

**Debre Genet Medhane Alem Mutual Aid Association**  
**Bylaws (Agreement)**  
**Fifth Amendment**

August 2023

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## **Preamble**

We, the families of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church

1. Place immense value on supporting one another during times of sorrow and hardship.
2. Recognizing the challenges posed by our diverse living and working conditions, we have established the Debre Genet Medhane Alem Mutual Aid Association. The Association operates under a set of bylaws comprising three parts, totaling 36 articles.

The initial Section outlines the fundamental aspects of the association, elucidating the rights and responsibilities of its members. The subsequent section details the functions of the General Assembly and delineates the overarching responsibilities of the Executive Committee members. Finally, the last Section focuses on the association's legitimacy, encompassing the organization's structure and the tenure of the Executive Committee members.

## **Definition**

1. The Association, known as the 'Debre Genet Medhane Alem Mutual Aid Association,' is a non-profit organization established by members of the Debre Genet Madhane Alem Church. Its primary purpose is to provide support and comfort to members during times of illness or in the event of bereavement.
2. Within these bylaws, the term 'association' refers specifically to the organization established by the members of the Debre Genet Medhane Alem Church.
3. A 'member' is an individual who has fulfilled the obligations outlined in these bylaws and has completed the registration process.
4. The term 'bylaws' refers to the regulations adopted by the General Assembly and enforced as the bylaws of the association.
5. 'Individual' signifies a registered member within the association.
6. 'Family' encompasses a married couple once they are registered, including children from birth, and adopted children.
7. 'Adopted' refers to a child legally recognized as such, possessing rights equivalent to those of a biological child.
8. The 'General Assembly' constitutes the governing body of the Debre Genet Medhane Alem Mutual Aid Association. A meeting attended by two-thirds of the association's members during voting constitutes a general meeting.
9. A 'bedridden person' is an individual unable to leave their bed due to illness or severe injury.
10. Within this regulation, 'Methods of Communication' delineate the various means by which members of the Debre

Genet Medhane Alem Mutual Aid Association can interact, whether in person or virtually, utilizing diverse communication technologies.

## **Section 1: General**

### **Article 1 Name of the Association**

The association shall be called Debre Genet Madhane Alem Mutual Aid Association.

### **Article 2 Address and meeting place of the association**

a. Address (physical) Debre Genet Medhane Alem Mutual Aid Association

Debre Genet Medhane Alem Mutual Aid Association

C/O Debre Genet Medhane Alem

Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church

4401 Old Branch Ave

Temple Hills, Maryland 20748

U.S.A

b. Virtual: The association's website will be

<https://www.dgmutualaid.net/>

c. Meeting place: The meeting place of the association is within the compounds of Debre Genet Medhane Alem Church. Virtual or both (Hybrid)

### **Article 3 logo or seal**

The association's logo or seal bears the inscription 'Debre Genet Medhane Alem Mutual Aid Association' and is circular in shape. It represents the organization situated in Prince George's County, Temple Hills, Maryland."

## **Article 4 Purpose and structure**

Established in 2004, the primary objectives of the Aid Association are as follows:

1. To unite members of the Debre Genet Madhane Alem Church, offering mutual support to overcome challenges stemming from sorrow, fostering a robust social bond among them.
2. The Association holds tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Management Regulations, operating as a non-profit organization sanctioned under Internal Revenue Code - 501(C)(3). Pursuant to section "(170) (C)(2)," contributions made by organizations and individuals to the association are tax-deductible.
3. The association maintains an apolitical stance, refraining from affiliations with any political organization. The website prohibits hosting advertisements that could compromise the interests of any political entity or individual. However, at the discretion of the management, the website may feature advertisements aligned with designated religious messages/reminders.
4. Adherence to Maryland and federal laws is a fundamental principle of the association.
5. The association seeks to establish connections with akin aid organizations in America, aiming for social collaboration and mutual support within the scope allowed by this regulation.
6. The monetary management of the association relies on income from members and diverse sources. The Executive Committee prepares a budget plan before each fiscal year.

## **Article 5 Membership requirements of the association**

1. Must be at least eighteen years old.

2. Prospective members must hold active membership in the Debre Genet Medhane Alem Church and consistently pay the church membership fee for a period of one (1) year.
3. Demonstrated understanding and alignment with the association's purpose and objectives.
4. Complete the association's membership registration form and personally submit it to the Member Recruitment Sub-Committee, confirming submission with a signature.
5. Individuals seeking membership should accept and adhere to the association's bylaws.
6. Both spouses are required to be members of the church for full benefits from the association.
7. Fulfillment of registration and monthly fees as detailed in articles 7 and 8.
8. Maintain good character and have no history of illegal activities.

#### **Article 6 Source of income of the association**

1. Revenue generated from monthly membership fees, registration charges, and other sources of income derived from enforcement.
2. Funds acquired through the organized fundraising events of the association.
3. Support received from charitable individuals, organizations, and government institutions.
4. Income generated from research endeavors conducted by the association.
5. Revenue accrued through property rental and sales activities.
6. Income sourced from annual interest gains held in banking institutions.

## **Article 7 Registration**

1. An individual may qualify for membership upon meeting the criteria outlined in paragraph 5 and submitting the registration fee along with the monthly contribution.
2. In accordance with the decision ratified on January 27, 2013:
  - a. An individual must pay \$200.00 upon registering to become a member.
  - b. For families (couples), the registration fee is \$300.00 upon registration.
  - c. In the event a clergy, who is a current member of the church, seeks to become a member: \$200.00 registration fee for an individual and \$300.00 registration fee for family is waived, however, a clergy member is required to pay monthly fee payment of \$15.00 for individual and \$20.00 for family.
3. A member becomes eligible for financial assistance after consistently paying the monthly fee for a year and fulfilling membership obligations as per the regulations.
4. Upon initial registration, every member is required to register their family.
5. Any changes in a member's family composition (additions or reductions) must be reported in writing to the Executive Committee within one month. Failure to notify the committee in a timely manner will result in the association withholding financial assistance for unregistered family members in the event of bereavement.
6. Membership within the association commences on the registration day as per this regulation. The membership period for

future spouses or other family members also begins on the day when the existing member completes the family form and registers them.

### **Article 8 Monthly payments**

1. If a member is registered as an individual, the monthly fee is \$15.00.
2. The monthly fee for a member registered as a family (spouses) is \$20.00.
3. A member must pay the monthly fee by the second week (15th day) of the month.

### **Article 9 Members' rights**

1. Once a member meets the registration fee requirement outlined in Article 7,
  - a. They gain the right to attend and vote in meetings. However, eligibility for candidacy requires consistent monthly payments for a year and meeting other membership obligations.
  - b. Members extend support to an ill or grieving member.
  - c. In the event of a member's passing, the association provides funeral wreaths, members attend the funeral, and offer comfort to the bereaved family.
2. Each member holds a single voting right.
3. After a member has registered, consistently paid monthly contributions, and fulfilled obligations for a year:
  - a. In the event of the member's passing, \$4,000.00 is allocated for funeral expenses to the appointed representative of the member.

b. In the event of a self-reliant child or parent of a member who happens to reside locally or at a far-away location, member receives \$500.00 for funeral expenses.

c. In case of a resident or guest's death at a member's home, \$400.00 is provided for support. Members attend the funeral.

4. In the event of the passing of a non-member spouse of a deceased member, member receives \$1,500.00.

5. In the event of a child of a family or individual member that is younger than 18 or is a full-time student younger than 24 years of age passes, a member receives \$2,000 Dollars.

6. If a member's child, unable to study or work due to a health disorder and reliant on the member, a written request to waive limitations under Article 9 No. 5 may be submitted to the Executive Committee after investigation the Committee reports to the General Assembly.

7. In cases where parents of siblings who are members of the association in their individual capacity are visiting as guests, they can only be registered under one child. If a parent that is visiting as a guest pass, the member the parent is registered under receives \$1,200 Dollars. This only applies if the parent has not been registered as a guest for more than a year. If the parent has spent over a year as a registered guest, number 7 of this Article (9) will not apply.

8. If a member relocates to another place due to employment or any other reason but wishes to continue his/her membership of the Association, he/she can do so by notifying the Executive Committee in writing. He/she has to give written and signed consent to another member of the Association to represent him/her at the General Assembly or during other activities of the Association.

9. A member can terminate his/her membership at any time by notifying the Executive Committee in writing. A member that leaves the Association on his/her accord will not be entitled to any membership rights. The fees he/she has paid to the Association will not be returned. He/she cannot replace another person in his/her stead.

10. If a member is mourning the loss of a spouse, a child, a parent (father or mother) or a sibling living in a far-away location, members will visit and console him/her.

11. If the funeral is going to be held in Washington DC or nearby, members of the Association shall express their condolences by attending funeral and burial services. If the funeral is going to be held in another country, the members shall assist with sendoff the coffin ceremony.

12. If the Association cannot provide assistance due to insufficient funds, the Executive Committee shall call an urgent meeting of the General Assembly and request a decision. It will record, file, and implement the decision in writing.

### **Article 10 Membership obligation**

1. Understand and adhere to the rules and regulations of the Association.

2. Timely payment of the monthly membership fee as per the Bylaws.

3. Designate a fellow member as a representative in case of inability to attend Association meetings.

4. Adhere to and abide by membership obligations and guidelines of Debre Genet Medhane Alem Church.

5. Termination of individual church membership results in termination from the Mutual Aid Association without fee reimbursement.
6. Upon the death or divorce of a member who is the spouse of a registered church member, re-registration with the Church is necessary to retain Association membership as an individual.
7. Register the designated representative's name on the family registration form.
8. Notify the association if a spouse, child, or parent falls ill, prompting members to offer personal visits or calls for well-wishes.
9. In case of mourning for a relative (child, parent, or sibling), informing the Executive Committee obliges members to visit and offer condolences.
10. Report violations of Association rules and procedures directly to the Executive Committee in person or through written communication.
11. During Association's meetings, every group member is encouraged to express their personal opinions and constructive feedback in a manner that aligns with Ethiopian customs, both within the leadership and among the members.

### **Article 11 Punishable Acts**

1a. If a member is delayed by up to three months or ninety days in paying their monthly dues, they will incur an additional charge of \$10.00 alongside their regular dues. Failure to settle both the monthly contribution and the penalty within the specified time frame will result in dismissal from the contract through a formal notification. Any fees paid will not be refunded. Additionally:

1b. To enforce the stipulations outlined in Number 1, in the event of a natural or human-caused disaster, the managing committee will determine the necessary penalties.

2. Apart from the monthly fee, non-attendance, or failure to attend the biannual general meetings will incur an additional charge of \$10.00, in addition to the regular monthly fee. Recurrent absences may result in further fines at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

3. Members who consistently fail to attend meetings or who are absent from a funeral service, unless due to ill health or natural disasters in the area, may face membership removal as decided by the Executive Committee. This decision will be communicated in writing.

4. Any member who violates meeting rules or commits an offense that harms the association, whether once or repeatedly, will be subject to action by the Executive Committee. The consequences, ranging from fines to membership cancellation, will be determined based on the severity of the offense.

5. As per Articles "3" and "4," any funds paid by a departing member until the time of departure will not be reimbursed. The member is obligated to return any property or funds acquired from the association.

### **Article 12 Marriage and divorce of members**

1. Individuals wishing to become members can join by completing the membership form. They are also required to notify the association in writing in the event of marriage.

2. In cases where individuals are registered as a married couple and subsequently separate or divorce, both parties must independently

inform the association. Upon being informed, the Executive Committee will send separate letters to each member.

3. If a legally separated couple wishes to maintain individual memberships, they may do so by each completing a new registration form. No additional registration fee is required in this case.

### **Article 13 Reinstatement of membership**

1. Should a member who voluntarily terminates their membership wish to rejoin, they can do so by submitting a written request to the Executive Committee and adhering to the conditions outlined in Article 7.

2. As stated in Article 11, Sections "3" and "4," it is important to note that an individual who has been expelled from the association may not always be eligible for reinstatement.

### **Article 14 Electoral Committee**

1. Every three years in November, an electoral committee comprising five members is elected during the general assembly meeting.

2. Upon their election, the electoral committee promptly initiates their duties by appointing a chairperson and a secretary from among themselves.

3. In a special general assembly meeting held in the first week of January, the Executive Committee presents two candidates for each position of internal auditor and auditor, who are then elected.

4. The election process is conducted confidentially and through written ballots. The results are immediately disclosed to the members, for those appearing physically or participating virtually in the meeting.

5. Three weeks after the election, the electoral committee, internal auditor, and two observers conduct the handover ceremony.

6. The electoral committee submits an election performance report to the Secretary-General of the Executive Committee. The General Secretary then presents this report at the subsequent General Assembly.

7. The tenure of the electoral committee concludes upon the completion of the election ceremony and the handover process.

(\*\*If the elections for the church board members and the association's Executive Committee are conducted simultaneously, the church elections take precedence, followed by the elections for the association's committee members.)

## **Section 2 Administration**

### **Article 15 General Assembly**

The General Assembly serves as the governing body of the association, convening all its members.

### **Article 16: Functions and Powers of the General Assembly**

1. Elects and removes members of the Executive Committee.
2. Is empowered to revise the association's rules as needed.
3. Appoints an external auditor to audit the association's accounts whenever necessary.
4. Deliberates and decides on all matters presented by the Executive Committee, as well as any issues deemed significant by the assembly itself.
5. Appoints legal counsel, auditors, or internal auditors."

## **Article 17: General Assembly Meetings**

1. The General Assembly convenes regular meetings twice a year in November and April. Additional meetings may be called in case of urgent matters.
2. Every three years, during the regular November meeting, an electoral committee comprising five (5) members is elected.
3. Unless otherwise specified in the bylaws or other special articles, a quorum is achieved if two-thirds of the registered members are present at any general meeting. Resolutions supported by more than half of the attending members constitute the decision of the meeting.
4. In the event that the general meeting is called and less than 51% of the members attend, the meeting will be postponed, with the subsequent meeting scheduled for two weeks later. If at least 25% of the members (in person or virtually) attend the second meeting, the meeting will be considered valid. Decisions supported by the majority of the attending members will be approved as the decisions of the general meeting.

## **Article 18: Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee serves as the association's highest body following the General Assembly."

## **Article 19: Powers and Duties of the Executive Committee**

1. Drafts the association's annual budget a year in advance and presents it to the General Assembly for approval; Manages the budget accordingly.
2. Executes the day-to-day operations of the association in compliance with this regulation and the directives issued by the General Assembly.

3. Takes action against members who fail to fulfill their obligations or engage in activities detrimental to the association.
4. Accepts and records new members.
5. Organizes regular and emergency General Assembly meetings; Prepares meeting agendas.
6. Allocates a petty cash budget, with the amount determined by the chairperson.
7. Reviews the quarterly financial statements and provides necessary directives.
8. Ensures that any funds received by the association are deposited into the association's bank account.
9. Seeks General Assembly permission for expenditures that exceed \$20,000.00.
10. Establishes sub-committees when deemed necessary; Provides operational guidelines.
11. In instances where a member is unable to fulfill their responsibilities due to illness or other reasons, the Executive Committee may temporarily replace them. Decisions made in such circumstances will be announced at the subsequent general meeting and will require approval.
12. Executes actions beneficial to the association within the limits of the law.
13. Submits a report to the regular General Assembly meetings biannually.
14. Selects legal counsel.
15. A member of the Executive Committee, concurrently serving on the church board, may hold a position within the committee.

However, they cannot simultaneously serve on both the board and the committee. If elected, they should notify the Executive Committee.

### **Article 20: Executive Committee Meetings**

1. The Executive Committee convenes at least once per month.
2. Emergency meetings of the Executive Committee may be called, as necessary.
3. The presence of more than half of the members during a meeting of the Executive Committee will constitute a quorum, and it will pass decisions.

### **Article 21: Composition of the Executive Committee**

1. Chairperson
2. Vice Chairperson
3. Secretary General
4. Deputy Secretary
5. Accountant
6. Treasurer
7. Public Relations Officer

### **Article 22: Functions of the Executive Committee**

1. Chairperson:
  - a. Will administer and manage the Association under the guidance of the General Assembly.
  - b. Will chair meetings on which issues are presented to the General Assembly, as well as meetings of the Executive Committee.
  - c. Will represent the Association on any matter pertaining to the Bylaws, as well as on guidelines issued by the General Assembly and the Executive

Committee.

- d. Will sign checks along with the Association's Accountant, and in the absence of the accountant, will sign along with the Vice Chairperson.
- e. Will ensure that the decisions of the General Assembly and the Executive Committee are properly enforced.
- f. Will provide guidelines to members of the Executive Committee and monitor their work.

## 2. Vice Chairperson:

- a. Will serve as the assistant to the Chairperson.
- b. Will substitute the Chairperson in his/her absence or when he/she is unable to perform his/her duties.
- c. Will announce meeting particulars through diverse community platforms and the association's website.
- d. Will coordinate communications with the church board on behalf of the association.
- e. Will manage the registration, maintenance, and general management of the association's property.
- f. Will head and oversee the functioning of sub-committees within the association.

## 3. Chief Secretary:

- a. Will manage all administrative tasks within the association.
- b. Will compile agendas for Executive Committee meetings to be presented at the General Assembly.
- c. Will organize and announce General Assembly and Executive Committee meetings. Issue meeting notices along

with proxy papers three weeks prior to the scheduled meeting.

d. Will record and organize minutes of these meetings meticulously.

e. Will safeguard the association's seal, ensuring its appropriate and regulated use.

f. Will biannually prepare draft reports in consultation with the Chairperson.

g. Will maintain accurate records of members' names and addresses.

4. Deputy Secretary:

The deputy secretary of the association reports to the main secretary.

a. Will assist the Secretary-General and manage responsibilities as delegated by regulations.

b. Will function as a substitute in the absence of the Secretary-General.

5. Accountant:

a. Will manage and audit the association's accounts and financial documents.

b. Will create income and expense statements.

c. Will maintain precise accounting records for the association.

d. Will collaborate with the Treasurer to generate monthly financial statements.

6. Treasurer:

- a. Will co-sign checks with the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson.
- b. Will ensure prompt collection of membership fees and other association income.
- c. Will acknowledge all funds received by the association through a receipt, with the original copy promptly given to the payer. The second copy should be affixed to the income and expenditure registration document. Upon request, the third copy is retained for review by accountants and auditors.
- d. Will deposit all funds into the association's bank account within two days.
- e. Will record the allocated amount for petty cash in a dedicated register. Cash receipts for expenses shall be kept and filed meticulously. Is responsible for providing these receipts when requested by the chairperson, treasurer, and auditor. Adheres to the instructions outlined in the internal regulations regarding petty cash management.
- f. Will communicate updates on activities such as the treasurer and the financial status of the association to the general assembly, executive management committee, accountant, and auditor upon request.

7. Head of Public Relations:

- a. Will coordinate communication among members.
- b. Will manage and oversee the association's website.
- c. Will organize support for members during bereavement and communicate these arrangements.

- d. Will function as the association's official spokesperson.
- e. Will work closely with the Vice Chairperson on various association matters.

### **Article 23: Committee of Elders**

The Elder Committee is elected by the General Assembly and serves a five-year term. Members of this committee are expected to possess good manners, etiquette, and must uphold a strong moral and ethical conduct. It is required that the committee consists of three members, one of whom shall be a clergy member.

### **Article 24: Regulation of Cemetery**

1. In the event of a member's passing, the association will collaborate with the family to conduct the funeral rites. If the member were to choose to be buried at the association's cemetery, the family must first inform the chairperson of the Executive Committee. The chairperson will then facilitate cooperation between the cemetery officials and the family. The family is required to adhere to the rules and regulations governing cemetery practices, including guidelines for placing flowers or any other activities.

In the event of a member's passing

- a. For Fairfax Memorial Park: \$2,800.00 deducted from the Association's burial allowance, with the remainder given to the family.
- b. For Resurrection Cemetery: \$1,610.00 deducted from the Association's burial allowance, with the remainder given to the family.

c. For Gate of Heaven Cemetery: \$1,785.00 deducted from the Association's burial allowance, with the remainder given to the family.

3. Apart from cemetery fees, the family of the deceased is responsible for additional expenses (such as for digging or concrete).

4. If the family of the deceased member does not utilize the association's cemetery, as stipulated in Article 9 No. 3(a), a certain amount will be provided for funeral expenses.

5. Guidelines for Funerals in Association-Purchased Cemeteries:

a. Fairfax Memorial Park: Members who fulfill their membership obligations can opt to be buried next to their family members, and the decision lies with the family.

b. Resurrection Cemetery or Gates of Heaven Cemetery: Companion plots are available for the spouse or a family member upon their passing, and the decision lies with the family.

c. Clinton's Resurrection Cemetery or Gates of Heaven Cemetery: If the spouse of a member buried here passes away, the full burial allowance will be provided upon the family's preference for companion plot burials.

d. Support Funds After Bereavement: Applications for support funds for a family member can be claimed up to six months after bereavement. The grieving individual, a member of the group, must inform the group's leadership. Applications submitted after the six-month mourning period will not receive financial assistance as specified in the bylaws.

6. Guidelines for Tombstone Construction in Cemeteries:

- a. Clinton's Resurrection Cemetery: Permits for construction of Tombstone or the placement of a flat marker.
- b. Fairfax Memorial Park: Permits the placement of a flat marker.
- c. Gate of Heaven Cemetery: Permits the placement of a flat marker.

## **Article 25: Guidelines for the Rama Sub-committee within the Debre Genet Medhane Alem Mutual Aid Association**

### **Preamble**

The primary objective of this sub-committee is to provide additional financial support to members of the "Rama Committee" in addition to the existing assistance granted to members by the governing body, "Debre Genet Medhane Alem Mutual Support Association.

### **Name of the Sub-Committee:**

The committee is named the "Rama Committee."

### **Membership Requirements:**

- A. Membership in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church of Debre Genet Medhane Alem
- B. Membership of the Debre Genet Medhane Alem (Mutual Aid) Association.
- C. Registration as a member of the Rama Committee.
- D. Residency in the Washington Metropolitan area.
- E. New members must meet the above requirements initially.
- F. The Rama Committee's registration fee for new members is \$160.00.

### **Number of Committee Officers/Leaders:**

The committee comprises 3-5 members, with one from the Executive Committee of the Debre Genet Medhane Alem Mutual Aid Association, and the remaining members representing the Rama Committee.

#### Responsibilities of the Rama Committee:

- A. Providing additional financial assistance in the event of a member's death, supplementing the bereavement payment given by the Debre Genet Medhane Alem Mutual Aid Association to the deceased member's family.
- B. Collecting a specified contribution from each committee member upon the passing of a Rama Committee member.
- C. Distributing the collected funds to the designated representative mentioned on the Debre Genet Medhane Alem Mutual Aid Association's membership registration form when a Rama Committee member passes away.
- D. Rama Committee leaders will remind members, either verbally or via phone, to promptly submit their payments.

#### Rama Committee Fees:

- a. Registration Fee:
- b. Fees collected from each member are solely applicable in case of a member's death.
- c. Upon the passing of a Rama Committee member, the Committee provides a payment to the designated recipient.

#### Payment and Member Obligations:

- a. Upon a Rama Committee member's demise, each member is required to promptly submit the specified payment.

b. Members must submit their payments within 30 days. Failure to do so incurs a \$25.00 fine.

c. Failure to pay the due amount along with the fine within ninety days results in dismissal from the Rama Committee.

d. Payments made by a resigned/revoked member are non-refundable.

e. Members can mail payments or hand them to any committee member.

#### Bank Account Management:

a. The Rama Committee will maintain a separate Checking/Saving account under the Debre Genet Madhane Alem Aid Association.

b. Upon a member's passing, payment will be issued from the Rama Committee account via check.

c. Signatories on the bank account include the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, or Chief Treasurer of Debre Genet Medhane Alem Mutual Aid Association.

Note: Using funds for purposes other than death benefits is strictly forbidden.

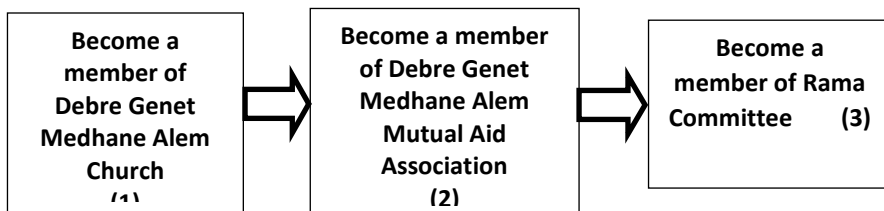
#### Audit and Internal Auditor:

a. The Rama Committee will appoint an internal auditor to ensure proper accounting of income and expenses.

b. The Audit Report will be submitted annually to the Executive Committee of Debre Genet Medhane Alem Mutual Aid Association and the Rama Committee members.

c. Rama's auditor ensures strict adherence to the above instructions.

#### Procedure to Become a Member of Rama Committee:



### **Article 26 Legal advisor**

1. Ensures the association's legal existence by examining pertinent state and federal laws and confirming the association's registration compliance with the law.
2. Reviews the association's by-laws in accordance with administrative law and proposes adjustments to the Executive Committee if necessary.
3. Verifies the legality of documents pertaining to fixed asset purchases and justifies their compliance with legal standards.
4. Recommends legal representation to the Executive Committee in the event of any legal action taken against the association.
5. Attends meetings upon request to provide legal clarifications and opinions on specific issues.
6. Ensures all association activities adhere to legal frameworks.
7. Examines and verifies that the decisions passed on a regular basis are taken in a way that does not contradict the existence of the association and its members.

### **Article 27 Auditor or Internal Controller**

The auditor or internal auditor shall be accountable to the General Assembly.

1. Ensures the proper maintenance of the association's income and expenditure accounts in accordance with the regulations, overseeing all accounting activities.

2. Analyzes the association's income and expenses and presents a biannual report to the entire assembly.
3. Reports to the Executive Committee if members assigned to specific responsibilities have not fulfilled their duties adequately. If the committee's actions are deemed unsatisfactory, the matter is escalated to the General Assembly for appropriate action.
4. Verifies the proper implementation of the association's bylaws and highlights any deficiencies for correction by the General Assembly.

## **Article 28**

### **Communication methods of the association**

The primary communication method utilized by the association is <https://www.dgmutualaid.net/>, where members can access relevant information, documents, and make payments. Additionally, communication methods include ROBOCALL, email, letters, and telephone communication.

## **Section 3 Summary**

### **Article 29: Term of Office of Executive Committee**

1. The term of office for Executive Committee members is three years.
2. Re-election is possible for a member whose term has expired, with a limit of serving no more than two consecutive terms.
3. During the election, five new members will be elected, allowing two existing members to continue. Members serving a second term cannot be elected for a third consecutive term.

### **Article 30: The Association's Tenure and Rules**

1. The Association was established for an indefinite period.

2. The Association is a legal entity and shall undertake legal action regarding all matters concerning the Association in accordance with these Bylaws.

### **Article 31: Service Fee**

Officers of the association do not receive compensation for their services.

### **Article 32: Amendments**

These Bylaws can be amended if endorsed by fifty-one percent of all members.

### **Article 33: Incidental Expenses**

For the purpose of covering any incidental expenses that the association might incur, every member shall contribute an annual administrative fee of \$20.00 (Twenty Dollars) payable once a year in January.

### **Article 34: Dissolution of the Association**

The Debre Genet Medhane Alem Mutual Aid Association or the Rama Committee can only be dissolved if three-fourths of its members support the decision during a meeting of the General Assembly. If the association is dissolved, its assets and cash will be transferred to Debre Genet Medhane Alem Church.

### **Article 35: Date of Ratification of the Bylaws**

The General Assembly of the Debre Genet Medhane Alem Mutual Aid Association has reviewed and unanimously ratified the Bylaws in August 2023, in Debre Genet Madhane Alem Church; Temple Hills; Prince Georges County; Maryland, for immediate effect.

### **Article 36: Legal Text**

The legally valid version of the Bylaws of the Debre Genet Medhane Alem Church Mutual Aid Association shall be the English version; the Amharic version, however, shall remain its translation.

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