

TRI-STATE SIKH
CULTURAL SOCIETY
CONSTITUTION



TRI-STATE SIKH CULTURAL SOCIETY
4407 MCKENZIE DRIVE
MONROEVILLE, PA 15146

Article I Name and Place

The name of the organization shall be the Tri-State Sikh Cultural Society (TSSCS), with its principal office at 4407 McKenzie Drive, Monroeville, Pennsylvania, 15146, in Allegheny County.

Article II Objectives

The objectives of the organization shall be as follows:

1. to learn, practice and promote the religious, cultural and social values based on the concept-of WAHEGURU (one God) and Universal brotherhood as taught by the ten Sikh Gurus and Sri Guru Granth Sahib;
2. to arrange regular Diwans (religious congregations) on Gurbani (teachings of the Gums) and maintain Sikh religious and cultural traditions;
3. to organize programs to promote Sikh religion, Sikh history, Sikh culture and Gurmukhi
4. to maintain, prosper, and expand the TSSCS Gurudwara and attached property as a permanent place for holding religious and cultural congregations and its use for community welfare;
5. to establish programs and facilities for children and youth development, with emphasis on achieving objectives outlined here;
6. to establish and maintain a library to offer facilities for studies and instructions on Sikh religion, culture, history, and Gurmukhi;
7. to establish a museum of Sikh history and heritage to inspire the posterity;
8. Sri Akaal Takhat Sahib and Sri Harimandar Sahib at Sri Amritsar, Punjab, India, will be the only consulting bodies on disputes involving Sikh religion and practice.

Article III Membership

- Section 1: All those who believe solely in the Sikh Religion, the teachings of the Ten Sikh Gurus, accept Sri Guru Granth Sahib as their present Guru, agree with the aims and objectives of TSSCS and pledge to abide by its Charter and By-laws, can become members.
- Section 2: There will be four (4) classes of membership: Associate, Active Voting, Life Voting and Honorary.
1. Associate Associate members are dues-paying members who have not met the qualifications of Active Voting membership.
2. Active Voting Active Voting members shall be residents of the tri-state area surrounding Pittsburgh, and shall have been a member of this organization for one (1) year; and shall be over the age of 18. In order to keep active status, the member must continuously pay dues without a break. In case there is a break in the payment of yearly dues, the member will not be considered Active Voting until the above requirements are met (i.e., the member will pay the dues, wait for 12 months before regaining his active status).
3. Life/Voting Life Voting members are those who fulfill all the residency requirements as stated above (in #2) and have paid one lump sum equivalent to ten times the current annual membership fee. Life Trustees will automatically become Life Voting members.
4. Honorary Honorary members are those subscribing to the objectives of the organization who have not met the criteria of other membership. Honorary members shall not be liable for dues and shall have no voting rights.
- The annual membership fee shall be determined by the Executive Committee from time to time, and will be due by Baisakhi of that year.

Article IV General Body

- Section 1: The general body shall be comprised of all members of the organization.
- Section 2: At least two (2) meetings of the general body shall be held during each calendar year. One (1) of which shall be for the purpose of electing office bearers for the next year.
- Section 3: Special meetings of the general body may be convened on the written request of twenty-five (25) members or 1/3 of the total membership, whichever is less. Special meetings of the general body may also be convened at the request of the Executive Committee or the Board of Trustees. All requests for special meetings shall specify the matter(s) to be discussed at such meetings and only those matters shall be the agenda at the special meetings. Requests to convene special meetings shall be made to the secretary who is bound to call meetings within seven days from the day the secretary receives such requests.
- Section 4: At least four (4) weeks written notice shall be given to all members as to the date, time, place and agenda of all meetings of the general body, except special meetings which are covered by Section 3 of Article IV. Any member may include any proposal on the agenda of any meeting upon seven (7) days written notice given to the secretary.
- Section 4: All meetings of the general body shall be presided over by the secretary or, in his absence, by the assistant secretary or, in the absence of both, by the treasurer.
- Section 6: At least one-third (1/3) or twenty-five (25) Active Voting members (whichever is less) of the organization shall constitute a quorum for any meeting of the general body.

- **Please see Article X (Amendments)**

Article V Board of Trustees

- Section 1 : The Board of Trustees shall be comprised of:
- (a) Members of this organization, who have donated \$20,000 (Twenty Thousand) dollars or more to the Tri State Sikh Cultural Society of Greater Pittsburgh. Trustees under this clause will be trustees for life. And,
 - (b) Members who have donated \$7,500 to TSSCS and \$1000 for the current year and \$1,000 thereafter for each year. And,
 - (c) Two additional trustees at large will be elected from the general body for a term of one year only.
- Section 2 : The Board of Trustees shall meet at least three (3) times a year, at least two (2) of these meetings shall be joint meetings with the Executive Committee. The presence of 1/2 (one half) of the number of Trustees shall constitute a quorum for their meetings. The Trustees shall elect a Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary from among their members. The Chairman will preside over all of the board's meetings or, in his absence, the Vice-Chairman or, in the absence of both, the Secretary will preside over the meetings.
- Section 3 : The Board of Trustees shall oversee all important financial and policy matters and shall make recommendations to the general body. The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for appointing and supervising any special committees including the permanent working committees mentioned below.
1. Financial and Audit
 2. Educational and Religious Programs
 3. Building and Maintenance
 4. Long-Range Planning
 5. Constitution
- Each committee shall have 5 (five) members. For each committee, initially 2 members will serve 2 years, 2 members will serve 4 years, and 1 will serve 5 years. After this initial staggering, new appointments will be for a five year term.
- Section 4 : Except as otherwise provided in this constitution, whenever any vacancy occurs on the Executive Committee, through the removal or resignation of an officer or otherwise, the Board of Trustees shall appoint any member(s) to manage the affairs of the organization for a period of three months or until the next elections, whichever is shorter.
- Section 5 : No Trustee shall be directly involved in any contract with the organization; nor shall any Trustee use his position to enhance his own personal financial gain.
- Section 6 : The Board of Trustees shall appoint one (1) archivist for the term of five (5) years who will be responsible for receiving the TSSCS records from the former archivists and maintain the TSSCS records in good order, Each page will be numbered accordingly to sequence of dates.

Article VI Executive Committee

- Section 1:** There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of seven (7) members, six (6) of whom shall be elected each year by the general body. The voting members of the general body shall elect a Secretary, an Assistant Secretary, a Treasurer and three (3) Executive Committee members at large. In addition, the previous Secretary shall serve as a voting member of the Committee.
- Section 2:** Executive Committee members shall be elected at the annual meeting of the general body. Any voting member of the organization with membership of two (2) year's good standing can seek election to the Executive Committee. No officer shall hold the same office for more than two (2) consecutive terms.
- Section 3:** The Executive Committee shall perform its functions on behalf of the organization in accordance with this Constitution and by laws framed by the general body from time to time.
- Section 4:** The Executive Committee shall hold a regularly scheduled meeting at least once every two (2) months. Two (2) of these meetings shall be joint sessions with the Board of Trustees. Seven (7) days written, or by phone, notice shall be given to all Executive Committee members of every regular meeting. Three (3) members of the Executive Committee may request a special meeting of the Executive Committee for good cause. Three (3) days written, or by phone, notice shall be given to all members of the Executive Committee. The presence of four (4) Executive Committee members shall constitute a quorum for all Executive Committee meetings. The Secretary will call the meetings and will inform the other members.
- Section 5 :** The Secretary shall preside over all general body meetings and all meetings of the Executive Committee. The Secretary shall vote at an Executive Committee meeting only in case of a deadlock. The Secretary shall take minutes and maintain records of all general body and Executive Committee meetings. The Assistant Secretary shall assist the Secretary and shall preside at all meetings in the Secretary's absence. Upon the resignation or removal from office of the Secretary, the Assistant Secretary shall act as Secretary until elections are held. In case the Assistant Secretary is unable to serve, the Board of Trustees will appoint a member of the Executive Committee to serve as Secretary until the next elections.
- Section 6:** The financial reports will be reviewed by the Financial/Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees on a quarterly basis. The Board of Trustees will review the financial reports on a yearly basis. All the financial reports shall be audited annually. The audit reports shall be posted thirty (30) days before the general election on a conspicuous place at the Gurudwara. Any member of the general body may inspect the financial reports of TSSCS upon one-month notice to the Treasurer. At this general body meeting, the outgoing Treasurer shall present a report on the financial status of the organization, for the general body's approval.
- Section 7:** The Secretary, Assistant Secretary and Treasurer shall maintain and operate a joint account in such bank(s) as may be authorized by the Executive Committee. Each check drawn on the organization's account over five hundred dollars shall bear the signatures of two (2) of the following officers:
- Secretary
Assistant Secretary
Treasurer
- No checks will be made payable in cash. The above three members will be bonded by a Bonding Agency for \$50,000 (Or the amount determined by the Board of Trustees.)
- Section 8 :** The Executive Committee shall prepare a yearly budget, which shall be presented to the Board of Trustees for its approval.
- Section 9 :** The Executive Committee or its authorized representatives are empowered to accept contributions, subscriptions, donations, gifts, grants and aids on behalf of the organization.

Article VII Elections

- Section 1 : All business, whether it be by the Board of Trustees, the Executive Committee, the general body or any special or ad hoc Committee duly constituted and appointed shall be adopted by a majority vote of members present and voting. All voting shall be by secret ballot.
- Section 2 : There shall be a Nominating Committee consisting of three (3) members elected by the general body at the annual elections. All Nominating Committee members shall be responsible for choosing a slate of candidates to run for each office for the general elections. Current Nominating Committee members may be candidates for any elected office. At least 30 days before the elections, the Nominating Committee will place a notice at a conspicuous place in Gurudwara regarding date/time/place of election and will seek nominations for various offices. The Committee shall receive all such nominations from the general body. If sufficient nominations are not received, the Committee shall prepare a list of candidates for each office. Written statements from the proposed candidates indicating their willingness to serve the offices will be required before putting their name(s) on the ballot. The Committee shall submit all names received from the general body along with those proposed by itself to the Secretary to be posted at a conspicuous place in the Gurudwara at least two (2) weeks before the scheduled election.

Article VIII Removal from Office

Twenty-five percent (25%) of the voting members may move, by written petition, that any member of the Executive Committee be removed. The motion shall be scheduled for vote at any regular or special general body meeting. The Secretary shall give written notice that the motion is scheduled for vote to each member of the organization at least two (2) weeks before the scheduled meeting. Any member of the Executive Committee may thereafter be removed from office with the approval of a 2/3 majority of the voting members present and voting at the meeting. Fresh elections may take place in the same meeting of the general body in order to fill the resultant vacancies.

Article IX Dissolution

Upon dissolution of the Tri-State Sikh Society, the Board of Trustees shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the organization, dispose of all the assets of the organization exclusively for the purposes of the organization in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, religious or scientific purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under section 501 (c) (3) of the internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Board of Trustees shall determine. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the County in which the principal office of the organization is then located, exclusively for such or to such organization or organizations, as said court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

Article X Amendments

The general body alone, as the primary organ of the organization shall have the power to amend or revise this Constitution or the By-laws of the organization. The quorum, shall be 2/3 of the Active Voting members. This Constitution may be amended by a 2/3 majority of the total members present and voting at any general body meeting. The Secretary shall give at least two (2) weeks written notice of such meeting to all organization members. The notice shall contain the text of any proposed amendment and shall specify the date time and place of the general body meeting. After the amendment, the new amendment will be posted at a conspicuous place in the Gurudwara.