

**CONSTITUTION OF**  
**THE PATRIOTS**

June 2017

## **Preamble**

The Patriots is a group of well-thinking, patriotic Young Professionals associated with the People's National Party of Jamaica. The spirit of the Patriots embodies respect, teamwork, camaraderie, vision, patriotism and hard work. The Patriots reject corruption, tribal and divisive politics and all forms of violence. The Patriots champion Jamaica and advocate the People's National Party as the best choice for Government to ensure prosperity and stability. The group shall be non-aligned within the Party.

## **Definitions**

“Active Member in good standing” shall mean that member who is approved for active membership in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution and is not in breach of any of its provisions or facing any disciplinary action.

“Member” shall mean any person registered in the database of membership maintained by the General Secretary.

“Party” shall mean the People’s National Party.

“Patriots” unless otherwise stated shall mean the Executive, all Parish Organisations and all members as a collective unit.

## **Name**

1. The name of the Organization shall be The Patriots. This name shall NOT be altered or changed without the assent of eighty percent (80%) of all Active Members in good standing voting at the Annual Congress.

## **Mission Statement**

2. The mobilisation of young professionals to support the People's National Party, by offering technical expertise and organisational support to the Party's Administration and Representatives, and to represent the policy views and champion the causes of young Jamaicans to the Party, its leadership and to the wider Jamaican society.

## **Objectives**

3. The Patriots subscribe to the Objectives outlined in the Constitution of the People's National Party (Rules 1 – 10) and adopts them.
4. Additional, the objectives of the Patriots shall be:
  - a. To assist the Party's representatives to win elections.
  - b. To train and provide candidates to represent the Party at the Divisional and Constituency levels
  - c. To give political organization, primarily but not exclusively to young professionals in the Party.
  - d. To formulate a stimulating programme of political education and other activities to attract young professionals to support and/or join the People's National Party.
  - e. To promote and support the policies and interests of the People's National Party and to seek opportunities to shape them.
  - f. To provide a confidential and stimulating forum through which young professionals can ventilate issues of concern, offer solutions and otherwise support and assist the Party and country.
  - g. To table progressive resolutions to the National Executive Council and Annual Conference and pursue their implementation.
  - h. To communicate the Party's policies and achievements to the electorate and the various demographic components throughout Jamaica.
  - i. To maximize the use of technology to improve the work of the Party.
  - j. To improve the public image and media profile of the People's National Party through an aggressive, proactive and attractive strategy for mass communication.
  - k. To promote the political, economic, social and cultural development of the country as a whole in accordance with the principles of democracy, equity and justice.
  - l. To advocate the policy views and positions of the Jamaican young professional electorate.

## **Membership**

5. Membership shall be open to all young professional Jamaicans 18 years or older who are not supportive of any political party in Jamaica other than the People's National Party provided that they are enumerated or commit to become enumerated before being accepted as Active Members.
6. All applications for membership must be submitted through the Parish Secretary of the parish the applicant is domiciled or the General Secretary.

- a. Decision on membership applications shall be communicated to applicants within six weeks of the date on which the application was submitted.
  - b. All applications submitted to the General Secretary shall be forwarded to the relevant parish secretary for decision within the prescribed time.
  - c. All applicants rejected at the parish level shall have the right to appeal to the National Council.
7. The membership database maintained by the General Secretary shall be the determinant of membership.
- a. Parish Secretaries shall submit all additions to their membership list to the Secretariat monthly on the prescribed form.
  - b. The Secretariat shall mail the list and status of all members to Parish Secretaries for each month by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the succeeding month. Parish Secretaries shall be responsible for reviewing and submitting concerns re membership to the Secretariat.

#### **8. Provisional Membership**

- a. All applicants shall remain provisional members for a minimum period of three months, after which the Outreach & Membership Committee shall consider their status.
- b. The Secretariat shall develop a minimum programme of orientation for provisional members which shall be implemented by the Parish Outreach & Membership Committee.
- c. The Parish Secretary shall forward to the secretariat a list of newly accepted provisional members for each month by the fifth day of the subsequent month.
- d. Provisional members shall not have the right to vote or to be elected.

#### **9. Active Membership**

- a. Upon completion of the minimum orientation programme, a member can be approved for active membership by a majority vote of the Parish Outreach & Membership Committee.

#### **10. Honourary Membership**

- a. The Executive, with the assent of 2/3rds of its Members, shall have the right to appoint any person of reputable standing who has demonstrated outstanding friendship to the Patriots to be a Honourary Member.
- b. A Honourary Members shall be a non-voting member and shall not be eligible to hold any office at the Parish or National level.

## **Subscription**

11. The Executive shall determine the level of financial subscription annually for:
  - a. Minimum member contribution
  - b. National Council Members
  - c. Executive Members
12. All members shall subscribe to the Patriots such amounts as determined by the Executive for each category of membership and any such member who is more than three months in arrears shall be deemed inactive and all rights of Active Membership shall be suspended.
13. All National Council and Executive Members shall submit dues directly to the National Treasurer.
14. The Parish Organization shall keep and produce to the Executive immediately on request, a detailed record of all subscriptions collected at the Parish level and shall remit 40% of all such collections to the Secretariat to support the work of the Organization.

## **The Parish Organization**

15. There shall be 13 Patriots Organisations responsible for coordinating the work of the Patriots at the Parish level. The objectives of the Parish Organisations shall mirror those contained in this Constitution.
16. Where a Parish Organization has fewer than 20 Active Members, the Secretariat shall maintain the right to take said organization into receivership if necessary.
17. Parish Organisations shall establish sub-chapters at the Parish and Divisional levels where practical. The Parish Organisations and their sub-chapters shall be called PATRIOTS, with a prefix that clearly denotes the geographic region to which they belong.
18. All Parish Organisations will actively seek to have their members represented on the Divisional and Constituency Committees in their respective parishes to ensure cohesion between the political work of the Patriots and that of the respective Division and Constituency Organisations.

19. All Parish Organisations shall establish Committees to support the following activities:
  - a. Outreach & Membership
  - b. Political Organizing
  - c. Policy & Advocacy
  - d. Finance & Fundraising
  
20. All Parish Organisations shall have a minimum of six General Member's Meetings per year. These meetings shall be open to Provisional and Active Members as well as recruits provided that two Active Members are able to vouch for said recruit in writing five days ahead of the meeting. Standard meeting days and times shall be communicated to the Secretariat. The Parish Secretary shall send notification of meeting to all Members 14 days before the meeting date
  
21. All Parish Organisations shall have an Annual Member's Meeting between the months of March and May. This meeting shall have a private session which shall only be open to Active Members as determined by the Central Registrar.
  - a. All Active Members shall be delegates in their own right at the Annual Member's Meeting and shall elect a Parish Chairperson, two Vice Chairs and a Treasurer.
  - b. A quorum at Annual Member's Meeting shall be 60% of all Active Members in the respective parish.
  
22. A Parish Secretary shall be elected every two year at the Member's Meeting immediately succeeding the Annual Member's Meeting.

## **National Council**

23. The National Council shall be the second highest decision making body outside of the Annual Congress and shall be the final authority on all matters between Annual Congresses provided that this Constitution may only be amended by the Annual Congress.
  
24. The National Council shall elect the General Secretary, Deputy General Secretaries, Legal Advisor and Treasurer of the Patriots at its first meeting immediately following Annual Congress.
  
25. The National Council shall consist of all National Officers; All Parish Chairs; All Parish Secretaries; All Active Members who are elected representatives at the Municipal or Parliamentary level; all Active Members who are Senators; All Active Members who serve on the National Executive Council of the Party and One additional member for every thirty Active Members of each Parish Organization.

26. The National Council shall meet at least four times per year in the months of February, May (to finalize resolutions for the Party Conference and approve the agenda for Congress), August (to finalize the plan of action and strategy in relation to the Party Conference) and November. The Officers may call a meeting of the National Council by majority vote.

## **Annual Congress**

27. The supreme authority of the Patriots shall be the Annual Congress which shall be held in June of each year at such time and place as the Executive shall decide.

28. The purpose of the Congress shall be the conducting of the following business:

- a. Elect the President and two (2) Vice Presidents for a term of two.
- b. Receive reports from the Officers, Parish Organisations and Committees;
- c. Treat with matters of policy;
- d. Discuss and vote on proposed amendments to the Patriots Constitution;
- e. Vote on the resolutions to be debated at Party Conference;
- f. Discuss and deal with matters affecting the Organization;
- g. Any other matter placed on the Agenda by the National Council.

29. All Active Members of the Patriots shall be entitled to attend Annual Congress as delegates in their own right.

## **Election of Officers**

30. The Officers of the Patriots shall be the President, two Vice Presidents, the General Secretary, two Deputy General Secretaries, the Treasurer, the Legal Adviser and the Immediate Past President. The President and two Vice Presidents shall be elected officers.

31. The President shall be the leader and political head of the Patriots.

32. The President and General Secretary shall be the spokespersons for the organization. They shall at all times be Full Members of the People's National Party.

33. The term of Office for all Officers, elected or appointed, shall be two years and no Officer shall hold the same office for more than two consecutive terms.

34. Voting in accordance with Rule 28(a) shall be by private ballot with only Active Members present and in good standing eligible to vote. There shall be no vote by proxy.

35. The President and all the Parish Chairpersons shall meet at least two (2) months prior to the date of the Annual Congress to:
  - a. ratify the list of Active Members eligible to vote, which shall comprise of the last list of Active Members for each Parish Organisation certified by the General Secretary as being: i) generated by the relevant Parish Secretary; and ii) valid as at the date of such Parish Organisation's last Annual Member's Meeting; and
  - b. appoint a Returning Officer to collect nominations and to preside over any elections held at the Annual Congress.
36. Any Active Member in good standing may be nominated by another Active Member in good standing. A nomination must be accompanied by the signature of three (3) Active Members in good standing.
37. At least one month before the Annual Congress, the Returning Officer shall publish the list of nominees for each office by email, on the internet and by any other means of communication as may be prescribed by the Returning Officer.
38. On the day of the Annual Congress, the Returning Officer shall empanel an Elections Committee which shall consist of the Returning Officer and two (2) Active Members in good standing appointed solely by the Returning Officer. The Elections Committee shall count the ballots and announce the results. In the event that there is a tie the three members of the Elections Committee shall cast deciding votes.
39. The Officers along with the Chairpersons of Committees as approved by the National Council comprise the Executive.

### **Use of Patriot Name, Logo and Public Statements**

40. All official public statements (which shall include but not be limited to statements made in the capacity of being a Member or Officer of the Patriots or statements which include the organisation's name or logo), written or verbal, shall before they are made to the public on behalf of the Patriots be disseminated among, discussed by and have the assent of the Executive.
41. The "Patriots" name and/or its logo shall not be used in any manner which may be interpreted as an endorsement of any action, policy, individual, organisation, company or event without the expressed assent of the Executive, provided that nothing herein shall prevent the use of the name or logo in a general endorsement of the Party.



42. The organisation's stance on any issue shall be, or be deemed to be the majority view of its members.

### **The People's National Party and its Groups and Affiliates**

43. The Patriots shall endeavour to maintain a good working relationship with the People's National Party and its Groups, Arms and Affiliates.

44. The Patriots shall seek to be recognized as an Affiliate of the People's National Party and shall maintain such Affiliation. Consequently it is hereby acknowledged that the Patriots are bound by and conform to the programme and policy of the People's National Party based on the principles of Democratic Socialism and to the Constitution and Standing Orders of the People's National Party.

45. Effective as of the date that the Patriots obtains Affiliate status, any provision in this Constitution, whether currently in existence or made by future amendment, which is contrary to Rule 44 above shall be deemed null and void.

46. A Member shall notify the Executive in writing if s/he is or intends to become a Member of any affiliate or group within the People's National Party.

47. No Patriot shall actively recruit any member from any group or affiliate of the Party in a manner which will bring the organization into disrepute or tarnishes the reputation of any other group or affiliate of the Party.

### **Succession**

48. In the event of the inability of the President to function for a period of time, not exceeding thirty days, s/he shall appoint a Vice President to act on his/her behalf.

49. In the event a sitting President resigns before completing his/her term, the Vice President who received the most vote at the last election shall serve until elections are due.

### **Discipline**

50. Within the Patriots there shall be established a Disciplinary Committee ('the Committee') comprised of a panel of five (5) members ('the Panel'), three (3) of whom shall officiate in each instance whenever a disciplinary hearing is called.

51. The Committee shall be appointed by a two-thirds (2/3rd) majority of the National Council and shall consist of members who have Active or Honorary Membership.
52. Members of the Committee shall serve for two (2) years and in accordance with these Rules and shall be the Committee used by all the Parish Organisations.
53. Members of the Committee shall be appointed based on their ability to solve disputes in a way which is fair, transparent, unbiased, and professional.
54. Upon the resignation, death, dismissal or otherwise of any member of the Committee, the Director – Legal affairs shall appoint a substitute within a reasonable time thereafter and any such substitute shall serve for the remainder of the term of the person substituted.
55. Members of the Committee shall select from among them a Chairman who shall serve for the life of the Committee.
56. Of the three (3) members of the Panel who shall officiate at each sitting, one (1) shall be chosen by the Chairman of the Parish Organization concerned with the dispute, one (1) shall be chosen by the member charged and the third shall be chosen by the first two. Where there is failure to select a constituted Panel by the means described herein, the Panel shall be selected the Chairman of the Committee.
57. The Executive or any Parish Organization shall have power to, on its own initiative or on the report of any member, inquire into the conduct of any member and impose sanction(s) on such member for any conduct which, in the opinion of the Executive or Parish Organization is contrary to the interest of the Patriots as an organisation, or its performance, policy or principles.
58. An appeal may be lodged to the Committee from the decision of the Executive, or Parish Organization, as the case may be, which was made in accordance with this Article and such appeal must be made within fourteen (14) days of receipt of any ruling of the Executive or Parish Organization. Notwithstanding anything said within this Constitution, no appeal shall lie unless formal notice is given to the Executive, or Parish Organization, setting out the ground(s) of appeal and within seven (7) days of receipt of the ruling of the Executive, or Parish Organization, mentioned herein.
59. A Panel shall have power to hear and determine any matter brought before it with respect to the conduct of any Member of the Patriots.

60. A Panel shall have power to recommend the suspension, or expulsion of any member found guilty, or make such other determinations as the Panel deem just in the circumstances of the case.

61. Elected Officers of the Patriots shall not sit on the Committee.

62. All recommendations for expulsion must be made to the Executive and can be carried by a vote of the majority of the Executive.

63. Nothing in this Article shall operate to prevent recourse to any court of law

### **Trustees**

64. The Executive shall appoint five (5) trustees who shall hold office until death, resignation, or removal from office by the President. The property of the Patriots, other than cash which shall be under the control of the Treasurer, shall be vested in the Trustees who shall deal with the same as directed by the President.

### **Amendments**

65. This Constitution may be amended, altered or added to by the assent of a 2/3rd majority of all Active Members in good standing at an Annual Congress of the Patriots, notice of which must be given to the Executive at least two (2) months before that meeting and after there has been reasonable time spent on discussion, consultation and debate.

66. No amendment shall be voted upon without two (2) week's advanced notice to all the Active Members on the Register.

### **Indemnity**

67. All members shall be indemnified by the Patriots for anything said or done in pursuance of the objectives of the Patriots and while acting under the express or implied authority of the Executive of Officer Corp. and while acting in accordance with this Constitution.

We, being the duly elected President and General Secretary of the Patriots do hereby certify that this is a true copy of the Constitution adopted by the National Council at a meeting duly

convened on the      day of                      2017 and ratified by the Executive at a meeting  
duly convened on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of June 2017.

Dated as of the              day of June 2017.

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Javette Nixon  
President

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Omar Newell  
General Secretary