

Federation of Liberian Mandingo Associations in the United States

**(FELMAUSA)**

**Independent Elections Commission**

**2015 General Elections**

**Section I. Introduction**

By virtue of the power vested in us under Chapter XXIV Article 1 of FELMAUSA Constitution, we the under-listed Commissioners established these guidelines for the upcoming FELMAUSA elections to encourage vigorous debate and to give a higher profile to candidates in general, without giving unfair advantage to one candidate or party over another.

We declare, therefore, that we will not participate in the campaign process and we will not contribute to any campaign and/or candidate in any way possible. Equally so, we ask every candidate to uphold and manage his or her campaign in accordance with these established principles and guidelines. Thus every candidate must:

- Keep the campaign professional;
- Ensure that all campaign statements are factual and in good taste.
- Keep the campaign free of smear, personal vilification, slander, innuendo, and character defamation;
- No candidate shall post any information on the listserv or the federation's website that may be harassing or disruptive to other members, including any inappropriate or profane use of language.

Subject to the Board's approval, these guidelines remain open to amendment due to any new and significant relevant evidence of current electoral support until the day after the close of filing of application.

**Section II. Elections Commissioners**

Commissioner Abraham Fofana	Chairman	MN	612 703 7674
Commissioner Mohammed S. Kamara	Co - Chairman	TX	214 270 6646
Commissioner Musa Willie	Secretary	PA	267 808 1018
Commissioner King Garfin V. Swaray	Member	NJ	973 444 2250
Commissioner Mohamed B. Sheriff	Member	PA	267 334 3008
Commissioner Lasana F. Kamara	Member	GA	404 583 4713

**Section III. Election Calendar**

The FELMAUSA 2015 General Electoral Activities shall occur as follows:

**Monday, August 10, 2015**

- Submission of Candidate's Application Form together with supporting documents.

**Wednesday, August 19, 2015**

- Submission of Application closes at 11:59PM EST.

### **Friday, August 21, 2015**

- Publication of qualified candidates.
- Certified candidates shall be invited to attend a special meeting with the Elections Commission to go over elections etiquettes.

### **Friday, August 21, 2015**

- Official campaign activities shall begin following publication of qualified candidates.

### **Thursday, August 20, 2015**

- All Chapters must submit roster of their accredited delegates to the National Administration.
- The National Administration shall, upon receipt, make the roster public on this date and immediately forward the roster of delegates to the Elections Commission.
- There will be **ONLY** two updates, if necessary, to the delegate lists per chapter, and said updates must be channeled through the National Administration at least four days before elections day. Please read **Section VI** below for additional details pertaining to Delegates and Chapters.

### **Debates:**

- There will be **two debates**: One before the Convention and the second and final during the Convention:
- The first one will be a teleconference Presidential Debate to be held one week before the Convention. The date and time of this debate will be arranged after close of registration.
- **Saturday September 5, 2015** – Second Presidential Debates to begin at 11AM.
- **Sunday September 6, 2015** – Elections Day.
- Polling starts at 10:00 AM and closes at 2:00PM CDT followed by announcement of results.

### **Section IV. Application Procedures**

The following outlines the application submission steps to the Independent Elections Commission.

- First, read the qualification requirements listed in the constitution for the position you are running for. Second, scan and e-mail all required documents to the Independent Elections Commission via E-mail address: [felmausaec2015@gmail.com](mailto:felmausaec2015@gmail.com)
- The required documents for all aspirant candidates are:
  1. Candidate Application Form ( IEC Form-01) Please complete all required fields;
  2. One Color Passport Size photo;
  3. Clearance from Chapter leadership;
  4. Deposit slip that you have paid your registration fee (please deposit fee in FELMAUSA Bank account);
  5. Resume, with Summary of Qualifications, Education, and current place of employment; and
  6. Copy of current ID to prove identity
- All required documents named above are applicable to all aspirants, and must be scanned and e-mailed to the Independent Elections Commission e-mail address provided above. Any incomplete application will be rejected. Also, please scan all documents in pdf format and photo in jpeg format.

## **Section V: Procedures of Elections**

Elections will be conducted employing secret ballot system.

- Names of candidates for each separate office will appear in alphabetical order.
- Ballots shall contain the names, photos, and positions of contesting candidates.
- The ballots issued by the Commission will be the sole instrument to exercise voters' franchise.
- Every candidate will run on his/her merit, not as a team.
- The Commission shall maintain records of the ballots.
- Voters/delegates shall provide proof of identity (ID issued by chapter state) before voting. Any voter with ID issued by state other than chapter state must 1) provide copy of the ID to the Elections Commission at the time when delegates names are being submitted, 2) provide a legitimate reason for not having an ID issued by chapter state, and 3) sign a Consent for Release of Information form. The Elections Commission shall, upon receipt of the information, check and decide the validity of the voter.
- Elections results shall be announced publicly at the Convention and thereafter posted on the Federation's Website.
- All election materials shall be collected, secured and sealed by the Elections Commission.

## **Section VI: Eligibility to Vote or Contest in Election**

### **Eligibility of Member Chapters**

- All Chapters to the Convention must meet all of their financial obligations to the Federation prior to participating in the electoral process.

### **Eligibility of Individual Delegate**

- To be considered a voter, your name on the roster of delegates issued by your state must be an exact match of your name on your state issued ID.
- All Delegates will be required to register and pay a fee of \$10.00 to the Elections Commission before being issued a ballot to vote.

## **Section VII. Positions up for Elections**

**The following positions are up for the upcoming elections, and qualified candidates can contest for ONLY one position.**

- National President
- National Vice President for Administration
- National Vice President for Operations
- National Secretary General
- Assistant National Secretary General
- National Treasurer
- National Financial Secretary

### **Section VIII: Registration Fees**

**The following Non refundable fees are to be paid by each candidate at the time of registration:**

Position	Nonrefundable Registration Fees
<input type="checkbox"/> National President	\$250
<input type="checkbox"/> National Vice President of Administration	\$200
<input type="checkbox"/> National Vice President of Operations	\$200
<input type="checkbox"/> National Secretary General	\$150
<input type="checkbox"/> National Assistant National General Secretary	\$150
<input type="checkbox"/> National Treasurer	\$150
<input type="checkbox"/> National Financial Secretary	\$150

### **Section IX: Void Ballots**

Each voter/delegate will utilize a secured method when casting ballots. Importantly, each voter/delegate is encouraged to conduct this process with forethought and civility so as to foster transparency and conflict free process. The fundamental goal of the Elections Commission is to enforce the guidelines and ultimately administer free and fair elections. The ballot will be designed appropriately and be made simple. Every voter/delegate will use **BLUE** or **BLACK INK** to mark or shape his/her candidate of choice. Voter/delegate's choice of candidates must be marked appropriately or the ballot will be nullified. Scratching on the ballot is not permissible. If a voter/delegate fails to vote for any candidate, the Elections Commission will not complete the form and that ballot will be void. Handling of ballots is one of the functions of the Commissioners. No one else will be allowed to handle a ballot.

### **Section X: Observers**

Each Candidate has the right to observe the conduct of the elections. Candidates are allowed to have two (2) observers present at the Polling Station and at the counting of the ballots to ensure a free and fair electoral process. The name, phone number, address and passport size photo of each observer shall be submitted to the Elections Commission at least two weeks prior to the conduct of the elections. This submission shall be done electronically in jpeg format to the Independent Elections Commission's e-mail address, [felamuasec2015@gmail.com](mailto:felamuasec2015@gmail.com) Replacement of observers shall be allowed until the day before the elections. There shall be no change or replacement of observers on the day of elections except in cases of emergency and/or unavoidable circumstances as per the determination of the Commission.

**Section XI: Election Protests**

Any Candidate may file a protest provided all of the following conditions are met:

- Protesting member must have been eligible to participate in the elections.
- All aggrieved parties must reduce grievances in writing to provide the Commissioners unequivocal understanding of the nature of the protest in all dimensions.
- Protest letter must have been written prior to the announcement of the elections results.
- The Elections Commission shall acknowledge receipt of the protest letter and notify every person against whom the protest has been filed; and such acknowledgement and notice shall be in writing.

**Section: XII: Electoral Commitment**

- The Elections Commission shall be the **neutral judge** in the electoral process; and the manner in which the Commission conducts and performs its affairs and duties shall be characterized by ethics, transparency and impartiality. The Elections Guidelines shall be consistent and in conformity with the provisions of the Federation’s Constitution and Bylaws.
- All elections complaints shall be decided by the Elections Commission except for the complaint(s) made against the Commission. The General Convention delegates shall hear complaints against the Elections Commission.
- The Federation’s Website ([www.felmausa.org](http://www.felmausa.org)) may be used by all candidates for campaign purposes and other activities consistent with these guidelines.
- All candidates are encouraged to conduct a civil and respectful campaign punctuated by the highest degree of maturity, credibility and responsibility during the entire process.

Adopted and signed by

Commissioner Abraham Fofana	Chairman	_____
Commissioner Mohammed S. Kamara	Co - Chairman	_____
Commissioner Musa Willie	Secretary	_____
Commissioner King Garfin V. Swaray	Member	_____
Commissioner Mohamed B. Sheriff	Member	_____
Commissioner Lasana F. Kamara	Member	_____