

## BYE LAWS OF HINDU SAMAJ

Approved in the General Body Meeting of Hindu Samaj planned on Apr 27, 2025

### ARTICLE I

#### NAME

This religious corporation shall be named HINDU SAMAJ, hereinafter called "SAMAJ".

### ARTICLE II

#### OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Samaj are as follows:

1. To foster, in the broadest manner, Hinduism and its philosophy.
2. To promote unity and effectiveness of effort among all concerned.
3. To increase contribution of Hinduism to human welfare
4. To arrange special programs for children of members of the Samaj to inculcate in them the spirit of Hinduism.

To these ends, the Samaj proposes to conduct meetings, celebrate festivals, organize visits to holy shrines and places of inspiration, perform and help perform religious education, and make available the facilities to the residents of the MidHudson and surrounding areas for the purpose of religious practices and cultural events.

### ARTICLE III

#### MEMBERSHIP

1. Membership is open to all persons interested in the advancement of Hinduism who wish to promote objectives of the Hindu Samaj and contribute towards the objectives of Hindu Samaj.
2. All ACTIVE members have same rights and privileges, including voting, holding office and serving on the Board of Trustees (sometimes hereafter referred to as the "Trustees") and other committees of the Samaj.
3. The members as a whole shall hereinafter be referred to herein as the "General Body".

### ARTICLE IV

#### MEMBERS

Any person above the age of eighteen who is interested in the advancement of Hinduism and agrees to abide by the rules and regulations of the Samaj can become a member by paying the appropriate dues.

#### ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

1. The membership period will be from Jan 1 to Dec 31 of any calendar year.
2. The annual membership dues shall be \$100/- per family, \$50/- for single person. Family membership includes husband, wife, children under the age of eighteen years and parents **living with them permanently and registered with Hindu Samaj.**
3. The annual membership dues may be periodically adjusted by the Trustees, **but may not be increased by more than \$100/-** without the approval of the General Body.

#### LIFE MEMBERSHIP

1. Life membership dues are a single payment of \$ 1,000/-.

#### ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

Children of Hindu Samaj member who are 18 and above and enrolled in an accredited university/college in USA can become associate members by filling out the membership form. There are no dues for associate membership. Associate members do not have voting rights.

## **HONORARY MEMBERSHIP**

The Board of Trustees may confer Honorary membership on any person with significant contribution towards Humanity, Community, Religion or Hindu Samaj. An Honorary member has all the privileges of a member except for voting rights.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

1. The board of Trustees shall consist of fifteen (15) members; each elected by the General Body for a three year term. The term of at least one third of the board members shall expire with the General Body meeting in April. All trustees must remain members in good standing during their tenure in office. A board member can be relieved from his/her duties from the board if he/she misses three consecutive meetings without a justifiable reason.
2. The Trustees shall have custody and control over all the property of the Samaj.
3. The Trustees shall serve until the expiration of their terms or until their successors have been elected/selected and have assumed their responsibilities.
4. The Trustees shall hold a meeting within two weeks after the annual meeting for the election of the officers.
5. The presence of a majority of Trustees (greater than 50 percent) shall constitute a quorum and all the decisions pertaining to the Samaj shall only be with the concurrence of a majority of total number of Trustees.
6. To the extent permitted by law, any action required or permitted to be taken by the Trustees, may be taken without a meeting if all members of the Board of Trustees consent in writing to the adoption of a resolution authorizing the action to be taken. The resolution and consent thereto by the members of the Board of Trustees shall be filed with the minutes of the last proceedings of the Board of Trustees.
7. Any one or more members of the Board of Trustees may participate in a meeting of the Trustees by means of a telephone conference or similar communications equipment allowing all persons participating in the meeting to hear each other at the same time. Participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at a meeting. Participation by telephonic conference call should be only in the event a trustee cannot physically make it to the meeting and should not be a normal practice.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **OFFICERS**

1. There shall be Four (4) officers of the Board of Trustees: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.
2. All the Four (4) officers must be Trustees and shall be elected by the members of the Board of Trustees for a one year term by simple majority.
  - a. An officer may be relieved of his/her duties by a greater than two thirds majority (more than 66.67 percent) vote of the Trustees after due process and proper notification.
3. The President shall be the chief executive officer of the Samaj, responsible to the General Body, and shall perform all duties required by the Bye Laws, or if not specified, by the resolutions passed by the General Body.
4. Officers shall serve until their successors are elected and have assumed their responsibilities.
5. The Vice President shall assist the President in the execution of his duties. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall assume the responsibilities.
6. The Secretary shall perform the duties usual to the office of an organizational secretary and those required by the Samaj Bye Laws and by actions of the Board of Trustees.
7. The Treasurer shall perform the duties usual to the office of an organization treasurer and those required by the Samaj Bye Laws and by the actions of the Board of Trustees. He/She must also present the budget for the coming year for the approval of the General Body.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **ELECTION OF THE OFFICERS**

1. Nominations for officers of the Board of Trustees shall be accepted by the outgoing President, but only if proposed by two members of the Board of Trustees and accepted by the candidate.
2. Election of the officers shall be presided over by an Election Officer who is not a current trustee.

3. The election officer shall count the ballots and announce the results at the same meeting. The candidate receiving the largest number of votes for the office of the Board of Trustees shall be declared elected. In the event of a tie there will be a second or third ballot until an officer is elected.
4. The newly elected President shall assume office after the results of the election are announced. All records, capital assets and funds in possession of the outgoing officers shall be passed on to the new President within two weeks.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **SUBCOMMITTEES**

1. The Board of Trustees may appoint subcommittees for the furtherance of the purpose of the Samaj.
2. Any subcommittee of the Samaj may be dissolved at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **MEETINGS**

1. The annual meeting of the Samaj shall be held on the last Sunday of April each year. Under extraneous circumstances an alternative date could be chosen. At this meeting the Board of Trustees shall present a report of its activities during the past year, including financial transactions.
2. The notice of the annual meeting of the Samaj will be sent no later than in first week of March each year. Above notice shall be deemed complete when communicated via Samaj email and posted at the notice board of the Samaj buildings (e.g. Temple, Community Hall, etc).
3. The President, at his/her discretion, may call a meeting of the General Body to discuss issues of vital interest to the Samaj.
4. The President must call a meeting of the General Body within four (4) weeks of the receipt of a written request to do so by thirty (30%) percent of the members. The purpose of such a meeting must be explained to the President, who in turn must convey it to the trustees within one week and the General Body within two weeks.
5. In case of a vacancy arising for the post of the President, the Secretary of the Samaj must call a meeting of the Trustees within two weeks to fill the vacancy.
6. To conduct the business of the general body meeting of the Hindu Samaj, the presence of a quorum is necessary. The quorum is defined as 20% of the membership of the Hindu Samaj in good standing OR 50 members whichever is lower in number.
7. A majority vote (greater than 50 percent) of the quorum shall control the proceedings of the meeting and the necessary approvals required by the meeting. However, in the case of amendment of the Bye Laws, a two third (2/3) vote shall be required.
8. Proxy votes will not be recognized.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

1. The funds collected by the Treasurer shall be spent by the Trustees to further the objectives of the Samaj.
2. The board can select annually one qualified and competent person (preferably Qualified and Practicing CPA or Accounting Professional) from the membership or an independent professional to examine the accounts of the Samaj. The report will be presented at the Annual Meeting of the General Body and will be made available to General Body to review.
3. President and Treasurer shall be the official joint signatories on the Hindu Samaj Checks
4. Samaj accounting year is from April 1 to March 31.

## **ARTICLE XI**

### **FUND OBJECTIVES:**

1. To establish and expand a Center which includes place of worship as well as carry out cultural/social/educational activities for the Samaj in Dutchess County.
2. To arrange religious seminars and functions of great significance in accordance with the aims and objectives of the Samaj.
3. To sponsor scholarships to an educational institute in the USA or abroad.
4. To donate for worthy charitable causes such as relief funds for earthquakes, floods, or famine victims in the USA or abroad.
5. To perform or to aid in the performance of Hindu rites and rituals.
6. To promote Indian culture.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### **SEVERANCE OF MEMBERSHIP**

1. A member may resign by submitting a resignation in writing to the Board of Trustees.
2. If the dues of any member remain unpaid by the due date, his name shall be removed from the membership roll after the member has been notified at least thirty (30) days in advance of the proposed action and due process followed. A member may resume his membership upon payment of current dues.
3. Any member whose conduct is prejudicial to the good of the Samaj may be dropped from the membership roll and/or as a Trustee by a thirty percent vote of the total membership, and a two thirds (2/3) vote of the Trustees after the member has been notified at least thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting, as to the charges against him/her, and has been given the opportunity to answer the charges in person or in writing.

## **ARTICLE XIII**

### **RULES OF ORDER**

Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the parliamentary procedure of all meetings of the Samaj.

## **ARTICLE XIV**

### **ELECTION PROCESS:**

1. Election will be held as part of the Annual General Body Meeting in April of every year. The number of positions would be one third of the Board of Trustees but could vary depending on additional vacancies created during the previous year.
2. **Vacancy filling:**  
All Board of Trustees positions are elected for 3 years. However, if there is a vacancy on the Board for any reason, that position may be filled by appointment by the President & approval by a simple majority of the Board of Trustees until the next general elections. At the next General elections, a candidate who is elected with the least number of votes will serve out the remaining term of that vacancy. The candidate elected with the least number of votes may serve as trustee for 1, 2 years depending upon the term remaining for that vacancy.
3. Any member who is eighteen or above and has paid the annual membership by Dec 31 of previous year but no later than March 1 of the election year, or is a life member by March 1 of election year can vote. Any annual or Life member who has paid dues on or after March 2 of election year is not eligible to vote in the upcoming election.
4. Family membership is defined as husband, wife and any parents living with them permanently and registered with Hindu Samaj.
5. All requests to contest the election must be submitted in writing to the President or the Secretary of the board by March 1 and no request will be honored if received after that. All contestants must be bona fide members (Annual or Life) for at least one year by March 1. Under exceptional circumstances of acts of God (like declared state emergencies due to inclement weather, fire, etc) deadline of March 1 can be extended to a next reasonable date by the President.

## **AMENDMENTS**

**1995**

The number of the Board of Trustees of the Samaj is increased from eleven (11) to thirteen (13).

**1997**

1. Any member who wants to contest the election for the Board of Trustees of the Samaj has to submit a request in writing to the President or the Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the Samaj.
2. Annual membership for the Samaj is increased from twenty five dollars (\$25/-) to fifty dollars (\$50/-).

**1998**

Annual membership for the Samaj is increased from fifty dollars (\$50.00) to one hundred dollars (\$100.00).

**2002**

Bye Laws reviewed, revised and adopted by General Body Meeting

**2011**

Vacancy filling amendment approved at the General Body meeting

All Board of Trustees positions are elected for 3 years. However, if there is a vacancy on the Board for any reason, that position may be filled by appointment by the President & approval by a simple majority of the Board of Trustees until the next general elections. At the next General elections, a candidate who is elected with the least number of votes will serve out the remaining term of that vacancy. The candidate elected with the least number of votes may serve as trustee for 1, 2 years depending upon the term remaining for that vacancy

**2022**

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **MEETINGS**

1. The annual General Body meeting of the Samaj shall be held on the last Sunday of September each year.
2. GBM to include Financial Year Balance Sheet
3. GBM to be called as needed by BOT.
  - Email Notice to be 1 month to the community for GBM with special subject title.
  - Include detailed agenda

## **ARTICLE X**

### **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

1. Any capital projects involving \$200K or more requires approval by the General Body.

## **ARTICLE XIV**

### **ELECTION PROCESS**

1. Elections will be held as part of the Annual General Body Meeting on the last Sunday in September of every year.
2. In the event of a vacancy, due to an elected trustee leaving before the term expires, or due to not enough candidates running for election, the BoT, at their discretion, may leave the vacancy unfilled, or appoint a Hindu Samaj member vested in Hindu Samaj's interests to serve on the BoT until the next elections.
3. All contestants must be bona fide Life members for at least one year before the Aug 1st nomination filing deadline.

## **ARTICLE XV**

### **TERM LIMITS**

The Trustees can serve a maximum of three (3) consecutive terms of three years. each. The trustee can run again for election if he/she wishes to, after a mandatory gap of at least 1 year.

## ARTICLE IV

### ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

- The fee for Annual Membership shall be \$250 PER family and \$100/- for single person.

### LIFE MEMBERSHIP

- Life membership dues are a single payment of \$2,500/-.

## ARTICLE IX

### MEETINGS

- The annual General Body meeting of the Samaj shall be held on the last Sunday of April each year.

## ARTICLE XIV

### ELECTION PROCESS

- The elections for the Board of Trustees shall be held on the last Sunday of April each year.
- In the event that the last Sunday of April is unavailable due to unforeseen circumstances, the Board of Trustees shall reschedule the election for a date as close as possible to the original timing, with prior notice to the membership.
- For the calendar year 2025, Elections for BOT will move from the last Sunday in September 2025 to the last Sunday in April 2026.
- All contestants must be bona fide life members who have been a life member for at least one year as of March 1.

## ARTICLE XVI

- **Portfolio Assignment:**
  - Following the election of the Executive Board members, the assignment of portfolios (specific duties or areas of responsibility) shall be completed as per operating guidelines. The Executive Board members shall meet and assign portfolios based on the needs of the organization, the skills of the members and the input from the board members. This assignment will be documented and shared with the entire Board.
- **Transfer of Responsibility for Portfolio Assignments:**
  - The transfer of responsibility for portfolio assignments must be completed as per operating guidelines after the initial portfolio assignments. During this time, the outgoing portfolio holder shall transfer all relevant materials, documents, and responsibilities to the incoming portfolio holder.
- **Knowledge and Transfer of their work Expertise:**
  - Knowledge transfer is the shared responsibility of both the outgoing and incoming portfolio holders. This knowledge transfer must be completed as per operating guidelines from the date of the portfolio assignment. Both parties are expected to ensure that the incoming portfolio holder is fully equipped with the necessary information, tools, and training required to effectively manage their responsibilities.