



**Pan-African Community Action
Constitution
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PREAMBLE

I. ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

1. Name
2. Powers

II. OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGY

1. Objectives
2. Strategy

III. PRINCIPLES

1. Principles
2. Tools of Analysis
3. Non-Contradiction Clause

IV. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

1. General Membership
2. Central Committee
3. Supporters of PACA
4. Partner Organizations
5. Committees
6. Programs
7. Campaigns
8. Caucuses

V. MEMBERSHIP

1. Members
2. Leaders
3. Supporters

VI. MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

1. Regular General Membership Meetings
2. Special Membership Meeting
3. Central Committee Meetings

VII. CHAPTERS

1. Locals
2. Chapter Charters
3. Non-Contradiction Clause

VII. DISSOLUTION

1. Process
2. Distribution of Assets

PREAMBLE

Pan-African Community Action (PACA) is part of a historic and global movement for Pan-Africanism, or the liberation and unification of Africa, and of African people on the continent and in the diaspora, under the economic system of scientific socialism.

As part of the Pan-African movement, PACA is a grassroots group of African/Black people organizing for community-based power.

PACA undertakes to build community-led power through **political education** and **participatory programs of action** that avow and advance: 1) our human right to informed consent and self-determination and 2) collective community control over the elements of **land, political systems, economic systems, systems of justice** (such as police and judicial), **social systems** (such as education and culture), and **ecological systems**.

In order to realize this shift in power, PACA is helping build a movement led by the most impacted of our communities, which we understand to be **low-income and working-class African women** and other low-income and working-class African communities who are marginalized, such as those who are queer, trans, or disabled.

PACA is explicitly anti-capitalist. We stand against all forms of race-, class-, gender- and sexual orientation-based oppression.

We stand for full community access to the resources necessary for a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of individuals and families, including: food, clothing, housing, medical care, and necessary social services. We also believe that all people have the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age, or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond one's control.

I. ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

1. Name

The organization hereby constituted is called **Pan-African Community Action** and can be known by the acronym **PACA**, pronounced | PAH-cah |.

2. Powers

PACA has the power to:

- a) exist in its own right as a unique entity separate from its individual members;
- b) continue to exist even when its membership changes and there are different office-bearers;
- c) own property, own possessions, develop and own intellectual property, and enter into contracts and agreements;
- d) establish chapters;
- e) create subsidiary entities, controlled in whole or in partnership with other entities;
- f) engage in campaigns, programs, and conducts in furtherance of its mission and inside of its principles;
and
- g) establish physical offices, change the location of those offices, establish bank accounts, and change this constitution, as dictated by needs and with the majority vote of the appropriately empowered organizational committee or body.

II. OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGY

1. Objectives

PACA's Objectives are:

- a) Build and maintain community-based power;
- b) Develop ideologically clear and competent Pan-African political leadership, with an emphasis on women and LGBTQ folks;
- c) End systems of colonial domination, which are rooted in capitalism, and advance institutions and the practice of self-determination in Black communities;
- d) The liberation and unification of Africa under the economic system of scientific socialism.

2. Strategy

Pursuant to our Objectives and in the context of this moment in history and in this society, PACA's general Strategy and Program is:

- (a) **Build PACA.** Build a strong, effective, efficient, and democratic grassroots working-class organization capable of winning power.
- (b) **Engage in Mass Political Education.** Political education for the purposes of consciousness-raising and building political unity. Win the masses of African/Black people towards the concept of power instead of reformism.
- (c) **Engage in Leadership Development of PACA members, with an Emphasis on Women and LGBTQ folks.** Forge political and ideological unity and build skills to administer a mass movement to shift power into the hands of African/Black people. A broad based and properly trained leadership will prepare our communities for the effective exercise of power and movement-building.
- (d) **Launch Community Control Campaigns.** Wage strategic and effective campaigns designed to end exploitation and oppression and to shift power, even if initially in only discrete sectors of society. Campaigns should be strategically selected to address core issues in people's lives and heighten contradictions. Campaigns should also include analysis and components that address the unique triple oppression of low-income and working-class African/Black women (i.e., class, race, and gender). Campaigns can include Community Control Over Police, Community Control Over Land, other Community Control campaigns, or other strategically selected campaigns.

III. PRINCIPLES

PACA is organized around a series of principles that serve as the ideological glue that binds us into a single entity. PACA also employs Tools of Analysis that are used to evaluate ideas, proposals, and historical events.

1. Principles

The principles of PACA include:

- Anti-exploitation (capitalism)
- Anti-race-based oppression (white supremacy)
- Anti-sex-based oppression (patriarchy)
- Anti-gender-identity- and -sexual-orientation-based oppression (transphobia and queerphobia)
- Self-determination, under socialism, is the highest expression of democracy
- We want POWER, not reform or inclusion in an anti-human system
- Human rights and needs supersede the desire for profit or economic growth
- Ecological sustainability

2. Tools of Analysis

The PACA Tools of Analysis include:

- **Pan-Africanism**
 - The primacy of Africa
 - The liberation and unification of Africa under the economic system of scientific socialism
 - Until Africa is free, no African can be free
- **Black communities in the U.S. are a domestic colony**
 - Colonies serve the wants and needs of those in power
 - We must end colonial domination and replace it with self-determination
- **The core issue is POWER, not racism**
 - Power and self-determination
 - We want control, not inclusion or oversight
- **Capitalism is inherently exploitative**
 - The exploitation of one human by another for the purpose of profit
 - The destruction of the earth's ecology for the purpose of profit
- **Intersectionality**
 - There are multiple and simultaneous forms of exploitation and oppression
 - Black women's experiences are different from those of Black men or white women
 - LGBTQ issues intersect with other identities and class statuses
 - Ending white supremacy and patriarchy will not end capitalism
 - Ending capitalism will not end white supremacy and patriarchy
- **Organization is imperative**
 - Only way to end oppression and exploitation
 - Only way to build a new society
 - Organizing is a science
- **Dialectical and Historical Materialism**
 - History is a process, and that process can be understood and predicted
 - History is advanced by material conditions and can be significantly influenced by organized human activity

3. Non-Contradiction Clause

No PACA positions, policies, campaigns, or practices can violate PACA principles.

No PACA chapters or subsidiaries can hold or advocate positions, campaigns, practices, or rhetoric that contradicts PACA principles.

No PACA member or members can advocate positions, proposals, or rhetoric that contradicts PACA principles.

Positions, policies, practices, campaigns, rhetoric, and proposals that contradict PACA principles are unconstitutional. In the event of an unconstitutional practice, either said practice must be reversed or association with PACA (by the chapter, subsidiary, or member) must be severed.

IV. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

PACA's structure for making and executing decisions within committees, campaigns, or programs must be democratic, egalitarian, and designed to expand the number of participants. Conversely, it must also be designed to provide basic levels of security.

PACA's organizational structure for making and executing decisions is as follows:

1. General Membership

- a) General Membership is the heart and soul of PACA and ultimate decision making power.
- b) General Membership is comprised of active PACA Members, as defined in this constitution.
- c) General Membership must conduct regularly scheduled meetings to review organizational business, exercise oversight over the Central Committee and make decisions about organizational direction.

2. Central Committee

- a) The Central Committee is comprised of active PACA Leaders, as defined in this constitution.
- b) The Central Committee is empowered to make strategic decisions for the organization, including the initiation of coalitions, campaigns, contracts and other agreements in pursuit and in compliance with decisions made by the General Membership.
- c) The Central Committee is non-hierarchical and, therefore, contains no officer positions.

3. Supporters of PACA

Supporters are non-member donors or volunteers who provide material support for PACA-led programs, campaigns, or committees. Supporters are part of the PACA structure but do not have voting or other decision-making authority.

4. Partner Organizations

- a) Organizations that share tactical interests are eligible to be considered Partner Organizations.
- b) Organizations that share tactical interests, but that also advocate positions that contradict PACA Principles, are not eligible for partnership. For example, a Black nationalist organization with shared tactical interests in the fight against police terrorism but that also advocates Black patriarchy is not eligible for Partner Organization status.
- c) Partner Organization status can be approved by either the General Membership or the Central Committee by a simple-majority vote.
- d) General Membership has the authority to veto the Central Committee's decision on Partner Organization status, by a simple-majority vote

5. Committees

- a) Committees are small, more-agile workgroups empowered by either the General Membership or the Central Committee to execute a plan or task.
- b) Committees can be given full power to execute decisions or limited powers to gather information or make certain decisions, but not others.
- c) Committees can be established as:
 - i. Standing. These are long-term committees responsible for ongoing projects or tasks, such as a finance committee, responsible for ongoing financial record-keeping.

- ii. Ad-hoc. These are short-term committees established for a specific project or task. Ad-hoc committees dissolve after the completion of the project or task.
- d) Standing committees must be led by a Leader.
- e) Ad-hoc committees must be led by an active Member, and every effort should be made to have the committee led by a Leader.
- f) Committees should be staffed by Members, but can be staffed by Supporters.
- g) Committees are empowered by, and therefore accountable to, the General Membership. The General Membership can revoke or alter committee powers and can alter committee member composition.

6. Programs

- a) Programs are the long-term services and operations of the organization, as chartered or empowered by the General Membership.
- b) Programs must be supervised by a Leader. That Leader does not have to be on the staff of the Program.
- c) Programs can be entirely internal to the organization or external, facing the broader community.
- d) Programs can be run internal to the organization or created as a semi-autonomous entity, such as a non-profit or co-op, with its own legal identity, but still controlled by PACA. As a semi-autonomous entity, Programs make their own day-to-day decisions, but take overall policy direction from the General Membership.
- e) Programs are empowered by, and therefore accountable to, the General Membership.

7. Campaigns

- a) Campaigns are outward-facing public actions designed to win an objective or demand, as chartered by the General Membership.
- b) Campaigns must be led by a Leader.
- c) Campaigns are chartered with objectives and can be provided with strategies.
- d) Campaigns are run as semi-autonomous actions and, therefore, have the power to make strategic and tactical decisions that impact them, such as creating or entering into a coalition. However, the campaign cannot make decisions with broader implications on the organization, such as entering into a Strategic Partnership with another organization.
- e) Campaigns are empowered by, and therefore accountable to, the General Membership.

8. Caucuses

- a) Caucuses are identity-based groupings of PACA membership, such as the women's caucus, youth caucus, LGBTQ caucus, etc.
- b) Caucuses must be led by a Leader.
- c) Caucuses can be created by the General Membership or Central Committee on an as-wanted basis, by a simple majority vote, and rules of operation and participation are set by the creating body.
- d) Caucuses can be dissolved by the General Membership or Central Committee for inactivity or with cause.
- e) Caucuses are empowered by, and therefore accountable to, their creating body.

V. MEMBERSHIP

Pan-African Community Action (PACA) is an all African working class organization. As such, membership is limited to African-descent people of the working class.

1. Members

- a) Members are individuals who:
 - i. have completed the orientation process;
 - ii. understand and support the organizational Mission, Principles, and Objectives;
 - iii. are current in membership obligations (dues, meetings, work, etc.); and
 - iv. are not under suspension.
- b) Members have the authority to vote on TACTICAL campaign and organizational decisions.
- c) Members have the right to join organizational committees or campaigns.
- d) Members can speak publicly as a member of the organization.
- e) Members can be suspended or expelled for cause.

2. Leaders

- a) Members who have demonstrated a high level of political unity, have internalized the organizational Principles and Objectives, and have demonstrated a commitment to the organization over time are eligible for leadership.
- b) Leaders are part of the Central Committee and are required to engage in ongoing Work-Study.
- c) Leaders have the authority to vote on PRINCIPLED and STRATEGIC campaign and organizational decisions, as deliberated in Central Committee.
- d) Leaders have the authority to lead a committee, campaign, or program, and to make decisions on behalf of the organization in the committee, campaign, or program.
- e) Leaders can speak publicly on behalf of the organization.
- f) If there is cause, Leaders must be suspended or expelled.

3. Supporters

- a) Non-members are organized into a formation called “Supporters of PACA,” or “Supporters.” Supporters provide material support for PACA-led programs, campaigns, or committees. Material support can be in the form of skills, talent, labor, money, or other expressions that help advance the provided objectives.
- b) Supporters are donors, volunteers, and members of the general public who support our positions, but are not members.
- c) “Supporters” is primarily designed for individuals who fall outside of our target demographic but still want to support the work, such as non-Africans, African people who are not in the working class, and African working-class people who want to support but are not ready to join PACA as a member.
- d) Supporters can organize internally to make decisions within the confines of the committee, campaign, or program provided. However, supporters explicitly accept political leadership from PACA, through an empowered PACA entity, such as general membership, Central Committee, or a PACA committee, program, or campaign.
- e) Supporters can be invited to join committees, campaigns, or programs.
- f) Supporters do not have general membership rights.
- g) Supporters can be suspended or expelled with or without cause.

VI. MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

1. Regular General Membership Meetings

- a) Regular General Membership Meetings must be held on a regular basis.
- b) Active members in good standing must be notified of General Membership Meetings in a timely fashion via email, phone call, or hand-delivered flyer or letter.
- c) Each Meeting should include:
 - an agenda
 - a note-taker
 - minutes from the previous meeting.
- d) Decisions included on the pre-circulated agenda can be made during the Membership Meeting. Although decisions about items not on the agenda can be made, or there may be instances in which the agenda was not circulated in advance, care should be taken to make these decisions in good faith, so as not to leave the impression that a lack of transparency was used to advance an agenda item. Votes taken on items not announced in a pre-circulated agenda are subject to challenge and overturn on process grounds.
- e) Attempts should be made to make decisions by consensus. When this is not possible, simple majority votes make decisions.
- f) Not every decision has to be made by the entire membership. The membership is free to empower—by vote—a Committee to carry out general orders and make decisions inside the confines of those orders.
- g) While anyone allowed by the General Membership can attend a Regular Meeting, only active members in good standing can vote.

2. Special Membership Meeting

- a) A Special Membership Meeting is where significant decisions about organizational changes in direction and strategy are made.
- b) Every attempt should be made to hold such a meeting at least once each year.
- c) Active members in good standing must be notified of Special Membership Meetings in a timely fashion via email, phone call, or hand-delivered flyer or letter. Notice for Special Membership Meetings should be sent no less than 30 days before the meeting.
- d) Each Special Meeting should include:
 - an agenda
 - a note-taker
 - minutes from the previous meeting.
- e) Calls for and agendas for Special Membership Meetings must be approved by a simple-majority vote during a Regular Meeting. Agendas must be circulated with the Notice for Special Membership Meetings.
- f) Except for extraordinary circumstances, only items included in the Agenda can be voted on during the Special Meeting.
- g) Special Membership Meetings are the only venues where the PACA constitution can be amended, via a two-thirds majority vote.
- h) While anyone allowed by the General Membership can attend a Special Meeting, only active members in good standing can vote.

3. Central Committee Meetings

- a) Central Committee is a committee comprised of organizational leadership.
- b) Central Committee meetings are structured like General Membership Meetings, but with a “big picture” focus

- c) Central Committee Meeting decisions are subject to veto power from the General Membership by a simple-majority vote.

VII. CHAPTERS

When deemed necessary or desirable, PACA can launch, charter, or empower local Chapters.

1. Locals

Chapters are organized by geographic region, which can be a state, metropolitan area, county, city, or community.

PACA Chapters have autonomy but are members of PACA and, therefore, have a shared obligation to pursue political unity with the national.

Local chapters are required to maintain at least semi-annual contact with the national, including updates on membership, meetings, and campaigns.

Local Chapters are recognized after:

- a) petitioning to become a Chapter;
- b) registering ten (10) members with first month's dues paid in advance;
- c) completing the Chapter Orientation process; and
- d) establishing a Chapter Charter.

2. Chapter Charters

Each Chapter must adopt the same constitution. Instead of going simply by "PACA," Chapters may use a more-specific name that includes "PACA" but that also describes their geographic area. For example, a Washington, DC, metropolitan area chapter can be named "PACA-DMV," and a Miami-area chapter can be named "PACA-Miami." Chapter charters can also include a section for any rules particular to the chapter.

3. Non-Contradiction Clause

See Section III.3.

VII. DISSOLUTION

1. Process

The organization may be dissolved if two thirds of active Members present during a binding Special Membership Meeting (as described in Section VII.2) or special organization-wide meeting vote in favor of dissolution.

2. Distribution of Assets

As part of dissolution, the organization will pay off its debts and donate any remaining resources to another poor people's movement, led by African people, that aligns with the majority of our principles, anywhere in the world, as chosen by popular vote at the meeting.

As part of chapter dissolution, chapters will give assets to the national organization. Chapters reserve the right to make recommendations to the national to dispense assets to another organization—local or otherwise—and the national is required to consider the recommendation.