

Bylaws

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HADIYA COMMUNITY IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA
USA

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977 Montreal Rd. Clarkston, GA. 30021
P.O. Box 713
Clarkston, GA. 30021

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HADIYA COMMUNITY IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the Hadiya Community Association, drawing strength from our rich history, cultural heritage, and the enduring spirit of our ancestors, do hereby establish these bylaws. Inspired by the resilience, contributions, and sacrifices of our forebears, we commit ourselves to the preservation, promotion, and transmission of the invaluable cultural, social, and historical legacy of the Hadiya people.

Acknowledging the Fandaanano, our traditional socio-religious system, and the merit-based leadership practices that exemplify the democratic spirit of our ancestors, we recognize their importance in shaping our values and community identity. Having navigated through historical challenges and transformations, we remain steadfast in our mission to revitalize and safeguard the uniqueness of our identity, language, traditions, and values.

While residing in the United States of America, we are determined to live as both integrated American citizens and proud Hadiya. We aim to embrace the culture, language, and spirit of Americanism without losing ourselves in it, nor seeking to overwhelm it. We envision a balance where we are fully immersed in both worlds—honoring our Hadiya roots while contributing positively to the American society we call home.

We aspire to be exemplary neighbors, friends, and even role models for the communities around us, fostering goodwill and understanding. It is our desire to pass this mantle of cultural preservation and integration to future generations, ensuring that they continue to carry the torch of our heritage.

Through these bylaws, we commit to building a community that respects diversity, encourages active participation, and promotes the well-being of all its members. We pledge to uphold the dignity and integrity of our culture and language, ensuring that the Hadiya heritage is not only preserved but also celebrated and understood within the context of our modern lives. This association is dedicated to the educational, cultural, and social enrichment of our community, both within the Hadiya diaspora and in our homeland, with the goal of strengthening our collective bonds and securing our rich legacy for future generations.

Though we live thousands of miles from Ethiopia, we continue to live as both Americans and Hadiya, recognizing that our identity is shaped by both worlds. Just as the Hadiya community in

Ethiopia has lived in harmony with other Ethiopian tribes and languages without abandoning its own language and culture, so too must we maintain this spirit of balance and unity in the United States.

Our community is growing rapidly, with new generations being born and new members arriving from Ethiopia. This growth requires organization and support, especially for those newly settling here. It is imperative that we provide a strong foundation for the next chapter of our community's journey.

While the association was established earlier, it has not fully realized the hopes and expectations of its members. Therefore, to meet these aspirations and fulfill our collective vision, we establish this new constitution as follows.

ARTICLE I. NAME AND ADDRESS

1.1 NAME:

This Church shall be known as "HADIYA COMMUNITY IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA"

1.2 ADDRESS:

1.2.1 HADIYA COMMUNITY IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA

977 Montreal Rd. Clarkston, GA. 30021

P.O. Box 713

Clarkston, GA. 30021

1.2.2 It may also be referred to in this Constitution and Bylaws as "HADIYA COMMUNITY IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA" "the Community" or "HCAG."

1.2.3 The community may open branch or subordinate offices at other locations in the future.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE AND FUNCTIONS

2.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of Hadiya Community Association is to foster a vibrant, cohesive, and safe neighborhood by facilitating social connectivity, local governance, and the effective management of shared resources and amenities. We aim to enhance the quality of life for all residents through proactive maintenance of common areas,

resolution of conflicts, and advocacy for the community's needs. Our association is dedicated to ensuring a harmonious living environment where each member feels valued, connected, and involved in the decision-making processes that shape our community. By promoting engagement, safety, and well-being, we strive to maintain and increase property values, creating a desirable and thriving community for current and future residents.

2.2 FUNCTIONS:

The functions of Hadiya Community Association have been outlined in the following nine points:

- 2.2.1 **Social Connectivity and Community Building:** Hadiya Community associations foster a sense of belonging and togetherness among residents. They create opportunities for neighbors to meet, socialize, and develop strong bonds, which is particularly valuable in a diverse and often individualistic society.
- 2.2.2 **Local Governance and Self-Management:** To create a positive influence among local and government officials. Hadiya Community associations allows residents to have a say in the management of their local community. This includes decisions about amenities, community rules, and maintenance, ensuring that the community's needs and preferences are reflected in its management.
- 2.2.3 **Maintenance and Upkeep of Common Areas:** Hadiya Community association is responsible for maintaining common areas and facilities like parks, pools, and community centers. This upkeep enhances the quality of life for residents and can increase property values.
- 2.2.4 **Conflict Resolution:** Hadiya Community associations provide a structured way to address and resolve disputes between residents, such as issues related to property boundaries, noise complaints, or shared resources.
- 2.2.5 **Community Safety and Security:** Hadiya Community associations implement measures to enhance safety and security, such as neighborhood watch programs, security patrols, and well-lit common areas, contributing to a safer living environment.

- 2.2.6 **Resource Allocation and Management:** Hadiya Community associations manage collective resources, ensuring that amenities are well-maintained and community funds are used effectively and transparently.
- 2.2.7 **Representing in Legal Matters:** As the legal representatives of the Hadiya Community, we will represent the community in all legal matters. They can represent the community in local government or other external organizations, advocating for the community's needs and interests. In essence, community associations play a crucial role in enhancing the quality of life for residents, ensuring well-maintained and safe neighborhoods, and fostering a sense of community and belonging.
- 2.2.8 **Seek Scholarships:** Hadiya Community will seek free scholarships for youth to support their education and job training.
- 2.2.9 **Empowering Community Members Through Political Awareness for Collective Benefit:** Hadiya Community will enhance the political awareness of its members to protect and uphold their interests.

ARTICLE III. AUTHORITY AND POWER

3.1 GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

General Assembly of all members is the final authority of the Hadiya Community.

- 3.1.1 Under the General Assembly, there shall be a governing body known as the Community Board, which is accountable to the General Assembly.
- 3.1.2 Members of the Community Board shall be elected by the General Assembly and are accountable to it. The Community Board is responsible for executing the general operations and leadership of the Hadiya Community.
- 3.1.3 To support the work of the Hadiya Community, various subcommittees shall be established, each accountable to the Community Board.
- 3.1.4 The Chairman of the Community Board shall preside over meetings of the General Assembly. However, if deemed necessary, the General Assembly may elect another individual from the board or the community members to lead by a two-thirds majority vote.

3.2 DEFINED RESPONSIBILITIES OF AUTHORITIES

Subject to the provision of Georgia Non-profit Corporation Law and an limitation in the Articles of incorporation, the Hadiya Community shall exercise the following powers;

- 3.2.1 Prepare constitutions and bylaws, to implement and amend them as deemed necessary.
- 3.2.2 Establish various ministry Departments, Divisions and Institutions to promote the purpose of the Hadiya Community.
- 3.2.3 Shall formulate guiding polices and interpret the policies,
- 3.2.4 Without relinquishing its right to self-governance and self-direction, the Hadiya community will collaborate with other communities and organizations that share similar purposes.

3.3 SOURCE OF INCOME

- 3.3.1 The Hadiya Community shall fund its operations through contributions from members, friends, and other ethically aligned sources. The community is committed to ensuring that all financial support reflects its values and mission.
- 3.3.2 Any funds or gifts from external sources shall be accepted only upon approval by the Community Board. Once approved, these funds shall be managed by the Treasurer in alignment with the Board's directives to ensure transparent and responsible financial stewardship.

3.4 MEMBERSHIP

- 3.4.1 Membership shall be granted to individuals who meet the following criteria:-
 - 3.4.1.1 Those born into Hadiya families, either biologically or through adoption.
 - 3.4.1.2 Individuals who respect and value the Hadiya community and wish to associate with it.
 - 3.4.1.3 Individuals who are connected to Hadiya families by marriage or other recognized association.
 - 3.4.1.4 Individuals who accept and uphold the constitution (bylaws) of the Hadiya Community.

3.4.1.5 Individuals actively involved in the work and vision of the Hadiya Community.

3.4.1.6 Those willing to support the vision of the Hadiya Community through their talents, finances, time, and skills.

3.4.2 **Acceptance of Members**

The acceptance of new members shall take place officially during General Assembly meetings. The names and addresses of new members shall be recorded in the membership registry.

3.4.3 **Composition of the General Assembly**

The General Assembly shall consist of the Board, full-time and part-time workers, and all members of the Hadiya Community.

3.4.4 **Termination of members.**

Membership may be revoked for any one of the following causes:

3.4.4.1 When a member requests to be terminated.

3.4.4.2 If a member is absent from members meetings at least for four times without good cause and fails to inform the board or not willing to respond to communication from the board. The case should be reviewed by the board and, if deemed appropriate, the board may terminate the individual by 2/3 majority vote.

3.4.4.3 By death of the member.

3.4.4.4 If he holds to or promotes false information that damages the reputation of the community or the Board as a whole.

3.4.4.5 Termination of a member shall be decided by the Board.

ARTICLE IV. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

4.1 Revision of Membership Roll

The Board shall conduct an annual review of the Community's membership roll, ensuring that all member statuses are updated and accurately recorded.

4.2 Rights and Responsibilities of Members

- 4.2.1 Members shall engage in fellowship with one another through mutual care, acceptance, respect, forgiveness, constructive guidance, and encouragement to foster personal growth and strengthen the community.
- 4.2.2 Each member is expected to uphold ethical standards and demonstrate common sense in their actions. Members are encouraged to lead lives that serve as positive examples within the community and society at large. –
- 4.2.3 Members are expected to participate actively in the community’s activities and to support its mission, goals, and initiatives.
- 4.2.4 Members shall contribute to the community by sharing their gifts, talents, and resources for the collective benefit of all.

4.3 Disciplinary Actions

A member may be subject to disciplinary action under the following circumstances: -

- 4.3.1 If a member is found to be no longer in alignment with or acting contrary to the principles and mission of the community, they shall be formally admonished by the General Assembly.
- 4.3.2 If a member’s conduct harms the reputation or well-being of the community, the Board shall counsel the member with the goal of restoration rather than punishment. The primary aim of disciplinary action is to maintain harmony within the community and to help the individual reintegrate positively. If, despite these efforts, restoration cannot be achieved, the Board may proceed with the exclusion of the offending member.
- 4.3.3 **Restoration of Membership.** An excluded member who demonstrates genuine repentance and a commitment to the community’s principles may apply for reinstatement. Upon review and approval by the Board, the individual may be welcomed back, with a period of restoration to be defined by the Board to ensure a smooth reintegration into the community.

ARTICLE V. BOARD AND BOARD MEMBERS

- 5.1 The Board members shall be elected by the General Assembly of members through a transparent and fair voting process.

- 5.2 The number of Board members shall be no fewer than five and no more than seven to ensure effective governance and representation.
- 5.3 The roles and titles of Board members shall be as follows: -
 - 5.3.1 Board Chairperson
 - 5.3.2 Vice Chairperson
 - 5.3.3 Board Secretary
 - 5.3.4 Board Treasurer
 - 5.3.5 General Board Members
- 5.4 The Board members are entrusted with upholding and advocating for the mission, vision, and core values of the Community.
- 5.5 The Board serves as the principal administrative body of the Community and is responsible for representing the interests of the General Assembly in all matters.
- 5.6 Subject to the provisions of the Georgia Non-Profit Corporation Law and any limitations set forth in the Articles of Incorporation or these bylaws, the business, affairs, and functions of the Community shall be managed by or under the direction of the Board, in alignment with the expressed will of the General Assembly.
- 5.7 The duties and responsibilities of the Board members include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - 5.7.1 Determining the location of the Community's office, its organizational structure, and management hierarchy as deemed necessary for effective operations.
 - 5.7.2 Entering into agreements, borrowing funds, and incurring debt on behalf of the Community when necessary to further its mission and goals, while maintaining fiscal responsibility.
 - 5.7.3 Calling special meetings of the General Assembly as necessary to address urgent or significant matters affecting the Community.
 - 5.7.4 Preparing an annual report, strategic plan, and budget proposal to present to the General Assembly. These documents must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the General Assembly to be enacted.

- 5.7.5 Enforcing disciplinary measures for members who fail to adhere to the Community’s moral and ethical standards. The Board shall inform the General Assembly of any disciplinary actions taken, ensuring transparency and accountability.

ARTICLE VI. ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS

- 6.1 The election of members to the Board shall be conducted once every three years during a General Assembly meeting called specifically for this purpose.
- 6.2 The term of office for each Board member shall be three years, aligning with the election cycle to ensure continuity in leadership.
- 6.3 A Board member may be re-elected to serve up to two consecutive terms (totaling six years). After serving two consecutive terms, a Board member must step down for one term (i.e., three years) before being eligible for re-election.
- 6.4 Criteria for Board membership are as follows:
 - 6.4.1 The individual must demonstrate ethical conduct that is beyond reproach, exemplifying integrity and accountability.
 - 6.4.2 The individual must have been a member of the Community for at least three years to ensure familiarity with its values, mission, and members.
 - 6.4.3 The individual must have demonstrated commitment to the Community through contributions of time, skills, financial support, or other valuable resources, showing a genuine dedication to its growth and success.
 - 6.4.4 The individual must have responsibly managed their personal affairs and family, displaying diligence and ethical behavior that is free from blemish or reproach.
 - 6.4.5 The individual must possess a mature understanding of the cultural, social, and economic context of the United States, with particular familiarity with the state of Georgia, to effectively guide the Community in a manner aligned with local needs and realities.

ARTICLE VII. COMMITTEE FOR NOMINATION OF BOARD MEMBERS

7.1 Nomination Committee

The Nomination Committee shall consist of five members nominated from the General Assembly. The selection of committee members shall be determined by a two-thirds majority vote of the General Assembly. Nominees for the committee should be individuals of maturity and fairness, trusted to carry out their duties with integrity.

7.2 Election Procedure

7.2.1 The Nomination Committee shall present a slate of nominees totaling at least twice the number of board positions to be filled.

7.2.2 The General Assembly may add one or two additional nominees to the list if deemed necessary.

7.2.3 All nominees shall be screened based on the established criteria for board membership. The screening process will be conducted in consultation with current board members to ensure alignment with community standards and expectations.

7.2.4 Upon completing the screening process, a final list of nominees, numbering at least twice the required openings, shall be presented to the General Assembly for the final election.

7.2.5 Elections shall be conducted by secret ballot, which will be distributed to all voting members of the General Assembly.

7.2.6 Nominees will be ranked according to the number of votes received. Those with the highest number of votes will be appointed to the board. The next two highest-ranking nominees will be designated as alternates, who may serve if one or two board members are unable to fulfill their roles. Alternates shall serve until the next scheduled election.

7.2.7 Immediately following the annual election, the newly elected board members shall meet to elect officers (e.g., Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer) from among themselves. This meeting shall be chaired by the Nomination Committee.

- 7.2.8 The Nomination Committee shall be nominated by the General Assembly, but the election process itself shall be conducted under the oversight of the current board.
- 7.2.9 For the purpose of electing board members, the General Assembly shall meet twice within a one-month period: once for nominations and a second time for the final election.

ARTICLE VIII. ASSEMBLY

8.1 Members General Assembly

- 8.1.1 Regular annual meetings of the General Assembly shall be held twice a year, on the third Sunday of June and December. Every three years, an election for board members shall be held during the October General Assembly meeting. If the board deems it necessary, a meeting may be scheduled up to one month earlier or later, provided that all members are clearly notified of the change. During each annual General Assembly meeting, board members shall be elected (when applicable), and other relevant agenda items shall be discussed and decided upon.
- 8.1.2 The venue and date for each General Assembly meeting shall be determined by the board members and announced in advance.
- 8.1.3 Notice of any General Assembly meeting shall be given at least two weeks prior to the scheduled date. Additionally, a written notice specifying the location, date, and time of the meeting shall be prominently posted on the official noticeboard at the Community office.

8.2 Special Meetings of Members

A special meeting of members may be called by the Board Chairperson or Secretary upon request by a majority of the board or by a written request from a majority of the members. Such requests must state the purpose of the proposed meeting.

8.3 Quorum

- 8.3.1 For meetings of the board and any other committees of the Hadiya Community, a majority of the members constitutes a quorum required to conduct business, hold a meeting, and make decisions. Decisions passed at such meetings are valid if the required quorum is present.

- 8.3.2 Unless otherwise specified in these bylaws with a higher voting requirement, decisions shall be passed by a simple majority vote. While a consensus is desirable, a simple majority vote shall suffice.
- 8.3.3 A simple majority shall also constitute a quorum for General Assembly meetings.

ARTICLE IX. OFFICES OF RESPONSIBILITY/RESPONSIBILITIES OF OFFICERS

9.1 **Board Members.** The Board shall consist, at a minimum, of a Chairman, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. Additional positions may include an Accountant, Vice Chairman, Vice Secretary, or any other Officer as deemed necessary. While a single board member may occupy two offices, no individual may hold more than one of the following roles simultaneously: Chairman, Secretary, or Treasurer.

9.2 Duties of the Chairman

- 9.2.1 Chairs all Board meetings and General Assembly meetings of the Members.
- 9.2.2 Prepares the agenda for Board meetings in consultation with the Secretary and the agenda for General Assembly meetings in consultation with Board members.
- 9.2.3 Unless otherwise prohibited by law or these Bylaws, executes business on behalf of the Hadiya Community Association or Board, as authorized by the Board, with external organizations or institutions.
- 9.2.4 May serve as an ex-officio member of any committee within the Hadiya Community Association.
- 9.2.5 Responsible for overseeing and following up on the implementation of Board decisions.
- 9.2.6 Oversees the activities and performance of other Board offices.
- 9.2.7 Performs additional duties as assigned by the Board.
- 9.2.8 In the Chairman's absence, the Vice Chairman shall fulfill the Chairman's duties.

9.3 Duties of the Secretary

- 9.3.1 Maintains, or ensures the maintenance of, minutes of all meetings and proceedings, including those of the General Assembly and Board meetings.

- 9.3.2 Assists the Chairman in preparing meeting agendas.
- 9.3.3 Handles official correspondence on behalf of the Hadiya Community Association or Board, as assigned by the Board or in consultation with the Chairman.
- 9.3.4 Carries out other duties as assigned by the Board.

9.4 **Duties of the Treasurer**

- 9.4.1 Has general custody of all funds, properties, and securities of the Hadiya Community Association.
- 9.4.2 Maintains, or ensures the maintenance of, accurate and adequate records of the association's properties and business transactions.
- 9.4.3 Ensures all expenditures are pre-approved by the Board and that outgoing checks are co-signed by at least two Board members.
- 9.4.4 Ensures the keeping of orderly and accurate accounting records and provides financial statements to the Board or General Assembly upon request.
- 9.4.5 Regularly presents financial reports to the Board.

ARTICLE X. MEETINGS & SYMPOSIUMS

- 10.1 **Regular and Special Meetings.** The Chairman or any member of the Board may call a meeting. The Board shall hold regular meetings at least once a month. Services may be suspended under special circumstances, such as inclement weather, at the discretion of the Chairman or in consultation with the Secretary.
- 10.2 **Flexibility in Meeting Locations and Timing.** To fulfill the mission of the Hadiya Community, meetings may be held at any location and time. However, the Board shall decide the location and time prior to each meeting.
- 10.3 **Conferences and Symposiums.** The Hadiya Community Association shall organize conferences or symposiums at least three (3) times per year to advance its mission. The Board shall determine the time and location for these events. A minimum of two weeks' notice shall be given to all members, and all necessary materials for instruction and participation shall be made available.
- 10.4 **Emergency Meetings.** In the event of urgent matters, the Board may call a special Board meeting or General Assembly meeting as needed.

ARTICLE XI. AMENDMENTS

The Word of God, as set forth in the scriptures, is unchangeable and shall not be amended. Amendments to these Bylaws may be proposed and approved by a four-fifths (4/5) majority vote of the General Assembly, either at the annual meeting or a special meeting specifically convened for this purpose. Amendments to this bylaw require additional scrutiny: any proposed change must be approved by a majority vote at two consecutive General Assembly meetings called for that purpose. All amendments shall be based on thorough investigation and study to ensure alignment with the mission and values of the Hadiya Community.

ARTICLE XII. DISSOLUTION

In the event that the organization must dissolve, no funds or assets of the Hadiya Community shall be distributed to any member, board leader, or employee. After all outstanding debts and liabilities have been paid, any remaining assets shall be transferred to one or more nonprofit organizations with a similar purpose, as determined by the general assembly.

ARTICLE XIII. POWER TO INTERPRET

In the case of any ambiguity or controversy regarding the interpretation of a word, phrase, clause, or statement in these Bylaws, the final decision shall be made by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the General Assembly.

SPECIAL NOTES:

1. Any references using male pronouns shall be understood to include female counterparts equally.
2. Terms such as “Board,” “Committee,” and “Executive Board” refer to the Board elected by the General Assembly.
3. “General Assembly (GA)” denotes the assembly of members with the required quorum present.

Date

ARTICLE XIV.

HADIYA COMMUNITY MEMBERS COVENANT

As a member of the Hadiya Community, whether by birth or association, I enter into a covenant with my fellow members to uphold the values and integrity of our Community Association.

- I will conduct myself and guide my family to avoid any wrongful or unethical actions that could harm others or damage the community's reputation.
- I strive to be a positive role model in both actions and words for the new generation and for the surrounding communities.
- When I make a mistake, I will seek forgiveness from those affected and from the community that embraces me as a member.
- I commit to supporting the Hadiya Community through my resources—be it my time, talents, knowledge, or financial contributions.

Full Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____