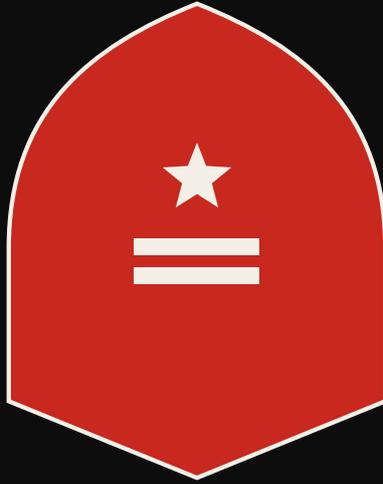


CIVIL DEFENSE SOCIETY

PRESENTS



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# CONSTITUTION

## OF THE CIVIC COMMONWEALTH

REVISED AND STRENGTHENED DRAFT

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*Twenty articles establishing human dignity, equal citizenship, democratic sovereignty, accountability of power, historical repair, and stewardship of society and the natural world — for the present generation and every generation that follows.*

ARTICLES

TWENTY (I-XX)

STATUS

REVISED DRAFT

ADOPTED BY

THE PEOPLE

§ 00 - PREAMBLE

# Founding Statement

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*We, the people of the Civic Commonwealth, establish this Constitution in recognition of the inherent dignity, equality, and worth of every human being.*

We acknowledge that prior systems of governance within this Commonwealth failed to restrain power, permitted slavery and exclusion, enabled corruption, concentrated authority in too few hands, and treated democracy as optional rather than essential.

We affirm that freedom without equality is hollow, justice without repair is incomplete, and democracy without participation is fragile. We further affirm that equality cannot be used to extinguish individual liberty, for each reinforces the other.

We therefore constitute this Commonwealth to secure human rights, equal citizenship, shared self-governance, accountability of power, historical repair, and stewardship of society and the natural world for present and future generations.

This Constitution exists to serve the people — all the people — without exception.

The Preamble shall serve as interpretive guidance for all provisions of this Constitution. It does not independently create enforceable rights or duties, nor does it rank or subordinate the rights enumerated herein.

## ARTICLE I - ONE

# Foundational Principles

- 1. Human Dignity.** Every person possesses inherent dignity and equal moral worth. This dignity is inviolable and shall guide all law, policy, and public authority.
- 2. Equality of Citizenship.** All citizens are equal in political, civil, social, and economic standing. No hierarchy of citizenship shall exist.
- 3. Democratic Sovereignty.** All political authority derives from the people collectively and shall be exercised only through their participation.
- 4. Rule of Law.** The law binds all persons and institutions equally. No individual or office is above the law.
- 5. Shared Responsibility.** Rights and responsibilities coexist. Active democratic participation is a civic ideal to which all citizens are encouraged. This principle shall not be construed to impose punishment or legal disability on any citizen for failure to participate in democratic processes.
- 6. Truth, Repair, and Non-Recurrence.** Historic injustice must be acknowledged, repaired, and prevented from recurring.
- 7. Intergenerational Stewardship.** The Commonwealth holds its institutions, resources, and environment in trust for future generations.

## ARTICLE II - TWO

# Citizenship

1. Citizenship is conferred by birth within the Commonwealth, descent from a citizen parent, or lawful naturalization, without discrimination on any ground.
2. Citizenship shall not be revoked except by voluntary and informed renunciation. Renunciation is valid only when made freely, in writing, with full access to independent legal counsel, without coercion, duress, or undue governmental pressure, and before a judicial officer who certifies its voluntariness.
3. Exile, banishment, or statelessness is prohibited. The Commonwealth shall not revoke, suspend, or administratively withhold citizenship documents as a means of constructive exile.
4. All citizens possess equal rights and duties under this Constitution.

ARTICLE III — THREE

# The Bill of Rights

## SECTION 1: CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

1. Right to life, bodily integrity, and personal safety.
2. Freedom of thought, expression, press, and access to information.
3. Freedom of belief, conscience, and religion, including the right to none.
4. Freedom of peaceful assembly, protest, association, and unionization.
5. Right to privacy, bodily autonomy, and protection of personal data.
6. Due process of law, fair trial, and equal protection.
7. Protection from arbitrary detention, punishment, or surveillance.

## SECTION 2: SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS

1. Right to accessible, high-quality physical and mental healthcare.

2. Right to free, inclusive, lifelong education.
3. Right to meaningful work, fair wages, safe conditions, and rest.
4. Right to safe, adequate, and affordable housing.
5. Right to nutritious food and clean water.
6. Right to social security and protection from poverty, disability, illness, and old age.

## SECTION 3: DIGITAL RIGHTS

1. Right to access digital infrastructure as a public good.
2. Personal ownership and control of one's data, subject to judicial authorization for lawful law enforcement purposes consistent with Article VIII.
3. Transparency and contestability of algorithmic decision systems.

**Section 4: Limitations Framework.** Rights enumerated in this Article may be limited only by law of general application, only to the extent strictly necessary and proportionate to achieve a legitimate purpose in a democratic society, and never in a manner that destroys the essential content of any right. Any limitation must be subject to judicial review. No limitation may be applied on the basis of the viewpoint expressed or the identity of the speaker. When rights conflict, courts shall seek to harmonize them; neither class of rights enumerated herein is categorically superior to the other.

ARTICLE IV - FOUR

# Democratic Participation

1. Participation in democratic processes is both a fundamental right and a civic ideal of the highest order.
2. Voting in elections and referenda is a universal civic duty. The Commonwealth shall guarantee accessibility of voting through adequate polling locations, transportation assistance, language access, disability accommodation, and flexible voting periods of no fewer than seven days per election.
3. Participation does not require endorsement; blank ballots and conscientious abstention are protected expressions.
4. Failure to vote shall not be criminalized, shall not result in fine or civic penalty, and shall not be used to diminish any citizen's rights or standing.
5. Continuous, publicly funded civic education is guaranteed to all citizens from early schooling through adulthood.

## ARTICLE V – FIVE

# Restitution and Permanent Equality

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1. Slavery and its aftermath are acknowledged as crimes against humanity committed within the prior governance of this territory.
2. Descendants of persons enslaved under prior regimes within this territory are entitled to restitution. Descent shall be established through documentary evidence, oral history, genealogical record, or such other means as the Independent Restitution Commission shall provide by regulation, with the burden of proof designed to be accessible rather than exclusionary.
3. Restitution shall include financial compensation, targeted community investment, expanded educational access, healthcare equity measures, and structural reform of institutions that perpetuated or benefited from slavery.
4. Under no circumstances shall descendants of enslaved persons be relegated to second-class citizenship in law or in practice.
5. These guarantees are permanent and non-derogable. No future amendment may diminish them.
6. An Independent Restitution Commission shall administer restitution programs transparently and equitably. Its composition, terms, independence safeguards, and accountability mechanisms shall be established by organic law within two years of this Constitution's adoption. The Legislature shall appropriate sufficient funds for the Commission's full operation; systematic underfunding constitutes a constitutional violation subject to judicial remedy.

ARTICLE VI — SIX

# The Legislature

1. Legislative authority is vested in a representative body elected through proportional representation. Elections shall use a party-list or mixed-member proportional system ensuring that seat distribution reflects the popular vote within a margin of five percent nationally. Any system of electoral thresholds shall not exceed three percent of the national vote.
2. The Legislature holds exclusive authority over lawmaking, taxation, and public budgets.
3. Proceedings shall be transparent, publicly broadcast, and open to public scrutiny. Records of votes and deliberations shall be published within seventy-two hours.
4. No person may serve more than twelve years in the Legislature across all terms combined. This limit is absolute and applies to continuous or non-continuous service.

# The Executive Council

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1. Executive authority is vested in a three-member Executive Council.
2. Council members are co-equal and directly elected by ranked-choice vote in a single national constituency, each serving a single six-year non-renewable term on a staggered schedule, with one seat contested every two years.
3. All executive actions of legal or material consequence require approval by at least two of three Council members. In the event of deadlock on any matter requiring timely action, the Council member whose term began most recently shall serve as Presiding Member for the purpose of that decision only, with the decision remaining subject to review and reversal by full Council majority within thirty days.
4. No Council member may act unilaterally. Actions taken without lawful quorum are void ab initio.
5. The Executive Council possesses no inherent or implied powers. All executive authority must derive explicitly from this Constitution or from law enacted by the Legislature.
6. In the event of the death, incapacity, or removal of a Council member, an emergency election shall be held within ninety days. Pending that election, the remaining two members may act by unanimous agreement on matters of essential governance only, as defined by law.
7. Security forces and civil administration are loyal to this Constitution alone and shall refuse orders that violate it.

ARTICLE VIII - EIGHT

# The Judiciary

1. Judicial authority is vested in an independent judiciary appointed through a non-partisan Judicial Appointments Commission composed of members nominated jointly by the Legislature, Executive Council, and an independent bar association, with no single branch holding appointment majority.
2. Courts possess mandatory authority of constitutional review over all legislation and executive action.
3. Judges shall serve fixed, non-renewable terms of no fewer than twelve years for courts of general jurisdiction and no fewer than fifteen years for the Supreme Constitutional Court.
4. Lifetime appointments are prohibited. No person may hold judicial office beyond the age of seventy-five.
5. Access to justice is guaranteed to all. The state shall provide funded legal representation to any person in proceedings that affect a fundamental right enumerated in Article III.

# Political Equality and Anti-Corruption

1. Political power is not purchasable or transferable by wealth.
2. Private political donations, paid lobbying, and paid access to officials are prohibited. For purposes of this Article, 'paid lobbying' means compensation to any person or entity for the purpose of influencing legislation or executive decision-making, whether direct or through intermediary organizations including but not limited to think tanks, advocacy nonprofits, and contracted advisory firms.
3. Elections and political advocacy are publicly funded and equally resourced by formula established by law and subject to independent audit.
4. No public official or their immediate family member may receive compensation, employment, or material benefit from any entity that was subject to their official decisions for a period of five years after leaving office.
5. Violations of this Article constitute constitutional offenses subject to strict liability. Ignorance of the source of benefit is not a defense.
6. A Democratic Integrity Commission shall enforce this Article. Its composition, funding, and independence shall be established by organic law and insulated from Executive or Legislative interference.
7. This Article may be amended only to expand its anti-corruption protections, never to diminish them. Any such amendment requires approval by three-quarters of the Legislature and ratification by national referendum.

ARTICLE X — TEN

# Civic Information Integrity

1. Citizens have the right to informed democratic participation.
2. Opinion, dissent, satire, and advocacy are fully protected forms of expression and shall not be subject to regulation under this Article.
3. The Legislature may regulate, by law of general application, conduct that constitutes demonstrable fraud, criminal impersonation, undisclosed paid manipulation, or the distribution of deceptive synthetic media that a reasonable person would believe to be authentic. No regulation under this section may be applied to punish criticism of public officials, political parties, or government policy.
4. All political messaging exceeding a minimum threshold of distribution shall disclose its funding source, targeting criteria, and any use of automated amplification.
5. All regulatory action under this Article is subject to pre-enforcement judicial review. No restriction on expression may take effect without judicial authorization except where it constitutes criminal conduct under pre-existing law.

ARTICLE XI — ELEVEN

# Defense of Democratic Order

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1. Equal citizenship and democratic order are constitutionally protected.
2. All ideologies may be expressed and organized within the bounds of lawful conduct.
3. Actions — not speech or advocacy — seeking to abolish equal citizenship through violence or coercion are prohibited.
4. Any restriction on a political party, organization, or movement under this Article may be imposed only by judicial determination under strict scrutiny, initiated by the Democratic Integrity Commission or the Attorney General of the Commonwealth. Such determination shall be completed within sixty days of initiation. During the review period, the subject party or organization retains the right to organize, communicate, and participate in elections.
5. Peaceful dissent and civil disobedience are protected. Prosecution of civil disobedience shall not be used as a pretext to suppress political opposition.

ARTICLE XII — TWELVE

# Foreign Policy and War Powers

1. Human rights and international law govern all external action of the Commonwealth.
2. The Executive Council holds no sole authority in foreign affairs. Treaty ratification requires legislative approval by simple majority; mutual defense commitments and trade agreements of constitutional significance require a two-thirds majority.
3. Offensive military force against another state or non-state actor requires prior approval by a two-thirds supermajority of the Legislature.
4. Emergency defensive action in response to active armed attack may be authorized by the Executive Council without prior legislative approval, provided: (a) such action does not exceed seventy-two hours; (b) the Legislature is notified within six hours of commencement; and (c) continuation beyond seventy-two hours requires legislative supermajority approval. Any claim of defensive necessity is subject to immediate judicial review.
5. Arms transfers to foreign governments or non-state actors require a public human-rights impact assessment and legislative approval.
6. No official of the Commonwealth is immune from accountability for war crimes, crimes against humanity, or other violations of international humanitarian law.

ARTICLE XIII — THIRTEEN

# Environment and the Commons

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1. The natural environment, including ecosystems, watersheds, forests, and atmospheric systems, possesses the right to exist, regenerate, and be protected from irreversible harm.
2. Climate protection and ecological sustainability are constitutional duties of all branches of government.
3. Air, water, land, and essential public infrastructure are held in trust for the people and may not be permanently alienated to private ownership in a manner that impairs public access or ecological integrity.
4. An Office of Environmental Guardianship is established as an independent constitutional body with standing to bring legal actions on behalf of natural systems. Any citizen may petition this Office to initiate proceedings. The Office shall be funded independently of the Legislature to prevent political interference.

ARTICLE XIV — FOURTEEN

# Constitutional Crisis Protocol

1. A constitutional crisis exists only where the functioning of constitutional institutions is materially and demonstrably threatened by unlawful action.
2. A constitutional crisis may not be declared unilaterally. It requires: concurrent declaration by at least two members of the Executive Council; ratification within forty-eight hours by a two-thirds majority of the Legislature; and certification by the Supreme Constitutional Court that the threshold has been met.
3. Crisis measures shall be limited in scope to restoring constitutional order and shall expire automatically after thirty days unless renewed through the same three-way process.
4. Non-derogable rights — including the right to life, freedom from torture, due process, and equal citizenship — shall never be suspended under any crisis declaration.
5. All crisis powers and expenditures shall be publicly accounted for within ninety days of the crisis's termination.
6. Security forces shall refuse orders that violate this Constitution. Obedience to unconstitutional orders is not a defense to any legal proceeding.
7. The people, through petition signed by five percent of registered citizens, may trigger mandatory legislative review of any crisis declaration.

ARTICLE XV — FIFTEEN

# Term Limits and Intergenerational Governance

1. Public office is a temporary trust, not a permanent entitlement.
2. No person may serve more than twelve years in legislative office or more than one term in executive office, whether continuous or cumulative.
3. No person may hold judicial office for life. Term limits for judicial offices are specified in Article VIII.
4. Capacity and fitness reviews of sitting officials may be conducted under due process guarantees and only by independent medical panels; findings shall be subject to judicial appeal within thirty days.
5. Intergenerational impact review — a formal assessment of consequences for persons not yet born — is required for any legislation with effects projected to extend beyond twenty years.
6. Mechanisms established by law shall ensure meaningful representation of citizens between the ages of eighteen and thirty in advisory and deliberative bodies at all levels of governance.

ARTICLE XVI — SIXTEEN

# Executive Eligibility and Competency

1. Candidates for the Executive Council must demonstrate sufficient cognitive, emotional, and adaptive capacity to fulfill constitutional duties. Competency assessments are designed to identify conditions that render a person wholly unable to understand or discharge the responsibilities of executive office; they are not instruments of political screening.
2. Assessments are pass/fail only and determine eligibility, not election outcomes. Results are confidential as to the individual. Aggregate pass rates shall be published annually to enable bias monitoring.
3. Standards shall be developed by independent medical and psychological experts, subject to public consultation, free from government direction, and subject to bias audit every four years.
4. Any candidate who fails may appeal the determination to the judiciary within twenty-one days. No candidate may be finally disqualified without judicial confirmation of the assessment's validity and procedural compliance.

# Independent Executive Competency Commission

1. An Independent Executive Competency Commission is established as a constitutional body, appointed jointly by the judiciary and the bar association, with no Executive or Legislative role in appointments.
2. The Commission is non-political and institutionally independent. Its budget is fixed by constitutional formula and may not be reduced by the Legislature below that floor.
3. Assessment standards are published in full. Individual results are strictly confidential. The Commission is subject to independent audit for discriminatory patterns.
4. All decisions are subject to appeal and judicial review on both procedural and substantive grounds.

ARTICLE XVIII - EIGHTEEN

# Legislative and Judicial Office Requirements

1. Candidates for judicial office shall meet professional qualification requirements — specifically, completion of accredited legal training and good standing with the bar — as the sole eligibility threshold. No subjective cognitive or psychological assessment shall be applied to judicial candidates.
2. No competency threshold beyond citizenship and age eligibility shall apply to candidates for legislative office. Democratic legitimacy requires that voters, not government commissions, assess the fitness of legislative candidates.
3. Judges shall be subject to ongoing peer review of professional conduct, distinct from competency assessment, administered by the Judicial Appointments Commission, with findings subject to judicial appeal.

ARTICLE XIX — NINETEEN

# Amendments and Constitutional Protection

1. This Constitution may be amended to expand rights, improve democratic governance, or adapt to unforeseen circumstances.
2. No amendment may diminish human dignity, equal citizenship, democratic participation, restitution guarantees, or anti-corruption protections. Any amendment purporting to do so is void without further process.
3. Amendments require: approval by three-quarters of the Legislature; a minimum deliberation period of twelve months from introduction to vote; ratification by majority in a national referendum; and certification of compliance with §2 by the Supreme Constitutional Court before taking effect.

ARTICLE XX – TWENTY

# Final Provisions

1. This Constitution is the supreme law of the Civic Commonwealth. Any law, regulation, executive action, or judicial decision inconsistent with it is void to the extent of the inconsistency.
2. All public officials shall swear enforceable oaths of constitutional loyalty before taking office. Violation of the oath is grounds for removal and personal legal liability.
3. The Commonwealth commits itself to peace, justice, international cooperation, and the universal advancement of human rights, and shall conduct its foreign relations in a manner consistent with these commitments.



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# ADOPTED BY THE PEOPLE

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*For the dignity of all, without exception.*

CIVIL DEFENSE SOCIETY • CIVIC COMMONWEALTH • YEAR ONE

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