

In the name of ALLAH, Most Gracious, Most Merciful
CONSTITUTION OF MASJID AL JANNAH

Preamble

Whereas Sovereignty over the entire universe belongs to Almighty Allah alone, Whereas the path to success is Deen-e-Islam alone as enshrined in the Shari'ah, Whereas the final and perfect guide unto humanity is the Holy Messenger Muhammad (sallallahu-alayhi-wasallam). We, the Muslims of Masjid Al Jannah, Islamic Center of Columbus, Georgia, have agreed and adopted the present constitution and hereby establish hereinafter called the Association. We as a community are conscious of the injunction to "HOLD FAST, ALTOGETHER, TO THE BOND WITH ALLAH AND BE NOT DIVIDED" (The Holy Qurán, 3:103)

ARTICLE I

Name

The Name of this organization shall be "Masjid Al Jannah, Islamic Center of Columbus, Georgia."

ARTICLE II

Aim and purpose

SECTION 1.

The aim and purpose of the Association is:

- a. Serve in the best interest of Islam for the Muslims of Columbus, Georgia and its surrounding communities.
- b. Promote unity and joint action among the Muslims.
- c. Conduct religious activities in the best traditions of Islam.
- d. Arrange and hold congregational prayers at the prescribed times in accordance with The Qurán and Sunnah.
- e. Promote friendly relations between Muslims and Non Muslims.
- f. Endeavor to make Islamic teachings known to interested Muslims and Non Muslims.

SECTION 2.

The Association shall maintain an office at the premises of The Masjid Al Jannah, 6550 Forrest Road, Columbus, Georgia -31907.

SECTION 3.

The Association is formed exclusively for religious, charitable, cultural, and educational purposes as specified in Section 501 (c) (3) of the Tax Reform Act of 1986, and shall conduct activities allowed to a tax-exempt organization. The objectives of the Association are all without personal-benefit to any Executive Committee member and the Board of Turstees. The fundamental purpose of the Association shall be to encourage and to enable Muslims with the basic knowledge and competence in Islam to contribute individually and collectively towards meeting human needs in conformity with Islamic Shariah. It shall also be the purpose of the Association to avoid any wrong practices in Islam and to create a feeling of brotherhood, by using Qurán and Sunnah as the base to guide and resolve the disputes.

ARTICLE III

Affiliation

SECTION 1.

The Association shall be affiliated with NAIT (North American Islamic Trust).

SECTION 2.

Real-estate purchases or donation to the Association shall be entrusted with the NAIT. (North American Islamic Trust).

SECTION 3.

The Association may not under take any activity that violates The Qurán and Sunnah.

ARTICLE IV
Membership

SECTION 1.

Any Muslim individual, 18 years or older, residing in Columbus, Georgia and surrounding areas, who agrees to support the objectives of the constitution, and follows the Quran and Sunnih may become a member.

SECTION 2.

Person who desires to be a member:

- a. Shall be a Muslim.
- b. Shall be a Musallee meaning thereby any Muslim male/female of 18 years or above residing in Columbus Ga. and surrounding districts who frequents the congregational prayers at any of the congregational prayer facilities controlled by the organization.
- c. Shall have been a resident of Columbus, Ga. and surrounding districts for more than three months.

SECTION 3.

Membership of an individual can be suspended or revoked if it has been proven to be in violation of the constitution and/or its bylaws, and a resolution to that effect is passed by two-thirds of the members present. A written notice of at least 30 days shall be given prior to any voting on such a resolution.

ARTICLE V

Office Bearers of the Executive Committee

SECTION 1.

The Executive Committee shall consist of President, Vice-President, General Secretary, Finance Secretary, Social Affairs Secretary and Women's Coordinator.

SECTION 2.

All members of The Executive Committee shall be elected by the General Assembly at its annual meetings.

SECTION 3.

The term of the Executive Committee shall be one Hijra year, from Ramadan to Ramadan.

SECTION 4.

The President shall be responsible for:

- a. The General management of all the activities of the Association.
- b. Directing and coordinating the activities of the association to achieve its goals.
- c. Calling and presiding over meetings of the Executive Committee and the General Assembly.
- d. Forming various Adhoc Committees with the approval of the Executive Committee.
- e. Controlling funds and expenses of the Association as defined in Article 6 Section 8.
- f. Presenting annual report to the General Assembly and periodic reports to the Executive Committee.
- g. Establishing an efficient link between the Association and the North American Islamic Trust.

SECTION 5.

The Vice-President shall be responsible for:

- a. Assisting President in all important events, activities and meetings of the Association.
- b. Holding the responsibilities of the association in the absence of the President.

SECTION 6.

The General Secretary shall be responsible for:

- a. Reporting the important events and activities of the Association to its members.
- b. Preparing and circulating the minutes of all the meetings within thirty days, among the Executive Committee.
- c. Preparing and notifying the agenda for the Executive Committee and General Assembly in reference to any meetings.
- d. Maintain the Association as a Non-Profit Religious Organization in the State of Georgia. It shall be the responsibility of the General Secretary to do all the necessary paperwork in order to keep Association's registration active in the State of Georgia.
- e. Presiding over the executive committee meeting in the absence of President and/or Vice president.
- f. Presenting the minutes of the previous meeting for approval by the Executive Committee.
- g. Maintaining the list of the members of the association.
- h. General Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining the suggestion box in the Masjid premises.
- i. The General Secretary shall be responsible for posting on the bulletin board of the Mosque, A list of members eligible to vote in the election. This list shall be posted at least fifteen days before the election.

SECTION 7.

The Social Affairs Secretary shall be responsible for:

- a. Direct and supervise all religious, cultural, social, and educational activities of the association and maintain the list of members for various activities of the association. Inform the members about the time, place, details of the festivals and social events.
- b. Posting name, address, and telephone numbers of the members, and updating the list periodically.
- c. Preparing circulars, bulletins, and newsletters for the Association and presenting the same, before the Executive Committee for review.

SECTION 8.

The Finance Secretary shall be responsible for:

- a. Maintaining the record of all the financial transactions for the Association.
- b. Managing all funds and receipts in an accurate manner.
- c. All funds and assets of the association are deposited in accurate manner as designated by the Executive Committee.
- d. He shall be responsible for systematic bookkeeping, writing disbursements, receipts, and bank records.
- e. Collecting and depositing all the funds received on behalf of Association.
- f. Counter signing all withdrawal checks on behalf of the association in accordance with Article VI Section 6.

SECTION 9.

The women coordinators shall be elected by the female members of the Association. The women coordinators shall be responsible for:

- a. Acting as liaison between the Executive Committee and female members of the Association.
- b. Looking after the specific needs of ladies and children on various occasions such as convention, social gathering etc.
- c. Women members will NOT vote for the members of the Executive Committee.

SECTION 10.

The decision on each and every matter in the Executive Committee meeting shall be reached in a parliamentary way with each member of the Executive Committee present in the meeting and voting on the decision. The members not attending the meeting shall not be able to vote on any issue. (Refer to Article XI Section 3 for voting rights).

SECTION 11.

The Executive Committee may invite former member(s) to the meeting to seek their views in case of controversy. However, none of the invitees shall have a right to vote on any Executive Committee decision.

ARTICLE VI

Finance

SECTION 1.

Membership dues are \$15 per month for one adult, or \$25 per month per family. (or otherwise approved by the Executive Committee).

SECTION 2.

Annual membership dues shall not increase more than 25% per year (or other wise approved be the Executive Committee).

SECTION 3.

Any member whose dues are three months or more in arrear after the beginning of the Hijra year shall lose all membership privileges. Furthermore, in order to vote in the elections the member shall have paid his/her dues before the election. Privileges cannot be forfeited unless the member has been notified in writing 10 days in advance regarding his/her failure to pay the dues and possible effects thereof if not cleared in 10 days.

SECTION 4.

The Executive Committee may accept any contribution from any source, consistent with the purpose of the Association and with the principles of Islam, Qurán and Sunnah.

SECTION 5.

Funds collected for any incentive shall be used for the same purpose, unless a 2/3 of members authorize it for any other use within the goals and objectives of the Association. However, the funds collected for expansion and maintenance of the Masjid Al Jannah/Islamic Center shall not be used for any other purpose.

SECTION 6.

The Association shall maintain the following accounts:

- a. *Expense Account*, This is an interest-free bank account for current expenditures. This account is supplied with funds from the reserve funds. The Finance Secretary, President or General Secretary are authorized for disbursement from this account.
- b. *Reserve Account*, All incoming funds/donations for Masjid Al Jannah/Islamic Center shall be deposited in this account. Any withdrawals from this account shall be for deposit into the Expense Account. This account must also be interest free.

SECTION 7.

Funds shall only be released by the signature of at least two of the following Executive Members: The Finance Secretary, President or General Secretary.

SECTION 8.

Authorizing of Expenditures: Funds can not be released for more than \$ 200.00 on a single expense without the approval of Executive Committee.

SECTION 9.

The Executive Committee shall nominate auditors for the following Hijra year. Auditors shall not be member of Executive Committee. Auditors shall have sufficient knowledge of accounting an auditing procedure. The auditors shall audit the Association account once every quarter and submit the report to the Executive Committee and the annual report to the General Assembly.

ARTICLE VII
Associate committees

SECTION 1.

The newly elected Executive Committee shall nominate the Associate Committees. Associate Committee members must be the member of the Association.

SECTION 2.

The tenure of the Associate Committee shall be one Hijra year.

SECTION 3.

The Fiqah Committee shall be nominated by Executive Committee. This Committee will consist of three members including the Imam. The committee shall study the practice of four juristic schools of thought viz. Hanafi, Shafi, Maliki and Hambali.

SECTION 4.

The Committee shall review and select the books for the library of mosque.

SECTION 5.

The Fiqah Committee shall be able to answer religious question in the light of The Qurán and Sunnah. If required religious scholars can be contacted depending upon the four juristic schools of thought viz. Hanafi, Shafi, Maliki and Hambali.

SECTION 6.

- a. The Executive Committee will conduct the selection of Imam.
- b. The responsibility of Imam will be, to lead the daily prayer, Friday Kuthba and Eid Prayer.
- c. The Committee will have the authority to replace the Imam with any other member, who is qualified to assume the responsibilities in his absence.

SECTION 7.

The Funeral Assistance Committee will consist of the President and the Chairperson of the Fiqah Committee. The Funeral Assistance Committee shall:

- a. Maintain Up to date information on local cemetery lots, Funeral homes and their services.
- b. Stay informed of legal and religious requirements for burial.
- c. Contact relatives of the deceased Muslim, if he/she has no relative in the area.
- d. Contact the embassy of the Country of which the deceased was the citizen, if he/she was not the citizen of USA.
- e. Stay informed of the expenses in order to transport the deceased to another part of the Country or any foreign country.

ARTICLE VIII
Meetings

SECTION 1.

The Association shall have at least one General Assembly meeting during the Hijra year.

SECTION 2.

An emergency meeting may be called by a petition, signed by 10% of all members of the General Assembly. Such a meeting shall be held within a week after the written petition is presented to the President or General Secretary.

SECTION 3.

The Executive Committee shall meet once every month. Time and Place will be decided by the Executive Committee members.

SECTION 4.

The President may call Executive Committee meetings in addition to the regular meeting in case of emergency.

SECTION 5.

Written notice for a General Assembly meeting shall be mailed or e-mailed to all members of the Association at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

SECTION 6.

An emergency Executive Committee meeting may be called at the request of at least 1/3 of the Executive Committee members. Such a meeting shall be held within one week after the written request is made to President or General Secretary.

ARTICLE IX
Amendments

SECTION 1.

No amendments shall be made to this constitution unless adopted by a two-third majority of the members of the Assembly at a special general meeting convened for that purpose.

SECTION 2.

An affirmative vote by majority shall be necessary for adoption of all amendments.

SECTION 3.

The quorum requirements for voting on amendments shall be 50% of the total members.

SECTION 4.

If 50% of the members are not present in a General Assembly meeting called for voting on the proposed amendments, another general Assembly meeting will be called for the same purpose within four weeks after the first meeting date, in which the quorum requirements as stated in section 3 of this article shall be waived and proposed amendments shall be discussed and adopted by majority of the members present.

ARTICLE X
Judiciary Procedures

SECTION 1.

Charge(s) of misdemeanor, misuse of funds, fraud, corruption, violation of the Constitution, cover-up of such offenses, etc., can be brought against a member or a group of members by a petition signed by at least 10 percent of total regular members. The petition shall be handed over to The Executive Committee for necessary action.

SECTION 2.

The Executive Committee shall meet within two weeks of acknowledgement of the petition in order to setup a panel to hear the charges. If the charge is/are against Executive Committee member, The Executive Committee shall be responsible to call the meeting for setting up the panel.

SECTION 3 .

- a. The panel shall consist of at least one member of the Executive Committee and two other members from the General Assembly. At least one member should be knowledgeable in Islamic Shariah. The person(s) against whom charge(s) has (have) been brought does (do) not qualify to be on the panel.
- b. The panel members shall elect or choose among them the Chairman of the panel.
- c. The Chairman of the panel shall schedule time and place for first session, and notify the panelists in writing at least one week before the scheduled session.
- d. The panel shall conduct its affairs in accordance with Islamic law (Shariah) shall hear the charge(s) and witnesses from both sides and examine all evidence and pass a verdict of “Guilty” or “Not Guilty”, and determine punitive and/or corrective measures.
- e. The panel shall submit a report on their findings and actions to the General Assembly.

ARTICLE XI

Elections

SECTION 1.

Annual election shall be held once every first month of Hijra year in order to elect the Executive Committee for the following year.

SECTION 2.

The selection of election committee shall comprise of five members nominated by the Executive Committee.

SECTION 3.

The nominees of election must reach the Election Committee two hours before the specified time for election. The Executive Committee shall announce the exact time of the election.

SECTION 4.

The nominator shall be the member of Association.

SECTION 5.

The nominee for each post shall be a member who has not been holding the same post for two consecutive terms including the current year.

SECTION 6.

The newly elected Executive Committee should assume the charge of the Association after exact two weeks of election.

SECTION 7.

The member who cleared his/her annual membership dues within three months of the day of election shall have a right to vote. This section supersedes *Section 3 of Article VI.*

SECTION 8.

The Election Officers shall not campaign in favor or against of any candidate.

SECTION 9.

The Election Officer shall have the right to vote as a member of Association.

ARTICLE XII
Miscellaneous

SECTION 1.

Any Executive Committee member, who has failed to attend three consecutive meeting without being excused by the Committee prior to the meetings, shall be asked to give his explanation for the absence in writing. If he fails to do so or will be unable to satisfy the Committee he will be dismissed from the post. The Executive Committee shall grant him a hearing so as to enable him to defend his explanation of absence. If he refuses to appear before the Executive Committee within a period of six weeks, decision will be made on the recommendation of the Executive Committee.

SECTION 2.

In case of ambiguity regarding the interpretation of any sections of the constitution or possible conflict between two or more sections, the interpretation of the Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees to clarify such ambiguities or resolve the conflicts shall be final.

SECTION 3.

A member of the Executive Committee or General Assembly who is indicted, or arrested, or against whom a trial is pending in a State or Federal court shall be immediately and automatically suspended from his/her membership till he/she is acquitted. If he/she is convicted after an appeal, he/she shall be expelled from this Association.

SECTION 4.

If a member of the Executive Committee resigns or moves from the area or is dismissed, the Executive Committee with the consent of the General Assembly shall co-opt a member to fill the position temporarily.

SECTION 5.

As this Organization abides itself to Islamic behaviors, rules, practices, and general basic Islamic beliefs, all congregations shall have the following regulations:

- a. No alcohol or/and pork based food or drink is allowed.
- b. No dance, improper music, or indecent behavior or dressing is allowed.

SECTION 6.

A Muslim who desires to make an announcement after Jummah's Prayer shall seek the consent of the President or Vice President. If there is more than one Muslim desiring to address after Jummah's prayer and has sought consent shall be allowed to do so based on the schedule of the day.

SECTION 7.

Each member shall attempt to avoid discussion of controversial issues that may hurt the feelings of the member or group of members considering this mosque as a global mosque. Tolerance and respect is the right of all members of this Association.

ARTICLE XII
Board Of Trustees

SECTION 1.

The local members of the community will elect of the Board of Trustees who will be responsible to oversee the work of the Executive Committee. It will comprise of 3-5 members, and will be headed by a Chairman elected by the members of the Board.

SECTION 2.

The executive committee does not report to the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 3.

The term of the Board members will be for three years and elections will be done along with the executive committee members.

ARTICLE XIII
Constitution Adoption and Enforcement

SECTION 1.

The constitution shall be adopted and enforced, effective immediately after it has been signed by majority of the Association.

SECTION 2.

Registration in the State of Georgia, opening the bank accounts, and implementation of other matters as required by the constitution shall be accomplished within three months after the constitution has been adopted.

ARTICLE XIII

Dissolution

If a situation arises which makes the dissolution of the Association inevitable the Executive Committee shall call upon Board of Trustee to handle the process of dissolution with the assistance of the local members.

Interpretation

ASSOCIATION: *Consists of members who are paying dues to “The Muslims of Masjid Al Jannah, Islamic Center of Columbus, Georgia.”*

ELECTION OFFICER: *An individual member selected by Executive Committee for the performance of election.*

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: *Group of five members organizing the Association for the Hijra year.*

EXPENSE ACCOUNT: *This is an interest-free bank account for current expenditures.*

GENERAL ASSEMBLY: *Members of Association other than Executive Committee.*

HIJRA: *The migration of Muhammad (sallallahu-alayhi-wasallam) from Mecca to Yathrib (later Medina) in 622 A.D. The beginning of the Muslim calendar; years are designated HI.*

MOSQUE/MASJID: *Any place of Muslim worship. A Jama-Masjid or Friday Mosque is a major mosque where weekly prayer services are performed and a sermon or khutbah is given.*

MUSALLEE: *Any Muslim male of 18 years or above residing in Columbus, GA. and surrounding areas who frequents the congregational prayer at any of the congregational prayer facilities controlled by the Organization.*

NAIT: *North American Islamic Trust.*

ORGANIZATION: *System registered in the State of Georgia as, “The Muslims of Masjid Al Jannah, Islamic Center of Columbus, Georgia.”*

RESERVE ACCOUNT: *Interest free bank account that will hold all incoming funds until release to expense account.*

SHARIAH: *Islamic Law as expounded within the confines of the four juristic schools of thought viz. Hanafi, Shafai, Maliki and Hambali Schools.*

BOARD OF TRUSTEE: *Members of the community elected for a period of three years.*