

# CONSTITUTION

## NAME

1. The society shall be known as “Society of Independent Doulas (Singapore) or “Doulas of Singapore” or “DoS”, hereinafter referred to as the “Society”.

## PLACE OF BUSINESS

2. Its place of business shall be at such address as may be decided upon by the committee and approved by the Registrar of Societies. DoS shall carry on its activities only in places and premises which have the prior written approval from the relevant authorities, where necessary.

## OBJECTS

3. The Society’s objects are:
- a) To provide a platform for doulas that allows for communication, support, exchange of information and social interaction. This includes mentorship and continued professional development.
  - b) To encourage dialogue and a good working relationship between doulas and the medical profession
  - c) To communicate with hospitals and primary care-givers to keep up-to-date with their standards and procedures and make this information available to its members.

## MEMBERSHIP

4. Membership requirements:
- a) Any professional birth workers who have achieved certification with internationally renowned institutions like CBI (Childbirth International) and DONA (Doulas of North America).
  - b) Graduates from other certifying institutions are welcome to apply for membership providing details of their course content and certification requirements and individual cases will be assessed by a designated committee.
  - c) Fully certified members must have completed a minimum of two births
  - d) Trainee members studying under the aforementioned institutions must provide proof of active study and complete their certification within 18 months.
  - e) All members must be over the age of 18.
  - f) Membership is not restricted by sex, experience, race or religion.
  - g) A copy of the constitution shall be furnished to every approved member upon payment of the first annual subscription or made available at any time upon request.

- h) Any membership queries should be directed to the following email address:  
[membership@doulasofsingapore.com](mailto:membership@doulasofsingapore.com)

## **ENTRANCE FEES, SUBSCRIPTIONS AND OTHER DUES**

9. An Annual Subscription for Membership paid by all members as shall be determined by the Committee from time to time. There will be no Entrance Fee.
- a) Membership will run from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January to the 31<sup>st</sup> of December
  - b) The Membership Contribution is based on the Committee's estimate of the running expenses of the Society, i.e. stationery, postage, printing, web hosting and other expenses related to the Society's online presence.
  - c) Surplus funds may be utilised to subsidise *ad hoc* functions.
  - d) Membership contributions are non-refundable.
  - e) Should a member join after 1<sup>st</sup> of January, the Society will shall be pro-rata their subscription.
  - f) Members who retire from the Society during the financial year will not receive any refund of their subscription.
  - g) The Committee shall inform all members of any change in the Membership Contribution by the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> month (September) of the relevant financial year.
  - h) The annual subscription for renewing members is due before the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> month of the fiscal year. If a member falls into arrears with their subscription or other dues, they shall be informed immediately by the treasurer (through monthly reminders). If they fail to settle their arrears within four months of them becoming due, the President may order that they be denied the privileges of membership.
  - i) The Committee shall ensure that the "Member in Arrears" has received due notice of their debts.
  - j) Any additional funds required for special purposes may only be raised from members with the consent of the General Meeting of the Members.

## **SUPREME AUTHORITY AND GENERAL MEETINGS**

10. The income and property of the Society whensoever derived shall be applied towards the promotion of the objects of the Society as set forth in this Constitution and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend or bonus or otherwise howsoever by way of profit to the persons who at any time are or have been members of the Society or to any of them or to any person claiming through any of them.

11. The supreme authority of the Society is vested in a General Meeting of the Members presided over by the President or their nominee.

12. The Annual General Meeting has to be held two months from the close of its financial year.

13. At other times an Extraordinary General Meeting must be called by the President on the request in writing of not less than one quarter of the total voting membership, and may be called at any time by the order of the Committee. The

notice in writing shall be given by the Secretary setting forth the business that is to be transacted. The Extraordinary General Meeting shall be convened within two months from receiving this request to convene the Extraordinary General Meeting.

14. If the Committee does not within two months after the date of the receipt of the written request proceed to convene an Extraordinary General Meeting, the members who requested for the Extraordinary General Meeting shall convene the Extraordinary General Meeting by giving ten days notice to voting members setting forth the business to be transacted and simultaneously posting the agenda on the Society's website and/or circulate it via email.

15. At least two weeks' notice shall be given of an Annual General Meeting and at least ten days notice of an Extraordinary General Meeting. Notice of meeting stating the date, time and place of meeting shall be sent by the Secretary to all voting members. The particulars of the agenda shall be posted on the Society's website or distributed via email seven days in advance of the meeting.

16. The following points will be considered at the Annual General Meeting:

- a) The previous financial year's accounts and annual report of the Committee
- b) Where applicable, the election of office-bearers for the following term.

17. Any member who wishes to place an item on the agenda of a General Meeting may do so provided they give notice in writing to the Secretary one week before the meeting is due to be held.

18. At least one quarter of the total voting membership or 30 voting members, whichever is the lesser, present at a General Meeting shall form a quorum.

19. In the event of there being no quorum at the commencement of a General Meeting, the meeting shall be adjourned for half an hour and should the number then present be insufficient to form a quorum, those present shall be considered a quorum, but they shall have no power to amend any of the existing rules.

## **MANAGEMENT AND COMMITTEE**

20. The administration of the Society shall be entrusted to an Executive Committee consisted of the following to be elected at each Annual General Meeting:

- Executive Committee:
  - President
  - Vice-president
  - Secretary
  - Treasurer

21. All other Members will automatically form the General Committee.

22. Names for the Executive Committee shall be proposed and seconded at the Annual General Meeting and election will follow on a simple majority vote of the Members. The term of office of the Executive Committee is one year. At the end of their term of office, Executive Committee members may put themselves up for re-election at the subsequent Annual General Meeting.

23. Election will either be by show of hands or, subject to the agreement of the majority of the voting Members present, by a secret ballot. In the event of a tie, a re-vote shall be taken. If a re-vote still results in a tie, a lot shall be drawn to determine who shall be the successful candidate, unless the contesting candidate withdrew in favour of one of themselves. Absentee Members can send in their votes by proxy (in writing).

24. A General Committee Meeting shall be held at least once a month after giving seven days' notice to members. The President may call a General Committee meeting at any time by giving five days' notice. At least half of the General Committee Members must be present for its proceedings to be valid. A meeting may also take place via conference call, video conference or electronically.

25. Any member of the Executive Committee absenting themselves from three meetings consecutively without satisfactory explanations shall be deemed to have withdrawn from the Executive Committee and a successor may be co-opted by the Executive Committee to serve until the next Annual General Meeting. Any changes in the Executive Committee will be notified to the Registrar of Societies within two weeks of the change.

26. The duty of the Executive Committee is to organise and supervise the daily activities of the Society. The Executive Committee may not act contrary to the expressed wishes of the General Meeting without prior reference to it and always remains subordinate to the General Meetings.

27. The Executive Committee has the power to:

- a) Authorise the expenditure of a sum not exceeding SGD2,000.- per ad hoc expenses from the Society's funds per month.
- b) Exceed the SGD2,000 cap limit if agreed unanimously by all Committee members in writing. Agreement may be provided by email in one or more parts or documented in minutes of a Committee Meeting.

## **DUTIES OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

28. The President shall act as chairperson at all General and Committee meetings. She shall also represent the Society in its dealings with outside persons.

29. The Vice-President shall assist the President and deputise for her in her absence.

30. The Secretary shall keep all records except financial of the Society and shall be responsible for their correctness. She will keep minutes of all General and Executive Committee meeting, she shall maintain an up-to-date Register of Members at all times.

31. The Treasurer shall keep all funds and collect and disperse all moneys on behalf of the Society and shall keep an account of all monetary transactions and shall be responsible for their correctness. She is authorised to expend up to SGD1,000 per month for petty expenses on behalf of the Society. She will not keep more than SGD 250 in the form of cash. Money in excess of this will be desposited in a bank to be

named by the Executive Committee. Cheques etc for withdrawals from the bank can be signed by any two of the Executive Committee Members (President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary).

32. General Committee Members shall assist in the general administration of the Society and perform duties assigned by the Executive Committee from time to time, e.g. hosting sisterhood meetings and organising on-going training and development as well as mentoring new doulas.

## **REVIEW AND FINANCIAL YEAR**

33. The financial year shall be from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January to the 31<sup>st</sup> of December.

34. The Executive Committee will appoint a suitable member to perform a review of the financial accounts on behalf of members, hereinafter referred to as the "Reviewer". The review does not need to be a full audit, but at minimum is a review of levels of expenditure and reconciliation of cash to original bank statements. The accounts of the Society shall be audited by a firm of Certified Public Accountants if the gross income or expenditure of the Society exceeds SGD500,000 in that financial year.

35. The Reviewer must be over the age of 18 and should have a generally recognised financial qualification (diploma or higher) and/or sufficient business experience to be able to perform a financial review. A member who has worked in a finance function; or had directly managed a business/department, is likely to be deemed to have sufficient business experience to act as a Reviewer.

36. Any Member that has been an Executive Committee Member at any time during the year cannot act as Reviewer for that year.

37. The Treasurer will provide to the Reviewer a balance sheet; cash flow statement; bank reconciliation (if necessary); and access to source documents including bank statements; cheques and the cheque book. The Treasurer will assist the Reviewer to complete the review.

38. The Reviewer will complete a report outlining the scope, work performed, and the results of the review and send to the Executive Committee by the end of the first month of the subsequent financial year. The treasurer will be required to present a report upon each year's accounts to the Annual General Meeting including balance sheet, cash flow and the reviewers report.

## **PROHIBITIONS**

39. The following prohibitions shall be in effect:

- a) The funds of the Society shall not be used to pay the fines of members convicted in a court of law.
- b) The Society shall not engage in any Trade Union activity as defined in any written law relating to trade unions for the time being in force in Singapore

- c) The Society shall not indulge in any political activity or allow its funds to be used for political purposes.
- d) The Society shall not hold any lottery whether confined to its members or not, in the name of the Society or its Executive Committee or Members unless with the prior approval of the relevant authorities.

### **AMENDMENT TO RULES**

40. The Society shall not amend its Constitution without the prior approval in writing of the Registrar of Societies. No alteration or addition/deletion to this Constitution shall be passed, except at a General Meeting and with the consent of two thirds of the voting Members present at the General Meeting.

### **INTERPRETATION**

41. In the event of any question or matter pertaining to day-to-day administration of the society which is not expressly provided for in this Constitution, the Executive Committee shall have the power to use their own discretion. The decision of the Executive Committee shall be final unless it is reversed at a General Meeting of Members.

### **DISPUTES**

42. In the event of any disputes arising amongst members, they shall attempt to resolve the matter at an Extraordinary General Meeting in accordance with the rules of the Constitution.

### **DISSOLUTION**

43. The Society shall not be dissolved, except with the consent of not less than three-fifths of the total voting membership of the Society for the time being resident in Singapore expressed, either in person or by proxy, at a General Meeting convened for the purpose.

44. In the event of the Society being dissolved as provided above, all debts and liabilities legally incurred on behalf of the Society shall be fully discharged and the remaining funds disposed of in such manner as the General Meeting of Members may determine or donated to an approved charity or charities in Singapore.

45. A Certificate of Dissolution shall be given within seven days of the dissolution to the Registrar of Societies.