

**DELTA IBO WOMEN ASSOCIATION- DIWA INC.
CONSTITUTION**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ARTICLE 1:	NAME
ARTICLE 2:	OBJECTIVE
ARTICLE 3:	ORGANIZATION
ARTICLE 4:	MEMBERSHIP
ARTICLE 5:	CODE OF CONDUCT
ARTICLE 6:	OFFICERS
ARTICLE 7:	DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS
ARTICLE 8:	FINANCE
ARTICLE 9:	CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS
ARTICLE 10	MEETINGS
ARTICLE 11	HANDING OVER
ARTICLE 12	RATIFICATION
ARTICLE 13	AMMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION
ARTICLE 14	AUTHORS

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

The overall goal in the formation of this organization arose from the necessity and desire of indigenes of Delta State Ibo women who reside in the USA. To promote a positive cultural identity for

its people, with strong unity of purpose amongst its members, and to promote the economic and social development of our people.

ARTICLE I NAME

Accordingly, the name of the organization shall be known, called or addressed as **Delta Ibo Women Association-DIWA Inc. Atlanta Chapter**, hereinafter to be referred to as "**the Association**".

The greeting and response at all meetings shall be "**OTU IFE CHUKWU DE * EWENE NFICHA**" or "**OWENE NFICHA**".

our mode of operation shall be guided by this document hereinafter to be referred to as "**the Constitution**".

ARTICLE II OBJECTIVES:

- 1) To enable members of the Association to acquaint themselves with one another.
- 2) To promote our cultural heritage, provide a forum for good interpersonal relationship and to foster solidarity amongst our people.
- 3) To provide financial, moral & networking support to members as specified by the privileges.
- 4) To collectively seek group solutions to common problems, such as life and health
- 5) insurance, and general wellbeing of our members.

ARTICLE III ORGANIZATIONS:

- 1) The Association shall operate as a Georgia Nonprofit Corporation.
- 2) The Association shall operate as an independent organization

ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIPS:

The membership of this association shall be organized as follows:

- a) Full membership: The full membership of this association shall be open to all daughters, wives or women from the Ibo speaking area of Delta State who are 18 years old and above.
- b) Women whose parents are not from Delta Ibo but born in Ibo land are not qualified to be members.
- c) To become a member of this Association, there is a registration fee of **\$100.00** with a 1.75lt bottle of Baileys Original Irish cream.
- d) A member shall be in good standing if she has-
 - i) Paid a registration fee of **\$100.00** and a bottle of Baileys Original Irish cream or a bottle of Cognac for new members to the association;
 - ii) Paid monthly due of **\$10.00**. Monthly due is subject to annual review. Incentive will be given to members who pay off their annual dues in bulk at the beginning of the year (**January – March**). Such members will pay 100.00 instead of paying \$120 for the year.
 - iii) Attended a minimum of **nine meetings** within the past one year and is in good financial standing. Punctually and active participation in all meetings and member functions is mandatory.

e) The exceptions to the above requirements are:

- i) Nonattendance to nine meetings in the past nine months due to ill health that has been reported to members of the executive council;
- ii) Engagement in the U.S. Military assignment/job outside Georgia
- iii) Educational needs for members

ARTICLE V CODE OF CONDUCT

- a) Each member shall subscribe to, and always protect and uphold this constitution and its by-laws.
- b) Active participation by attending meetings and functions is mandatory. If a member is unable to attend a meeting, she should obtain permission to be absent from the meeting with a reasonable excuse 24 hours before the meeting day and not when the meeting has commenced. Failure to abide by this rule will attract a fine of \$50.00.**
- c) Members are to notify the house of any planned parties with a minimum of 2-month notice. It is mandatory for all members to attend a fellow member's occasion. Failure to abide by this rule will attract a fine of \$100, except in an emergency or acceptable excuse is presented with proof to the house which will be approved by the president or vice president.**
- d) Decisions made in the meeting are bound by the constitution as long as it is made by two-third of the house members until if the constitution is amended.
- e) There must be decorum at all times during the duration of the meeting. People must exhibit appropriate, orderly, and polite behavior at meetings. On no grounds will members disrupt the meeting while in progress for example**

there should be no food sharing or eating until the meeting had come to an end. Failure to adhere to this will attract a fine as deemed appropriate by the President. The Provost will enforce this as her office demands.

- f) Profanity, gossiping, family feud including inappropriate language or abuse on our social media will attract a fine of **\$100.00**. Any form of criminal act is unacceptable behavior and is punishable by the disciplinary committee of the Delta Ibo women's Association.
- g) Continuous absence from meeting for three consecutive times will be addressed by the welfare officer. The welfare officer will contact such member and provide support or assistance as needed. If absence continues without permission, member will be given a fine of \$25.00. If no improvement after 6 consecutive absence, member will be referred to a disciplinary committee to make a final decision.**
- h) Failure to pay dues and levies for six consecutive months, will render such member a non- financial member status and inactive. The member would be required to re-register.
- i) New members will be provided a copy of the constitution on their first visit. They will be on a three-month probation period during which time they are free to leave or become full members. Any feud, internally or externally that cannot be resolved by the involved parties must be referred to the disciplinary committee for deliberation
- j) Members are expected to be cordial and respectful of others.
- k) Officer's attendance is mandatory.
- l) Leadership by example should be the guiding principle.
- m) Officers are accountable to members, not the other way around.

DELTA IBO WOMEN ASSOCIATION – DIWA INC

- n) There will be a fine of **\$5.00** for lateness. A person is considered late after the Minutes have been read. It is the duty of the Provost to enforce this rule. Members must report any absence from a meeting to an executive, who must in turn report such member's absence in the executive page by 5pm on the day of meeting. After 5pm, that member will be given an unexcused absence

- o) Exemption to fines for Tardiness and Absenteeism will be granted for job related excuses and illness when an attending member notifies the association 24 hours before the meeting;
 - i) If a member is absent for 3 consecutive meetings, a committee will be set up to enquire and find a solution to the problem. Failure to resolve this will result in the member being asked to resign membership of the association. Such a member can reregister as a new member if they so wish.

 - ii) A returning member who left the association for more than one year shall pay a subscription returning fee of one-year dues. Other members who return less than a year shall pay their outstanding dues.

ARTICLE VI OFFICERS

Section I The Executive:

The executive shall consist of the following officers who reside in Atlanta Metropolis.

The executive consists of the following:

President

Vice President

Secretary

Assistant Secretary

Financial Secretary

Treasurer

PRO

Provost

Welfare Director

Section II Terms of office of the executive

The affairs of the Association shall be managed by elected officials who shall serve for two (2) years from the date of election. All members of the executive council shall have the constitutional rights to run for a second term of two (2) years after the first term; and after that shall lose the right, until after another candidate has ran, won and served out another two (2) years.

EXCEPTION: THE PRESIDENT MAY NOT SERVE MORE THAN TWO FULL TERMS. AFTER TWO TERMS, THEY AUTOMATICALLY BECOME A PATRON FOR THE ASSOCIATION

- a) Voting will be confidential and shall be conducted by volunteers who are not running for office
- b) At the end of their tenure, the cabinet will be officially dissolved before the initiation of the next election.
- c) A winner shall be declared on the basis of a simple majority
- d) Positions shall be held by each member for a maximum of two terms (4 years) for all positions, Members are allowed to run for a different position as they deem fit.

Section III Powers of the executive committee

The executive committee shall have the following powers:

- a) It shall be the policy making body of the association.
- b) It shall have the power to levy members after the approval of the general house.
- c) It shall have the power to take disciplinary action/ remove from office a member for misconduct, criminal activity, and/ or negligence of duty after the approval of the general house

- d) It shall create portfolios whenever necessary after the approval of the general house.
- e) Appoint two members each year to audit the finance of the association at the end of the year.
- f) The Secretary, Financial Secretary and Treasurer are to submit report to the house at the end of each year which will be filed by the secretary.
- g) The power of impeachment lies with the house.
- h) An Officer will be removed if she is absenting from three consecutive meetings without notice. Notice of absence must be validated through documentation in the minutes by the secretary.
- i) An officer can be voted out of office if the majority of the house agrees that she is not performing to her full potential or capacity. This will be validated by a silent vote. Any member is authorized to move the motion for impeachment.
- j) Misappropriation of funds is grounds for impeachment and legal action.**
- k) Two-third of the membership of the Association is required to form an authoritative quorum for impeaching any officer whenever the need arises.

ARTICLE VII DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS:

Responsibilities of each elected office are as follows:

The President shall:

- a) Be the chief executive officer of the association.

DELTA IBO WOMEN ASSOCIATION – DIWA INC

- b) Preside over all meetings of the association.
- c) Summon executive meetings and emergency meetings whenever the need arises, or when requested by members of the association.
- d) Deliver a written address about the activities and aspirations of the association annually.
- e) Be empowered to fill vacancies. To suggest a person to fill a vacant position with subject to the approval of two-third of the house.
- f) Recommend a replacement of an officer considered **inactive**, subject to subsequent confirmation by two-thirds majority of the house.
- g) Have the power to appoint a committee as a mediator where and when conflicts arise between members.
- h) In the event of unresolved matters and in matters that concern the general welfare of the organization, the president shall consult with the vice president and if need be other members of the executive council before a decision is made.
- i) Have a casting vote.
- j) Delegate responsibilities to the vice president or other officers when necessary
- k) Coordinate the activities of fellow officers.
- l) Signatories to the account shall consist of the president, Vice president, and Treasure

The Vice President shall:

- a) Perform all the duties of the president in the absence of or at the request of the

president. Whenever the office of the president becomes vacant, the vice president shall act as the president until formally elected by the members of the general house.

- b) Have all the power over all executive meetings in the absence of the president and will vote only in case of a tie.

The Secretary shall:

- a) Oversee the official writing documents and stationery of the organization.
- b) Send out all meeting notices minimum of 10 days prior to each meeting. All event notices should also be sent out in a timely manner to members to allow ample time for preparation
- c) Record the minutes of all meetings, executive, general, and emergency meetings, and must be sent out to members latest 7 days before each meeting, Noncompliance with this count as underperformance.
- d) Brief in writing, the various decisions of the association.
- e) Send information of importance, or regarding every meeting in writing to reach the members not later than fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting date.
- f) The secretary shall be responsible for preparing the yearly roster of Delta Ibo Women in Atlanta.
- g) Identify members in good standing and act as liaison between members and the executive.
- h) File all original copies of legal documents; the constitution, bylaws, reports, approved minutes and correspondences.

The Assistant Secretary shall:

- c) Perform all the duties of the Secretary in the absence of or at the request of the Secretary. Whenever the office of the Secretary becomes vacant, the Assistant Secretary shall act as the Secretary until formally elected by the members of the general house.

Financial Secretary shall:

- a) Render quarterly or monthly report account report to members at every meeting.
- b) Present at the end of the year a detailed financial report
- c) Keep all financial records of the organization.
- d) Collect membership registration fees, dues, fines, etc. received on behalf of the Association and shall maintain an up-to-date record of such collection.
- e) Hand over all cash collection to the Treasurer of the Association and shall keep a written evidence of such transfer, duly signed by the Treasurer.
- f) Maintain an up-to-date journal of each member's contribution and all other source of fund.
- g) Present, at each monthly meeting the Association reconciled cash position.
- h) On no account would the account signatories close, withdraw or transfer funds from the DIWA account without presenting their intensions to the members and an agreement must be reached before that process is approved. At least three account signatories are required to close, withdraw or transfer funds from any of the DIWA accounts irrespective of the president's executive privilege.

The Treasurer shall:

- a) Collect all funds on behalf of the association
- b) Disburse money as approved by the association.
- c) Deposit all monies of the association to the bank no later than 72 hours after receipt.
- d) Maintain books and files of receipt, bank deposits, and bank statements.
- e) Present at each monthly meeting the association's bank balance.

Public Relations Officer Shall:

- a) promote and publicize Delta Ibo women Association.
- b) Be responsible for publicizing all information, press releases and articles approved by the executive committee.
- c) Function as liaison between the association and the general public, through publicity methods approved by the house.
- d) Be responsible for initiating, coordinating and organizing all social gatherings, and activities of the association as approved by the association.**
- e) Work with the financial team in formulating programs for raising funds for the organization.
- f) Shall be the custodian of the organization's website and social media accounts.
- g) Coordinate membership drives on a continuous basis. Will take absentee calls from members and will contact absent members on why they were absent.**

The Provost shall:

- a) Shall be responsible for enforcing all procedural rules of the Association during meetings.
- b) Shall be charged with the maintenance of peace and order during meetings.
- c) Shall assist the President in appointing speakers during meetings.

Welfare Director:

- a) Make monthly telephone calls enquiring about the health, wellbeing of members**
- b) Visit members in need in a timely manner on grounds of illness, bereavement, and allied misfortunes amongst others
- c) Report back to the meeting on any event during the month.
- d) Setting up disciplinary committee
 - The disciplinary committee Shall be fully responsible for enforcing disciplinary actions against any member who fails to observe the “modus operandi” or who exhibits recalcitrant behavior(s) toward members of the organization.
 - Shall enforce discipline during DIWA meetings, gatherings, or at other places and at times as deemed necessary.

ARTICLE VIII FINANCE:

- a) The Association shall generate funds through member registration fees and member monthly dues. Special levy may be imposed when necessary.

- b) The Association shall maintain a checking account at any federally insured bank. All cash disbursement must be by check through the bank account.
- c) The President, the Vice president, Treasurer and Secretary shall be signatories to the bank account.
- d) All checks issued must have the signature of the President, the vice president and the Treasurer.
- e) The secretary shall sign checks in the absence of either the President or the Treasurer.
- f) Disbursement of funds must be for budgeted and approved expenses only or expenses authorized by the executive committee in time of emergence.
- g) The treasurer must concur with the secretary's cash position.
- h) Under no circumstance shall the Association go into debt.

ARTICLE IX CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS

- a) All indigenes who are members have a right to vote and be voted for.
- b) The contesting candidates shall be both financial and participating members that have complied with Article III parts (a) and (b).
- c) Voting shall be by secret ballot. Members in good standing shall be allowed to vote in proxy.
- d) A candidate who receives a majority plurality of votes cast shall be declared elected. In case of a tie on the ballot cast for any position, there shall be run off election by two candidates with the highest votes.

- e) One nominating speech lasting no more than 5 minutes preceding each vote shall be allowed.
- f) Officers may not resign at will. They would be encouraged to finish their tenure since they were duly elected by the house. If they must resign after they have been sworn into office, they must give the house 60 days' notice before giving up the office.

Electoral Committee

- Shall be constituted by DIWA President.
- Shall function independently of any governing body of DIWA
- Shall not be involved in campaigning for any of the executive positions.
- Shall be unbiased and neutral to any member's opinion
- Shall compile the list of eligible voters.
- Shall screen the potential candidates to determine eligibility to hold executive office.
- Shall set deadlines for application submission for the election.
- Shall organize the electoral process and work in accordance with DIWA Constitution.
- Shall conduct electoral rules for the candidates and general membership
- Shall provide guidelines for candidates according to DIWA constitution
- Shall count the ballots after all members have voted. s. Shall ensure the election is democratic.

ARTICLE X MEETING

- a) General meetings shall be held every last Sunday of each month by rotation amongst members unless otherwise noted. If a general meeting is not held for any reason, meeting will be rescheduled for the following month and the hosting roaster will be adjusted accordingly. The President shall use her discretion to limit the time for each meeting. Each member is allowed a maximum of five minutes per speech.
- b) A quorum meaning that half of the meeting members must be present for the

DELTA IBO WOMEN ASSOCIATION – DIWA INC

meeting to commence. DIWA members are highly encouraged to be punctual and be ready to participate in all meetings

- c) Executive or emergency meetings shall be called under the instruction of, and presided over by the President and three members shall form a quorum for executive meetings. The President or Secretary must be present for emergency meetings. In the absence of the President, the Vice President must preside over the emergency meeting.
- d) The president or the presiding member must recognize each speaker before he or she can speak and every speech shall be addressed to the president.
- e) The time for the meeting is as agreed by the house. Members will be considered late after the meeting minutes have been read.

ARTICLE XI HANDING OVER

- a) The handing over of the documents and properties of the association shall be done following the first meeting after the election of new officers.
- b) In case a member decides to resign or be removed from the office because of misconduct or transfer before the end of her term, such official shall return the documents or properties in her possession to the President of the association.

ARTICLE XIII AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

- a) A motion to amend any portion of the constitution shall be submitted by a member in good standing at the meeting.
- b) Motion will be debated at the general meeting by a simple majority vote.
- c) A two -third majority of all members in good standing present shall after discussion vote for the adoption of any amendment.
- d) The constitution committee shall insert an amendment to adopted by the house, which amendment shall thereafter be considered a part of the constitution
- e) All constitution amendments and adoptions would be at the end of the year
(SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER MEETINGS)

ARTICLE XIV AUTHORS

The Constitution Committee 2020

Mrs. Roseline Balfour (Vice President)

Mrs. Augusta Williams (Asst. Secretary)

Mrs. Josephine Nosegbe (Committee Member)

Mrs. Ndidi Ogwu (Committee Member)

Mrs. Franca Orewa (committee member)

Mrs. Gloria Eziakor (social director)

Effective: March 29, 2020.

