

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TRIAL
Judges of Liberia (NATJL)
Temple of Justice Building, Capitol Hill
Monrovia, Liberia**



CONSTITUTION AND BYELAWS

**REVISED AND ADOPTED BY
THE NATIONAL TRIAL JUDGES CONFERENCE
SATURDAY FEBRUARY 7TH FEBRUARY A.D. 2026**

**IN THE CITY OF GANTA, COUNTY OF NIMBA
REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA**

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Preamble

We, as Judicial Officers exercising the functions of trial judges and for the purpose of enhancing the sacredness of our duty for the promotion of legal system and rule of law free

of all biases, boxing the integrity, independence, impartiality, and excellence of the Judiciary

in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Liberia, Statutes governing

professional associations, and international best practices for judiciary associations, do

hereby constitute and promulgate this Constitution and By-Laws of the National Association

of Trial Judges of Liberia (NATJL); which provisions shall be binding on all members of the

Association.

ARTICLE I: NAME AND LEGAL STATUS

1.1 Name

The Name of this association shall be the National Association of Trial Judges Liberia (NATJL)

1.2 Legal Status

The NATJL is a non-for-profit, non-political, professional association of Trial Judges, organized under applicable Liberian law governing associations and professional bodies.

1.3 Principal Office:

The registered office and principal place of business shall be in Monrovia, Liberia, with sub-offices in the Counties Capitols or at such other place as the National Executive Council may designate.

1.4 Affiliations:

The Association may affiliate with regional and international judicial associations, subject to approval by the National Executive Council (NEC) and compliance with national law.

ARTICLE II: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 Aims:

To promote the administration of justice in Liberia by supporting trial judges through professional development, ethics, research, exchange of best practices, and mutual support, while upholding judicial independence, impartiality, and integrity.

2.2 Objectives:

1. To seek and promote Professional development and continuing education for trial judges; promotion of high ethical standards and codes of conduct and, the welfare and well-being of its members;
2. To facilitate jurisprudential research, publication, and sharing of best Practices whilst seeking to promote and enhance harmonious working relationship with the Supreme Court Bench and the Liberia National Bar Association (LNBA), The United States Federal Bar Association (FBA), the American Bar Association (ABA) and especially the International Association of Judges (IAJ), the American Judges Association (AJA) and the Federal Judges Association (FJA), African Bar Association, and other associations that share common vision with the NATJL.
3. To enhance the effective administration of justice and contribute to the development of the law in Liberia through continual legal education of its members;
4. To support, uphold, protect and defend the independence and impartiality of Judges and the Liberian Judiciary **and the rule of law.**
5. To ensure and assure public confidence in the integrity of the Liberian Judiciary by **engagement with the public and other branches of government in a constructive and lawful manner.**
6. To ensure that the Judicial Canons of the Republic of Liberia and all other ethical and professional standards are observed and adhered to;
7. To work with and in coordination with the Chief Justice and Associate Justices to encourage and ensure that the Government of Liberia (GOL) assists in underwriting the costs associated with section 1 to 4 above, consistent with the policy of supporting, upholding, protecting and defending judicial independence and the rule of law in Liberia.

- 2.3 Non-Political Nature: The NATJL as an institution shall not engage in political campaigning or partisan activities; it may advocate for policies affecting the administration of justice in a manner consistent with constitutional duties.

**ARTICLE III
EMBLEM**

- 3.1 The Association shall have an emblem which shall be distinctive and representing the legal existence of the Association. The emblem of the Association shall have the following distinct features: Lady Justice blind folded inserted in a scale, the name and initial (NATJL) of the Association and the gavel, this shall constitute the official seal of the Association.



- 3.2. **Motto**
The Motto of the Association shall be “**Sacerdos Lustitiae (PRIESTS OF JUSTICE)**”

**Article IV:
Principles and Ethics**

- 4.1 **Core Principles:**
Independence, Impartiality, Integrity, Accountability, Transparency, Respect for the rule of law, and Protection of confidential judicial information.

**ARTICLE V:
MEMBERSHIP**

- 5.1 **Eligibility:**
Membership of the Association shall be open to all Circuit and Specialized Courts Judges; Stipendiary and Associate Magistrates.
- 5.2 **Suspension of NATJL Membership**
Any member of the NATJL who is being suspended but his/her suspension does affect his ability to pay due, said member’s obligation shall automatically cease to exist during the period of his/her suspension;
- 5.3 Any member of the NATJL who loses trial jurisdiction by reasons of secondment, and or sabbatical shall not be eligible to run for any elected position.
- 5.4 **Category of Membership:**
Classification of membership of this Association shall be consistent with the following provisions:
1. **Category A:** Membership shall be all Judges of Circuits and Specialized Courts of
Record, who are law school graduates from a recognized law school and admitted to the Liberian National Bar as Attorney-At-Law and or Counsellor-At-Law of the Supreme Court Bar;
 2. **Category A1:** Membership shall be all Stipendiary Magistrates and Associate

Magistrates of Courts of limited records who are law school graduates from a recognized law school and admitted to the Liberian National Bar as Attorney-At-Law or the Supreme Court Bar as Counsellor-At-Law

3. **Category B:** Members shall be all Stipendiary and Associate Magistrates and Specialized Court Judges, who are College, Graduates and/or Graduates of the James AA Pierre Judicial Institution, but are not law school graduates;
4. **Category B1** Members shall be, all Stipendiary and Associate Magistrates and Specialized Court Judges who are neither College graduates nor graduates of the James AA Pierre Judicial Institute.

5.5 Duties, Rights and Responsibilities of Members:

All Circuit Courts, Specialized Courts Judges, Stipendiary and Associate Magistrates shall have the right to:

1. Shall be eligible to vote and have the right to be elected, appointed to hold offices;
2. Uphold and support the Constitution of the NATJL in achieving its aims and objectives as enshrined in this Constitution and By-Laws;

5.6 Membership Dues

Every member of the Association shall pay a monthly due to be determined from time to time by the National Executive Council to be approved by the National Trial Judges Conference.

ARTICLE VI: EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

6.1 OFFICERS

The National Association of Trial Judges of Liberia shall have the following Executive Officers:

1. President
2. First Vice President
3. Second Vice President
4. General Secretary
5. Assistant General Secretary
6. Financial Secretary
7. Treasurer
8. Chaplin
9. County Coordinators

6.1 QUALIFICATION AND ELIGIBILITY OF OFFICERS

1. **President and First Vice President:**
ONLY Category A members shall qualify for these positions;
2. **Second Vice President and General Secretary:**
ONLY Category A-1 shall qualify for these positions;
3. **Assistant Secretary General, Treasurer and Financial Secretary:**
ONLY Category A-1 and B members are eligible for these positions;
4. **Chaplin and County Coordinators:**
ONLY Category B and B-1 members are eligible for these positions;

5. A member desirous of contesting for any position of the Presidency (President, 1st Vice President and 2nd Vice President) is eligible having satisfied the following conditions:
 - a. He or she must be a member of not less than four (4) years, and in good standing;
6. A member desirous of contesting any of the positions outside of the Presidency must be a member of the NATJL not less than **two (2) years** and in good standing
7. Definition of good standing shall be interpreted as not being under administrative or judicial suspension or not being under probe by the Judicial Inquiry Commission (JIC); where the JIC has investigated and recommended punitive action to the Honorable Supreme Court.

6.1 THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICERS:

6.2 The President

1. The President shall be Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Association and shall preside over all Businesses of the Executive Council and the National Trial Judges Conference;
2. The President shall have the power to recommend to the Executive Council for investigation of any elected officer who has violated any provision of this Constitution and By-Laws, and if found guilty, for subsequent action against said officer and/or removal from Office;
3. The President shall have the power and authority to appoint Ad Hoc Committees and dissolve same upon completion of tasks;
4. He/she shall supervise and direct all other officers and committees for the effective discharge of their duties;
5. The President shall approve all financial transactions of the Association and sign contracts with other institutions except in the case of disability, impeachment, resignation or travel, the First Vice President shall automatically assume such responsibility;
6. He/she shall serve as Chief Spokesperson of the Association on any matter of public interest or special interest to the Association;
7. He/she shall ensure that the provisions in the Constitution and By-Laws are faithfully supported, upheld, and defended;
8. He/she shall submit an annual national budget to the National Executive Committee for scrutiny and approval no later than fifteen (15) working days following election and induction.

6.4 The First Vice President –

1. The First Vice President shall, in the absence of the President preside over all businesses which the President, by these provisions of this Constitution and By-Laws has power to preside over;
2. He/she shall succeed the President in the event of death, impeachment, resignation or inability to perform the duties and functions of the office of the

President to complete the unexpired term of the President. In such a case, this shall not constitute a term.

3. He/she shall be responsible for all matters pertaining to Category A members “Judges Affairs”;
4. He/she shall be responsible for International Affairs;
5. He/she shall carry out other duties and functions that the President may assigned as per the provisions of this Constitution and By-Laws.
6. He/she shall report to the President

6.5 The Second Vice President

1. He/she shall be responsible for all Magistrates’ Affairs;
2. He/she shall be responsible for all projects and programs for the NATJL in consultation with the National Executive Committee;
3. He/she shall have oversight responsibilities of the Finance Section and/or over the Financial Secretary;
4. He/she shall carry out other duties and functions that the President may assigned as per the provision of this Constitution and By-Laws;
5. He/she shall report to the President.

6.6 The General Secretary:

1. The General Secretary shall be the official scribe of the Association and shall perform all duties assign to him/her by the President;
2. He/she shall take minutes and keep records of the proceedings of all Executive Committee meetings and the National Trial Judges Conference;
3. He/she shall keep an update registry of all members of the Association;
4. As General Secretary, he/she shall serve as custodian of all official records of the Association;
5. He/she shall receive reports from the County Coordinators in the various Judicial Circuits of Liberia for onward submission to the President;

6.7 The Assistant General Secretary:

1. He/she shall serve under the supervision of the National General Secretary and shall act in the place of the National General Secretary during his/her absence;
2. He/she shall serve in the capacity and perform the duties and functions of the General Secretary in the event of death, impeachment, resignation or inability to perform the functions and duties of the office of the General Secretary;

3. He/she shall carry out other duties and functions as may be assigned to him/her by the General Secretary in consultation with the National Executive Committee (NEC).

6.8 The Financial Secretary:

1. He/she must have an accounting knowledge obtained from a recognized learning institution;
2. He/she shall record all financial transactions in keeping with acceptable accounting standards and ensure that such records are safe and protected.
3. He/she shall prepare and submit a quarterly financial report to the Executive Council through the office of the Second Vice President;
4. He/she shall prepare and submit an annual budget to the Executive Committee through the office of the Second Vice President and subsequently to the President for approval and onward transmission unto the National Executive Council;
5. He/she shall implement all lawful orders from the Second Vice President in consultation with the National Executive Council.

6.9 The Treasurer:

1. He/she shall work in close association and collaboration with the Financial Secretary to ensure proper accountability and transparency in all financial transaction of the Association;
2. He/she shall account of all dues, fees, special levies as well as funds collected from members and other resources;
3. He/she shall deposit all funds belonging to the Association in a recognized bank within the County and approved by the National Executive Council of the NATJL;
4. In the event that the Treasurer is indisposed, the Financial Secretary shall act in the stead of the Treasurer.

6.10 The Chaplin:

1. He/she shall perform all religious functions of the Association;
2. He/she shall work assiduously to promote unity and friendship amongst members of the Association.

6.11 The County Coordinator

1. The County Coordinator shall be elected by members of their constituents at the local level within a period of thirty (30) days after the inauguration of the National Officers;
2. The County Coordinator shall act as the direct representative of the National President in the County;
3. He/she shall supervise and monitor the activities of members at the local level;

4. He/she shall prepare and submit a quarterly report to the General Secretary with the knowledge and/or consent of the Resident Judge or Presiding Circuit Judge who shall attest to said report.

6.12 SIGNATORIES TO THE ASSOCIATION'S ACCOUNTS:

The following officers of the association shall be signatories to the account in the following manner:

1. President and first vice president shall be category "A" signatories
2. The General Secretary and the Treasurer shall be category "B" signatories.

ARTICLE VII: TENURE OF THE ELECTED OFFICERS:

- 7.1 All elected officer of the Association shall hold office for two-years term commencing the date of inauguration, which inauguration shall be held immediately following their elections. These elected officers are eligible for re-election, and no elected officer shall serve for more than two terms. However, he/she shall be qualified to run for the same or other position after a succeeding term.
- 7.2 In the event the office of an elected officer (other than the President) is vacant by reason of death, removal, resignation, elevation, sabbatical and or incapacitation, the President of the NATJL shall with immediate effect call an Executive Council Meeting which meeting shall then appoint a qualified member to fill the vacant position of the remaining term of the elected officer.

ARTICLE VIII: REMOVAL FROM OFFICE OF AN ELECTED OFFICIAL

1. Any elected official shall be suspended or removed from office by two-third (2/3) vote of the National Executive Council for a cause after been investigated by the Grievance and Inquiry Committee;

ARTICLE IX: PRINCIPAL ORGANS:

- 9.1 The Association shall comprise of the following organs:

1. National Trial Judges Conference
2. National Executive Council
3. Standing Committees
4. National Secretariat
5. Ad-Hoc Committees
6. Advisory Committee
7. County Coordinators

9.2 National Trial Judges Conference:

1. The National Trial Judges Conference is the Supreme authority of the National Association of Trial Judges of Liberia and is vested with the authority to amend the Constitution and By-Laws of the Association, take major policy decisions and/or set general policies of administration and conduct of election for new corps of officers;
2. The National Trial Judges Conference shall receive report from the President, which report shall include but not limited to administrative and financial reports for the period he/she presided over the affairs of the Association.

3. The National Trial Judges Conference shall constitute a committee that will examine the report of the President along with the recommendations therein and if necessary, make further recommendations for adoption by the Conference;
4. The National Trial Judges Conference shall at a location to be determined by the National Executive Council convene every two years in the last week of January at which time general election will be held to elect new corps of Officers for the Association.

9.3 Composition of the National Executive Committee (NEC)

1. The National Executive Committee members should be comprised:
 1. All elected National Officers
 2. All Circuits and Specialized Courts Judges,
 3. All Stipendiary Magistrates who are Law School Graduates
 4. All County Coordinators
2. The quorum of the NEC shall be nine (9) members of the entire members of the National Executive Committee, provided that at least one member of each Category is present;
3. The National Executive Council (NEC) shall approve the annual budget of the Association. The President shall present copies of the annual budget to members of the NEC within two weeks prior to the NEC's approval;
4. The National Executive Council shall, at the request of the President, meet and make decisions that otherwise could be cognizable before the National Trial Judges Conference, and where necessary, make appropriate recommendations to the National Trial Judges Conference;
5. The National Executive Council shall be consulted by the President when making appointment of Standing Committee's Chairpersons;
6. The National Executive Council shall approve policy-governing loans, death and other benefits affecting the general welfare of its members.

9.4 The National Secretariat

1. The National Secretariat shall be headed by the General Secretary and shall comprise of other staff as may be determined by the NEC for the effective operation of the Association;
2. The line personnel of the Secretariat shall be vetted by the NEC and appointed by the President;
3. There shall be an office manager, who shall coordinate the day-to-day affairs of activities of the Association's office with the advice and consent of the National Executive Council. He/she may be assisted by the other office staff. The Office Manager shall be designated as Executive Secretary.

9.5 Standing Committees:

The Association shall have the following standing Committees:

1. Ways and Means Committee
2. Auditing Committee
3. Education and Awareness Committee
4. Welfare Committee
5. Grievance and Inquiry Committee

9.6 The Ways and Means Committee:

The Ways and Means Committee shall have the primary responsibility of planning, organizing and executing programs with the objective of generating funds for the support of the Association's budget. The National Executive Council shall approve all planned programs. The Treasurer shall serve as secretary to the committee.

9.7 The Auditing Committee:

The Auditing Council shall have the responsibility to review all financial reports of the Association at regular interval of time with the view of ensuring accountability and transparency. The Committee shall submit audit report annually to the President for review and consideration by the National Executive Council. The Chairperson of this Committee must be a bona fide member of the Association and must have background in auditing and accounting.

9.8 The Education and Awareness Committee:

- a. The Education and Awareness Committee shall organize, coordinate, conduct and implement Continuing Legal Education (CLE) activities sponsored or co-sponsored by the Association. It shall cooperate, when appropriate with the Louise Arthur Grimes School of Law, the Liberian National Bar Association (LNBA), The James A.A. Pierre Judicial Institute and other organizations concerned with Continuing Legal Education. This Committee is also charged with the responsibility to solicit local and international scholarships for training of its members.
- b. The Education and Awareness Committee shall develop an Educational Financial Aid Policy for Magistrates pursuing their Bachelor of Law. This Policy shall be presented to the National Executive Council to be adopted by the NATJL Convention.
- c. The National Executive Council shall determine the amount of financial aid per eligible person on a case-by-case basis. Eligibility for financial Aid shall be based on a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.5 or higher;
- d. All Financial Aid shall be subject to salary deductible and shall be paid within the academic year in which the aid is granted. A member who has taken loan from the Association will not qualify until outstanding obligation to the Association is liquidated.

9.9 The Welfare Committee:

- a. The Welfare Committee shall visit with the sick, shut-in, bereaved families and retired members of the Association. This Committee shall submit an annual report to the National Executive Committee through the Office of the President regarding the welfare and special needs of those visited.

9.10 Grievance and Inquiry Committee:

- a. The Grievance and Inquiry Committee shall be responsible to receive, reveal, and investigate complaints of improprieties or conflict between members of the Association on the one hand or between member of the Association and third parties (non- members), ie members of the Liberia National Bar Association. The Grievance and Inquiry Committee shall investigate and accord due process to all persons complained and makes recommendations as to the findings and outcomes of any complaint to the President for onward submission to the National Executive Council for appropriate action.

**ARTICLE X:
THE TENURE OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES' MEMBERSHIP:**

- 10.1 The membership of the Standing Committees shall be for a period of two years and may be reappointed by succeeding administration with the advice and consent of the National Executive Council, except for the Chairperson of the Auditing Committee who shall serve for a period of three (3) years.

**ARTICLE XI
AD HOC COMMITTEES:**

- 11.1 The President shall appoint Ad-Hoc Committees from time to time for a special period to carry out a particular function for the growth, wellbeing and development of the Association. The Committee appointed shall dissolve immediately upon the completion of said tasks.

**ARTICLE XII:
THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE:**

- 12.1. The Advisory Committee shall comprise of Past Presidents, and **Past Vice Presidents** who shall have the responsibility to advise elected officers, the National Executive Council and/or the entire Association on issues relevant to the development of the Association.

**ARTICLE XIII:
THE QUALIFICATION OF CANDIDATES FOR ELECTED POSITIONS**

- 13.1 Except for County Coordinators, the Ad-Hoc Election Commission, shall present the list of qualified candidates who have complied with the provisions of the Constitution and the NATJL elections guidelines.

**ARTICLE XIV:
AMENDMENT**

- 14.1 Two-third (2/3) majority members of the National Trial Judges Conference in attendance shall amend this Constitution and By-Laws;
- 14.2 It shall nevertheless come into force and effect sixty (60) working days following its adoption. The amended Constitution shall be adopted by the Annual Conference and signed by the President with the day and date of its adoption;
- 14.3 It shall be the responsibility of the National Secretariat to print, publish and distribute copies of the amended Constitution to members of the Association within the period provided herein through the office of the County Coordinators.

**PRESENTED BY THE CONSTITUTION AND POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE AND
ADOPTED BY THE NATIONAL TRIAL JUDGES CONFERENCE ON FEBRUARY 7,
2026.**

**THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS HEREBY AFFIXED THEIR NAMES AND
SIGNATURES:**

1. _____
DATE: _____
His Honor Othello S. Payman, I
CHAIRPERSON

2. _____
DATE: _____
Her Honor Mameita Jabateh Sirleaf
CO-CHAIRPERSON

3. _____
DATE: _____
His Honor George Smith
MEMBER

4. _____
DATE: _____
Her Honor Lucrezia Thomas Anderson
MEMBER

5. _____
DATE: _____
His Honor Vicent Kollie
MEMBER

6. _____
DATE: _____
His Honor Daniel D. Dolokelen
MEMBER

7. _____
DATE: _____
His Honor James Ngafua
MEMBER

Signed: _____
Her Honor Nancy Finda Sammy
PRSIDENT
National Trial Judges Association (NATJL)