

OSA Chapter Constitution and By-Laws

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ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of the organization shall be Washington DC chapter of The Orissa Society of the Americas, Inc., here after abbreviated OSA DC.

ARTICLE II: OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the chapter shall be:

- To form a non-political and non-profit child organization of OSA with all the persons residing in Washington DC vicinity, i.e., in the states of Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Delaware and capital city Washington DC that are interested in Orissa.
- To promote interest and activities in the understanding of the Oriya culture in local level.
- To facilitate the exchange of information between Orissa and DC area Oriyas.

ARTICLE III: ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION

Section 1

OSA DC will be a chapter organization with the same EIN as of OSA which is incorporated under the laws of the United States and is a non-profit organization.

Section 2

The article of organization of OSA DC comprises of the Article of its inception and the associated By-Laws as amended from time to time.

Section 3: Address for Communication

The default address for communication will be the address of the chapter president. For membership application, the address of chapter's Secretary-Treasurer will be used.

ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1

Membership in the OSA DC shall be open to all persons in Washington DC vicinity interested in Orissa. The membership dues and categories shall be described in the By-Laws.

Section 2

Annual membership dues shall be payable by October 30th of each year.

ARTICLE V: OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1

The ultimate authority of OSA DC shall be vested in the membership. The members of the chapter that are also members of OSA National shall choose the elected officers by mail ballot.

Section 2

The office bearers of the OSA DC shall be an elected President, a Vice President and a Secretary-Treasurer. The executive committee of the OSA DC shall consist of the following:

1. President (Chairperson of the Committee)

2. Vice President.
3. Secretary-Treasurer
4. Editor of the OSA DC Newsletter (Non-Voting)
5. Immediate past President.

Section 3

The President, the Vice-President and the Secretary-Treasurer shall be elected for a term of two years. These three executive officials must be permanent members (life members of the chapter and life member, patron or benefactor of OSA National) of both OSA National and OSA DC and must be members of good standing and must be of 21 years of age or over. The Vice President shall be a running mate of the President. A vote for the President shall mean a vote for his/her running mate. The President shall appoint the Editor of the OSA DC Newsletter.

Section 4: Powers and functions of the President

1. The President shall be the chief executive officer of the OSA DC. He/she shall announce the members of the executive committee at the time of assuming office in the Kumar Purnima event. The executive committee shall assume office for a term of two years. The other elected office bearers also shall take office at the Kumar Purnima event following the election for a term of two years.
2. The President, in consultation with the executive committee, shall present a plan of activities along with a proposed budget at his/her first official event. In the event of resignation, inaction or negligence of duties by any member of the Executive Committee, the President shall call for re-election or re-nomination for such position within a period of one month.
3. The President shall have the power to appoint committees and sub-committees to conduct various functions as he/she deems proper for the smooth functioning and continuity of the OSA DC.
4. If the President fails to perform his/her duties to the satisfaction of the members of OSA DC, he/she shall be removed by a vote of no-confidence. A no-confidence motion may be moved by a petition signed by at least 20% of the total membership as per the annual membership list published in January-April Newsletter of the Calendar year or from the current roster. This petition shall be submitted to the Secretary-Treasurer who shall circulate the same among the members of the executive committee within 10 days and among the membership within 30 days from the date of receipt of the petition. The Secretary-Treasurer will collect the votes from the membership within 30 days from the date of receipt of the petition. The Secretary-Treasurer will collect the votes from the membership by mail ballot, within 21 days from the date of remittal, and will announce the outcome, in writing, to the Vice President and to the Executive Committee within 7 days of the deadline date of the receipt of the votes. The President will be removed from office by a 2/3 majority of votes of no-confidence. In case of the removal of the President by a vote of no-confidence, the Vice President shall assume the office of the President for the rest of the term and shall appoint a Vice President subject to confirmation by the Executive Committee.

Section 5: Powers and Functions of Vice President

1. The Vice President shall derive his/her duties from the President and succeed him/her in case of his/her incapacity, resignation, or death.
2. He/she will serve as the Co-host of the Annual OSA DC Kumar Purnima event and work with the members for making detailed arrangements. He/she will act as the official chapter representative to coordinate activities for OSA annual conventions on behalf of the chapter.
3. He/she may act in any other capacity, as delegated by the OSA DC President.
4. In case of his/her resignation or death, the President shall nominate a successor to the Vice President whose appointment will be approved by the Executive Board with a simple majority vote, for the remainder of the term.

Section 6: Powers and Functions of the Secretary-Treasurer

1. The Secretary-Treasurer shall assume office along with the President and present detailed annual expense report at the annual Kumar Purnima event. He/She shall be responsible for keeping the financial records current and for reporting it to the Executive Committee and to the general membership at the annual Kumar Purnima event.

2. The operating budget of OSA shall be within the limits of the total revenue raised.
3. He/she will send the chapter financial records to the treasurer of OSA National by **May 31st** of every year.
4. The Secretary shall be responsible for fundraising, membership recruitment and for compilation of a list of paid members. This list shall be published in the chapter Newsletter for every fiscal year.
5. The office bearers of the OSA DC shall be reimbursed for reasonable mailing, telephone, and other expenses. Any one item of expenditure beyond two hundred dollars must be approved of by the President. Any amount over 400 dollars on a single non-budgeted item must be approved by a majority of the Executive Committee. On expiration of his/her term or in the case of his/her resignation or removal, he/she shall transfer the accounts to his/her successor or to the President within 30 days.
6. The Secretary-Treasurer shall be removed by the same way as the President. However, a no-confidence motion in this case shall be presented to the President for further action.
7. In case of the removal of the Secretary-Treasurer by the no-confidence motion, or his/her resignation or death, the President shall nominate a successor whose appointment will be approved by the Executive Committee with a simple majority vote, for the remainder of the term.

Section 7: Powers and Functions of the Editor

The Editor is responsible to publish annual OSA DC Newsletter by January-April of every year. He/she is also responsible for the contents of the newsletter. Each Newsletter shall include, among other items, the President and Secretary's notes, chapter activities and non-political Orissa news.

Section 8: Powers and Functions of the Executive Committee

All matters pertaining to OSA DC must be discussed in the Executive Committee and the decisions must be taken by a majority vote of members present in the meeting.

ARTICLE VI: ELECTION

Section 1

All life members and annual members of OSA DC that are also members of OSA National have the right to vote and participate in the election.

Section 2

All elections are to be conducted by a secret ballot. The election procedures shall be described in the By-Laws.

Section 3

No two members of the OSA DC Executive Committee at any time shall be from the same immediate family (e.g. Husband & wife, parents & children, siblings) of any Executive Committee member.

Section 4

In case, a current office bearer such as, President, Vice President, or Secretary-Treasurer, decides to run for re-election or for another position, he/she shall give up all his/her election related responsibilities as defined in the By-Laws.

ARTICLE VII: EVENTS/MEETINGS

Section 1

There shall be at least one general body meeting within one calendar year. The President of OSA DC shall be responsible for organizing such meetings with the help of the Executive Committee.

Section 2

The Executive Committee shall meet at least twice a year to discuss the past activities, future plans, and the budget.

Section 3

Fifty percent of the regular paid members shall constitute a quorum for the general body and Executive Committee meetings.

Section 4

The President shall conduct the meetings. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall preside over the meetings. In the absence of both the President and the Vice President, an Executive Committee member appointed by the President shall conduct the meetings.

Section 5

The Executive committee should see that the four chapter events Saraswati Puja, Annual Picnic, Ganesh Puja and Kumar Purnima are organized. The Executive committee may decide to drop an event and introduce a new event; however, this should be done in consultation with the general membership of the chapter.

Section 6

The Executive committee should arrange chapter delegation for OSA National annual convention

Section 7

At least one member from the Executive committee must attend OSA National annual convention

ARTICLE IX: FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year for Washington DC chapter shall begin on November 1 of each even year.

ARTICLE X: AMENDMENTS AND RULES OF BUSINESS

Section 1

Any proposed amendments to the OSA DC constitution or By-Laws shall be proposed by a petition signed by at least 10 percent of the total membership or by the Executive Committee. The petition must be circulated to the general membership at least 30 days prior to the annual general body meeting.

Section 2

Any amendment to the OSA DC constitution shall need the approval of the 2/3 majority present in the general body meeting, or by 2/3 majority of members through mail ballot, for incorporation into the OSA DC constitution.

Section 3

The business of the OSA DC shall be conducted in accordance with the rules contained in the latest edition of 'Robert's Rules of Order' provided these do not contradict the By-Laws and the Rules of Business of the OSA.

Section 4

The decision of the majority of the Executive Committee on any questions involving the Constitution, its By-Laws and the Rules of Business shall need approval of a 2/3 majority of the total membership of OSA DC that are both members of OSA National and OSA DC.

BY LAWS

- BY-LAW I - MEMBERSHIP
- BY-LAW II: CHAPTER EVENTS
- BY-LAW III: ELECTION PROCEDURE
- BY-LAW IV: ETHICAL CONDUCT
- BY-LAW V: DISCIPLINARY ACTION
- BY-LAW VI: MISCELLANEOUS

BY - LAW I - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1

Any person eighteen years of age or more interested in the stated objectives of the OSA DC shall be eligible for membership.

Section 2

Membership in the OSA DC shall be of the following types:

1. REGULAR: Members that are members of both OSA National and Washington DC chapter
2. AFFILIATE: That are only members of Washington DC chapter

The above two categories will have 2 membership types available

1. ANNUAL: A single person or family by paying annual dues of \$40.00.

2. LIFE MEMBER: A single person or family paying \$150.00. In case of marriage of the single member the spouse shall be granted life membership. In case of divorce, both spouses shall be accorded individual life memberships.

Section 3

To encourage membership drive, the Executive Council may temporarily reduce the amount for any category of membership through written notification to the general membership. The period over which this reduction will be valid must be specified in the notification and the reduction cannot be repeated within the normal tenure of a particular Executive Council. The membership fees cannot be reduced to less than 65% of the prevailing schedule."

Section 4

All chapter members are expected to be members of OSA National. Members that are not OSA National members would be designated as OSA-DC affiliate members as described above.

Section 5

OSA DC members that are not members of OSA National are not eligible to vote or seek office of the OSA DC.

Section 6

Membership dues in any category may be changed by the Executive Committee with approval of the general body by a majority vote.

Section 7

The fiscal year of the OSA DC shall be from November 1 to October 31st.

BY - LAW II: CHAPTER EVENTS

Section 1

The site, dates of the chapter events shall be selected by the Executive Committee at least four months in advance for smooth planning.

Section 2

The members should be informed through web page display and by emails.

Section 3

Regular members of the chapter will be given more priority for event/cultural participation than non-members. The accounts of the events shall be prepared by the secretary/treasurer and be checked by the President along with 2 other members for audit purposes. The financial report should be communicated to OSA DC members within 45 days of the event. Any fund or the membership dues collected in the name of OSA National should be deposited with OSA National.

BY - LAW III: ELECTION PROCEDURE

Section 1

A three member election committee with one as chairman shall be appointed by the Executive Committee and will be announced to the general membership. The election committee members should be permanent members of both the chapter and OSA National in good standing. If and only if enough volunteers are not found for the job, one or two members can be appointed.

Section 2

No member of the Executive Committee is eligible to be a member of the election committee.

Section 3

The Secretary of the OSA shall prepare a list of members who have paid their dues by May 31st of the election year. This list along with the list of life members shall be submitted to the chairman of the election committee by June 4th Saturday of the election year.

Section 4

Any member that is both OSA National and chapter member can nominate. This includes the spouse of the nominee.

Section 5

Any member that is a permanent member of both OSA National and the chapter and at least a permanent member (life member) of the chapter for at least three years is eligible to contest in the election.

Section 6

Every member that is both OSA National and chapter member can vote.

Section 7

Every even year is the election year

Section 8

The following timeline should be strictly adhered for conducting the election.

Election committee formed – by June 2nd Saturday
Secretary/Treasurer provides membership list – by June 4th Saturday
Invitation for Nomination – By July 2nd Saturday
Nomination received – August 2nd Saturday
Ballots go to members – August 4th Saturday
Ballots received – September 4th Saturday
Results declared – October 1st Saturday

Section 9

Nominations for the various offices shall be invited by the election committee chairman through email announcement by July 2nd Saturday. After the nominations arrive, in case of contests, the names of the candidates shall be announced in a special US mail letter to be sent by the election committee along with the position statement of each contesting candidate. If there is no contest, the election results can be declared within one week of the deadline for receiving nominations.

Section 10: No nominations case

If there are no nominations, the election committee will extend the deadline for another week and send a reminder to all the members. If still there are no nominations, the election committee is empowered to discuss and nominate the future office bearers.

Section 11: Single slate case

In case of a single slate nomination, the election committee may announce the result and ask for formal acceptance of the default office bearers.

Section 12: Multiple slates case

In case of multiple slates, the Election Commissioner of OSA DC shall print and supply the ballots. All ballots must be sequentially numbered or coded.

Section 13

The ballots shall be mailed in the fourth weekend of August of the election year. The ballot number or code must be noted against the master membership list held by the election committee. For a returned ballot to be valid, it must be postmarked by the date on or before the 4th Saturday of September of the election year.

Section 14

The President of OSA DC shall submit the results to the Executive Committee for approval and announce the results during the Kumar Purnami event of the election year.

Section 15

The election committee shall adopt prudent ways to insure the secrecy of the voting system.

Section 16

All expenses for the election shall be reimbursed by the Secretary-Treasurer of OSA DC upon the submission of the expense report. The committee shall caution to keep expense within the budget.

Section 17

Any charge of election irregularity or fraud shall be reported to the President and the members of the Executive Committee for resolution.

Section 18

The Chapter President should present the results of the election to OSA National executives within one week of the results obtained.

BY - LAW IV: ETHICAL CONDUCT

Section 1

Considering that OSA DC is a socio-cultural organization, it values high ethical standard of respect for each other member in every OSA DC events. Uncivilized behavior will not be tolerated.

Section 2

Any dissatisfaction of a member should be conveyed to Executive Body. The Executive Body may discuss with the general membership for the necessary action.

Section 3

Membership in OSA DC is on at-will basis. OSA DC will not be legally responsible for any member's personal problems with other members or dissatisfaction with the organization.

Section 4

If some member is unhappy with the organization, he/she may resign by sending an application to the executive committee. Membership fee will not be returned.

Section 5

Ethical violation includes derogatory remarks, chain emails with uncivilized language, character assassination, harassment letters, lawsuits, physical harm and actions of similar nature.

BY - LAW V: DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Disciplinary action shall be taken by a 2/3 majority vote of the Executive Committee against any member for gross misconduct.

BY-LAW VI: MISCELLANEOUS

No part of the earnings of the OSA DC shall go to the personal benefit of any member, office bearer or private individual. Should the OSA DC disband, after paying or making provisions for payments of all the liabilities of the OSA DC, the remaining funds and assets of the OSA DC shall go to such charitable organizations as have objectives similar to this society, chosen by the majority vote of the general membership at a special meeting called for that purpose.

LOCAL CHAPTERS: FORMATION PROCESS

Section 1

A minimum of 15 families with at least 30 permanent members (life member, patron or benefactor of OSA National) from a particular area is required to petition for establishing a chapter. Those members should send a written request to the Board of Governors through the Executive Council with signatures of those 30 sponsors. These family members should commit to be members of the chapter for at least 4 years. The decision of the Board shall be conveyed in writing.

Section 2

A petition to form a chapter must be made to the Secretary of OSA for approval by the Executive Committee at least two months prior to the targeted date of its establishment.

Section 3

The petition should include constitution and by-laws of the chapter with clear objectives of formation.

Section 4

The President of a chapter or an elected representative shall become a member of the OSA Board of Governors for a term of two years. A notification to that effect shall be submitted to the Secretary of OSA on or before the June 30th of the OSA election year. A president cannot stay in the position beyond two terms totaling four years.

Section 5

The President of a chapter shall provide a membership list of the chapter to the Secretary of OSA at the beginning of each fiscal year (by June 30th) and he/she is authorized to collect the OSA National membership dues from the members of his/her chapter.

Section 6

Any donation and membership dues collected by a chapter in the name of OSA National shall be deposited with the Treasurer of the OSA National. A chapter shall, however, be free to raise its own membership fees and other donations for local activities.

Section 7

Local chapters raising funds in the name of OSA National and using the OSA National Federal Identification Number shall follow the OSA National rules and be accountable for the IRS audit. A copy of the annual financial report shall be submitted to the Secretary-Treasurer of OSA at the end of each fiscal year.

Section 8

Every new chapter can request a regional mentor to oversee the chapter activities for the initial two years of its life. A mentor should be a National OSA permanent member for at least 3 years.

Section 9

If any chapter fails to maintain its membership strength for two consecutive years, it would lose its chapter status.

Section 10

A chapter can be reinstated once it gets back its membership strength following the same procedure as forming a new chapter.

Section 11

New chapters will not be allowed to be formed in the same serving area, same state or same locality. If and only if an existing chapter's membership strength exceeds 60 family members or 120 members, then a new chapter can be formed in consultation with OSA National executives.

Section 12

Every chapter will send its organization maintenance fee with \$5/per each member to the treasurer of OSA National at the beginning of each fiscal year of OSA (July 1st).

LOCAL CHAPTER: CONNECTION WITH OSA NATIONAL

Section 1

As soon as the elections are over, the current chapter president or any member of the executive committee must notify the results of election to OSA National within a week (7 days).

Section 2

The secretary of OSA will update the chapter representative list and will include the new chapter president into the Board of Governor's (BOG) list within a week (7 days).

Section 2

The chapter President must attend bi-monthly BOG meeting arranged by OSA National. If he/she cannot attend, then he/she should authorize the chapter Vice President or the Secretary to do so.

Section 3

A chapter President must work with the Secretary-Treasurer to provide chapter income-expense report to the treasurer of OSA National by June 30th of every year.

Section 4

A chapter President must work with the Secretary-Treasurer to provide chapter membership list to the Secretary of OSA National by June 30th of every year.

Section 5

A chapter President must attend OSA National Convention every year. If he/she cannot attend, he/she must work with the Vice President or Secretary-Treasurer to represent the chapter.

Section 6

A chapter President must send chapter semi-annual activity report to the Editor of OSA National for publication in OSA Newsletter Utkarsa before one month of the publication date ([October 30 and April 30 of every year – Utkarsa Publication dates should be fixed first](#)).

Section 7

A chapter President must send organization maintenance fee (\$5 per each member-family – a family will be considered one family-member in this case).

Section 8

When a chapter takes charge of organizing annual OSA convention, the Secretary and Treasurer of OSA National and the Secretary-Treasurer of the chapter should be members of the convention finance committee.

Section 9: Fundraising

If a chapter wants to pursue a fundraising activity for a special cause for OSA, then it should send a petition to OSA National executives. OSA National Executives will discuss among themselves and with BOG. With 2/3rd vote of BOG members, they can authorize a chapter to carry on the fundraising work and manage the activity. Their decision should be conveyed within 30 days. The final income/expense report has to be provided by the chapter President to the Treasurer of OSA National for tax filing, reporting and audit purposes. In emergency situations such as flood, cyclone etc. a chapter is allowed to initiate the activity sending a formal letter and requesting emergency authorization. In this case any voting member of OSA National executive committee is eligible to authorize the fundraising activity without waiting for BOG approval.

LOCAL GROUPS: FORMATION PROCESS

Section 1

Groups can only be formed in regions where there are no chapters. Groups can also be formed with a particular goal.

Section 2

A minimum of 8 families with at least 16 permanent members (life member, patron or benefactor of OSA National) from a particular area is required to petition for establishing a **Group**. Those members should send a written request to the Board of Governors through the Executive Council with signatures of those 16 sponsors. These family members should commit to be members of the group for at least 2 years. The decision of the Board shall be conveyed in writing.

Section 3

A petition to form a group must be made to the Secretary of OSA for approval by the Executive Committee at least two months prior to the targeted date of its establishment.

Section 4

The petition should include operating manual of the group. The executive positions of the Group should include a **Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary-Treasurer**.

Section 5

The leader of the group will be called **Chairman** who shall become the group representative for a term of two years. A notification to that effect shall be submitted to the Secretary of OSA on or before the June 30th of the OSA election year. A **Chairman** cannot stay in the position beyond two terms totaling four years. The **Chairman of a Group** will be a non-voting member of the BOG.

Section 6

The Chairman of a group shall provide a membership list of the group to the Secretary of OSA at the beginning of each fiscal year (by June 30th) and he/she is authorized to collect the OSA National membership dues from the members of his/her group.

Section 7

Any donation and membership dues collected by a group in the name of OSA National shall be deposited with the Treasurer of the OSA National. A group shall, however, be free to raise its own membership fees and other donations for local activities.

Section 8

Local groups raising funds in the name of OSA National and using the OSA National Federal Identification Number shall follow the OSA National rules and be accountable for the IRS audit. A copy of the annual financial report shall be submitted to the Secretary-Treasurer of OSA at the end of each fiscal year.

Section 9

If any group fails to maintain its membership strength for two consecutive years, it would lose its group status.

Section 10

A group can be reinstated once it gets back its membership strength following the same procedure as forming a new group.

Section 11

New groups will not be allowed to be formed in the same serving area if the formation creates conflicts with existing groups or chapters.

Section 12

Every group will send its organization maintenance fee with \$5/per each member-family to the treasurer of OSA National at the beginning of each fiscal year of OSA (July 1st).

LOCAL GROUPS: CONNECTION WITH OSA NATIONAL

Section 1

As soon as the elections are over, the current Chairman must notify the results of election to OSA National within a week (7 days).

Section 2

The secretary of OSA will update the group representative list and will include the new group chairman into the list within a week (7 days).

Section 2

The group chairman can attend bi-monthly BOG meeting arranged by OSA National. If he/she cannot attend, then he/she should authorize the group's Vice Chair or the Secretary-Treasurer to do so. The group chairman will be a non-voting member in the decision making process.

Section 3

The group Chairman must work with the Secretary-Treasurer to provide the Group's income-expense report to OSA National by June 30th of every year.

Section 4

The group Chairman must work with the Secretary-Treasurer to provide chapter membership list to the Secretary of OSA National by June 30th of every year.

Section 5

The group Chairman must attend OSA National Convention every year. If he/she cannot attend, he/she must work with Vice Chair or Secretary-Treasurer to represent the group.

Section 6

The group Chairman must send the group's semi-annual activity report to the Editor of OSA National for publication in OSA Newsletter Utkarsa before one month of the publication date (October 30 and April 30 of every year – Utkarsa Publication dates should be fixed first).

Section 7

The group Chairman must send organization maintenance fee (\$5 per each non-member of OSA National– a family will be considered one family member in this case).

Section

A group can take charge of organizing the convention by providing the evidence of collaboration with a major chapter for undertaking such responsibilities that can be managed remotely. In that case, the Secretary and Treasurer of OSA National and the Secretary-Treasurer of the chapter should be members of the convention finance committee.

Section 9: Fundraising

If a group wants to pursue a fundraising activity for a special cause for OSA, then it should send a petition to OSA National executives. OSA National Executives will discuss among themselves and with BOG. With 2/3rd vote of BOG members, they can authorize the group to carry out the fundraising work and manage the activity. Their decision should be conveyed within 30 days. The final income/expense report has to be provided by the Group chairman to the Treasurer of OSA National for tax filing, reporting and audit purposes. In emergency situations such as flood, cyclone etc. the group is allowed to initiate the activity sending a formal letter and requesting emergency authorization. In this case any member of OSA National executive committee is eligible to authorize the fundraising activity without waiting for BOG approval.