

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**Constitution / Bylaws of
DAR AL-TAQWA Incorporated
Registered August 13, 1992**

Bism Allah ir Rahman ir Rahim
La Ilaha Illallah Muhammadun Rasul Allah
*(There is no Lord worthy of worship except Allah,
Muhammad is the messenger of Allah)*

Name: Dar Al-Taqwa Incorporated, hereafter referred to as DAT

Address: 10740 Route 108, Ellicott City, MD 21042

November 28, 2005

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ARTICLE I: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

- To uphold and apply the principles and practices of Islam as revealed to Prophet Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him (pbuh).
- To organize religious, educational and charitable activities for the benefit of the Muslims, as well as other communities in Maryland, with particular emphasis on the residents of Howard County, Maryland
- To establish, maintain and operate the DAT facilities for religious, educational and community services.

ARTICLE II: GOVERNING PRINCIPLES:

- SHURA: Shura (mutual consultation), as defined by Al-Quran (The holy book of Al Islam) and As-Sunnah (the practices and teachings of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him), shall constitute the governing principle.
- RELIGIOUS SOURCES (in descending order of authority):
 - The Quran
 - The Sunna
 - The Ijmaa' (Total consensus of the Sahaba)
 - The legacy of the pure Islamic doctrines and practice of Ahlus-Sunna Wa Al-Jama'ah
 - The legacy of the four renowned scholars of Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence)
 - All decisions shall be accepted and defended by every member, as long as they are in accordance with these sources
- LIMITATIONS ON ACTIVITIES: No activities that violate the injunctions of Al-Quran and As-Sunnah shall be permitted by the general body, the Board of Trustees (Shura Council) or any member of DAT.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

SECTION III-1: TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP – RIGHTS AND LIMITATIONS:

Membership can be classified according to the following categories:

- **Ordinary Membership** with full voting rights, may be extended to any Muslim eighteen years or older who resides within the voting boundary defined as Howard County, as well as the adjacent counties in Maryland including Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Montgomery, and Prince George's Counties. Ordinary membership will commence immediately, if all the requirements have been met. However, voting privileges will take effect on January 1st of the following year, only if six months or more have elapsed since paid registration.
- **Associate Membership**, without voting privileges, may be extended to those Muslims who reside outside the perimeter designated for ordinary membership.
- **Honorary Membership**, without voting privileges, may be granted to any Muslim who has performed an outstanding service to the DAT community.

SECTION III-2: APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP:

The following rules apply to membership applications:

Applications for ordinary or associate membership shall be submitted to the Board of Trustees on a DAT membership forms.

The duration of ordinary or associate membership is one year, and such memberships can be renewed annually upon payment of fees.

The annual membership fees are due no later than March 31st of each calendar year.

Honorary memberships shall be awarded at the discretion of the Board of Trustees. Such memberships do not require application fees.

SECTION III-3: VOTING RIGHTS:

Only ordinary members, who have paid their fees on time, are eligible to exercise their voting right.

The voting privilege is not extended to the ordinary member's family automatically. An ordinary member's Muslim spouse and children, who are eighteen years of age or older, must register separately as ordinary members in order for them to attain the voting privilege.

The voting privilege is revoked immediately upon the suspension or cancellation of membership.

SECTION III-4: TERMINATION/CANCELLATION OF MEMBERSHIP:

In accordance with Islamic law and evidence, the Board of Trustees may revoke a person's membership in DAT if that individual commits any of the following:

- Violation of membership requirements as set forth by these Bylaws
- Cursing any of the wives or companions of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)
- Accepting any book other than the Holy Quran as the authentic word of Allah
- Seeking aid, assistance, or guidance from a deceased person at his gravesite or otherwise
- Participating in, or promoting rituals that are contrary to the teachings of Islam.

SECTION III-5: MEMBERSHIP FEES:

The DAT Board of Trustees reserves the right to change the membership fees as it deems necessary.

SECTION III-6: SOURCES OF FUNDS:

The main sources of funds shall include collected membership fees, donations, Zakat, Sadaqah, money acquired through the renting/leasing of DAT facilities, and any other legal and Islamically legitimate sources.

DAT funds will be managed by the treasurer and dispensed at the discretion of the Board of Trustees in accordance with the charter of DAT.

ARTICLE IV: GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

SECTION IV-1: THE GENERAL BODY MEETING:

Two semi-annual general body meetings shall be held each calendar year at the DAT facility. One meeting shall be scheduled to take place during the Spring season, and the other in the Fall season. The meeting dates shall be announced at least thirty days in advance. The following topics shall be addressed in these meetings:

- Minutes of the last general body meeting.
- Semi-annual report prepared by the Imam.
- Semi-annual report of established committees (education, public relations, etc.) whenever applicable.
- Annual financial report (at the Spring meeting only).
- Election of ordinary members to the open seats in the Board of Trustees (at the Fall meeting only).
- If necessary, the Board of Trustees shall draft proposed amendments to the Bylaws and present them to the General Body of DAT for approval.
- Any other pertinent business, with the permission of the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

SECTION IV-2 SPECIAL GENERAL BODY MEETINGS:

Special general body meetings may be convened for any of the following reasons:

- When a request is made by the Board of Trustees.
- Upon written request, signed by at least 20% of the voting members.
- In response to such a request, the Board of Trustees shall call for a general body meeting within 45 days. The schedule and agenda of such meetings shall be announced or distributed to members at least 15 days in advance.

SECTION IV-3: QUORUM REQUIRED FOR GENERAL BODY MEETINGS AND BYLAW AMENDMENTS:

A quorum is necessary for the transaction of any business. The quorum is reached with the presence of 20% of the voting members in the first call. If a quorum is not achieved in the initial call, the attendance of at least 30 voting members shall constitute a quorum in subsequent calls. The majority of the Board of Trustees members should also be present.

ARTICLE V: GOVERNMENT AND ORGANIZATION:

SECTION V-1: THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

The Board of Trustees consists of six elected members, in addition to the Imam:

- Chairman
- Vice Chairman
- General Secretary
- Treasurer
- Public Relations Secretary
- Property Manager
- Imam

No elected Board of Trustees members shall be compensated for their services.

SECTION V-2: GOVERNING RULES

The Board of Trustees member's term is governed by the following rules:

- Three years constitutes the full term for each Board of Trustees member.
- At the end of the term, a Board of Trustees member is eligible for nomination to fulfill another term.
- A maximum of three positions may be open for election at the general body meeting in any given year.
- If the Chairman's seat should become vacant after the conclusion of the Fall elections, the Board of Trustees members shall select a new Chairman from amongst themselves at the first full Board of Trustees meeting that convenes thereafter.
- Any elected Board of Trustees member who has served on the current Board of Trustees for at least one full year is qualified to fill the Chairman's position.
- If the Board of Trustees fails to select a Chairman, a special general body meeting must be called by the Board of Trustees to enable the ordinary members of DAT to elect the qualified member they deem most suitable to fill the position of Chairman.

SECTION V-3: DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES (SHURA COUNCIL)

The duties and functions of the Board of Trustees shall include:

- Implementing and protecting DAT's constitution.
- Planning of activities to accomplish the objectives stated in the articles of incorporation and any subsequent amendments. Any amendments of the Bylaws must initially be approved by the Board of Trustees, and then it must be approved by at least 2/3 of the voting members in a general body meeting that reaches a quorum.
- Enforcing the policies and carrying out the decisions of the general body.
- Acting on behalf of DAT for the purposes of purchasing, acquiring and maintaining any property rights, privileges and securities that are Islamically permitted.
- Managing the financial affairs of DAT in a responsible manner. Assessing the necessity and appropriateness of borrowing without interest upon the credit or assets of DAT. Should such action be deemed necessary, the Board of Trustees is responsible for acquiring the loan and making provision for its timely repayment.
- Managing and supervising all transactions involving financial institutions and the DAT checking account. The treasurer and two other Board of Trustees members are authorized as signatories for the DAT checking account. The signatures of the treasurer and one of the other two authorized Board of Trustees members are necessary to validate any check issued by DAT.

SECTION V-4: BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETINGS:

Regular meetings: The Board of Trustees shall hold meetings on a fortnightly basis, or as frequently as they consider necessary.

Special meetings: A special meeting can be called by the Chairman at the request of any Board of Trustees member.

The presence of a majority of the Board of Trustees members shall constitute a quorum.

The Board of Trustees members present at any of the meetings shall be required to take a simple majority vote for decisions to be ratified.

SECTION V-5: SPECIFIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEMBERS:

CHAIRMAN:

- Implement and uphold the DAT constitution.
- Call and preside over the Board of Trustees meetings and the general body meetings.
- Direct and coordinate day-to-day affairs and activities.
- Act as spokesperson, representative, and coordinator of DAT in external activities.

VICE CHAIRMAN:

- Arrange and coordinate all DAT activities.
- Temporarily assume the duties and responsibilities of chairman during the DAT Chairman's absence.
- Assist the Chairman in accomplishing the goals and objectives of DAT.

GENERAL SECRETARY:

- Prepare and maintain the minutes of the Board of Trustees meetings and the general body meetings.
- Prepare and publicize the agenda of meetings
- Maintain membership records
- Check and direct all regular correspondence via mail and email, and respond appropriately and in a timely fashion to website inquiries and voicemail

TREASURER:

- Collect and deposit all funds received on behalf of DAT in DAT's bank accounts.
- Maintain impeccable records of all financial transactions.
- Co-sign withdrawal checks with another authorized Board of Trustees member.
- Prepare and present comprehensive financial reports to the general body.
- Organize the fundraising activities of the finance committee.
- Prepare and submit all necessary returns to government agencies.

PUBLIC RELATIONS SECRETARY:

- Brief the Board of Trustees on current community events and broader Muslim affairs.
- Maintain the DAT website and media center; prepare publications, announcements, press releases and other forms of communication through various media outlets.
- Prepare circulars, bulletins, and newsletters, and distribute them to members via efficient means, electronic or otherwise.
- Collect and document written suggestions and comments from the community.
- Review and determine the suitability of all announcements, handouts or fliers that have been submitted by members of the general public, prior to their distribution or exhibition at DAT facilities or activities.

PROPERTY MANAGER:

- Manages, secures and maintains all DAT real estate properties
- Prepares and presents annual reports concerning repair and maintenance of DAT property and submits plans for projected expenditure to the Board of Trustees for their approval.
- Reviews bids and offers for maintenance and repair contracts before meeting with the Board of Trustees for discussion of these matters.
- Inspects each contractor's work and authorizes payment.

IMAM:

The Imam is the religious leader of the DAT community. His primary role within the Board of Trustees is to guide them according to the laws of the Quran and Sunna.

SECTION V-6: ELIGIBILITY FOR NOMINATION TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

The following conditions make one eligible for nomination to positions on the Board of Trustees:

- Ordinary voting member for at least one year
- United States citizen or legal permanent resident
- Practicing Sunni Muslim according to Islamic Sharia'a
- Active member in DAT's daily prayers, weekly and monthly activities
- Not holding any executive position in any other Islamic or non-Islamic organizations that could constitute a conflict of interest with DAT affairs.

SECTION V-7: TERMINATION & SUCCESSION OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEMBERS

Any Board of Trustees member who has committed any of the following acts shall be asked to resign by the Board of Trustees. Should that member refuse to resign, the matter will be addressed by the general body.

- Failed to maintain the qualifications set forth in Section V-6
- Charged with and proven to be in direct violation of the DAT constitution
- Misused or misappropriated DAT funds
- Missed three consecutive or five separate Board of Trustees meetings without a reasonable and acceptable excuse
- Committed any of the major sins (Al-Kaba'er)
- Held an executive position in any other Islamic and non-Islamic organizations that constitute a conflict of interest with DAT affairs

Outgoing Board of Trustees members shall immediately surrender all DAT equipment, property, access keys, paper and electronic documents to the Board of Trustees.

Vacant positions shall be filled by temporary appointees of the Board of Trustees until the next election.

SECTION V-8: STANDING COMMITTEES

The Board of Trustees shall form committees as deemed necessary to conduct special activities. Each committee shall consist of at least three members. The Board of Trustees will assign a chairman for each committee. The chairman shall appoint committee members upon consultation with the Board of Trustees.

The following are the initial committees: (1) Daawah, (2) Education, (3) Community Relations, (4) Fundraising, (5) Construction, (6) Maintenance, and (7) Youth. Other committees will be formed as the needs arise, such as election committees etc.

All committees shall conduct their affairs through mutual consultation. If any committee fails to perform its assigned duty, the committee must refer the matter to the Board of Trustees.

Daawah: The Imam shall be the chairman of the Daawah committee. This committee will be responsible for inviting and educating individuals about Islam; communicating with other religious organizations; organizing and participating in interfaith dialogues and meetings.

Education: This committee is responsible for organizing Islamic education for children and adults.

Community Relations: The Community Relations committee is responsible for organizing periodic religious events, conducting Ramadan and Eid activities, and inviting scholars and guest speakers.

Fundraising: The treasurer shall be the chairman of the Fundraising committee. This committee will be responsible for all fundraising activities.

Construction: The Construction Committee is responsible for the planning and supervision of new construction and future expansion of existing DAT facilities..

Maintenance: The property manager shall be the chairman of the Maintenance committee. This committee will be responsible for maintaining DAT properties, including repairs, cleaning, landscaping, and snow removal.

Youth: The Youth Committee will be striving to meet the great challenges of keeping our Muslim Youth united, and establishing their Muslim identities here in this Western society. The Youth Committee will try to meet those demands by organizing regular activities that young people can attend, enjoy, and participate in while developing taqwa and strength in their hearts for practicing Islam.

ARTICLE VI: GENERAL ELECTIONS

The Board of Trustees will appoint an election committee chairman at least four weeks before any scheduled DAT election.

The election committee will:

- Distribute the official DAT nomination forms to DAT members.
- Publish the list of eligible voting members

The DAT members will have two weeks to submit the completed nomination forms to the election committee. Nomination by at least two members is required for a candidate's nomination to be valid.

The election committee and the Board of Trustees will verify each nominee's eligibility and will finalize the qualified nominees list. The final list of nominees will be made available at least one week prior to the election.

On the day of election, the election committee is in charge of conducting the election proceedings. Individual members must be present to cast their votes.

The election committee will count the votes, and the chairman will announce the results.

The chairman of the election committee shall have the final say in any electoral matters under dispute.

ARTICLE VII: DISPUTE RESOLUTION:

The Board of Trustees will identify an advisory council consisting of five "Islamic scholars" from various Islamic organizations. The list of advisory council members will be updated every year.

Disputes that fall under the category of 'that which is allowed' (Mubah) in the Islamic Sharia, shall be referred to the Imam for resolution.

Disputes that cannot be resolved by the Imam shall be forwarded to the advisory council.

The disputing parties must select at least one of the five advisory council members to make the final decision, and this decision will be binding.

The Imam will coordinate all communication between the Board of Trustees and the advisory council.

In the event of a dispute among the members of the Board of Trustees, the matter will be referred to the advisory council for resolution.

ARTICLE VIII: APPOINTMENT AND DUTIES OF THE IMAM:

The Imam is the religious leader of the DAT community. His duties include:

- Effectively communicating the mission of DAT, and the values which form its foundation, to all organizational committees.
- Leading daily congregational prayers, Jumuah prayers, Eid prayers, etc.
- Conducting legal marriages as well as providing human relations counseling for individuals and groups.
- Establishing halaqat (study circles) for men, women and the youth.
- Overseeing educational programs and activities such as the weekend school, summer camps, etc.

SECTION VIII-1: QUALIFICATIONS:

The Imam must:

- be a male believer in Islam
- have thorough knowledge of the Quran and Sunnah
- strive to maintain the highest standards of manners and Islamic conduct
- have excellent communication skills in both the Arabic and English languages
- exercise sound judgment.

SECTION VIII-2: SELECTION PROCESS

If the position of the Imam becomes vacant, an Imam will be selected by the Board of Trustees. The appointment of the Imam will be confirmed after a 60-day probation period.

SECTION VIII-3: CONTRACT

The Imam's contract shall be negotiated by the elected members of the Board of Trustees and shall include the following items at the very minimum:

- Duties and responsibilities
- Term length
- Salary and benefits

The contract shall be renewed automatically at the end of the negotiated term.

SECTION VIII-4: CONTRACT TERMINATION:

The Imam's contract may be terminated by the Board of Trustees based on findings consistent with Islamic law and evidence. However, the Imam's termination can only occur with the sanction of 2/3 of the voting members in a general body meeting that reaches a quorum.

These Bylaws were approved by the general body on November 18, 2005

Current Board of Trustees Members (arranged in alphabetical order according to first names):

- Althaf Lohani
- Galal Mahmoud
- Mahmood Abdelhady
- Mumtaz Khan
- Reida Elwannas
- Sayed Hassan
- Shahid Khan

VOIDED