

**New Kemet Harambe Charter
Chicago, Illinois**



®

BY-LAWS

**ARTICLE I
NAME**

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the New Kemet Harambe Chapter of Blacks In Government (BIG). It shall be referred to in these bylaws as New Kemet Harambe or the Chapter.

Section 2. The seal of the National organization shall be in the form of two concentric circles and shall bear the words "Blacks In Government" inscribed in the space between the inner and outer circle and/or the letters BIG inscribed in the space inside the inner circle.

**ARTICLE II
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Section 1. To be an advocate of equal opportunity for Blacks in government.

Section 2. To eliminate practices of racism and racial discrimination against Blacks in government.

Section 3. To promote professionalism among Blacks in government.

Section 4. To develop and promote programs which will enhance ethnic pride and educational opportunities for Blacks in government.

Section 5. To establish a mechanism for gathering and disseminating information for Blacks in government.

Section 6. To provide a nonpartisan platform on major issues of local, regional and national significance that affects Blacks in government.

**ARTICLE III
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

Section 1. Membership: The Chapter shall consist of members employed by the Federal, State, County and City Government employees in the Chicago Metropolitan area. The main recruitment area of the Chapter shall be the U. S. Department of Environment Protection Agency (EPA) Located in Chicago, Illinois.

Section 2. The Chapter's membership shall be open to all individuals regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, religion, age, sex, political affiliation, marital status or handicapped condition who have met the membership requirements prescribed herein.

Section 3. Officers. The Chapter's officers shall be elected by the regular members in good financial standing at a regular meeting.

A. The elected officers shall include the President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer.

B. The Executive Committee shall consist of the elected officers.

Section 4. Regional Council

A. This chapter shall belong to the Region V Council of Blacks In Government in accordance with the National Constitution.

B. The representatives to the Regional Council shall consist of three (3) regular financial members selected from the chapter. *The President, by virtue of office, will automatically be one of the council representatives.*

C. *Any chapter council representative elected to an office of the Region V Council shall serve as a chapter council representative by virtue of the elected position within the Region V Council for the term of their office held.*

Section 5. National

A. This Chapter shall be a part of the national organization and participate in national assemblies in accordance with the National Constitution.

B. This Chapter shall submit quarterly reports to the National Office in accordance with the National Constitution and other reports as requested.

ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Individual Membership. Any person who is in accord with the philosophy, principles, policies, and objectives of this organization, and agrees to adhere to the same, may become a member of the national organization with the consent of the Executive Committee and by paying the Annual National membership fee, provided he or she is qualified as stated herein.

Section 2. Membership Categories. There shall be three categories of individual membership: Regular, Associate, and Life. Other categories of membership may be established by the National Board of Directors. Individual membership in the organization at the national level is a requirement for chapter membership.

A. Regular Membership.

- (1) Any employee or retiree of a federal, state, county or a local governmental unit, who is in accord with the principles, policies, and objectives of the organization and who agrees to adhere to the same, may become a regular member of this organization by paying the applicable Annual Chapter membership fee.
- (2) Regular members shall be accorded all privileges of membership
- (3) Any person who, at the time of being separated without prejudice from employment by the federal, state, or local government, was a regular member in good standing is eligible for continuing regular membership in this organization.
- (4) Any person who, at the time of being separated with prejudice from employment by the federal, state, or local government and such separation is grieved, and that person is a regular member in good standing, is eligible for continued regular membership in this organization until such grievance is resolved.

B. Associate Membership.

- (1) Any person who is not eligible for regular membership but is in accord with the principles, policies, and objectives of the organization and who agrees to adhere to the same, may become an associate member of this organization by paying the applicable Annual Chapter membership fee.
- (2) Such members shall be accorded all rights and privileges of membership except those of voting and holding elective offices.

C. Life Memberships.

Any person who is in accord with the principles, policies, and objectives of the organization and who agrees to adhere to the same, may become a life member of this organization at the National level with the consent of the National Board of Directors and by paying the life membership fee. Annual Chapter membership fees must be paid to retain chapter membership.

ARTICLE V

DUTIES OF OFFICERS, APPOINTMENTS, AND STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1. Executive Committee. The elected officers and immediate past president shall constitute the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall implement the programs of the Chapter. The Executive Committee shall also transact routine business between meetings of the Chapter and act in emergency situations. All actions of the Executive Committee shall be ratified by the Chapter at the next meeting following the action taken.

Section 2. Officers. The elected officers of the organization shall include the President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Assistant Treasurer and Correspondence Secretary.

A. President. The President shall serve as Chair of the Executive Committee and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating and Election Committees. In addition, the President shall guide the implementation of programs which have been approved by the membership; shall recommend to the membership changes in programs and procedures; shall present the chapter's annual report; countersign with the Treasurer or First Vice President (in the absence of the Treasurer) checks drawn on the chapter's treasury; shall receive reports on activities of the various committees; and shall make appointments as necessary with approval of the Executive Committee or regular membership. Shall perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Committee or the Chapter.

B. First Vice President. In the absence of the President or in the event of disability of the President, the First Vice President shall perform all the duties and functions of the President. During such a period, the First Vice President shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions placed upon the President. Shall countersign with the President or Treasurer checks drawn on the chapter's treasury. The First Vice President shall serve as liaison to committee chairs and shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Executive Committee or the Chapter.

C. Second Vice President. In the absence of the First Vice President or in the event of disability of the First Vice President, the Second Vice President shall perform all the duties and functions of the First Vice President. During such a period, the Second Vice President shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions placed upon the First Vice President. The Second Vice President shall be responsible for serving as the focal point and coordinating programs and activities relating to the following sectors: Federal, state, county and local and shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Executive Committee or the Chapter.

D. Secretary. The Secretary shall maintain a record of the proceedings of the organization; shall produce such records upon request of any member in good standing; shall read the minutes of the previous meeting at each Executive Committee and Chapter meeting, shall provide copies of the minutes to the Executive Committee members 15-30 days after each meeting and shall maintain in safe custody the Chapter's charter and electronic archives of the Chapter's minutes. In the absence of the Corresponding Secretary or in the event of disability of the Corresponding Secretary, the Secretary shall perform all the duties and functions of the Corresponding Secretary and shall perform other duties assigned by the Executive Committee or the Chapter.

E. Corresponding Secretary. The Corresponding Secretary shall receive correspondence and other external messages from outside of the Chapter and respond to those messages either routinely by forwarding or presenting it to the appropriate officer of the Executive Committee as necessary for action. In the absence of the Secretary or in the event of disability of the Secretary, the Corresponding Secretary shall perform all the duties and functions of the Secretary and shall perform other duties assigned by the Chapter.

F. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be chief financial officer of the organization; shall countersign with the President or Vice President all checks and requisitions for the disbursement of organization funds; shall provide financial statements as often as required, but at least quarterly, to the Executive Committee and Chapter Members. The Treasurer's books shall be subjected to audit annually. Shall perform other duties assigned by the Executive Committee or the Chapter.

G. Assistant Treasurer. The Assistant Treasurer shall assist the Treasurer in carrying out all financial responsibilities of the Chapter, will provide financial reports of all Chapter projects to the membership, shall consult with the Treasurer on the availability of funds and shall maintain a record of all financial transactions, both receipts and disbursements. In the absence of the Treasurer or in the event of the disability of the Treasurer, the Assistant Treasurer shall perform all the duties and functions of the Treasurer. Shall perform other duties assigned by the Executive Committee or the Chapter.

Section 3. Standing Committees, Special Committees and Appointments: The President may appoint all standing committee chairs, special positions, and special committees. The term of office for all appointed positions and committees shall be concurrent with that of the appointing authorities, unless otherwise specified at the time of appointment. In no case will the term of an appointment extend beyond the term of the appointing authority.

A. Chairpersons of Standing Committees shall have the authority to make recommendations to the Chapter President on the establishment of subcommittees within their committee for the purpose of conducting committee business.

B. All standing committee members shall be selected from the general membership. The standing committees shall include but not be limited to:

Finance
Program and Planning
Communication and Public Relations
Membership
Bylaws

(1) **Finance.** The Finance committee shall be responsible for the financial accountability of the chapter. This committee will be responsible for, but not be limited to, determining the cost of the chapter's programs and reporting to the general membership the feasibility of implementing these programs. In addition:

(a) This committee will serve as the audit committee for audits required by law, or any other reason.

(b) An audit must be conducted and results reported at the first Chapter meeting of each calendar year. This committee will have access to all financial records necessary to complete the audit. In the function of the Audit Committee, the size of the committee will be increased by at least one (1) member. No officers can be members of this committee when performing the audit functions.

(2) **Program and Planning Committee.** The Program and Planning Committee shall be responsible for development and implementation of the necessary programs and requirements to fulfill the purpose and objectives of the chapter. This committee shall be responsible for training and assistance in those areas critical to the well being of Black government employees. All programs pursued by this committee must be approved by the Executive Committee and/or General Membership and certified to be feasible by the Finance Committee.

(3) **Communication and Public Relations.** The Communications and Public Relations Committee shall be responsible for the development and printing of all published documents of the chapter; shall be responsible for all contacts with the media (TV, newspapers, etc.). The primary purpose of this committee is to assure public exposure of the chapter as approved by the Executive Committee and/or Membership. All public statements shall be in accordance with National policies.

(4) **Membership Committee.** The Membership Committee shall be responsible for developing and implementing programs for membership drives, receiving and screening applications, and any other functions deemed necessary by the Chapter or Executive Committee.

(5) **The Bylaws Committee** shall be responsible for the bylaws of the chapter. This committee will be responsible for all amendments and alteration actions of the chapter's bylaws.

C. **Special Committees:** Special committees may be established to perform specific functions as required. All Special committee members shall be elected from the general membership. The Special Committees shall include but not be limited to:

Audit
Nomination
Election

(1) **Audit Committee** The Audit Committee will perform audits required by law, or any other reason. Normally an audit must be conducted and results reported at the first Chapter meeting of each calendar year. This committee will have access to all financial records necessary to complete the audit. In the function of the Audit Committee, the size of the committee will be an odd number determine by the Chapter membership. No officers that signs or countersigns checks can be a member of this committee when performing the audit functions.

(2) **Nomination Committee.** The Nomination Committee shall be composed of an odd number of members from the general membership and elected by the general membership for the purpose of conducting annual Chapter elections. Nominations for chapter officers shall be submitted to the nominating committee or made from the floor at a general membership meeting held for nominations.

(3) **Election Committee** The Election Committee shall be composed of an odd number of members from the general membership and shall be elected by the general membership for the purpose of conducting annual Chapter elections. The Committee will prepare an official ballot of eligible candidates for each office; conduct the actual election of officers in conjunction with the slate officers presented by the Nominating Committee; and present the election results to the membership and provide certification in writing of those results to the Chapter Secretary.

D. **Appointments**

(1) Parliamentarian. The Parliamentarian may be appointed by the President, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee or regular membership and shall give parliamentary opinions upon request.

ARTICLE VI MEETINGS AND QUORUMS

Section 1. In order to conduct Chapter business, the following will be necessary:

- A. Regular meetings shall be held at a time and place determined by the Executive Committee or General Membership. The location will be communicated to the membership at least one (1) week prior to each meeting.
- B. Special meetings may be called by the President, a majority of the Executive Committee, or any four (4) regular members by request to the President, or by request to a majority of the Executive Committee or notification of all financial members, at least seven (7) days prior to meeting date.

Section 2. A quorum of the regular assembly shall consist of not less than five (5) financial members and should include at least one Chapter officer. A quorum must be present before any issue is voted upon.

Section 3. The Executive Committee meetings shall be held at least quarterly. The time and place of the meetings shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

Section 4. A quorum of the Executive Committee shall be a simple majority of its members.

ARTICLE VII NOMINATION, ELECTIONS, TERMS OF OFFICES, AND VACANCIES

Section 1. Nominating and Election Committee. The Nominating Committee, consisting of an odd number of members and the Election Committee, consisting of an odd number of members, shall be elected by the general membership at the **August** regular meeting (at least 60 days prior to the election).

Section 2. Nominations. Nominations of Chapter officers may be submitted to the nominating committee at least three (3) week prior to the election or may be made from the floor at the **September** regular meeting of the general membership each year.

- A. Nominating Committee shall present the slate of nominees for all positions to the general membership prior to the election.
- B. Candidates may be nominated for office by the Nominating Committee, or at the **September** regular meeting of the general membership from the floor.

Section 3. Elections. The election of officers shall be at the **October** regular meeting of each year.

- A. The election committee shall conduct the actual election and prepare the official ballot of eligible candidates for each office, present the election results to the membership and provide certification of the results to the Chapter Secretary.
- B. Any regular members in financial status with the Chapter and the National shall be eligible to vote and hold any office.
- C. Election of officers shall be by secret ballot of all regular members present and voting.
- D. Any candidates receiving a majority of vote shall be declared the winner of said office.
- E. The election committee will ensure that only regular members in good financial standing are provided a ballot, will collect and tally all votes, and report the election results to the general membership.

Section 4. Term of Office. All officers shall take office on January 1st of the year following their election. The term of office for all elected officers shall be two (2) years or until their successors are elected. The election officers shall be staggered for continuity. The office of President, Second Vice President, Secretary and Assistant Treasurer shall be elected for terms beginning in the even year and the office of First Vice President, Treasurer and Corresponding Secretary shall be elected for terms beginning in the odd year.

Section 5. Officers elected initially off cycle shall serve for one year and are eligible to serve two (2) two-year terms but not to exceed a total five (5) consecutive years. Officers shall serve no more than two (2) two-year terms or five (5) consecutive years in the same office. However they shall be eligible for election to all other offices.

Section 6. Vacancies. Any office may be declared vacant, for cause, upon recommendation of the Executive Committee and/or a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the general membership at any legal (regular or special) meeting.

Section 7. Special Election. Special election shall be conducted at the next general membership meeting following the announcement of vacancy. Nominations shall be received from the floor. Regular member in good financial standing shall be eligible to hold office. Validation of eligibility shall take place prior to voting. Election shall be by secret ballot except when there is only one candidate for an office, in which case the election shall be by acclamation. A majority vote shall elect. The term of office shall begin at the close of the election fulfilling the unexpired term. Officers elected through special election serving a term of twelve (12) months or less are eligible to serve the maximum standard tenure meaning two (2) two-year terms but not to exceed a total of five (5) consecutive years in elected office.

Section 8. Each elected officer shall maintain files and records and shall deliver them to his/her successor upon vacating his/her office.

**ARTICLE VIII
DUES AND ASSESSMENTS**

Section 1. The fiscal year shall be from 1 January to 31 December inclusive.

Section 2. The Chapter dues shall be as set by the membership.

Section 3. The Regional dues shall be as set by the Regional Council.

Section 4. Finances of this Chapter are to be used solely for expenses involving in pursuing the goals and objectives of organization.

Section 5. The Chapter accounts shall have the name of the President, First Vice President, Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer registered, with the requirements that at least two (2) signatures shall be necessary for all disbursement activities.

Section 6. All financial liabilities incurred by this chapter shall remain the responsibility of this chapter. To insure this end, the Finance Committee shall have the responsibility of determining when additional assessments are necessary to cover the cost of chapter business that exceeds the treasury.

Section 7. All financial reports shall be in writing and submitted to the Chapter membership for acceptance.

Section 8. The Chapter shall keep current, accurate, complete books and records of accounts, and minutes of the proceedings of its meetings. An annual audit will be performed to ascertain the accuracy and integrity of the books and records.

**ARTICLE IX
EXPULSIONS, TERMINATIONS, OR REMOVALS**

Section 1. Shall be in accordance with Article X of the National Constitution.

**ARTICLE X
RULES OF PROCEDURE**

Section 1. Rules of procedure as stated in Robert's Rules of Order, "Newly Revised", the National Constitution, Articles of Incorporation and the District of Columbia Code shall govern the Chapter except as otherwise provided herein.

**ARTICLE XI
INCORPORATION**

Section 1. The National Organization of Blacks In Government (BIG) is incorporated as a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation under the appropriate laws of the District of Columbia.

Section 2. The Chapter is covered under the umbrella of the national organization and may be recognized in each state as a foreign corporation.

ARTICLE XII LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

Section 1. Fiscal Responsibility. No member of this Chapter shall have authority or power to impose or incur financial liability on the part of the Chapter without the express authority of the membership.

Section 2. Distribution of Assets and Properties. There shall be no general distribution of monetary property assets to members or officers of the Chapter, and all gains realized shall be devoted solely to the implementation of the objectives of the chapter. No member or officer shall be personally liable to the creditors of the Chapter for an indebtedness of liability incurred pursuant to Article VIII, Section 6 of the bylaws and any and all creditors shall look only to the assets of the Chapter for payment.

Section 3. When, and if, this Chapter is dissolved, funds remaining after the settlement of all liabilities shall become the property of the Regional Council. If no Regional Council exists, the funds become the property of the National organization. If there is no national organization, all funds and property shall be distributed to such tax-exempt nonprofit organizations as may be selected by the members. The assets of the chapter shall in no event be distributed to any of its members or officers.

ARTICLE XIII AMENDMENTS

These By-Laws may be amended or altered by two-thirds (2/3)-majority vote of the regular members present and voting at any regular or special meeting of the Chapter.

The proposed amendments must be presented to the membership or to all members in writing 30 days in advance of any vote. Any amendment acted upon is effective immediately provided the quorum requirements of Article VI are adhered to and after approval by the National Board of Directors.

**ARTICLE XIV
RATIFICATION**

These By-laws become effective upon ratification by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the regular members at a regular meeting provided the quorum requirements of Article VI are adhered to and are approved by the National Board of Directors.

This revision of the By-laws was approved at the March 7, 2006 New Kemet Harambe Chapter of Chicago, Illinois regular monthly meeting.

Secretary

Date: _____

Chapter President

Date: _____

Reviewed:

Regional Director

Date: _____

Regional Director

Date: _____

Approved:

Chair, National Board of Directors
Blacks In Government (BIG)

Date