

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS NEW SOUTH
WALES INCORPORATED

CONSTITUTION

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CONSTITUTION

OF “THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS NEW SOUTH WALES INCORPORATED”

1. **NAME**

The name of this Organisation shall be The Compassionate Friends New South Wales, Incorporated (herein referred to as “TCF” or “the Organisation”).

2. **THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS**

TCF is a self-help organisation offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents upon the death of their child(ren) and to foster the physical and emotional health of bereaved parents and their surviving child(ren).

Its aims include:

- (a) to offer support and friendship to any sorrowing parents;
- (b) to listen with understanding;
- (c) to provide group meetings;
- (d) to give information about the grieving process;
- (e) to provide acquaintance with bereaved parents whose sorrow has softened and who have found fresh hope and strength for living;
- (f) to promote more understanding among professional, medical, paramedical, police, clergy and teaching persons and the community at large of the plight and special needs of bereaved parents;
- (g) to seek assistance for bereaved families in need;
- (h) to establish, promote and assist Chapters in NSW (the State) for primary help to bereaved parents;
- (i) to establish and maintain Bereavement Parent Centres, to offer support, refuge, personal contact and referral for all bereaved parents.

3. PRINCIPLES

The seven (7) principles of TCF are as follows:

- (i) TCF OFFERS FRIENDSHIP AND UNDERSTANDING TO BEREAVED PARENTS
 - (a) Bereaved parents have learned that the death of their child(ren) has caused a pain that can best be understood fully by another bereaved parent.
 - (b) They can reach out with love and support, as their own grief subsides, to those who still feel alone and abandoned.
- (ii) TCF BELIEVES THAT BEREAVED PARENTS CAN HELP EACH OTHER
 - (a) Bereaved parents understand that they must find their own way through grief.
 - (b) They know that expressing thoughts and feelings are part of the healing process. TCF offers an opportunity for sharing and learning from other bereaved parents.
 - (c) TCF does not offer professional psychotherapy or counselling.
 - (d) TCF seeks the co-operation and support of the professional community but does not depend on it for supervision or formal guidance.
 - (e) TCF welcomes the opportunity to share with the professional community information about the needs of bereaved parents.
- (iii) TCF REACHES OUT TO ALL BEREAVED PARENTS IRRESPECTIVE OF RELIGION, RACE, FINANCIAL STATUS OR NATIONALITY
 - (a) TCF espouses no specific religious or philosophical ideology.

- (b) TCF does not participate in legislative or political controversy. (Members are free to do so OUTSIDE of the Organisation).
 - (c) Members express their individual views on controversial subjects with respect and consideration for those who may disagree with them.
- (iv) TCF UNDERSTANDS THAT EVERY BEREAVED PARENT HAS INDIVIDUAL NEEDS AND RIGHTS
- (a) TCF does not suggest that there is a correct way to grieve or that there is a preferred solution to the emotional and spiritual dilemmas raised by the death of a child.
 - (b) All members are given the opportunity to speak and be heard. However, no one is compelled to speak.
- (v) TCF HELPS BEREAVED PARENTS PRIMARILY THROUGH CHAPTERS
- Chapters are established to provide sharing groups that create an atmosphere of openness and honesty.
- (vi) TCF CHAPTERS ARE ESTABLISHED FOR THEIR MEMBERS
- (a) What is said at meetings is confidential and what is learnt about members is privileged information.
 - (b) TCF recommends that attendance at Chapter meetings by the media, by students, or by other observers be permitted only with prior announcement and with the consent of the members.

- (vii) TCF CHAPTERS ARE CO-ORDINATED BY THE COUNCIL TO EXTEND HELP TO EACH OTHER AND TO INDIVIDUAL BEREAVED PARENTS THROUGHOUT THE STATE

TCF acknowledges the obligation of its members to support local State and National goals of the Organisation by contributing their time, talent and resources.

- (a) THE COUNCIL is to assist in the development of new chapters to bereaved parents directly where there is no local Chapter to train or assist in the training of members to ensure TCF's aims are fulfilled.

The Council may establish and appoint Chapters, Sub-Chapters, Representatives and Telephone Contacts throughout the State.

- (b) A CHAPTER so established shall be charged with performing the work and fulfilling the objects of TCF in its area and will consist of at least six (6) members, and shall be responsible to the Council.

A CHAPTER shall be administered by a committee of not less than three (3) members consisting of an elected Chapter Leader and other elected members of such number as shall be determined from time to time by the Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Chapter.

- (c) SUB-CHAPTER – Two (2) or more members endeavouring to carry out the function described above, but without forming a committee, shall be deemed to be A Sub-Chapter administered by the Council.

- (d) TCF REPRESENTATIVES – TELEPHONE CONTACTS – Members working on their own, approved by the Council as

TCF Representatives or Telephone Contacts will be responsible to the Council.

4. MEMBERSHIP

(i) Ordinary Members

- (a) Membership is open to all bereaved parents.
- (b) A bereaved parent becomes a Member of TCF upon:
 - (A) Completion of an application form containing the following declaration:

“I hereby agree if admitted to membership of TCF to observe and be bound by the Constitution and Rules of the Organisation.”
 - And
 - (B) Acceptance by a Chapter, Sub-Chapter or the Council.
- (c) No fee shall be charged for membership.
- (d) Membership shall relate to a specific calendar year from 1st January to 31st December.
- (e) Membership shall be renewed annually upon submission of a Membership Renewal Form.

(ii) Honorary Membership

Honorary Membership may be granted to visiting members of other Chapters of The Compassionate Friends established in other States of the Commonwealth of Australia.

(iii) Members' Liabilities

The liability of members of the incorporated Organisation to contribute towards the payment of the debts and liabilities of the Organisation or the costs, charges and expenses of the winding up of the Organisation is limited to the amount, if any, unpaid by the members in respect of membership of the Organisation as required by Clause 5(ii).

(iv) Cessation of Membership

A person ceases to be a member of TCF if that person:

- (a) Dies;
- (b) Resigns that membership; or
- (c) Is expelled.

(v) Disciplining of Members

(a) Where the Council is of the opinion that a member of TCF has:

either

persistently refused or neglected to comply with a provision or provisions of this Constitution;

or

persistently and wilfully acted in a manner prejudicial to the interests of TCF

the Council by way of Resolution may

either

expel the member from TCF;

or

suspend the member from TCF for a specified period.

(b) Where the Council passes a Resolution under Sub-clause (a) of this Clause, the Secretary shall as soon as practicable, cause notice in writing to be served on the member:

A. Setting out the resolution of the Council and the grounds on which it is based.

B. Stating that the member may address the Council at a meeting to be held not earlier than fourteen (14) days and not later than twenty-eight (28) days after service of the notice.

C. Stating the date, place and time of that meeting

and

D. Informing the member may do either or both of the following:-

- Attend and speak at that meeting

or

- Submit to the Council at or prior to the date of that meeting written representations relating to the Resolution.

(c) A Resolution of the Council under Sub-clause 4(v)(a) is of no effect unless the Council, at a meeting held not earlier than fourteen (14) days and not later than twenty-eight (28) days after service on the member of a notice under Sub-clause (b), confirms the Resolution in accordance with this Clause.

(d) At a meeting of the Council held at referred to in Sub-clause (c) the Council shall:-

- A. Give to the member an opportunity to make oral representations.
- B. Give due consideration to any written representations submitted to the Council by the member at or prior to the meeting.
- C. By resolution determine whether to confirm or to revoke the Resolution.

(e) Where the Council confirms a Resolution under Sub-clause (d), the Secretary shall within seven (7) days after that confirmation, by notice in writing, inform the member of the fact and of the member's right of appeal under Sub-clause (g).

(f) A Resolution confirmed by the Council under Sub-clause (d) does not take effect:

- A. Until expiration of the period within which the member is entitled to appeal against the Resolution where the

member does not exercise the right of appeal within that period.

- B. Where within that period the member exercises the right of appeal, unless and until the Council confirms the Resolution pursuant to Sub-clause (g)B.

(g) Right of appeal of disciplined member:

- A. A member may appeal to TCF in General Meeting against a Resolution of the the Council which is confirmed under Sub-clause (d) within seven (7) days after notice of the Resolution is served on the member by lodging with the Secretary a notice to that effect.
- B. Upon receipt of a notice from a member under Sub-clause (g)A., the Secretary shall notify the Council which shall convene a General Meeting of TCF, to be held within twenty-one (21) days after the date on which the Secretary received the notice.
- C. At a General Meeting of the Council convened under Sub-clause (g)B:
 - (1) No business other than the business of the appeal shall be transacted.
 - (2) The Council and the member shall be given the opportunity to state their respective cases orally, or in writing or both.
 - (3) Members present shall vote by secret ballot of the question of whether the Resolution should be confirmed or resolved.
 - (4) If at a General Meeting the Council passes a Special Resolution in favour of the confirmation of the Resolution, the Resolution is confirmed.

5. **REGISTERS**

(i) Members' Registrar

- (a) The Secretary shall establish and maintain a register of members of the Organisation specifying the name and address of each person who is a member together with the date on which the person became a member.
- (b) The register of members shall be kept at the principal place of administration of the Organisation.

(ii) Newsletter Subscription Register

- (a) The Council shall set annually the subscription fee for TCF newsletter.
- (b) The Council may at their discretion approve free subscriptions in special circumstances.
- (c) A Non-Member Subscriber Register will be kept.

6. **MANAGEMENT**

- (i) The management of TCF shall be vested in the Council which shall consist of:
 - (a) President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer; and
 - (b) Up to two (2) other persons elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Organisation provided that the Council shall not contain, at any one time, more than four (4) persons from the one Chapter.
 - (c) The Office of President shall be an elected Office by members at the Annual General Meeting of the Organisation and shall hold office for two years.
 - (d) The position of Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer shall be filled by appointments made by members of the Council.
 - (e) At the 2005 Annual General Meeting of the Organisation all the members of the Council shall retire from office, and at the

Annual General Meeting in every subsequent year one half of the members of the Council for the time being, or if their number is not 2 or a multiple of 2, then the number nearest one half, shall retire from office.

- (f) A retiring member of Council is eligible for re-election.
- (g) The members of Council to retire at an Annual General Meeting, other than the 2005 Annual General Meeting, are those who have been longest in office since their last election, but as between persons who became members of Council on the same day, those to retire shall (unless they otherwise agree among themselves) be determined by lot.

(ii) Authority and Powers of the Council

- (a) The Council shall be subject to the Act, the Regulations, and the Constitution and Resolutions passed by TCF at General Meetings.
- (b) Notwithstanding any possible disqualification, defect or vacancy in appointment of any member of the Council no Resolution of the Council shall invalidate any prior act otherwise valid.
- (c) The Council has power to perform all such acts and do all such things as appear to it to be necessary or desirable for the proper management of the affairs of TCF.
- (d) The Council may approve of sponsors who may not be bereaved parents to assist in the formation of a Chapter/Sub-Chapter, provided such persons abide by the principles herein set out.

(iii) Executive

- (a) The Executive shall consist of the President, and two other members elected by the Council.
- (b) It shall be subject to control and direction of the Council provided such directions shall not invalidate any prior act otherwise valid.

- (c) The Executive shall have such powers and authority as may be granted to it under this Constitution or as may be delegated to it by the Council.

7. ELECTION OF MEMBERS

- (i) Nominations of candidates for election as Members of the Council:
 - (a) Shall be made in writing signed by two (2) members of TCF with the written consent of the candidate included on the Nomination Form;
 - (b) Shall be delivered to the Secretary at the AGM;
 - (c) May be received from the floor at the AGM.
- (ii) If the number of nominations received for positions is singular and equal to the number of vacancies to be filled, the persons so nominated shall be deemed to be elected;
- (iii) If more than one nomination for a position is received and accepted, a ballot is to be held for the position;
- (iv) If insufficient nominations are received to fill all vacancies, the candidates nominated shall be deemed to be elected and the Council shall have the authority to appoint persons to those vacant positions.

8. SECRETARY

- (i) It is the duty of the Secretary to keep Minutes of:
 - (a) All appointments of office bearers and members of the Council;
 - (b) The names of members of the Council present at all its meetings, and General Meetings;
 - (c) All proceedings at the Council, Executive Meetings and General Meetings;
- (ii) Such minutes shall be signed by the President of the Meeting of which they record or by the Chairman of that Meeting.
- (iii) The Secretary shall:
 - (a) Notify all members of meetings;

- (b) Record the full details of all accounts presented and approved for payment;
- (c) Have custody of the Common Seal;
- (d) Ensure the seal is not affixed to any instrument except by authority of the Council and the affixing of the Common Seal shall be attested by any two members of the Council;
- (e) Except as otherwise provided by this Constitution, keep in custody or under his control all records, books and other documents relating to TCF.

9. **TREASURER**

It is the duty of the Treasurer of TCF to ensure that:

- (a) All money due to TCF is collected and received and that all payments authorised by TCF are made;
- (b) Correct books and accounts are kept showing the financial affairs of TCF including full details of all receipts and expenditure connected with the activities of TCF;
- (c) All payments in excess of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) made by the Organisation shall be paid by cheque signed by any two (2) unrelated Office Bearers;
- (d) Excess funds are invested, upon resolution of the the Council, in such Trust Funds as authorised by Law;
- (e) The Provisions of the Charitable Fund Raising Act 1991 and the Regulations thereunder are complied with.

10. **VACATION OF OFFICE**

The office of a member the Council, the Executive or Chapter shall become vacant upon such person:

- (a) Dying;
- (b) Becoming bankrupt or making any arrangement or composition with creditors generally;

- (c) becoming mentally ill or a person whose person or estate is liable to be dealt with in any way under the law relating to mental health;
- (d) giving one months' notice in writing of resignation;
- (e) being absent from two (2) consecutive meetings without acceptable reason on a Motion duly carried but leave of absence may be granted at Council's discretion;
- (f) Ceasing to be a member of TCF;
- (g) Being the subject of a resolution being passed by a two-thirds majority of members present at a properly constituted General Meeting called for the purpose to remove such person from office;
- (h) Holding any office of profit in TCF;
- (i) being directly or indirectly interested in any contract with TCF without the consent of the Council.

11. **MEETINGS**

- (a) Council meetings are to be held at such time and place as is determined by the Council.
- (b) Executive meetings are to be held at such time and place as is determined by the Council.

12. **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Annual General Meeting of TCF and Chapters shall be held within sixteen (16) weeks of the conclusion of the financial year in each year to be convened on such date and at such time and place as the Council thinks fit, for the following purposes:

- (a) To confirm the Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting and any intervening General Meeting (no discussion thereon except as to their accuracy to be permitted);
- (b) To receive and adopt the Annual Report of the President, Treasurer and Secretary and Statement of Accounts for the preceding financial year;
- (c) To elect members of the Council for the ensuing year;

- (d) To appoint an auditor for the ensuing year;
- (e) To transact any business of which at least twenty-one (21) days prior written notice has been given to the Secretary. The Secretary shall request members to submit matters to be raised at AGM two (2) months prior to the date set down.

13. **SPECIAL OR EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETINGS**

- (a) General Meetings may be convened by the Council whenever it thinks fit.
- (b) Members of TCF or Chapters may call a General Meeting upon requisition of at least four (4) members.
- (c) A requisition of members for General Meetings:
 - (A) Shall state the purpose or purposes of the meeting.
 - (B) Shall be signed by the members making the requisition.
 - (C) Shall be lodged with the Secretary.
 - (D) May consist of several documents in a similar form, each signed by one (1) or more of the members making the requisition.

14. **NOTICES OF MEETINGS**

- (a) At least fourteen (14) days notice in writing shall be given of all General Meetings to the members of TCF (or Chapter) specifying the place, the day and the time of meeting and the nature of business to be dealt with at the meeting.
- (b) At least twenty-one (21) days notice in writing shall be given to the Secretary of business to be raised at the Meeting.
- (c) A notice may be given to a member personally or by sending it by post to him at his address registered with TCF where a notice is sent by post. Service of the notice shall be deemed to be effected on the day after the date of its posting.

15. PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNCIL

- (a) The Council may meet together for the dispatch of business, adjourn and otherwise appoint and regulate its meetings as it thinks fit. At least seven (7) days prior notice shall be given to the Council members. Non receipt of a notice by any member shall not invalidate the meeting. The President, at any time, the Secretary and the Treasurer, on the requisition of any of at least two (2) members of the Council may summon a meeting of the Council.
- (b) Questions arising at any meeting of the Council shall be decided by a majority of votes of those present and a determination by a majority of all the members of the Council present, shall for all purposes be a determination of the Council. In the case of an equality of votes, the Chairman of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.
- (c) The continuing members of the Council may act, notwithstanding any vacancy in the Council, but if and so long as their number is reduced below the number fixed by or pursuant to this Constitution as the necessary quorum, the continuing member or members may act for the purposes of increasing the number of members of the Council from amongst the members, which they are empowered to do, or of summoning a General Meeting of TCF, but for no other purpose.

16. QUORUM

- (i) (a) A quorum shall consist of ten (10) members at a TCF General Meeting or not less than four (4) members at a Chapter General Meeting.
- (b) A quorum shall consist of four (4) members at a Meeting of the Council.
- (c) A quorum shall consist of two (2) members at a Meeting of the Council Executive.
- (d) A quorum shall consist of four (4) members, at a meeting of a Chapter.

- (e) Should within half an hour of the time set down for a meeting to commence, a quorum not be present then the meeting shall be adjourned to a time and place to be determined thereat.

If at the meeting called in place of any meeting adjourned due to lack of a quorum, then those members attending, being not less than two, shall be deemed to be a quorum.

(ii) General Meetings

- (a) Only registered members of TCF may vote at TCF General Meetings.
- (b) Upon any question arising at a General Meeting of the Association a member has one vote only.
- (c) All votes shall be given personally or by proxy but no member may hold more than five proxies.
- (d) In the case of an equality of votes on a question at a General Meeting, the Chairperson of the meeting is entitled to exercise a second or casting vote.
- (e) Each member shall be entitled to appoint another member as proxy by notice given to the secretary not less than forty eight (48) hours before the time set down for the conduct of the meeting in respect of which the proxy is appointed.
- (f) The notice appointing the proxy shall be in the following form:-

- (b) The Chairman may, with the consent of any meeting at which a quorum is present (and shall if so directed by the meeting), adjourn the meeting from time to time and from place to place but no business shall be transacted at any adjourned meeting other than the business left unfinished at the meeting from which the adjournment took place. When a meeting is adjourned for thirty (30) days or more notice of the adjourned meeting shall be given as in the case of an original meeting. Save as aforesaid it shall not be necessary to give any notice of the adjournment or of the business to be transacted at an adjourned meeting.
- (c) (A) At any general meeting, a Resolution put to the vote, shall be decided on a show of hands, unless a poll (before or on the declaration of the result of the show of hands) is demanded by the Chairman or by at least three (3) members present.
- (B) Unless a poll is so demanded, a declaration by the Chairman that a Resolution has, on a show of hands, been carried unanimously, or by a particular majority, or lost, and any entry to that effect in the book containing the Minutes of the proceedings of the Organisation, shall be conclusive evidence or the fact without proof of the number or proportion of votes recorded in favour of or against the Resolution.
- (C) The demand for a poll may be withdrawn.
- (D) If a poll is duly demanded, it shall be a Secret Ballot, taken in such manner and either at once or after an interval or adjournment or otherwise as the Chairman directs. But the result of the poll demanded on the election of a Chairman or on the question of adjournment, shall be taken forthwith.
- (E) In the case of an equality of votes, whether on show of hands or on a poll, the Chairman of the meeting at which the show of hands takes place or at which a poll is demanded, shall be entitled to a second or casting vote.

- (d) Each member present and voting at a General Meeting of the Council or Chapter shall have only one (1) vote.
- (e) An attendance record shall be kept in a separate bound book of those people attending meetings of Members of the Council, a Chapter or Sub Chapter.

18. **INSURANCE**

- (a) TCF shall effect and maintain insurance in accordance with the Act, Section 44.
- (b) TCF may effect and maintain other insurances as deemed fit.

19. **FINANCIAL YEAR**

The financial year shall conclude on 30th June each year.

20. **AUDIT**

- (a) The auditor shall be appointed at the Annual General Meeting. He shall examine all accounts, vouchers, receipts, books, etc., and furnish a report thereon to the members at the Annual General Meeting.
- (b) The auditor shall be a qualified accountant, recognised by the Institute of Accountants and shall not be a member, or closely related to a member of the Council.
- (c) Subject to paragraph (d) hereof, notice of intention to nominate an auditor to replace the current auditor shall be given to the Secretary at least twenty-one (21) days before the Annual General Meeting. The Secretary shall send a copy of the nomination to the current auditor at least fourteen (14) days before the Annual General Meeting. The current auditor shall be entitled to attend the Annual General Meeting and if he so wishes be heard at such Annual General Meeting.
- (d) Where the current auditor submits his resignation, or notifies the Secretary of his intention not to seek re-election as auditor, paragraph (c) hereof shall not apply.

21. SALARIED POSITIONS

- (a) From time to time it may be necessary to employ people to salaried positions with TCF. The election of the person for the position is to be made by not less than two (2) members of the Council. The position is to be advertised.
- (b) No member of the Council shall be appointed to any salaried office of TCF or any office of TCF paid by fees. No remuneration or other benefit in money's worth shall be given by TCF to any member of the Council except repayment of out of pocket expenses, interest in respect of money lent to TCF (at a rate not exceeding interest at the rate for the time being charged by Bankers in Sydney) and reasonable and proper rent for premises let to TCF.

22. ANNUAL REPORTS

A report of each Chapter and Sub-Chapter will be submitted annually to the Council.

23. DISSOLUTION

- (i) (a) The TCF shall be dissolved in the event of its membership being less than six (6) persons or upon the vote of a three-fourths majority of members present at a General Meeting convened to consider such question.
- (b) Upon dissolution (the motion having been a special resolution passed by three-fourths of members present at a General Meeting conveyed to consider such question) all assets and funds of the Organisation on hand shall, after payment of all expenses and liabilities, be handed over to such registered or exempted NSW Charity or Charities whose objects are compatible to those of TCF, being also an organisation, donations to which are deductible under Section 78 of the Income Tax Assessment Act.

(ii) Chapters

- (a) A Chapter shall be dissolved in the event of its membership being less than six (6) persons or upon the vote of a three-fourths majority of members present at a General Meeting convened to consider such question.
- (b) A notice of the proposed meeting must be forwarded to the Council.
- (c) Upon dissolution of all assets and funds of that Chapter or Sub-Chapter on hand shall be forwarded immediately to the Treasurer of the Council.

(iii) Sub-Chapters

A Sub-Chapter shall be dissolved in the event of there being insufficient members who wish to continue.

24. CHANGE OF STATUS

- (a) A Chapter may change its status to become a Sub-Chapter upon written notification by the retiring President to do so, including statements and cash expenditure by the Chapter for the year to that date, and the return of all assets including the balance of moneys at the bank. The change of status of the Chapter is subject to the approval of the Council.
- (b) A Sub-Chapter may change its status to become a Chapter upon written notification to the Council and acknowledgment of its financial responsibilities, advice of duly elected Office Bearers, adoption of an appropriate Constitution and acceptance by the Council.

26. CHARTERS

TCF shall issue a Charter to all Chapters, Sub-Chapters, Telephone Contacts and other such Members as it may deem necessary under the following provisions:

- (a) Upon application by the Executive of a newly formed Chapter or Sub-Chapter containing the minutes of a meeting at which a resolution was passed to the effect that the Chapter or Sub-Chapter will conform to the Constitution (as amended) of TCF and will subscribe to the Objects and Principles of TCF.
- (b) Existing Chapters and Sub-Chapters will be issued with a Charter upon receipt of a copy of the minutes of a meeting at which a Resolution was passed to the effect that the Chapter or Sub-Chapter will conform to the Constitution (as amended) of TCF and will subscribe to the Objects and Principles of TCF.
- (c) In the case of Groups, Telephone Contacts or others, The Council may issue a Charter at their discretion from time to time.
- (d) All applications for Charter will be dealt with at the Council Meetings.
- (e) A Charter may be withdrawn by the Council if a serious breach of the Constitution, Objects and Principles or conduct detrimental to TCF occurs.

27. CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

A Certificate of Appreciation may be awarded to outstanding workers of TCF in recognition of dedicated service in an honorary capacity in the following circumstances:

- (a) Service rendered must be for at least five (5) years;
- (b) Certificates may be presented to Members, Non-Members, or a Company or Group and the foregoing may receive the award only once. In the case of a Group or Company, the award should be displayed in an appropriate place and not in the home of an individual;
- (c) Recommendations are to be submitted to the Council on an approved form with citation signed by two (2) Executive Officers or a Chapter, Sub-Chapter or Group. The Council may from time to time disapprove of the application and no reason for such decision will be disclosed.
- (d) The Council may award Certificates as it deems fit.

- (e) Certificates will be presented by the State President or a representative at a mutually acceptable time and place.

28. AMENDMENT OF THIS CONSTITUTION

This Constitution may be amended by a special resolution passed by a three-quarter majority of members present at a General Meeting convened in accordance with the provisions of Section 20(1) of the Associations Incorporation Act, 1984 (as amended).

29. RESOLUTION OF INTERNAL DISPUTES

Disputes between members (in their capacity as members) of the Association, and disputes between members and the Association, are to be referred to a community justice centre for mediation in accordance with the Community Justices Centres Act, 1983.

30. COMPLAINT HANDLING MECHANISM

Complaints relating to the operations of the Association shall be handled as follows:-

- (a) The President shall be the person responsible for investigating all complaints.
- (b) A register will be maintained which includes the date the complaint was made, the name, address and telephone number of the complainant, the nature of the complaint, the name of the person or persons who were the subject of the complaint, action taken to investigate it, details of the findings and the date and manner by which the complainant was informed of the outcome.
- (c) Where the complaint requires investigation, a pro forma action sheet will be developed which will include details of any interviews with the person or persons who were the subject of the complaint.
- (d) Where the Association is at fault, steps will be taken to avoid a recurrence.
- (e) Appropriate action will be taken where a particular individual has been the offender in more than one complaint.

- (f) Where the complaint resulted from false or misleading information being provided to the complainant, the Association will accept full responsibility. If the person responsible continues to offend, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.
- (g) A monthly report will be submitted to the Executive of the Association summarising details of all complaints received.
- (h) Complaints will be analysed to reveal any recurrences or trends in the form of complaints received.