verbally or in print (including electronic print) on behalf of the party without permission. The onus is on the party member to seek clearance and clarity. Party members are prohibited from advocating anything inconsistent with party policy.

## 7.0 Structures

### 7.1.0 The National Convention

7.1.1 The ultimate authority of Saoradh is The National Convention, which shall meet on an annual basis. All members of Saoradh shall be entitled to attend and vote at the National Convention.

7.1.2 The National Convention shall have the power to adopt or alter any Saoradh policy or strategy.

7.1.3 The National Executive and all individual members shall have the right to submit constitution motions and proposals for inclusion on the Clár of the National Convention. Such Saoradh constitution motions and proposals must be submitted to the National Executive not less than twenty-eight days prior to the date of same.

7.1.4 The Clár for the annual National Convention, which shall include the text of all proposed motions, policy or strategy proposals, proposed amendments to the constitution and nominees for national positions shall be made available to all members not less than twenty-one days prior to the date of same.

7.1.5 The National Convention shall elect the National Executive consisting of: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, National Secretary, National Organiser, Finance and Resource Officer x 2, Public Relations Officer, and Education Officer, to serve on the National Executive.

7.1.6 The National Executive shall be responsible for convening, and making all arrangements necessary for, the National Convention.

7.1.7 A minimum of fifty-six days notice of the time, date and location of the National Convention shall be provided to all members.

7.1.8 An extraordinary National Convention may be convened where the National Executive or not less than one-third of the entire membership support a motion calling for the convening of same. Such a motion must include the reason(s) for the convening of an extraordinary National Convention.

7.1.9 A minimum of twenty-one day notice of the time, date, location and clár of an extraordinary National Convention shall be provided to all members.

#### 7.2.0 The National Executive

7.2.1 The National Executive, which is collectively tasked with implementing all decisions taken by the National Convention and with the day to day running of Saoradh, shall meet not less than once every six weeks.

7.2.2 The National Executive shall consist of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson, the National Secretary, the National Organiser, the Finance and Resource Officer x 2, the Public Relations Officer, the Education Officer plus a maximum of four co-options and Chairs of all Local Saoradh Branches.

7.2.3 A minimum attendance of one-third of the members of the National Executive shall be required to constitute a quorum.

#### 7.3.0 Local Branches

7.3.1 Local Saoradh Branches shall be established within a defined geographic area and be tasked with developing Saoradh within that area.

7.3.2 The National Executive alone shall have the authority to establish and disestablish Local Saoradh Branches.

7.3.3 Each Local Saoradh Branch shall elect a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer (x2) on an annual basis.

#### 7.4.0 Departments

7.4.1 The National Executive shall have the authority to form Departments to focus on specialized and clearly defined areas of work.

#### 8.0 Consensus and Agreement

8.1 Every member should be encouraged to participate to the highest possible degree in Saoradh's internal decision-making processes.

8.2 Prior to the taking of votes, every effort shall be made to reach consensus on all proposals.

8.3 Every member shall have an equal vote on all issues of policy and strategy.

8.4 In relation to major issues of policy and strategy, all decisions shall be reached by following the decision-making process outlined in section two of this constitution.

#### 9.0 Amendments to Saoradh's Constitution

9.1. Amendments to Section One of Saoradh's Constitution can only be made by The National Convention. Notice of proposed changes to Section One of Saoradh's Constitution must be made available to all members not less than twenty-one days prior to the meeting of The National Convention. Amendments to Section One of Saoradh's Constitution shall require a majority of two-thirds support from those members voting at The National Convention.

9.2 Amendments to Section Two of Saoradh's Constitution can only be made by The National Convention or by the membership voting at meetings of Local Saoradh Branches. Notice of proposed changes to Section Two of Saoradh's Constitution must be made available to all members not less than twenty-one days prior to the meeting of The National Convention or relevant Local Saoradh Branch meetings. Amendments to Section Two of Saoradh's Constitution shall require a majority of two-thirds support from those members voting at The National Convention or the Local Saoradh Branches.

9.3 Amendments to Section Three of Saoradh's Constitution can only be made by The National Convention or by the membership voting at meetings of Local Saoradh Branches. Notice of proposed changes to Section Three of Saoradh's Constitution must be made available to all members not less than twenty-one days prior to the meeting of The National Convention or relevant Local Saoradh Branch meetings. Amendments to Section Three of Saoradh's Constitution shall require a majority of

two-thirds support from those members voting at The National Convention or the Local Saoradh Branches.

## Section 2

### 1.0 Membership

1.1 Membership of Saoradh is granted following a three-month probationary period.

1.2 Probationary membership is granted where the National Executive is satisfied that the applicant is genuine, of good character, and that he/she subscribes to the principles and objectives of Saoradh.

1.3 Probationary members are not eligible to vote at the National Convention, the National Executive or Local Saoradh Branches or hold any position within Saoradh's structures.

1.4 In exceptional cases where two existing, non-probationary, members of Saoradh are willing to act as referees for an applicant the National Executive has the power to reduce or waive said applicant's probationary period.

1.5 An appeal can be made by any probationary member who has been refused full membership. This appeal has to be made in writing, no later than 21 days after the decision has been communicated in writing to the individual who has been refused membership. This appeal will be dealt with by a three-person panel nominated by The National Executive at its next meeting.

1.6 During the course of their probationary period all members are expected to attend and participate in the "New Members Induction Programme".

1.7 Members who fail to participate in Saoradh's activities or structures for a period greater than three months shall be deemed to have become lapsed members.

1.8 In exceptional cases The National Executive shall have the power to extend the period after which an individual's membership will be deemed to have lapsed.

1.9 Lapsed members are not eligible to vote at a National Convention, The National Executive or Local Saoradh Branches or hold any position within Saoradh's structures.

1.10 The National Executive alone shall have the authority to determine when individual membership has lapsed.

1.11 A copy of all protocols relating to recruitment and membership shall be made available to all members by The National Secretary.

### 2.0 Structures

2.1 The National Executive shall establish a committee tasked with organising the annual National Convention not less than 84 days ahead of the deadline for the National Convention.

2.2 All votes at the National Convention relating to amendments to the constitution and Saoradh policy and strategy shall take the form of a show of hands with every member present entitled to vote.

2.3 Nominations for election to the positions of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, National Secretary, National Organiser, Finance and Resource Officer x 2, Public Relations Officer, Education Officer, can be made by individual members. All such nominations must be received not less than twenty-eight days prior to the date of the annual National Convention.

2.4 All members shall be informed of the names of those standing for election not less than twentyone days prior to the date of National Convention.

2.5 The election of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, National Secretary, National Organiser, Finance and Resource Officer x 2, Public Relations Officer, Education Officer, shall take the form of a secret ballot with every member present at the National Convention entitled to vote.

2.6 For a vote on a motion convening an extraordinary National Convention to occur the motion must first have the support of ten named members.

2.7 The National Executive shall ensure that all members are informed of a motion convening an extraordinary National Convention at least seven days in advance of the meeting of Local Saoradh Branches where a vote on said motion is to take place.

2.8 A simple majority shall be sufficient to carry a motion calling for an extraordinary National Convention where not less than two-thirds of the total membership takes part in said vote.

2.9 The membership shall have the authority to recall the National Executive or individual members of same.

2.10 For a vote on a motion of recall to occur the motion must first have the support of a minimum of ten named members.

2.11 The National Executive shall ensure that all members are informed of a motion of recall at least fourteen days in advance of the meeting of Local Saoradh Branches where a vote on said motion is to take place.

2.12 A simple majority shall be sufficient to carry a motion of recall where not less than two-thirds of the total membership takes part in said vote.

2.13 The National Executive shall have the authority to appoint up to four co-options to The National Executive: co-options in accordance with nominations elected at Convention.

2.14 In exceptional cases where The Chairperson of a Local Saoradh Branch is unable to attend meetings of The National Executive a substitute may attend in their place. Such a substitute shall be elected by the membership of the Local Saoradh Branch.

### 3.0 Consensus and agreement

3.1 Voting on major issues of policy and strategy shall take place at The National Convention or Local Saoradh Branches.

3.2 Decisions reached via Local Saoradh Branches in relation to major issues of policy and strategy shall adhere to the following:

- The National Executive shall draft proposal.
- The proposal shall be circulated to all members not less than fourteen days prior to the Local Saoradh Branch meeting convened for the purpose of discussing the proposal.
- The proposal shall then be discussed and debated with areas of contention identified and possible amendments suggested.
- The National Executive shall, if appropriate, amend the proposal to address areas of contention and circulate the amended proposal to all members not less than fourteen days prior to the Local Saoradh Branch meeting convened to vote on the proposal.
- Members shall have the option of supporting the proposal or registering a strong objection to the proposal.
- The National Executive shall be responsible for collating votes from all Local Saoradh Branches.
- Where more than half of all voters register a “strong objection” to the proposal, the proposal shall be deemed not to have passed and shall be abandoned.
- Where less than one-third of all voters register a “strong objection” the proposal shall be deemed to have been passed.
- Where more than one third, but less than one half, of all voters register a “strong objection” to the proposal, the proposal shall be deemed not to have passed and shall be the subject of a reconciliation committee.
- Where more than one quarter but less than one-third of all voters who have registered a “strong objection” to the proposal the National Executive shall invite the submission of a “Minority Report”. Such reports may only be in relation to changes to the Constitution and matters of national policy.
- Where a proposal becomes the subject of a reconciliation committee The National Executive shall convene a committee to identify further possible amendments to the proposal. Such committees shall consist of a representative selection of those who support and have strong objections to the proposal. Suggested amendments are forwarded to The National Executive expeditiously.
- The National Executive shall make further amendments, if appropriate, to a final draft and shall circulate the final proposal to all members not less than fourteen days prior to the Local Saoradh Branch meeting convened for the final vote on the proposal.

- Following explanation of amendments, if any, members vote on the final proposal within Local Saoradh Branch meetings convened for the purpose of voting on final proposal. Members shall have the option of supporting the proposal or rejecting the proposal.
- The National Executive shall be responsible for collating votes from all Local Saoradh Branches.

## Section 3

### 1.0 Code of Conduct

#### 1.1 Overview

The Code of Conduct:

- Sets out the standards required by Saoradh as a condition of membership;
- Applies to all members, irrespective of the role they fulfil;
- Governs the conduct of the individual, not the organisation;
- Expects members to exercise their own judgement (which should be made in such a way as to be reasonably justified) to meet the requirements of the code and seek advice if in doubt.

#### 1.2 Breaches of the Code of Conduct

1.2.1 If a member of Saoradh should know of, or become aware of, any breach of this Code of Conduct by another member they are under an obligation to notify the National Executive.

1.2.2 Breaches of the Code of Conduct may also be brought to the attention of the National Executive by others who are not members of Saoradh.

1.2.3 Any breach of the Code of Conduct brought to the attention of Saoradh, or of which Saoradh becomes aware, will be considered under its Disciplinary Procedures.

1.2.4 If a member of Saoradh is approached by any of Britain's, or 26 County's, or indeed any other foreign government's agencies or becomes aware of any approach to another, the member should immediately report such matters to the National Executive.

1.2.5 Where Saoradh receives information that a member has been convicted of a criminal offence, the member shall provide all information and evidence of their criminal record (if any) within 28 days. Note that not all convictions are seen as relevant to membership and each case will be considered individually.

#### 1.3.0 Public Interest

Members shall:

1.3.1 Have due regard for the health, privacy, security and wellbeing of all;

1.3.2 Have due regard for the legitimate rights of others;

1.3.3 Conduct your activities without discrimination on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, marital status, nationality, colour, race, ethnic origin, religion, age or disability, or of any other condition or requirement;

1.3.4 Promote equal opportunities and seek to promote the inclusion of all sectors in society wherever the opportunities arise.

#### 1.4 Competence and Integrity

Members shall:

1.4.1 Only undertake to participate in activities or provide a service that is within your competence;

- 1.4.2 Not claim any level of competence that you do not possess;
- 1.4.3 Develop your knowledge, skills and competence on a continuing basis, maintaining awareness of developments, procedures, and standards that are relevant to you;
- 1.4.4 Ensure that you have the knowledge and understanding of the activities undertaken by Saoradh and that you comply with its rules of governance, in carrying out your responsibilities;
- 1.4.5 Respect and value alternative viewpoints and, seek, accept and offer honest constructive criticisms;
- 1.4.6 Avoid injuring others, their property, reputation, or membership; by false or malicious slander, or negligent action or inaction;
- 1.4.7 Reject and agree not to make any offer of bribery or unethical inducement.

## 1.5 Duty to Saoradh

Members shall:

- 1.5.1 Carry out your responsibilities with due care and diligence in accordance with Saoradh's requirements whilst exercising your best judgement at all times;
- 1.5.2 Seek to avoid situations that may give rise to a conflict of interest between you and Saoradh;
- 1.5.3 Accept responsibility for your activities and for the activities of others as defined in a given context as acting under your supervision;
- 1.5.4 Not disclose or authorise to be disclosed, or use for personal gain, or to benefit a third party, confidential information;
- 1.5.5 Not misrepresent or withhold information on the performance of activities, or take advantage of the lack of relevant knowledge or inexperience of others;
- 1.5.6 Accept your personal duty to uphold the reputation and good standing of Saoradh and not take any action which could bring Saoradh into disrepute;
- 1.5.7 Seek to improve Saoradh's standards through participation in its continual development;
- 1.5.8 Act with integrity and respect in your relationships with all members of Saoradh and with members of other republican organisations you work with;
- 1.5.9 Notify Saoradh if you or others security or integrity has or could be, breached;
- 1.5.10 Encourage and support fellow members in their development.

## 2.0 Disciplinary Policy and Procedures

### 2.1 Purpose of policy

This policy and procedure are intended to help members achieve and maintain the standards of conduct, capability, performance and competence required by Saoradh. It explains the procedure that will be followed if a member conducts himself or herself in a manner which is inappropriate or unacceptable, or where a member's attitude to duties, attendance, competence or performance does not reach the required level.

This is a statement of policy and forms part of your conditions of membership. Saoradh, in its absolute discretion, may amend this policy and procedure at any time in accordance with that which is laid out in its constitution.

### 2.2 Standards of conduct

2.2.1 All members must behave in a respectful and professional manner at all times carrying out our duties on behalf of Saoradh and when in attendance to its related events or activities. Behaviours that are considered unacceptable and which may result in disciplinary action being taken include:

- Failure to adhere to your terms and conditions of membership or any policies, practices or guidelines issued by Saoradh;
- Any sort of dishonesty or theft or fraud or misrepresentation or falsification of documents of any type;
- Improper or unauthorised use or disclosure of confidential information (whether relating to the Party, its members, prisoners or any third party to whom the members owe a duty of confidence);
- Unsatisfactory performance of duties;
- Failure to act in good faith and in the best interests of Saoradh's business and of its members;
- Failure to follow instructions or to have an uncooperative or unreasonably negative attitude to activities, or other members;
- Behaviours that are discriminatory or that insult, antagonise or harass members or others, or which create an environment which is discriminatory, offensive, intimidating or harassing;
- Excessive, inappropriate or unauthorised use of Saoradh's equipment, systems, and premises, such as: telephone, email, computer or other communications or information technology systems and offices; other than in the proper performance of your duties;
- Behaviours that pose a threat to the health or safety of any person including violence or threats;
- Abuse of status or responsibilities or any inappropriate use of position, or any action which represents a conflict of interest with your duties;
- Conduct that has the potential to embarrass Saoradh or have an adverse effect on it or its members or that of any third party with whom Saoradh does business;
- Breach of the rules of any authority or body which regulates Saoradh's activities;
- Incapability through alcohol, non-prescribed drugs or other substances;
- Any other behaviour which in the reasonable opinion of Saoradh constitute unacceptable behaviours;

\*This list is intended as a guide and is not exhaustive.

\*Some types of behaviour listed above will be considered gross misconduct and may result in summary dismissal. Examples of gross misconduct are set out in the section headed "Levels of disciplinary sanction" below.

## 2.3 Stages of the disciplinary process

### 2.3.1 Preliminary stage – informal discussion

Saoradh normally will attempt to resolve conduct and performance issues informally before taking formal disciplinary action, using this procedure where that is appropriate. Formal action will not be

taken under this procedure if the matter is not resolved or if informal discussion is not appropriate (for example, because of the seriousness of the allegation), in which case

Saoradh may move directly to stage one of the formal disciplinary procedure described below.

### 2.3.2 Stage one – formal disciplinary action

If Saoradh is unable to resolve the complaint or concern informally, or if the matter is too serious to

be dealt with informally, a formal disciplinary process may be commenced. The disciplinary process will be dealt with in accordance with the principles set out in the section headed “Disciplinary Proceedings” below and a decision will be reached and notified to those concerned. This may result in

the imposition of one of the disciplinary actions listed in the section headed “Levels of Disciplinary Sanction” below.

### 2.3.3 Stage two – appeals

Members have the right to appeal against any disciplinary decision or sanction imposed under this procedure. To start an appeal, the individual(s) concerned should give written notice of appeal to the Disciplinary Body within five working days of receiving confirmation of the original decision or sanction. The notice of appeal must explain the grounds for appeal, for example, that the acts complained of did not happen or the penalty imposed is too harsh. The notice should also identify any evidence relied on and enclose copies of that evidence where possible. The appeal process may proceed by way of either a review of the initial decision or a full re-hearing of the case, at Saoradh’s absolute discretion and will be dealt with in accordance with the principles described in the section headed “Disciplinary Proceedings” below.

Where possible, appeals will be determined by a person who is more senior than the original decisionmaker and who has not previously been involved in the case.

The member will be notified in writing of the outcome of the appeal. The result of the appeal will be final and no further appeal may be made.

## 2.4 Disciplinary Proceedings

2.4.1 Disciplinary matters will be dealt with confidentially, so far as is reasonably practicable. Members should keep confidential any information that they receive in connection with any disciplinary investigation or process (unless they are the subject of the investigation or proceedings and need to disclose the information in preparing for the disciplinary meeting).

2.4.2 Saoradh may suspend a member pending the outcome of:

- Any disciplinary investigation, process or decision;
- Any investigation or process into gross negligence or any performance issue where the alleged problem has the potential to cause disruption or damage or otherwise to be seriously prejudicial to Saoradh, its business, its members and other staff or any third party to whom Saoradh may owe a duty of care.

Suspension may be imposed at any stage during the process and will be no longer than is necessary.

In harassment cases, it may be necessary for the organisation to suspend both the complainant and the alleged harasser. Suspension is not a disciplinary penalty.

During any period of suspension, the member will not be able to access or use the following benefits:

- Meetings and events

- Entry to any premises of Saoradh and to refrain from contacting any Saoradh member, its suppliers or other professional contacts of Saoradh, in relation to party business.

2.4.3 Before any disciplinary sanction is given under this procedure, Saoradh:

- Will promptly conduct such investigations as it considers appropriate;
- May ask the member to attend an investigatory interview to discuss the matter and assist in deciding whether formal disciplinary action should be taken;
- Will notify the member of the nature of the complaint or concern about him or her and normally will identify any witnesses they are relying on and provide any relevant supporting evidence;
- Will arrange a meeting or hearing with the member to discuss the complaint or concern, for which the member will have reasonable time to prepare; and will tell the member in advance if the outcome of any disciplinary process may be dismissal.

2.4.4 The disciplinary meeting will normally be held by a different person from the one who has led the investigation. At the meeting, the person chairing will explain the complaint against the member and go through the evidence that has been gathered. The member will be able to explain their case and respond to the allegations. They will also have an opportunity to ask questions, present evidence and make points to the meeting on what witnesses say (although not normally by directly questioning witnesses). If the member wishes to call any witnesses, they should let the disciplinary body know in plenty of time before the meeting.

2.4.5 Saoradh may adjourn (and subsequently re-convene) the disciplinary meeting or hearing if new points come to light or if further investigations are needed.

2.4.6 The member may bring a colleague or representative (the Companion) to any disciplinary meeting or hearing. The rules about Companions are set out in the section headed "Companions" below.

2.4.7 Members who are subject to disciplinary proceedings or persons who attend as witnesses or as a Companion may not record any meeting held in connection with those proceedings (including any investigatory meeting or appeal meeting).

2.4.8 The outcome of a disciplinary hearing or decision will be confirmed in writing. The member will have the right to appeal against any disciplinary sanction imposed under this procedure and will be notified of this right when the sanction is confirmed (or afterwards). The appeal procedure is set out in the section headed "Stages of the disciplinary process" above.

Before any appeal decision is reached under this procedure, Saoradh:

- In the case of an appeal by way of rehearing, will repeat such stages of the initial disciplinary action as it considers appropriate to arrive afresh at a decision;
- In the case of an appeal by way of review, will review carefully the original decision-making process including considering whether there are reasonable grounds for the decision, whether the process has been fairly and appropriately conducted, and whether the sanction imposed is reasonable;
- In either case, will arrange a meeting or hearing with the member to discuss the appeal, for which the member will have a reasonable time to prepare.

2.4.9 A member normally will not be dismissed for a first offence except during their probationary period or, in the case of gross misconduct, serious negligence or fundamental breach of conditions of

membership, when the penalty may be dismissal without notice.

2.4.10 A member must co-operate in the disciplinary process, including providing details of witnesses and taking all reasonable steps to attend any scheduled disciplinary or appeal hearing. Failure to cooperate may itself be grounds for disciplinary action. If you do not attend a disciplinary meeting

without a good reason or if you fail to attend more than once or will not be available within any reasonable time frame, then Saoradh may proceed to make a decision based on the available information without a meeting.

2.4.11 A member who is subject to a disciplinary or performance procedure (or is involved in the process as a witness or in another capacity) and has difficulty at any stage because of a disability, should discuss the situation with the Disciplinary Body as soon as possible.

2.4.12 The principles above set out the way in which Saoradh will aim to deal with disciplinary matters. However, there are many reasons why compliance with one or more of the principles may not be possible or appropriate in a particular case. Saoradh may apply one or more of the principles in respect of any given disciplinary matter or proceedings.

## 2.5 Levels of disciplinary sanction

Saoradh may move straight to the second or third level of sanction in appropriate cases. At each and any stage of the procedure, a meeting will be held and the principles of disciplinary procedures set out above will normally apply.

### 2.5.1 Level one – written warning

If a member's performance or conduct is not of an acceptable standard, he or she will be warned in writing of this.

The reasons for the warning will be notified as well as suggestions, if appropriate, on how to improve performance or standards of conduct and any time scale within which the improvement must be achieved. Written warnings will remain active for a time period which will be specified when the warning is notified but which will not normally exceed six months.

### 2.5.2 Level two – final written warning

If the member's performance or conduct does not improve following a written warning, or if any further poor performance or unacceptable conduct occurs, then the member may be given a final written warning.

The Organisation may impose a final written warning without having first given a written warning if the matter is considered by Saoradh to be sufficiently serious.

The reasons for the final written warning will be given as well as suggestions, if appropriate, on how to improve performance or standards of conduct and any time scale within which the improvement must be achieved. The member may be informed that, should his or her performance and/or conduct not reach an acceptable standard within the specified time frame, his or her membership may be terminated. Final written warnings will remain active for a time period which will be specified when the warning is notified but which will not normally exceed twelve months.

### 2.5.3 Level three – dismissal

If the member's performance or conduct does not improve following a final written warning, or if any further poor performance or unacceptable conduct occurs, then the member may be dismissed.

Dismissal may be with or without notice depending on the circumstances.

The decision to dismiss must be authorised by the National Executive.

Saoradh may dismiss without any prior warning (or with only one prior warning) if you are on your probationary period or the matter is considered by the Party to be sufficiently serious, including if you are guilty of gross misconduct, serious negligence or fundamental breach of conditions of

membership, examples of which include:

- Serious or repeated breach of the terms and conditions of your membership or of any policies, practices or guidelines issued by Saoradh;
- Any sort of dishonesty or theft or fraud or misrepresentation or falsification of documents of any type;
- Improper or unauthorised use or disclosure of confidential information of Saoradh, its members, or any third party to whom Saoradh owes a duty of confidence;
- Deliberate or serious or repeated failure to follow instructions or guidelines or perform requested tasks or insubordination or gross negligence or neglect;
- Behaviours that are discriminatory or that insult, antagonise or harass members, clients, vendors or others or which creates an environment which is discriminatory, offensive, intimidating or harassing;
- Unauthorised absence from Saoradh;
- Behaviours that pose a threat to health or safety of any person including violence or threats;
- Deliberate damage or destruction of Saoradh property or the property of others;
- Abuse of status or responsibilities or any inappropriate use of discretion or authority or any action which represents a conflict of interest with your duties;
- Conduct that has the potential to embarrass Saoradh or have an adverse effect on it or its members, or that of any third party with whom Saoradh does business;
- Breach of the rules of any authority or body which regulates Saoradh's activities;
- Incapability through alcohol, non-prescribed drugs or other substances;
- Any other behaviour which in the reasonable opinion of Saoradh constitutes gross misconduct; or any other behaviour identified as gross misconduct or as justifying summary dismissal in any Saoradh written policy, procedure or guidance.

\*This list is intended as a guide only and is not exhaustive.

\*Dismissal for gross misconduct or fundamental breach of conditions of membership will normally be without notice.

## 2.6 Alternatives to dismissal

2.6.1 In circumstances where dismissal is justified, Saoradh may in some cases (in its absolute discretion) consider alternatives to dismissal.

These will usually be accompanied by a final written warning.

You do not have to agree to accept any alternative to dismissal when it is offered to you but, if you fail to do so, the likely outcome is dismissal. Examples include:

- Suspension for a specified period;
- Attendance at a specified training course or other learning programs (such as an anger management program);

2.6.2 The member may bring a Companion (as defined above) to the appeal meeting or hearing. The rules about Companions are set out in the section headed Companions below.

2.6.3 The member will be notified in writing of the outcome of the appeal, which may be that the original sanction is confirmed, removed or changed. The result of the appeal will be final and no further appeal may be made.

2.6.4 If the member appeals from a dismissal, his or her membership will not continue whilst the appeal process is taking place. However, if the appeal is successful the member shall have their membership fully reinstated.

## 2.7 Companions

2.7.1 Acting as a Companion is voluntary. The choice of Companion must be reasonable and Saoradh may ask for an alternative Companion to be nominated if the request is not reasonable, for example, if the person nominated has a conflict of interest or is unavailable within five days of the suggested meeting date.

2.7.2 During the meeting or hearing, your Companion may make representations and ask questions but should not answer questions on your behalf. You may confer privately with your Companion at any time during the hearing.

2.7.3 If the chosen Companion is not available to attend a disciplinary or appeal meeting or hearing, the member may propose an alternative time which is reasonable and which falls within five working days of the original proposed time.

2.7.4 The member is normally not entitled to bring a Companion to an investigatory interview but if you believe that special circumstances apply to merit this, then you should let National Executive know.

## 3.0 Grievance Procedure

### 3.1 Application and Scope

3.1.1 Saoradh is committed to promoting effective activist relationships and an environment in which its membership feel able to raise work-related issues with the Party.

3.1.2 This procedure provides a clear and transparent framework to deal with concerns, problems or complaints raised by members in the course of their undertakings of activism in relation to matters affecting themselves as individuals; or matters affecting their personal dealings or relationships with other members.

3.1.3 The procedure applies to all members carrying out activities on behalf of Saoradh. The aim of this procedure is, as far as possible, to achieve a fair and prompt resolution to individual grievances.

3.1.4 Exclusions – The procedure cannot be used to challenge formal outcomes in other procedures which have an appeal process, namely: Disciplinary and membership procedures.

### 3.2 General Principles

3.2.1 Wherever possible, grievances should be resolved informally without recourse to formal procedures. It is expected that individuals will enter into the procedure in good faith, with the aim of resolving a particular issue. The grievance procedure should not be used as a substitute for normal day to day discussions.

3.2.2 It is recognised that there may be occasions when it is not possible for a grievance to be resolved informally. In such cases, the procedure below at Stage 1 under the title Formal

Procedure should be followed. All parties should be absolutely clear whether any meeting is being held under the informal or formal stage of the procedure.

3.2.3 Any steps taken under this procedure should be taken promptly, unless there is a good reason for delay.

3.2.4 At any stage in the procedure, subject to the agreement of all parties concerned, there may be a

suspension in proceedings to facilitate mediation (see 6.3 Mediation below), fact-finding or other non-adversarial discussions with the aim of promoting resolution of the case.

3.2.5 At any stage in the procedure, the senior member dealing with the grievance may, at his/her discretion, defer consideration of the grievance if other activities which are relevant to the substance of the grievance are pending or in progress. In such cases the parties to the grievance will be advised of the reason for deferring consideration.

3.2.6 If, on investigation, the grievance is found to be vexatious or trivial it may be dismissed without further consideration. The member will be advised accordingly.

3.2.7 Saoradh may, with the agreement of the member, vary this procedure as appropriate to a particular case. In the event that it becomes impracticable to continue with the procedure, it may be discontinued. In such cases, Saoradh will advise the aggrieved parties of the outcome of their grievance in writing.

3.2.8 Right to be accompanied – All members who are the subject of this procedure will have the right to be accompanied at any formal meetings held under this procedure by a fellow member.

3.2.9 Equality and Diversity – To ensure fair treatment and, where appropriate, provision of support by Saoradh in the application of this procedure, members should be invited to provide information about any equality or diversity issues which may be relevant.

3.2.10 Confidentiality – All parties involved in these procedures must ensure that they maintain, as appropriate, the confidentiality of the process within and outside Saoradh.

3.2.11 Timescales – Whilst every endeavour will be made to comply with timescales: Due to the complexity and or specific circumstances of a case, timescales may be extended. In such circumstances, the individuals concerned will be advised of the reasons for any delay.

3.2.12 Involvement of National Executive – The Vice-Chairperson will be consulted and will advise on the formal process.

3.2.13 In very exceptional circumstances where the individual is reluctant to pursue a formal complaint through the Grievance Procedure, but where the alleged grievance comes to the attention of the Party or where Saoradh is aware that there are broader issues of concern around the culture of a team/group of individuals, an investigation may anyway be instigated, with the agreement of the Vice-Chairperson of the National Executive.

### 3.3. Mediation

3.3.1 At any stage in this procedure, the parties to the grievance may request that the matter be referred for mediation. Mediation is likely to be most appropriate in cases involving interpersonal relationships. There may, however, be circumstances in which alternative non-adversarial discussions may be undertaken with the aim of promoting a speedy resolution.

3.3.2 Mediation is voluntary and will take place only if all parties agree. It is, however, hoped that members will recognise the benefits of seeking to resolve issues via mediation and will be amenable to and cooperate with this approach.

### 3.4 Informal Procedure

3.4.1 Grievances can often be resolved quickly and informally through discussion with senior members and there is an expectation that every effort will be made to resolve matters informally.

Members are therefore expected to raise any concerns or issues informally with their immediate senior member.

3.4.2 Senior members will discuss a member's concerns in confidence with him/her, make discreet investigations, as appropriate, and attempt to address his/her concerns fairly and promptly.

3.4.3 It is the senior member's responsibility to seek to resolve the grievance informally and to notify the individual of the outcome. This would normally take the form of a summary note of the discussion and its outcome.

3.4.4 It is expected that a member will seek to resolve his/her grievance informally in the first instance and will only progress to a formal grievance if the issue cannot be resolved by informal means. Where this has been unsuccessful, or circumstances make this route inappropriate, the matter should be raised formally through the grievance procedure.

3.4.5 If the grievance is against a senior member it should be raised with a more senior member who will seek to resolve the matter informally as appropriate.

### 3.5 Formal Procedure

#### 3.5.1 Stage One – Formal Resolution

3.5.1.1 If it is not possible to resolve a grievance informally, the member should raise the matter formally, and without unreasonable delay, by putting his/her grievance in writing.

3.5.1.2 The immediate senior member will write to the member acknowledging receipt of the grievance, normally within five working days.

3.5.1.3 The immediate senior member will invite the member to attend a formal grievance meeting in order to discuss the grievance. This meeting will normally take place within ten working days of the written acknowledgement.

3.5.1.4 As a result of the initial grievance meeting, the immediate senior member may determine that it is necessary to make further enquiries and/or may appoint an investigating officer to conduct an impartial and thorough investigation into the background facts or into any allegations made by the member.

3.5.1.5 Investigation – If an investigation is deemed appropriate, the immediate senior member will appoint an investigating officer. Where the grievance relates to other members, the individuals involved will be informed in writing of the nature of the complaint and will be given the opportunity to submit a response.

3.5.1.6 The results of the investigation will be provided to the senior member in the form of an investigation report. This report will also be made available to the member raising the grievance and any member(s) named in the grievance. Following the investigation, the senior member may deem it

appropriate to hold a further grievance meeting with the member raising the grievance. The purpose of this meeting is to seek clarification on any further issues that might have arisen and to allow the member to comment on the findings of the investigation.

3.5.1.7 In some cases it might be appropriate to hold a grievance hearing with the aggrieved individual and the person(s) against whom the grievance lies.

3.5.1.8 Outcome – The senior member will determine the outcome of the grievance. S/he may reject the grievance, or may uphold the complaint and indicate what steps have been/should be taken to resolve it.

3.5.1.9 The senior member will inform the individual, in writing, of the decision and the right of appeal normally within ten working days of receiving the investigation report or of the final grievance meeting/hearing. The member will be given an explanation if this is not possible and will be advised when a response can be expected.

3.5.1.10 Any member(s) named in the grievance will also be advised, in writing, of the decision.

### 3.5.2 Stage Two – Appeal

3.5.2.1 If a member remains aggrieved, s/he may write to the Vice Chairperson within ten working days of the date of the decision under Stage 1, exercising his/her right of appeal.

3.5.2.2 Appeals will be considered by a more senior member (Appeal Officer). The Appeal Officer will have had no prior involvement in the case and will be supported by a member of the National Executive.

3.5.2.3 Where the appeal involves other members, the person(s) named in the grievance will be informed of the appeal and the outcome.

3.5.2.4 This procedure may, in the interest of natural justice, and following consultation with relevant parties, be varied and altered by the Appeal Officer who will detail the reasons for the variation.

3.5.2.5 The decision may be given verbally at the appeal hearing and will, in any event, be conveyed or confirmed in writing within ten working days of the hearing. Any recommendations for further action will be clearly stated in the letter.

3.5.2.6 The decision following the appeal is final and there will be no further internal right of appeal.

Note: The procedure recognises that a number of members may raise the same/similar concerns as individual grievances which would fall to be dealt with under this procedure