

Bylaws

Of

**The Islamic Society of
North East Ohio**

(ISNEO)

Article I – Name and Scope

The Society shall be called the "Islamic Society of North East Ohio". It will be referred to as the "Society" in this document. It will be abbreviated as "ISNEO". The term "Board of Directors" shall be abbreviated as "BOD". The term "General Assembly" shall be abbreviated as "GA". The term "Masjid Management Committee" shall be abbreviated as "MMC". The term "Property Management Committee" shall be abbreviated as "PMC". The term "School Management Committee" shall be abbreviated as "SMC".

Article II – Objectives

The objectives of the Society are the same as those established in the constitution of the Society.

Article III – Membership

There are two types of membership: Active membership and Guest (Non) members. Membership dues for each type of membership shall be established by the BOD and changed by the BOD as needed. The membership dues shall be payable in full by March 31st of each year.

A. Active Membership

1. Individual Membership

Muslims 18 years and older may apply for membership as independents. They do not need to be under the guardianship of a parent(s) or legal guardian.

2. Family Membership

Muslims under 18 years of age cannot apply for membership as independents. An existing or prospective Individual member of the Society must claim such Muslims as dependents. This existing or prospective member must be either their parent(s) or legal guardian.

3. Rights of Active Members

- I. Use all the facilities of the Islamic Center.
- II. Participate in the Society sponsored events, such as, picnics, dinners, guest lectures,
- III. Enjoy reduced fees wherever applicable.
- IV. Vote in all affairs of the Society including the General Assembly meetings after 3 months of membership.

- V. Nominate person(s) to the elected committees of the Society after 4 months of membership.
- VI. Be nominated for elected positions after 6 months of membership.
- VII. Dependents under the Family membership clause given under Article III Section A.2 of the Bylaws cannot vote, nominate or are nominated for election.

4. Responsibilities of Active Members

- I. Be a practicing Muslim.
- II. Subscribe to and believe in the objectives and activities of the Society.
- III. Follow bylaws, rules and regulations of the Society and pay dues in a timely fashion.
- IV. Follow and help implement the decisions of the BOD and committees chartered by the BOD.
- V. Do not engage in any illegal activity.
- VI. Help develop and participate in the Islamic Center programs, projects and functions.
- VII. Donate and provide funds for the proper functioning of the Islamic Center.

5. Termination/Suspension of Membership

- I. Any member of the Society may be deprived of, or suspended from the membership, for engaging or advocating and propagating behavior, words or deeds considered by the BOD to be detrimental to the Society.
- II. Members, who are delinquent in payment of membership dues for a period exceeding three months, will be automatically suspended. Reinstatement will require payment of such dues in full and affirmative action by the BOD.
- III. Any membership, that was terminated or suspended, may be reinstated, by a simple majority vote of the BOD following a written request by the terminated member.
- IV. A written resignation may be filed with the Secretary of the BOD and shall be effective upon acceptance by the BOD. No refunds shall be made for any dues paid or donations made.

B. Non-member/Guest: Guests and Non-members do not have any rights as those defined for Active members under Article III Section A.3 of the Bylaws. They would not violate the privilege of inclusion or participation in the Society event as deemed by the BOD.

C. Membership duration: An active member who has donated an identifiable one time amount of \$500.00 is awarded a lifetime membership to the society. A lifetime member is exempt from annual membership dues. Annual membership dues are \$25.00. The membership duration is applicable to both individual and family membership.

Article IV – Organization

The Society is comprised of the following bodies: The Board of Directors (BOD), Masjid Management committee, Property Management Committee, School Management Committee and The General Assembly (GA). Temporary committees may be formed and dissolved by the BOD as needed.

Article V – Board of Directors (BOD)

- A. The BOD is responsible for:
 - I. Upholding the constitution of the society.
 - II. Executive level management of the society
 - III. Managing the fiscal matters of the society. It will have the ultimate authority for all major contracts executed on behalf of the society.
 - IV. Managing the MMC
 - V. Managing the PMC
 - VI. Communication and public relations with other Muslim organizations and non-Muslim organizations or individuals
 - VII. Organizing the social festivals or events of the society.
 - VIII. Developing policies and procedures for functions or challenges that may be anticipated or un-anticipated for the society
 - IX. Assessing the progress and performance of all committees serving the goals of the society
- B. The BOD shall meet once every month or a minimum of 8 times during the year, to discuss community affairs. The time, venue or any changes relevant to the meeting will be communicated to all members of the BOD by the Secretary of the BOD.
- C. Decisions in the BOD are made based on a majority vote. In case of a tie, the President of the society must cast the tie-breaking vote.
- D. Absentee or proxy votes are not counted during meetings of the BOD.
- E. No member of the BOD is allowed to hold more than one position on the BOD.
- F. In case a vacancy is created on the BOD, it must be filled within sixty days based on a decision made through a majority vote of the remaining members on the BOD. In case of a tie, the highest remaining official on the BOD will cast the tie-breaking vote.

- G. A BOD member may resign from the BOD by providing a written notice to the President of the society. The notification must be provided three weeks prior to it taking effect. The member may withdraw their resignation during this three-week period. If the three-week period has elapsed, the resignation is treated as final. A resigned member cannot occupy a position in the BOD again until they are elected again during the GA elections.
- H. A BOD member is not allowed to serve more than two consecutive terms on the BOD in the same position.
- I. Any member of a committee or BOD found to be in violation of the constitution or bylaws of this society or any engagement that is deemed harmful to the society may be removed from their committee or stripped of their authority by a majority vote of the members of the BOD. In case the violation is critical, for instance, it involves legal implications, and then absentee or proxy votes from the members of the BOD may be counted, if reasonable. For example, a board member may be out of the country and not accessible, then another board member may cast an absentee or proxy vote in their stead. Proceedings for removing a committee member or board member cannot be initiated until an active society member has provided a written request to the President of the society. In case the President is not available, then the written request must be provided to the next highest-ranking officer of the BOD. If the request is against the President of the society, then it must be provided to the next highest-ranking official of the BOD present and available. A decision must be made on the request within 15 days of receipt in a BOD meeting. The member, proposed for removal must be afforded an opportunity to present their case at this meeting.
- J. A complaint against any member of a committee or BOD, stating them to be in violation of the constitution or bylaws of this society or any engagement that is deemed harmful to the society may lead to their reprimand based on a majority vote of the members of the BOD. In case the violation is critical, for instance, it involves legal implications, and then absentee or proxy votes from the members of the BOD may be counted, if reasonable. For example, a board member may be out of the country and not accessible, then another board member may cast an absentee or proxy vote in their stead. Proceedings for reprimanding a committee member or board member cannot be initiated until an active society member has provided a written request to the President of the society. In case the President is not available, then the written request must be provided to the next highest-ranking officer of the BOD. If the request is against the President of the society, then it must be provided to the next highest-ranking official of the BOD present and available. A decision must be made on the request within 15 days of receipt in a BOD meeting. The defendant must be afforded an opportunity to present their case at this meeting.
- K. The Vice President is the next highest-ranking officer after the President of the society.
- L. The Director of Finance, Director of Education and Secretary are equal in ranking.

The responsibilities of members of the BOD are:

President – The President of the society is the highest authority in the society though decisions made by the BOD are through majority vote. The President is responsible for overseeing all affairs of the society and ensures that all affairs are in compliance with the constitution and bylaws of the society. The President of the society chairs the meetings for the BOD and GA. If the President is unavailable to discharge this duty, then the next highest-ranking officer must take on the responsibility.

- A. The President shall be responsible for forming certain ad hoc committees i.e. Fundraising committee and election committee.

Vice President – The Vice President is the next highest-ranking official among the BOD after the President. The Vice President shall be in-charge of the MMC.

- A. The Vice President is first and foremost responsible for assisting the President of the society in discharging his/her duties.
- B. The Vice President shall be responsible for forming the MMC. The members of the MMC should have satisfactory religious knowledge, good social and communication skills, regular at prayers in the Masjid. The composition of the MMC should represent all cultural ethnicities of people in the Masjid at its best.
- C. The Vice President shall present/request any fiscal requirements for the MMC to the BOD.

Director of Finance – The Director of Finance is the treasurer of the society. The Director of Finance is responsible for the fiscal management of the society's monetary funds, fiscal assets, monetary transactions, taxation records, budget planning and estimation, inflows and outflows of funds to the society. The Director of Finance shall provide a quarterly financial statement for the society in BOD meetings.

- A. The signatories on the society's bank account shall be the Director of Finance, President or Vice President. Any expenditure over \$1000.00 shall require prior approval of the BOD except utilities, taxes and insurance premiums.
- B. The signatories on the society's school account shall be the Director of Finance, Director of Education or Secretary.
- C. The only acceptable forms of accepting monetary funds for the society shall be check, money order and cash. No other forms of payment shall be accepted.
- D. Any non-monetary donations must be accompanied with an appraised value (as deemed appropriate by the Director of Finance). The Director of Finance shall be responsible for issuing a receipt to the donor.

- E. The assets and liabilities records, accounting books, bank deposits and receipts, profit and loss statements, payroll, computerized financial records and inventory records shall be available for audit at any given time.

Director of Education – The Director of Education shall be in-charge of the Society’s weekend school. The Director of Education shall ensure that school programs realize the vision of the school through the SMC. The Director of Education shall be responsible for providing fiscal management to the school. The Director of Education shall present/request any fiscal requirements for the SMC to the BOD.

- A. The Director of Education shall be responsible for forming the SMC. The members of the SMC should have satisfactory religious knowledge, good social and communication skills, educational background is preferable. The composition of the SMC should represent all cultural ethnicities of people in the school at its best.
- B. The Director of Education serves the same role as the Director of Finance with regards to the weekend school fiscal management.

Secretary – The Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining records of all the official correspondence and Meeting’s of the society. The Secretary shall be responsible for publishing the Society’s newsletter through a committee. The Secretary shall be responsible for arranging, announcing and preparing the agenda of the meetings of the BOD and GA with consultation with the BOD. The Secretary shall take minutes of all meetings of these bodies; and shall keep an updated list of all the active members of the Society.

- A. The membership roster, meeting minutes, correspondence files, etc should be auditable at any given time.
- B. The secretary shall be responsible for forming an ad hoc committee to publish the newsletter and maintain the community website. The responsibility for maintaining the community website may also be transferred to the SMC because it will probably have high usage of the community website.

Article VI – Masjid Management Committee

The MMC is responsible for promoting religious activities in the Masjid. This committee has only one titled position, which is the “Imam”. It can have any number of members from the society not exceeding five as deemed necessary to carry out its responsibilities. The main responsibilities this committee carries; is conducting Friday prayers in the Masjid, funeral assistance, Ramadan activities, arranging the two Eid prayers in the Masjid, holding Halaqas in the Masjid, providing adult education related to Islam and other lectures or seminars that do not violate the teachings of Islam yet may be associated with other fields of knowledge.

- A. The MMC is a non-elected committee, which is selected by the Vice President and approved by the BOD.
- B. The Vice President is in-charge of this committee and this committee communicates with the BOD through the Vice President.
- C. The Vice President may use the MMC or other ad hoc members of the society for arranging social activities for the community.
- D. The MMC must comprise members from all major ethnic cultures represented in the community at its best.
- E. The Vice President must provide the fiscal requirements for the MMC to the BOD.

Article VII – Property Management Committee

The PMC is responsible for maintaining the Islamic center facility and any property owned by the society. It can have any number of members from the society not exceeding five as deemed necessary to carry out its responsibility.

- A. The PMC is a non-elected committee, which is selected by the BOD.
- B. This committee communicates directly with the BOD.
- C. The PMC should preferably have members who are familiar with construction, building maintenance and remodeling.

Article VIII – School Management Committee

The SMC shall be responsible for managing the school. This committee shall handle the school operation, curriculum selection, decision-making, and procurement and school events. The SMC shall be responsible for selecting volunteer teachers for the school for managing them.

- A. The SMC is a non-elected committee, which is selected by the Director of Education and approved by the BOD.
- B. The Director of Education leads this committee and this committee communicates with the BOD through the Director of Education.
- C. The SMC has four members, which are titled Principal, Vice Principal, Procurement coordinator and Food/Beverages coordinator.
- D. The BOD allocates an annual budget to the SMC sufficient enough to meet its needs. Currently this budget is \$5000.00.

Article IX – Ad hoc Committees

The BOD for carrying out short-term tasks may form ad hoc committees. The responsibilities of these committees shall be determined on an as needed basis. These are

committees, which have limited scope of functionality and are only needed temporarily such as the Publishing committee, Election committee and Fundraising committee.

Article X – General Assembly

The general assembly is the body comprising all the members of the community. The general assembly is normally convened for issues or events that require broader approval or public approval from the community members. Any meetings of the GA not routinely scheduled are called “Special general assembly” or “Special general body” meetings. Such meetings will be termed as SPGA. Under age members may participate in the GA or SPGA meetings but they cannot vote on any issue.

The functions of the GA are:

- I. The GA elects the BOD once every year as scheduled by the BOD.
- II. The SPGA can be called for amendments to the constitutions, amendments to the bylaws, and dissolution of the society, if necessary.
- III. The BOD may convene an SPGA on issues they consider would require community approval.
- IV. Any member or body of the community other than the BOD may not convene the GA or SPGA.
- V. The President of the society or his designee chairs the GA or SPGA.

Article XI – Elections

The Election committee is responsible for conducting the election of the BOD within the community. The elections are held once a year during the last week of November and beginning of December. The new board is to take charge in January.

- I. The election committee shall have three members who cannot be nominated for a position in the BOD.
- II. The election committee shall request the list of active members from the Secretary to determine who is eligible to hold office.
- III. Members who are not eligible to vote cannot be nominated for election to the BOD.
- IV. The election committee shall resolve eligibility disputes solely.
- V. The election committee shall solicit nominations from the society’s active members for positions to the BOD.
- VI. All written nominations should be submitted to the election committee three weeks prior to the election date.
- VII. The election committee shall verify that the nominations have been endorsed by at least one active member of the society and the nominee itself. No member can be nominated for more than one position.

- VIII. After considering all nominations and thoroughly deliberating over them the election committee shall select three nominees for each position, that is, if there are more than three nominees for any single position.
- IX. The election committee shall distribute the nominations to the society two weeks prior to the election date. The election committee may employ whatever reasonable means necessary for distribution such as letters, pamphlets after Friday prayers or emails.
- X. Floor nominations are not accepted.
- XI. A member of the election committee shall explain the rules prior to the ballots being cast. After collecting all the ballots and counting the votes the election committee shall forward the results to the President of the society. The President shall announce the results to the community at the earliest possible Friday prayer.

Article XII – Amendments

Any amendments to the Bylaws or Constitution shall be made as per the constitution.

- I. Petitions to amend the Bylaws or Constitution that get rejected cannot be appealed.
- II. Petitions to amend the Bylaws or Constitution that get rejected can be petitioned again after duration of sixty days.

Article XIII – Administrative grievances

Any grievances regarding the community administration should be presented to the BOD in writing. The BOD shall at its own discretion try to assess, investigate and analyze the matter and try to address the grievance in good faith to the best of their abilities. The BOD cannot be held liable for their decision on such a grievance morally, legally or contractually.

- A. Neither the BOD nor any of the committees shall get involved in personal disputes.
- B. Neither the BOD nor any of the committees shall get involved in religious disputes.
- C. Difference of opinion within the BOD or any of its committees shall be resolved amicably.
- D. The President within the BOD, and the leads (those who are in-charge) within each committee shall have the authority to cast tie-breaking votes or veto a group decision if absolutely necessary (vetoes are not encouraged though).

Article XIV – Fund solicitation

The society will not allow the use of its facility or any of its sponsored programs for funds solicitation to any external organization or any of the society's individual members without the explicit permission of the BOD. Permission may only be granted if all members of the board vote affirmative. Absentia votes must be sent in writing and signed. The BOD reserves the right to take necessary action to prevent the occurrence of such an incident or after the occurrence of such an incident, should it happen without their explicit permission.

Article XV – Public speaking

The society does not allow any of its public speakers (during regular Friday sermons, Eid sermons, Halaqas or society sponsored events) to use inflammatory, unpatriotic, political or illegal remarks. The BOD reserves the right to take necessary action should this article of the bylaws be violated or breached.