



# *The Constitution*

## Humanists of Trinidad & Tobago




This document contains the *Constitution*. The *Bylaws & Systems* are under separate cover.

### Table of Contents

CONSTITUTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Group Name</li><li>▪ Purpose</li><li>▪ Long-Term Vision</li><li>▪ Watchwords</li><li>▪ Logo/Icon</li><li>▪ Mandates</li><li>▪ Values</li><li>▪ Legal Structure</li><li>▪ Affiliations</li><li>▪ Membership Requirements</li><li>▪ Annual Calendar</li><li>▪ Operational Activities &amp; Events</li><li>▪ Board of Directors</li><li>▪ Elected Offices</li><li>▪ Duties of Each Office</li><li>▪ Executive Council Powers</li><li>▪ Committees</li><li>▪ Amending the Constitution</li></ul>

### CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Section	Contents
<b>Group Name</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The name of our group is: "Humanists TT"</li><li>▪ The Full Legal Name is: "Humanists of Trinidad &amp; Tobago" and,</li><li>▪ Herein abbreviated as: "HTT"</li></ul>
<b>Purpose</b>	Humanists TT is a member of a global network of national humanist organizations led by Humanists International. We promote Humanist philosophy as an alternative to traditional religious beliefs, rejecting belief in gods, supernatural realms, and dogma. Instead, we support individuals, communities, and society by offering a Humanist approach based on ethical principles, science, reason, and compassion, especially in advancing human rights.

<b>Long-Term Vision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✎ Humanists TT aims to achieve national visibility and respect as an advisory body, helping transition Trinidad &amp; Tobago towards a fully secular society.</li> <li>✎ We will promote science-and-research-based solutions to societal challenges, particularly in areas where religious or science-denying perspectives threaten progress.</li> <li>✎ As “other” or “them” is not in our dictionary we stand for human and civil rights, especially those of the minorities.</li> <li>✎ We will offer a growing community for those who, while finding religion no longer relevant, still seek fellowship.</li> <li>✎ Our organization will advocate for character-building programs that we ourselves utilize, which are free from dogmatic and outdated religious beliefs, making them accessible to all youth in the public school system.</li> <li>✎ Finally, we will move to be included in the next Census--as a creed by name: <b>Humanists</b>--instead of just “other” or “none.”</li> </ul>
<b>Watchwords</b>	<p>“The world is my country, all humanity is my kin, and doing good is my religion.” – Thomas Paine (1791)</p> <p>This can be updated every few years, if necessary.</p>
<b>HTT Logo</b>	<p>The first logo (green) was the 2004 version of the Trinidad &amp; Tobago Humanists Association. The red, black, and white logos are the current logos.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>“The new Humanists Trinidad &amp; Tobago logo embodies the vibrant spirit of our nation, rooted in both our cultural heritage and our shared human values. Taking inspiration from Shane Collen’s 2004 “green wining person” design, the figure has been transformed—now proudly red, with black and white, reflecting the national colours. It symbolizes our energy, creativity, and unwavering support for human rights, reason, and fairness. The map of Trinidad &amp; Tobago represents our national identity, reinforcing our commitment to secularism, ethical governance, and the inclusion of all . The figure’s uplifted stance represents an open invitation— a rallying call for all who seek knowledge and strive for a society where everyone can flourish. As we embrace the progressive possibilities of our society, we proudly declare our commitment to human dignity, compassion, and community— with humanist values to light our way.”</p>
<b>Mandates</b>	<b>INTERNAL</b>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To create a community for who do not believe in the supernatural yet are concerned about individually leading an ethical life and collectively in the rights and progress of mankind</li> <li>2. Provide HTT members and interested persons of the public with a holistic understanding of the Humanist philosophy, particularly as it relates to the development of an ethical and intellectual framework</li> <li>3. Assist new humanists in dealing with religious discrimination at home, the workplace or society and to adjust to their new secular lifestyle, to include personal development issues and parenting</li> <li>4. Provide a secular framework to facilitate the celebration and commemoration of life's significant events: birth, marriage, parenting, death, and holidays.</li> </ol> <p><b>EXTERNAL</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Advocate in favor of a secular society.</li> <li>2. Improve the public perception of atheists, agnostics, and other persons without faith, as legitimate and valued members of society</li> <li>3. Assist persons disillusioned with traditional religion that may be humanists without knowing the label</li> </ol>
<b>Values</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ <b>All Humans are Kindred</b> – Humanism rejects the idea of 'otherness.' We advocate for equality and fair treatment for all, regardless of demographic differences.</li> <li>♥ <b>Science over Revelation:</b> We advocate for common principles based on reason, science, and research that can be discussed in an inclusive and constructive manner, these principles are universal and evidence-based--unlike religious dogma</li> <li>♥ <b>Secular Governance</b> - We endorse democratic governance where no group dominates others, where the aspirations of the majority are advanced, and where the rights of minorities are protected</li> <li>♥ <b>People-Centred</b> – mankind—not god—is responsible for the direction of civilization, addressing its problems and providing solutions to support progress; people must always be treated with compassion as <i>ends</i> instead of <i>means</i></li> <li>♥ <b>Ethics Based on the Human Condition</b> – Besides the UN's human and civil rights charter and basic rules of right and wrong found in our innate <u>psychological conscience</u>, we advocate <u>moral reasoning</u> to face the challenges of evolutionary cultural change that create conflicts or ethical issues</li> </ul>
<b>Legal Structure</b>	<p><b>Non-Profit Organisation (NPO)</b></p> <p>The Non-Profit Organisations Act, No. 7 of 2019 (NPOA) defines an NPO as:</p> <p><i>“a body of persons, whether incorporated or unincorporated, which—</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>(a) is established primarily for the promotion of a patriotic, religious, philanthropic, charitable, educational, cultural, scientific, literary, historical, artistic, social, professional, fraternal, sporting or athletic purpose, or some other useful object and raises or disburses funds for that purpose or object;</i></li> <li><i>(b) carries on its business without pecuniary gain to its members or officers except as reasonable compensation for services rendered; and</i></li> <li><i>(c) restricts the use of any of its profits or other accretions to the promotion of its purpose or object.</i></li> </ol>

<b>Affiliations</b>	The HHT aspires to be a member of both the Humanists International (national group membership), and an affiliate of the American Humanist Association as part of a wider global humanist network.
<b>Membership Requirements</b>	<p>Membership is open to anyone who endorses the <u>Humanist Manifesto III</u> OR The <u>Amsterdam Declaration</u> and completes an application and would attend an initiation ritual. They should be citizens or residents of T&amp;T, or close allies of interests of HTT if they are foreigners.</p> <p>Members shall have the right to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Vote in all HTT elections and at business meetings</li> <li>2) Stand for election for any office on the executive of HTT after one year of membership</li> <li>3) Participate in and contribute to activities organized by HTT</li> </ol> <p>No dues (at this time). The executive team can consider it in the future and instead use a project-based resourcing model.</p>
<b>Annual Calendar</b>	Fiscal/Operational Year: October 1 <sup>st</sup> to September 30 <sup>th</sup> .

### Annual Calendar

This is not a complete calendar but just the most important anchoring events. A detailed *Calendar/Schedule of Events* would be published in October as a derivative of the Operational Plan. Dates will be maintained unless some type of uncontrollable events make alternative dates necessary. If so, all events should be completed within one week of the scheduled date.

Date	Event	Comments
End of August	Pro-forma Annual Report and all other reports compiled	September month would be an estimate (to be finalized later)
(")	Notice of AGM	21 days before AGM so membership could read all reports and raise questions
Third Saturday in September	AGM & Elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discussion of the Annual and all other reports</li> <li>▪ On elections years, they will be held at the AGM</li> <li>▪ Confirmation of any interim candidate for elected posts (if any)</li> <li>▪ Concerns raised by the membership</li> </ul>
(")	Handover of Offices	On election years to get passwords, summary of work-in-progress, active documents, etc. for a period of one week
September 30 <sup>th</sup>	Operational/Fiscal Year Ends	As stated
October 1 <sup>st</sup>	New Operational/Fiscal Year Begins	As stated
End of October	Final Annual and Other Reports Submitted	Actual report data through Sept. 30 <sup>th</sup> added to August report

(“)	Operational Plan Completed & First Business Meeting	For the upcoming year, along with the <i>Calendar/Schedule of Events</i> and establishing any committees or project chairpersons
(“)	Start of New Projects/Events/Activities	As stated, but those that are either already in the pipeline or are standard boilerplate will continue/be held as previously scheduled

Section	Contents
<b>Operational Activities &amp; Events</b>	<p>All activities in our group can be divided into “administrative” and “operational.” The former are mostly events like elections, business and committee meetings, planning and reporting, budgeting, and related activities and these are spelled out in the <b>Bylaws</b> section (under separate cover).</p> <p>Operational activities are what advance our cause and serve our membership—our mandates. Some are events, others projects (one-and-done), or programs (done periodically in a similar way). The activities and events can broadly be classified as internal or external. The table below provides some generic examples that could be considered.</p> <p>Because these will change from year to year and the size of the group, they will be spelled out in the annual <b>Operational Plan</b> made by the executive team. If a Humanist Celebrant is part of the group, then life-cycle ceremonies like weddings, funerals, new child welcoming, etc. will be performed on-demand for the members, at prevailing fees.</p>

### Possible Operational Activities

INTERNAL		EXTERNAL			
Educational	Community	Educational	Advocacy	Outreach	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Membership Education Sessions</li> <li>Workshops</li> <li>Access to Resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Celebration of Humanist Day &amp; Other Holidays</li> <li>Social Gatherings</li> <li>Humanist Celebrant Life-Cycle Ceremonies</li> <li>Pastoral Work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Lectures</li> <li>Panel Discussions</li> <li>Exhibitions</li> <li>Debates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research Projects</li> <li>Advocacy Projects</li> <li>Debates</li> <li>Publications</li> <li>Letters to the Editor</li> <li>Lawsuits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outreach Activities</li> <li>Media Messaging Content</li> <li>Other Ads</li> </ul> <p>“Promotion by attraction—not proselytizing”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fundraising Events</li> </ul>

Section	Contents
<b>Board of Directors</b>	This will not be established upfront, unless our legal structure or size requires us to have one.
<b>Elected Offices</b>	The executive s of HTT shall be elected and composed of the following officers: President, Secretary, and Treasurer (other posts can be created by the executive team if conditions warrant).

<b>Duties of Each Office</b>	<p><b>President</b></p> <p>The President shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Model humanist ideals in the operation of HTT</li> <li>2) Facilitate strategic direction for HTT with their team</li> <li>3) Ensure the efficient running of all affairs of HTT and the executive, to include annual planning and reporting</li> <li>4) Chair all executive meetings</li> <li>5) Create sub/special committees and appoint committee chairpersons subject to the review of the executive council</li> <li>6) Serve as ex-officio members of committees under HTT</li> <li>7) Vote in the case of indecisive matters</li> <li>8) Be the primary public spokesperson</li> </ol> <p><b>Secretary</b></p> <p>The Secretary shall be responsible for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Maintaining and making notes for records, minutes, resolutions, and motions</li> <li>2) Preparing an agenda for each executive and general meeting</li> <li>3) Managing all correspondence and be the point of contact for HTT</li> <li>4) Manage all social media accounts and activities</li> <li>5) Maintaining custodianship of records of HTT's members</li> <li>6) Issuing an annual report</li> <li>7) Assist the President as requested</li> </ol> <p><b>Treasurer</b></p> <p>The duties of the treasurer shall be to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Serve as the chairperson of the financial committee</li> <li>2) Maintain all records of HTT's financial transactions</li> <li>3) Authorize and manage all payments from HTT's funds in collaboration with the president</li> <li>4) Prepare detailed financial estimates/budgets for HTT's yearly activities for executive approval</li> <li>5) Collect any monies from club membership fees and fund-raising activities and deposit them (if utilized)</li> <li>6) Prepare and present an annual financial statement of HTT at the last general meeting prior to each election</li> <li>7) Lead organization of fundraising activities</li> <li>8) If an NPO, follow the "Controller's Obligations" (p. 9 of <u><a href="#">NPO-FAQ's</a></u>)</li> </ol>
<b>Executive Council Powers</b>	<p>Manage the affairs of the HTT.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Membership: President, Secretary, and Treasurer</li> <li>2. Develop an annual plan of activities and budget for discussion by end of October to be shared with the membership for simple majority ratification in the first business meeting</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Create committees and chairs to work on projects/activities based on the annual plan</li> <li>4. Have the power to appoint sub-committees for any other purposes deemed necessary by the executive</li> <li>5. Negotiate with other bodies and organizations on behalf of HTT and its members</li> <li>6. Have the power to act and take decisions in special cases, as deemed necessary by the executive, without referring the matter in question to a general meeting</li> <li>7. Provide a regular report of decisions, activities, and projects cumulating in the Annual Report</li> <li>8. Can change provisions of the Bylaws</li> <li>9. Also see “Amending the Constitution” below</li> </ol>
<b>Committees</b>	<p>Committees can be formed on a standing (permanent) or <i>ad hoc</i> project basis.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are headed by a Chair and Vice Chairperson</li> <li>2. Must create a project, event, or activity plan and budget for executive council approval</li> <li>3. Make regular progress reports at business meetings on execution</li> <li>4. Write a report of activities at the end of execution/or annually for standing committees</li> <li>5. No member shall be a member of more than two committees</li> </ol>
<b>Amending the Constitution</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recommendations should be submitted to the Secretary for members with two-years of good standing, in written form with the signatures of at least 5 – 10 members, the Secretary will in turn forward it to the rest of the executive.</li> <li>2. The recommendations will be circulated to the membership two months before the next AGM or Emergency AGM for discussion. If needed, a committee will be formed to evaluate the recommendations.</li> <li>3. The amendment would be made on a two-thirds majority vote of members of good standing in HTT with all three executive members present.</li> </ol>

End