

# World Federation of Right to Die Societies

## STATUTES

### 1. Name and headquarters

#### Article 1.

World Federation of Right to Die Societies (hereinafter the Federation) is a non-profit association under the provisions of Articles 60 et seq. of the Swiss Civil Code.

The Federation was formed to continue and further develop the activities previously carried on by World Federation of Right to Die Societies Ltd., a Not-for-Profit New York Registered Corporation, and as such its legal successor.

The Federation is independent of any government, political party, ideological or religious group.

#### Article 2.

The Federation's seat is Geneva, Switzerland.

### 2. Aims

#### Article 3.

The Federation, being a worldwide umbrella organization of societies which advocate a self-determined and dignified end of life, shall promote in a comprehensive and integrated way recognition of the end of life as a phase in which individuals should have the freedom to make choices, to decide for themselves, and request and obtain all appropriate care ranging from optimal palliative care to assisted dying, by

- *Collecting international data in regard to end-of-life decisions;*
- *Disseminating such information and educational materials to both members and interested parties by maintaining a website and by any other methods of communication;*
- *Arranging co-operation and liaison between member societies;*
- *Organizing regular meetings of the GA to ensure coordination and updating of the Federation's goals and direction*
- *Facilitating international conferences on end-of-life issues and assisted dying;*
- *Participating in international activities concerning the objectives of the Federation;*
- *Providing assistance, where requested, to groups and individuals interested in establishing new societies with similar objectives;*

- *Responding to requests by interested groups, scholars and others for information about end-of-life and assisted dying issues.*

### **3. Resources**

Article 4.

The Federation's resources shall come from: membership fees, donations, legacies, private and public grants, and any other resources authorized by law. The funds shall be used in conformity with the Federation's overall aims, if not otherwise stated..

### **4. Membership**

Article 5.

The Federation shall comprise members, associate members and supporters.

#### **4.1. Members**

Article 6.

Membership shall comprise organizations who

- are in agreement with the aims of the Federation (article 3 of these Statutes)
- declare their interest in membership of the Federation by application
- have either members or supporters and a Board or Committee which performs executive functions; and
- pay membership fees.

*Applications* for membership shall be addressed to the secretariat of the Federation, which shall put the request to the following meeting of the Committee. The Committee shall decide whether or not to grant interim membership of the applicant until the next General Assembly, which will decide about definite membership.

*Membership fees* – determined biennially by the Committee and approved by the General Assembly - shall be payable for each year, 1st July to 30st June. The amount of the membership fee due from a member society admitted between biennial meetings shall be determined by the Treasurer on a pro rata base.

Membership shall cease either by written notification of resignation, or by exclusion

- notification of resignation has to be sent to the Secretary;
- exclusion may be ordered by the Committee, for just cause, with a right of appeal to the General Assembly;
- unless otherwise decided by the Committee exclusion from membership shall be automatic for non-payment of membership fees before the end of June in the year they are due.

Members who have resigned or who have been excluded are liable for payment of the fees for the period of their membership and shall have no rights to any part of the Federation's assets.

#### **4.2 Associate members**

Article 7.

Subject to approval by the Committee of each application Associate Membership shall be open to all organizations or societies who support the aims of the Federation and wishes to be associated with the Federation.

Associate Membership fees shall be determined by the Committee and evaluated every two years.

In contrast to Members, Associate Members shall not have voting rights; otherwise similar rules regarding application and cessation of Membership apply to Associate Members as to Members.

#### **4.3 Supporters**

Article 8.

This category is open for individuals who support the aims of the Federation and contribute with an annual gift of a minimum of US \$ 25.

Supporters will be listed as such, will be kept up to date with the proceedings of the Federation and are allowed to attend WF meetings. They will not have voting rights

### **5. Liability**

Article 9.

The Federation's assets may be only used for obligations/commitments contracted in its name. Members shall have no individual responsibility for the financial commitments of the Federation.

### **6. Organization**

Article 10.

The Federation's organs for guarding the governance of the Federation shall be:

- 1) The General Assembly (GA)
- 2) The Committee
- 3) The Auditor

## **6.1 General Assembly**

Article 11.

The General Assembly (hereinafter GA) shall be the Federation's supreme authority. The GA shall be composed of representatives from all Federation members.

Any meeting of the GA is considered to be open for non-members, unless the President decides otherwise.

Article 12.

- a. The GA shall decide on any modification of the Statutes;
- b. take decisions on membership;
- c. elect the President and members of the Committee, to hold office until the next ordinary meeting of the GA;
- d. delegate to the Committee all responsibilities for the good conduct of the Federation's business;
- e. mandate the President to represent the Federation on all matters;
- f. vote on the adoption of the reports and financial statements for the previous period;
- g. approve the financial budget for the period;
- h. appoint an auditor for the Federation's accounts;
- i. decide on the annual membership fees;
- j. undertake any other business of which due notice has been given in accordance with article 12; and
- k. decide on the dissolution of the Federation.

Article 13.

The Committee calls the GA for meeting.

The ordinary meeting of the GA shall be held biennially in or around the month of September of every even year, in such location as is determined by the Committee. The GA may also meet in extraordinary sessions whenever deemed necessary by a decision of the Committee, or at the written request sent to the secretariat of one-fifth of the membership.

Place, date and time of the meeting of the GA shall be decided by the Committee and notified to all members at least six months prior to the date of the meeting. Any member wishing to propose a motion for discussion at the meeting of the GA, to put forward nominations and details of any matter they wish to have discussed, must give written notice to the Committee at least ten weeks prior to the date fixed for the GA meeting and the Committee shall circulate the agenda together with all relevant documents to all members at least six weeks prior to the date fixed for the meeting.

Members will be represented by one individual, authorized by the member society to act as their delegate and vote on their behalf.

The meeting of the GA shall be deemed lawful if a quorum of a majority of the membership is met, by presence of delegates or by proxy. Each delegate shall have one vote and each proxy shall have one vote for each member that the delegate represents.

An individual holding a proxy cannot represent more than three members at any meeting of the GA in addition to representing his or her own society. To be eligible to vote as a proxy the member appointed as such must have lodged with the secretariat a proxy authorized by the member, giving it not later than half an hour before the start of the meeting of the GA. Proxies given must enable the proxy holder the power to vote and speak on all resolutions at the GA as the proxy holder decides best. Specific proxy forms will be part of the written communication documents for each meeting of the GA.

An emergency motion may be presented at any meeting of the GA by a member society but can only be debated and voted upon if the Committee decides to accept the emergency motion for debate, or if not less than two-thirds of the members present at the meeting of the GA (excluding members represented by proxy) agree that the emergency motion should be debated and voted upon at the meeting.

Motions supported by written consent through e-mail of 85% of the Federation members are equivalent to a decision of the GA.

Article 14.

The President of the Federation or a member of the Committee delegated by the President shall chair the meeting of the GA.

Article 15.

Decisions of the GA shall be taken by a majority vote at any meeting of the GA. In the case of a tie vote, the President shall have the casting vote.

Decisions concerning *modification* of the Statutes of the Federation require the approval of a two-thirds majority of the members present at the meeting of the GA or represented by proxy; when the decision concerns *dissolution* of the Federation such decision requires an attendance at a meeting of the GA of 75% two-thirds of the members, represented either in person or by valid proxy and a two-thirds majority. If at the meeting of the GA, where dissolution was proposed by the Committee, these criteria are not met, the Committee shall call a new meeting of the GA at which no attendance quorum is needed. The decision to dissolve the Federation may be taken on such a meeting by a majority vote (50% +1).

Votes will be taken by a raising of hands, unless one-fifth of the attending members ask for voting by ballot. If the vote concerns individuals, voting must always be by ballot, unless approved by an unanimous acclamation.

## **6.2 Committee**

Article 16.

The Committee shall be composed of a minimum of three (3) and a maximum of five (5) members, which shall include the offices of President, Secretary and Treasurer. Consideration should be given to geographic and gender representation.

Committee members shall be recruited from the membership of Member Societies, through nomination or co-option. They will be elected for a period of two years and shall not serve more than three consecutive terms.

For the offices of President and Treasurer persons will be elected to those specific roles by the delegates, present at the ordinary meeting of the GA.

Decisions of the Committee shall be taken by a majority vote of the members present. Committee meetings require a quorum of three to take binding decisions. In case of a tie vote, the President shall have the casting vote.

Article 17.

The Committee is delegated by the GA to carry out all acts that further the purposes of the Federation. The Committee shall be authorized to manage the Federation's business, including opening and closing bank accounts.

The Federation is legally bound by the individual signature of the President or by the individual signature of the Treasurer.

The President represents the Federation generally in all other matters.

The Committee may decide to refer specific tasks to an individual or a group which it selects from either members or experts on the issues concerned.

The Treasurer is responsible for oversight of, and reporting on the finances of the Federation.

Should a vacancy in the Committee occur before the following ordinary meeting of the GA, the Committee shall be authorized to co-opt an individual, recruited from the membership of a member Society, to be a member of the Committee and hold office until the next ordinary meeting of the GA.

The Committee shall meet at least twice every year. Meetings may be held either in person or by way of electronic communication.

Article 18.

Committee members shall act voluntarily and shall not be compensated, except for documented expenses incurred.

Article 19.

Members of governing bodies of the Federation will never be held liable (personally or financially) for actions resulting from activities undertaken by the Federation.

### **6.3 Auditor**

Article 20.

The auditor appointed by the GA shall audit the Federation's accounts in the week preceding an ordinary GA.

Article 21.

The budget and financial accounting shall follow a two year period from 1 July to 30 June .

The audited accounts of the Federation will be supplied to all member societies no later than four weeks after the ordinary GA.

## **7. Dissolution**

Article 22.

In the case of the Federation being dissolved by a lawful vote of the GA, the assets shall be allocated to one or more non-profit organizations pursuing goals of public interest similar to those of the Federation. The assets cannot be returned to the founders or members, nor be used to the benefit of those, nor for any individual's or entity's own benefit.

GENEVA, Switzerland, April 1, 2015

Adapted in AMSTERDAM, Netherlands, May 11, 2016

Adapted in CAPE TOWN, South Africa, September 9, 2018

## **FOUNDING MEMBERS World FEDERATION of RIGHT to DIE SOCITIES**

April 1, 2015

<b>SOUTH AFRICA</b>	SAVES - The Living Will Society Dignity South Africa Final Exit Zimbabwe
<b>ASIA</b>	Japan Society for Dying with Dignity (JSDD)
<b>EUROPE</b>	Association pour le Droit de Mourir dans la Dignité (ADMD-B) R.W.S. vzw (Recht op Waardig Sterven vzw) EXITUS ry Association pour le Droit de Mourir dans la Dignité (ADMD-F) AAVIVRE Dignitas (Sektion Deutschland) e.V. DIGNITATE Living Wills Trust (LWT) Libera Uscita Association pour le Droit de Mourir dans la Dignité (ADMD-L) De Einder NVVE, Right to Die - NL EXIT Association pour le Droit de Mourir dans la Dignité (SR) EXIT-Deutsche Schweiz Dignitas Schweiz Lifecircle Friends at the End (FATE) Society for Old Age Rational Suicide, SOARS RTVD Sweden
<b>CANADA</b>	Association Québécoise pour le Droit de Mourir dans la Dignité Right to Die of Canada Dying with Dignity Canada
<b>USA</b>	Euthanasia Research & Guidance Organization (ERGO) Final Exit Network Hemlock Society of Florida, Inc Hemlock Society of San Diego Death with Dignity National Center
<b>AUSTRALIA / NZ</b>	Christians Supporting Choice for Voluntary Euthanasia Dying With Dignity Tasmania (Inc.) Dying With Dignity Victoria Northern Territory Voluntary Euthanasia Society South Australian Voluntary Euthanasia Society South Australia VE Youth Advocates (SAVE-YA) Dying with Dignity ACT West Australia Voluntary Euthanasia Society End of Life Choice, Voluntary Euthanasia Society of New Zealand
<b>SOUTH AMERICA</b>	Fundacion Pro Derecho a Morir Dignamente (DMD Colombia)