



ST. CHRISTOPHER AND NEVIS

CHAPTER 18.14

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT and Subsidiary Legislation

Revised Edition

showing the law as at 31 December 2002

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FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT

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CHAPTER 18.14
FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT

AN ACT TO MAKE PROVISION RELATING TO THE REGISTRATION OF FRIENDLY SOCIETIES FORMED FOR FRIENDLY PURPOSES; AND TO PROVIDE FOR RELATED OR INCIDENTAL MATTERS.

PART I
PRELIMINARY

Short title.

1. This Act may be cited as the Friendly Societies Act.

Interpretation.

2. In this Act—

“amendment of rule” includes a new rule, and a resolution rescinding a rule;

“branch” means any number of the members of a society, under the control of a central body, having a separate fund, administered by themselves or by a committee or officers appointed by themselves, and bound to contribute to a fund under the control of a central body;

“committee” means the committee of management or other directing body of a society or branch;

“land” includes any interest in land;

“meeting” includes (where the rules of a society or branch so allow) a meeting of delegates appointed by members;

“Minister” means the Minister responsible for Social Affairs;
(Inserted by Act 7 of 1976)

“officer” includes any trustee, treasurer, secretary, or member of the committee of management of a society or branch, or person appointed by the society or branch to sue and be sued on its behalf;

“persons claiming through a member” includes the nominees of the member where nomination is allowed;

“property” includes all property whether real or personal (including books and papers);

“Registrar” means the Registrar of the High Court;

“savings bank” means—

Barclays Bank. (PLC), Savings Department.

Royal Bank of Canada, Savings Department.

Savings Bank established under the Savings Bank Act, Cap. 21.14.

“signed,” in relation to a body corporate, means sealed;

“society” means a society registered under this Act, and includes societies subsisting at the commencement of this Act, to which the provisions of this Act apply.

PART II

REGISTRATION OF SOCIETIES

*Registrar***The Registrar.**

3. The Registrar of the High Court shall be the Registrar of Friendly Societies.
(Amended by Act 7 of 1976)

Annual return by Registrar.

4. The Registrar shall in every year make a return to the Minister containing, in respect of every society, the following particulars—
- (a) the date of registration and the objects of the society;
 - (b) the number of members on the roll of the society and the amount of money invested on real security or deposited in a savings bank or in the treasurer's hands on the preceding thirty-first day of December;
 - (c) a statement as to whether or not the society is in receipt of assistance from the Government;
 - (d) such other matters as may be prescribed.

Societies to which this Act applies.

5. The following societies shall be societies to which this Act applies—
- (a) societies (in this Act called friendly societies) for the purpose of providing by voluntary subscriptions of the members thereof, with or without the aid of donations, for—
 - (i) the relief or maintenance of the members, their husbands, wives, children, fathers, mothers, brothers or sisters, nephews or nieces, or wards being orphans, during sickness or other infirmity, whether bodily or mental, in old age (which shall mean any age after fifty) or in widowhood, or for the relief or maintenance of the orphan children of members during minority;
 - (ii) insuring money to be paid on the birth of a member's child, or on the death of a member, or for the funeral expenses of the husband, wife, or child of a member, or of the widow or widower of a deceased member;
 - (iii) the relief or maintenance of the members when on travel in search of employment, or when in distressed circumstances, or in case of shipwreck, or loss or damage of or to boats or nets;
 - (iv) the endowment of members or nominees of members at any age; or
 - (v) the insurance against fire, to any amount not exceeding seventy-two dollars, of the tools or implements of the trade or calling of the members:

Provided that this Act shall not apply to a friendly society which contracts with any person for the assurance of an annuity exceeding two hundred and forty dollars per annum, or of a gross sum exceeding nine hundred and sixty dollars;

- (b) societies (in this Act called cattle insurance societies) for the purpose of insurance to any amount against loss of neat cattle, sheep, lambs, swine, horses, and other animals by death from disease or otherwise;
- (c) societies (in this Act called benevolent societies) for any benevolent or charitable purpose;
- (d) societies (in this Act called working-men's clubs) for purposes of social intercourse, mutual helpfulness, mental and moral improvement, and rational recreation;
- (e) societies (in this Act called specially authorised societies) for any purpose which the Minister may authorise as a purpose to which the provisions of this Act, or such of them as are specified in the authority, ought to be extended : Provided that where any provisions of this Act are so specified those provisions only shall be so extended.

Societies to be registered.

6. (1) Every society to which this Act applies shall be registered under this Act:

Provided that it shall be deemed to be a sufficient compliance with the provisions of this section if, before any subscriptions or fees are collected from any member, the Registrar, by writing under his or her hand, permits any person named therein to take the necessary steps for the formation of a society and if such society is in fact registered within six months of such permission being given as aforesaid.

(2) In the event of any contravention of the provisions of this section, every secretary, trustee, member of the committee, or other officer of an unregistered society shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding twenty-five dollars for every day during which such society remains unregistered.

(Amended by Acts 7 of 1976 and 9 of 1986)

Conditions of registration.

7. (1) A society shall not be registered under this Act unless it consists of seven persons at least.

(2) For the purpose of registration, there shall be sent to the Registrar an application to register the society, signed by seven members and the secretary, and copies of the rules, together with a list of the names of the secretary, of every member of the committee, and of every trustee or other officer intended to be authorised to sue and be sued on behalf of the society.

(3) The rules of the society so sent shall, according to the class in which the society is to be registered, contain provisions in respect of the several matters mentioned in the First Schedule.

Name of society.

8. A society shall not be registered under a name identical with that under which any other existing society is registered, or so nearly resembling that name as to be likely, or in any name likely, in the opinion of the Registrar, to deceive the members or the public as to its nature or its identity.

Acknowledgment of registration.

9. The Registrar, on being satisfied that a society has complied with the provisions of this Act as to registration, shall issue to that society an acknowledgment

of registration specifying the designation of the society according to the classification set forth in this Act, and this acknowledgment shall be conclusive evidence that the society therein mentioned is duly registered, unless it is proved that the registration of the society has been suspended or cancelled.

Appeals from refusal to register.

10. (1) From a refusal to register a society, an appeal shall lie by the society to a Judge of the High Court.

(2) If the refusal to register is overruled on appeal, the Registrar shall give an acknowledgment of registration to the society.

Registration of amendments of rules.

11. (1) An amendment of a rule made by a society shall not be valid until the amendment has been registered under this Act, for which purpose copies of the amendment, signed by three members and the secretary, shall be sent to the Registrar.

(2) The Registrar shall, on being satisfied that any amendment of a rule is not contrary to the provisions of this Act, issue to the society an acknowledgment of registration of the amendment, and that acknowledgment shall be conclusive evidence that the amendment is duly registered.

(3) The provisions of this Act as to appeals from a refusal to register a society shall apply to a refusal to register an amendment of a rule.

Registration of dividing societies.

12. A society (other than a benevolent society or working-men's club) shall not be disentitled to register by reason of any rule for or practice of dividing any part of the funds thereof if the rules of the society contain distinct provision for meeting all claims upon the society existing at the time of division before any such division takes place.

Registration of societies assuring annuities.

13. A society assuring a certain annuity shall not be entitled to registration, unless the tables of contributions for the assurance, certified by the Director of Audit or some other person approved by the Minister, are sent to the Registrar with the application for registration.

(Amended by Act 7 of 1976)

Societies with Branches

Registration of societies with branches.

14. (1) Where a society has branches, the application for registration shall be accompanied with—

- (a) a list of all the branches, and notice of the place where the registered office of each branch is situate;
- (b) if any branch is to have trustees or officers authorised to sue and be sued on its behalf, other than the trustees or officers authorised to sue and be sued on behalf of the society, a list of the names of all such

trustees or officers, distinguishing the branches for which they are authorised to sue and be sued;

- (c) if the rules of all the branches (in this Act called branch rules) are or are intended to be identical, a statement to that effect, and copies of those rules; and
- (d) if the branch rules are not or are not intended to be identical, a statement to that effect, and copies of all branch rules.

(2) A society having a fund under the control of a central body to which every branch is bound to contribute may be registered as a single society.

Establishment of new branches.

15. There shall be sent under the hand of the secretary of a society to the Registrar—

- (a) notice of the establishment of every new branch of the society;
- (b) notice of the place where the registered office of the branch is situate;
- (c) if the branch is to have trustees or officers authorised to sue and be sued on its behalf, other than the trustees or officers authorised to sue and be sued on behalf of the society, a list of the names of such trustees or officers; and
- (d) a statement whether or not the rules of the branch are identical with those of the other branches of the society, and, if not so, a copy of the rules of the branch.

Application of previous provisions to branches.

16. The provisions of this Act as to—

- (a) the acknowledgment of registration of societies and amendments of rules;
- (b) appeals from refusals to register societies and amendments of rules and the result thereof;
- (c) the registration of the amendments of rules; and
- (d) evidence of registration and of the appointment of trustees and officers,

shall apply to branches and amendments of branch rules.

Requisites for registration of branches as societies.

17. (1) A body which has been registered as a branch of a society shall not be registered as a society except on production to the Registrar of a certificate, under the hand of the chief secretary or other principal officer of the society of which it was a branch, that the body has wholly seceded or has been expelled from the society.

(2) An appeal shall lie from the refusal of the chief secretary or other principal officer of the society, or his or her omission, after three months from the receipt of a request in writing made on behalf of the body to grant a certificate, to a Judge of the High Court.

Name of seceding or expelled branch.

18. A body which, having been a branch of a society, has wholly seceded or been expelled from that society shall not thereafter use the name of that society or any name implying that it is a branch thereof, or the number by which it was designated as such branch.

Contributions from one society to another.

19. A society or branch may contribute to the funds, and take part by delegates or otherwise in the government of any other society or branch of a society, as provided in the rules of that first-named society or branch, without becoming a branch under this Act of that other society or branch.

*Consequences of Registration***Subscriptions not recoverable at law.**

20. Save as provided by section 31 the subscription of a person being or having been a member of a society or branch shall not be recoverable at law.

Registered office.

21. (1) Every registered society and branch shall have a registered office to which all communications and notices may be addressed, and shall send to the Registrar notice of the situation of that office, and of every change of that office.

(2) In the case of a branch, the notice shall be sent to the Registrar through an officer appointed in that behalf by the society of which the branch forms part.

Appointment of trustees.

22. (1) Every registered society and branch shall have one or more trustees.

(2) The trustees shall be appointed at a meeting of the society or branch, and by a resolution of a majority of the members present and entitled to vote at that meeting.

(3) The society or branch shall send to the Registrar a copy of every resolution appointing a trustee, signed by the trustee so appointed, and by the secretary of the society or branch.

(4) The same person shall not be secretary or treasurer of a registered society or branch and a trustee of that society or branch.

(5) In the case of a branch, the copy of the resolution shall be sent to the Registrar through an officer appointed in that behalf by the society of which the branch forms part.

Change in list of officers of society.

23. Any change in the names shown on the list mentioned in subsection (2) of section 7 shall be forthwith communicated in writing to the Registrar by the secretary of a society, and any secretary failing to make such communication commits an offence under this Act.

Distribution of contribution cards.

24. Every society and branch shall cause contribution cards in the prescribed form to be issued to members for the purpose of being filled in, returned, and dealt with in the prescribed manner.

Manner of keeping accounts.

25. Every society and branch shall—

- (a) cause its accounts to be regularly entered in the prescribed books, separate accounts being kept of all moneys received or paid on account of every particular fund or benefit assured by the society or branch for which a separate table of contributions payable is adopted, distinct from all moneys received and paid on account of any other benefit or fund; and
- (b) keep a separate account of the expenses of management of the society and of all contributions on account thereof.

Return of members and investments.

26. Once in every year, not later than the thirty-first day of January, every society and branch shall send to the Registrar a return showing the number of members on its roll, the amount of money deposited in savings banks, the amount of money invested in real security, and the amount of money in the treasurer's hands on the preceding thirty-first day of December.

Audit.

27. (1) Every society and branch shall, once at least in every year, submit its accounts for audit to the prescribed person or persons at the prescribed time and shall pay the prescribed fees to such persons.

(2) The prescribed persons shall have access to all the books and accounts of the society or branch, and shall examine the annual return mentioned in this Act, and verify the annual return with the accounts, contribution cards, and vouchers relating thereto, and shall either sign the annual return as found by them to be correct, duly vouched, and in accordance with law, or specially report to the society or branch in what respects they find it incorrect, unvouched, or not in accordance with law.

Annual returns.

28. (1) Every society and branch shall, once in every year, not later than the thirty-first day of March, send to the Registrar a return (in this Act called the annual return) of the receipts and expenditure, funds, and effects of the society or branch as audited.

(2) The annual return shall—

- (a) show separately the expenditure in respect of the several objects of the society or branch; and
- (b) be made out to the preceding thirty-first day of December inclusively.

(3) The society or branch shall, together with the annual return, send a copy of any special report to the prescribed persons.

(4) In the case of a branch, the annual return shall be sent to the Registrar through an officer appointed in that behalf by the society of which the branch forms part.

Quinquennial valuation.

29. (1) Every society and branch shall, except as in this section provided, once at least in every five years either—

- (a) cause its assets and liabilities to be valued by a valuer to be appointed by the society or branch and approved by the Registrar, and send to the Registrar a report on the condition of the society or branch; or
- (b) send to the Registrar a return of the benefits assured and contributions receivable from all the members of the society or branch, and of all its funds and effects, debts and credits, accompanied by such evidence in support thereof as the Registrar prescribes.

(2) If the society or branch sends to the Registrar such report as aforesaid, the report shall—

- (a) be signed by the valuer;
- (b) state the address and calling or profession of the valuer; and
- (c) contain an abstract to be made by the valuer of the results of his or her valuation, together with a statement containing such information with respect to the benefits assured and the contributions receivable by the society or branch and of its funds and effects, debts and credits, as the Registrar may require.

(3) If the society or branch sends to the Registrar such return as aforesaid, he or she shall cause the assets and liabilities of the society or branch to be valued and reported on by some qualified person, and shall send to the society or branch a copy of the report and an abstract of the results of the valuation.

(4) This section shall not apply to—

- (a) a benevolent society, working-men's club, cattle insurance society or branch thereof; or
- (b) a specially authorised society or branch unless it is so directed in the authority for registering that society or branch.

(5) The Registrar may, with the approval of the Minister, dispense with the provisions of this section in respect of societies or branches to whose purposes or to the nature of whose operations he or she may deem those provisions inapplicable.

Copy of last balance sheet.

30. Every society and branch shall keep a copy of the last annual balance sheet, and of the last quinquennial valuation, together with any special report of the auditors, always hung up in a conspicuous place at the registered office of the society or branch.

Cattle insurance and other societies.

31. (1) The rules of a cattle insurance society or branch, and of such specially authorised societies or branches thereof as the Minister may allow to take the benefit of this section, shall bind the society or branch and the members thereof, and all persons claiming through them respectively to the same extent as if each member had subscribed his or her name thereto, and there were in the rules contained a covenant on the part of himself or herself, his or her heirs, executors, and administrators to conform to the rules subject to the provisions of this Act.

(2) All sums of money payable by a member to such society or branch as aforesaid shall be deemed to be a debt due from the member to the society or branch, and shall be recoverable as such before a Magistrate in accordance with the provisions of the Magistrate's Code of Procedure Act, Cap. 3.17.

PART III

PRIVILEGES OF REGISTERED SOCIETIES

Exemptions from stamp duty.

32. Stamp duty shall not be chargeable upon any of the following documents—

- (a) draft or order or receipt given by or to a registered society or branch in respect of money payable by virtue of its rules or of this Act;
- (b) letter or power of attorney granted by any person as trustee for the transfer of any money of a registered society or branch invested in his or her name in the public funds;
- (c) bond given to or on account of a registered society or branch or by the treasurer or other officer thereof;
- (d) policy of insurance, or appointment or revocation of appointment of agent, or other document required or authorised by this Act or by the rules of a registered society or branch.

Priority on death, bankruptcy, etc., of officer.

33. (1) In the following cases, namely—

- (a) upon the death or bankruptcy of any officer of a society or branch having in his or her possession by virtue of his or her office any money or property belonging to the society or branch; or
- (b) if any execution, attachment, or other process is issued against any such officer or against his or her property,

his or her executors or administrators, or trustee in bankruptcy, or the person executing the process, respectively, shall, upon demand in writing of the trustees of the society or branch, or of any two of them, or of any person authorised by the society or branch, or by the committee thereof, to make the demand, pay the money and deliver over the property to the trustees of the society or branch in preference to any other debt or claim against the estate of the officer.

(2) In this section, "bankruptcy" includes liquidation of a debtor's affairs by arrangement.

Membership of minors.

34. (1) The rules of a registered society or branch may provide for the admission of a person under eighteen years as a member.

(2) The member referred to in subsection (1) may, if he or she is over sixteen years by himself or herself, and if he or she is under that age by his or her parent or guardian, execute all instruments and give all acquaintances necessary to be executed or given under the rules, but shall not be a member of the committee, or a trustee, manager, or treasurer of the society or branch.

Subscriptions to hospitals.

35. A society or branch may subscribe out of its funds to any hospital, infirmary, charitable or provident institution, any annual or other sum which may be necessary to secure to members of the society or branch and their families the benefits of the hospital, infirmary, or other institution, according to its rules.

*Rights of Members***Right to supply of copies of the rules.**

36. Every society and branch shall deliver to every person on demand, on payment of a sum not exceeding twenty-four cents, a copy of the rules of the society or branch.

Right to supply of copies of annual return.

37. Every society and branch shall supply gratuitously to every member or person interested in its funds, on his or her application, either—

- (a) a copy of the last annual return of the society or branch; or
- (b) a balance sheet or other document duly audited containing the same particulars as to the receipts and expenditure, funds, and effects, of the society or branch as are contained in the annual return.

Inspection of books by members.

38. A member or person having an interest in the funds of a registered society or branch may inspect the books at all reasonable hours at the registered office of the society or branch, or at any place where the books are kept, except that the member or person shall not, unless he or she is an officer of the society or branch, or is specially authorised by a resolution of the society or branch to do so, have the right to inspect the loan account of any other member without the written consent of that member.

Limitation of benefits.

39. (1) A member, or person claiming through a member, of a friendly society or branch shall not be entitled to receive more than nine hundred and sixty dollars by way of gross sum, together with any bonuses or additions declared upon assurances not exceeding that amount, or two hundred and forty dollars a year by way of annuity, from any one or more such societies or branches.

(2) The society or branch may require a member, or person claiming through a member, to make and sign a statutory declaration that the total amount to which that member or person is entitled from one or more such societies or branches does not exceed the sums aforesaid.

Accumulation of surplus of contributions.

40. The rules of a society or branch may provide for accumulating at interest, for the use of any member, any surplus of his or her contributions to the funds of the society or branch which may remain after providing for any assurance in respect of which they are paid and for the withdrawal of the accumulations.

Service in Defence Force.

41. (1) A person shall not, by reason of his or her enrolment or service in any Defence Force or Defence Reserve, lose or forfeit any interest in a friendly society or branch which he or she possesses at the time of his or her being so enrolled or serving, or be fined for absence from or non-attendance at any meeting of the society or branch, if his or her absence or non-attendance is occasioned by the discharge of his or her military duty as certified by his or her commanding officer, any rules of the society or branch to the contrary notwithstanding.

(2) A dispute between the society or branch and a person by reason of that enrolment or service shall be decided by a Magistrate.

PART IV

PROPERTY, FUNDS AND INVESTMENTS

Investment of funds.

42. (1) The trustees of a society or branch may, with the consent of the committee or of a majority of the members present and entitled to vote in general meeting, invest the funds of the society or branch, or any part thereof, to any amount in any of the following ways—

- (a) in a savings bank;
- (b) in the purchase of land, or in the erection or alteration of offices or other buildings thereon;
- (c) upon any other security expressly directed by the rules of the society or branch, not being personal security, except as in this Act authorised with respect to loans; or
- (d) in any investment in which trustees are for the time being by law authorised to invest trust funds.

(2) The rules of a society with branches and of any branch thereof may provide for the investment of funds of the society or of that branch by the trustees of any branch, or by the trustees of the society, and the consent required for the investment shall be the consent of the committee, or of such majority as aforesaid of the society or branch by whom the funds are invested.

Loans to assured members.

43. (1) A society and, subject to the rules of the society, a branch may advance to a member of at least one full year's standing any sum not exceeding one half of the amount of an assurance on his or her life, on the written security of himself or herself and two satisfactory sureties for repayment.

(2) The amount so advanced, with all interest thereon, may be deducted from the sum assured, without prejudice in the meantime to the operation of the security.

Loans out of separate loan fund.

44. A society may, out of any separate loan fund to be formed by contributions or deposits of its members, make loans to members on their personal security, with or

without sureties, as may be provided by the rules, subject to the following restrictions—

- (a) a loan shall not at any time be made out of money contributed for the other purposes of the society;
- (b) a member shall not be capable of holding any interest in the loan fund exceeding four hundred and eighty dollars;
- (c) a society shall not make any loan to a member on personal security beyond the amount fixed by the rules, or make any loan which, together with any money owing by a member to the society, exceeds one hundred and twenty dollars;
- (d) a society shall not hold at any one time on deposit from its members any money beyond the amount fixed by the rules, and the amount so fixed shall not exceed two-thirds of the total sums owing to the society by the members who have borrowed from the loan fund.

Holding of land.

45. (1) A society or branch may (if the rules thereof so provide) hold, purchase, or take on lease in the names of the trustees of the society or branch any land, and may sell, exchange, mortgage, lease, or build upon that land (with power to alter and pull down buildings and again rebuild), and a purchaser, assignee, mortgagee, or tenant shall not be bound to enquire as to the authority for any sale, exchange, mortgage, or lease by the trustees, and the receipt of the trustees shall be a discharge for all sums of money arising from or in connection with the sale, exchange, mortgage, or lease.

(2) A branch of a society need not for the purposes of this section be separately registered.

(3) Nothing in this section shall authorise a benevolent society to hold land exceeding one acre in extent.

Vesting of property.

46. (1) All property belonging to a society shall vest in the trustees for the time being of the society, for the use and benefit of the society and the members thereof, and of all persons claiming through the members according to the rules of the society.

(2) The property of a branch of a society shall vest wholly or partly in the trustees for the time being of that branch or of any other branch of which that branch forms part (or, if the rules of the society so provide, in the trustees for the time being of the society), for the use and benefit either of the members of any such branch and persons claiming through those members, or of the members of the society generally, and persons claiming through them, according to the rules of the society.

(3) The trustees shall not be liable to make good any deficiency in the funds of the society or branch, but shall be liable only for sums of money actually received by them respectively on account of the society or branch.

Devolution on death.

47. Upon the death, resignation, or removal of a trustee of a society or branch, the property vested in that trustee shall, without conveyance or assignment, and whether the property is real or personal, vest, as personal estate subject to the same trusts, in the succeeding trustees of that society or branch either solely or together with any surviving or continuing trustees, and, until the appointment of succeeding trustees,

shall so vest in the surviving or continuing trustees only, or in the executors or administrators of the last surviving or continuing trustee.

Description in legal proceedings.

48. In all legal proceedings concerning any property vested in the trustees of a society or branch, the property may be stated to be the property of the trustees in their proper names as trustees for the society or branch without further description.

Discharge of mortgages by receipt endorsed.

49. (1) A receipt under the hands of the trustees of a society or branch, countersigned by the secretary, for all sums of money secured to the society or branch by any mortgage or other assurance, being in the form contained in the Second Schedule, if endorsed upon or annexed to the mortgage or other assurance, shall vacate the mortgage or assurance and vest the property therein comprised in the person entitled to the equity of redemption of that property, without reconveyance or resurrender.

(2) If the mortgage or other assurance has been noted by the Registrar of Titles on the duplicate Certificate of Title, the Registrar shall, on production of the receipt verified by the oath of any person, cancel the noting of the mortgage or incumbrance, and he or she shall file the receipt in the manner provided by the Title by Registration Act, Cap. 10.19, as his or her warrant for making such cancellation.

(3) The Registrar of Titles shall be entitled, for making such a cancellation, to a fee of sixty cents to be applied in like manner as other fees taken by the Registrar of Titles in his or her office.

Officers in Receipt or Charge of Money

Security by officers.

50. Every officer of a society or branch having receipt or charge of money shall, before taking upon himself or herself the execution of his or her office, become bound with one sufficient surety at the least in a bond in the form contained in the Second Schedule, or give the security of a guarantee society, in such sum as the society or branch directs, conditioned for his or her rendering a just and true account of all sums of money received and paid by him or her on account of the society or branch at such times as its rules appoint, or as the society or branch or the trustees or committee thereof require him or her to do, and for the payment by him or her of all sums due from him or her to the society or branch.

Accounts of officers.

51. (1) Every officer of a society or branch having receipt or charge of money shall, at such times as by the rules of the society or branch he or she should render account, or upon demand made, or notice in writing given or left at his or her last or usual place of residence, give in his or her account as may be required by the society or branch, or by the trustees or committee thereof, to be examined and allowed or disallowed by them, and shall on the like demand or notice, pay over all sums of money and deliver all property in his or her hands, or custody to such person as the society or branch, or the committee or the trustees, appoint.

(2) In case of any neglect or refusal to deliver the account, or to pay over the sums of money or to deliver the property in manner aforesaid, the trustees or

authorised officers of the society or branch may sue upon the bond or security before mentioned, or may apply to a Magistrate, who may order the delivery of such account or property or the payment over of such sums of money with costs, and, in default of such delivery or payment, the person making such default may be sentenced to imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for any term not exceeding three months; and the order of such Magistrate shall be final and conclusive.

Payments on Death Generally

Member may dispose of sums payable on his or her death by nomination.

52. (1) A member of a society (other than a benevolent society or working-men's club) or branch thereof, not being under the age of sixteen years, may, by writing under his or her hand delivered at or sent to the registered office of the society or branch, or made in a book kept at that office, nominate a person to whom any sum of money payable by the society or branch on the death of that member, not exceeding two hundred and forty dollars shall be paid at his or her decease.

(2) The sum of money payable by the society or branch on the death of a member shall include sums of money contributed to or deposited in the separate loan account and the sums of money accumulated for the use of the member under the provisions of this Act with interest thereon.

(3) The person so nominated must not be an officer or servant of the society or branch, unless that officer or servant is the husband, wife, father, mother, child, brother, sister, nephew, or niece of the nominator.

(4) A nomination so made may be revoked and varied by any similar document under the hand of the nominator, delivered, sent, or made as aforesaid.

(5) The marriage of a member of a society or branch shall operate as a revocation of any nomination theretofore made by that member under this section:

Provided that this subsection shall not apply to a clinical marriage.

(6) A nomination or a variation or revocation of a nomination by writing under the hand of a member of a branch and delivered at or sent to the registered office of that branch, or made in a book kept at that office, shall be effectual notwithstanding that the money to which the nomination relates or some part thereof is not payable by that branch, but is payable by the society or some other branch.

Proceedings on death of a nominator.

53. (1) On receiving satisfactory proof of the death of a nominator, the society or branch shall pay to the nominee the amount due to the deceased member, not exceeding the said sum of two hundred and forty dollars.

(2) The receipt of a nominee over sixteen years of age for any amount so paid shall be valid.

Intestacy.

54. If any member of a society or branch entitled from the funds thereof to a sum not exceeding two hundred and forty dollars, dies intestate and without having made any nomination thereof then subsisting, the society or branch may, without letters of administration, distribute the sum among such persons as appear to a majority of the

trustees, upon such evidence as they may deem satisfactory, to be entitled by law to receive that sum.

(Amended by Act 19 of 1983)

Validity of payments.

55. (1) A payment made by a society or branch, under the foregoing provisions of this Act with respect to payments on death generally to the person who at the time appears to a majority of the trustees to be entitled thereunder, shall be valid and effectual against any demand made upon the trustees or the society or branch by any other person, but the next of kin or lawful representative of the deceased member shall have remedy for recovery of the money so paid as aforesaid, against the person who has received that money.

(2) Where the society or branch has paid money to a nominee in ignorance of a marriage subsequent to the nomination, the receipt of the nominee shall be a valid discharge to the society or branch.

Certificates of death.

56. (1) A society or branch shall not pay any sum of money upon the death of a member or other person whose death is or ought to be entered in any register of deaths, except upon the production of a certificate of that death under the hand of the registrar of deaths or other person having care of the register of deaths in which that death is or ought to be entered.

(2) This section shall not apply to deaths at sea, nor to any death certified by a coroner to be the subject of a pending inquest.

Payments on Death of Children

Limitation of amount payable.

57. A society or branch shall not insure or pay on the death of a child under five years of age any sum of money which, added to any amount payable on the death of that child by any other society or branch, exceeds nine dollars and sixty cents, or on the death of a child under ten years of age any sum of money which, added to any amount payable on the death of that child by any other society or branch, exceeds fourteen dollars and forty cents.

Person to whom payment may be made.

58. A society or branch shall not pay any sum on the death of a child under ten years of age except to the parent of the child, or to the personal representative of the parent, and upon the production by the parent or his or her personal representative of a certificate of death issued by the registrar of deaths, or other person having the care of the register of deaths, containing the particulars mentioned in this Act.

Particulars of certificates.

59. (1) Where application is made for a certificate of the death of a child for the purpose of obtaining a sum of money from a society or branch, the name of the society or branch, and the sum sought to be obtained therefrom, shall be stated to the registrar of deaths.

(2) The registrar of deaths shall write on or at the foot of the certificate the words “to be produced to the society or branch (naming the same) said to be liable for payment of the sum of \$ (stating the same).”

(3) All certificates of the same death shall be numbered in consecutive order.

(4) A fee not exceeding twenty-four cents shall be charged by the registrar of deaths for each such certificate.

Cases in which certificates may be given.

60. (1) A registrar of deaths shall not give any one or more certificates of death for the payment in the whole of any sum of money exceeding four dollars and eighty cents on the death of a child under five years, or for the payment in the whole of a sum exceeding nine dollars and sixty cents on the death of a child under ten years.

(2) A registrar of deaths shall not grant any such certificate unless the cause of death has been previously entered in the register of deaths on the certificate of a coroner or of a medical officer who attended the deceased child during its last illness, or except upon the production of a certificate of the probable cause of death under the hand of a medical officer, or of other satisfactory evidence thereof.

Enquiries by societies.

61. A society or branch to which is produced a certificate of the death of a child which does not purport to be the first shall, before paying any money thereon, enquire whether any and what sums of money have been paid on the same death by any other society or branch.

Saving as to insurable interest, etc.

62. Nothing in this Act respecting payments on the death of children shall apply to insurances on the lives of children of any age, where the person insuring has an insurable interest in the life of the person insured.

PART V

DISPUTES

Decision of disputes.

63. (1) Every dispute between—

- (a) a member or person claiming through a member or under the rules of a society or branch, and the society or branch or an officer thereof;
- (b) any person aggrieved who has ceased to be a member of a society or branch, or any person claiming through the aggrieved person, and the society or branch or an officer thereof;
- (c) any branch of any society or branch and the society or branch of which it is a branch;
- (d) an officer of any such branch and the society or branch of which that branch is a branch; or
- (e) any two or more branches of any society or branch, or any officers thereof, respectively,

shall, subject to the express provisions of this section, be decided in manner directed by the rules of the society or branch, and the decision so given shall be binding and conclusive on all parties without appeal, and shall not be removable into any court of law or restrainable by injunction; and application for the enforcement thereof may be made to any Magistrate.

(2) Any party to a dispute in a society or branch may apply to the Registrar to hear and determine the same, and the Registrar may, if he or she thinks fit, and after proper notice given to the other parties to such dispute, hear and determine such dispute, and shall have power to order the expenses of determining the dispute to be paid either out of the funds of the society or branch, or by such parties to the dispute as he or she may think fit, and his or her determination and order shall have the same effect and be enforceable in like manner as a decision made in the manner directed by the rules of the society or branch.

(3) For the purpose of hearing and determining any such dispute, the Registrar to whom a dispute is referred may administer oaths, and may require the attendance of all parties concerned, and of witnesses, and the production of all books and documents relating to the matter in question.

(4) Where the rules contain no direction as to disputes, or where no decision is made on a dispute within forty days after application to the society or branch for a reference under its rules, or where the Registrar refuses to hear and determine a dispute, the member or person aggrieved may apply to a Magistrate who may hear and determine the matter in dispute; but in the case of a society with branches the forty days shall not begin to run until application has been made in succession to all the bodies entitled to determine the dispute under the rules of the society or branch, so however that no rules shall require a greater delay than three months between each successive determination.

(5) Notwithstanding anything contained in the Arbitration Act, Cap. 3.01, or in any other enactment, the Magistrate and the Registrar or any arbitrator or umpire to whom a dispute is referred under the rules of a society or branch shall not be compelled to state a special case on any question of law arising in the case, but the Magistrate or Registrar may, at the request of either party, state a case for the opinion of the High Court, on any question of law, and may also grant to either party such discovery as to documents, and otherwise, or such inspection of documents, as might be granted by the High Court, and the discovery shall be made on behalf of the society or branch by such officer thereof as the court or Registrar may determine.

(6) In this section, the expression "dispute" includes any dispute arising on the question whether a member or person aggrieved is entitled to be or to continue to be a member or to be reinstated as a member, but, save as aforesaid, in the case of a person who has ceased to be a member, does not include any dispute other than a dispute on a question between him or her and the society or branch or an officer thereof which arose whilst he or she was a member, or arises out of his or her previous relation as a member to that society or branch.

PART VI

CHANGE OF NAME, AMALGAMATION AND CONVERSION OF SOCIETIES

Power to change name.

64. (1) A society may, by special resolution, with the approval in writing of the Registrar, change its name, and shall not change its name in any other manner.

(2) Any such change of name shall not affect any right or obligation of the society, or of any member thereof, and any pending legal proceedings may be continued by or against the trustees of the society, or any other officer who may sue or be sued on behalf of the society, notwithstanding its new name.

Amalgamation and transfer of engagements.

65. (1) Any two or more societies may, by special resolution of both or all such societies, become amalgamated together as one society, with or without any dissolution or division of the funds of those societies or either of them.

(2) A society may, by special resolution, transfer its engagements to any other society which may undertake to fulfil the engagements of that society.

(3) A special resolution by a friendly society for an amalgamation or transfer of engagements under this Act shall not be valid without—

- (a) the assent to the special resolution of five-sixths in value of the members, given either at the meetings at which the resolution is, according to the provisions of this Act, passed and confirmed, or at one of them, or, if the members were not present at the meeting, in writing; and
- (b) the written consent of every person receiving or entitled to any relief, annuity, or other benefit from the funds of the society, unless the claim of that person is first duly satisfied, or adequate provision is made for satisfying that claim.

(4) On application of the trustees or committee of a friendly society desiring to amalgamate or transfer its engagements, and upon notice of that application being published in the *Gazette*, the Registrar, after hearing the trustees or committee and any other persons whom he or she considers entitled to be heard upon the application, may, with the consent of a Judge, order that any of the assents, consents, and conditions required by this Act, or by any regulations made under this Act, be dispensed with, and may confirm the amalgamation or transfer.

(5) A society consisting wholly of members under eighteen years, and a society or branch or branches of a society having members above eighteen years, may, by resolutions registered in the manner required for the registration of an amendment of rules, become amalgamated together as one society or branch, or provide for distributing among several branches the members of a society consisting wholly of members under eighteen years, and the other provisions of this section shall not apply to that amalgamation.

(6) The value of members shall be ascertained by giving one vote to every member, and an additional vote for every five years that he or she has been a member, but to no one member more than five votes in the whole.

(7) If any member of a friendly society which has amalgamated or transferred its engagements, or if any person claiming any relief, annuity, or other benefit from the funds thereof, is dissatisfied with the provision made for satisfying his or her claim, that member or person may apply to the Magistrate of the district within which the chief or any other place of business of the society is situate for relief or other order, and such Magistrate shall have the same powers in the matter as in regard to the settlement of disputes under this Act.

Conversion of society into company.

66. (1) A registered society may, by special resolution, determine to convert itself into a company under the Companies Act, Cap. 21.03, or to amalgamate with or transfer its engagements to any such company.

(2) If a special resolution for converting a society into a company contains the particulars required by the Companies Act, Cap. 21.03 to be contained in the memorandum of association of a company, and a copy thereof has been registered with the Registrar, a copy of that resolution under the hand of the Registrar shall have the same effect as a memorandum of association duly signed and attested under the said Act.

(3) If a society is registered as, or amalgamates with, or transfers all its engagements to, a company, the registry of the society under this Act shall thereupon become void, and shall be cancelled by the Registrar; but the registration of a society as a company shall not affect any right or claim subsisting against that society, or any penalty incurred by that society; and for the purpose of enforcing any such right, claim, or penalty, the society may be sued and proceeded against in the same manner as if it had not become registered as a company; and every such right or claim, or the liability to any such penalty, shall have priority, as against the property of the company, over all other rights or claims against or liabilities of the company.

Saving for right of creditors.

67. An amalgamation or transfer of engagements in pursuance of this Act shall not prejudice any right of a creditor of either or any society party thereto.

Meaning of special resolution.

68. (1) For the purposes of this Act, a special resolution shall mean a resolution which is—

- (a) passed by a majority of not less than three-fourths of such members of a society, entitled under the rules to vote, as may be present in person or by proxy (where the rules allow proxies) at any general meeting of which notice specifying the intention to propose that resolution has been duly given according to the rules; and
- (b) confirmed by a majority of such members, entitled under the rules to vote, as may be present in person or by proxy (where the rules allow proxies) at a subsequent general meeting of which notice has been duly given, held not less than fourteen days nor more than one month from the day of the meeting at which such resolution was first passed.

(2) At any meeting mentioned in this section a declaration by the chairperson that the resolution has been carried shall be conclusive evidence of the fact.

Registration of special resolutions.

69. A copy of every special resolution for any of the purposes mentioned in this Act, signed by the chairperson of the meeting and countersigned by the secretary, shall be sent to the Registrar's office and registered by him or her, and until that copy is so registered the special resolution shall not take effect.

PART VII

INSPECTION: CANCELLING AND SUSPENSION OF
REGISTRATION: DISSOLUTION**Inspection of books.**

70. (1) The Registrar may, if he or she thinks fit, appoint a qualified person to inspect the books of a society and to report on the books at the costs and charges of the society.

(2) In case any member of a society applies to the Registrar to direct an inspection of the books of such society, the Registrar may, in his or her absolute discretion, make it a condition of granting the application that such member deposit such sum as will be, in the opinion of the Registrar, sufficient to cover the costs and charges of such inspection.

(3) The Registrar may, after the inspection is over and in his or her absolute discretion, either return such sum to the member or cause to be repaid to the society the costs to which it has been put in and over such inspection out of such sum, the balance, if any, being returned to the member so depositing as aforesaid.

(4) A person appointed under this section shall have power to make copies of any book of the society, and to take extracts therefrom, at all reasonable hours, at the registered office of the society or at any place where the books are kept.

(5) Any person, whether connected with the society or not, who hinders, obstructs, or molests any person appointed by the Registrar to inspect the books of such society shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding three hundred dollars, or to imprisonment with or without hard labour, for any term not exceeding one month, or to both.

(Amended by Acts 7 of 1976 and 9 of 1986)

Cancelling and suspension of registration.

71. (1) The Registrar may—

- (a) if he or she thinks fit, at the request of a society, to be evidenced in such manner as he or she may direct; or
- (b) with the approval of a Judge of the High Court, on proof to his or her satisfaction that an acknowledgment of registration has been obtained by fraud or mistake, or that a society exists for an illegal purpose, or has wilfully and after notice from the Registrar violated any of the provisions of this Act, or has ceased to exist,

by writing under his or her hand, cancel the registration of a society.

(2) The Registrar, in any case in which he or she might, with the approval of a Judge, cancel the registration of a society, may, by writing under his or her hand, suspend the registration for any term not exceeding three months, and may, with the approval of a Judge, renew the suspension for the like period.

(3) Unless the Registrar has given to a society not less than two months' previous notice in writing, specifying briefly the ground of any proposed cancelling or suspension, the registration of the society shall not be cancelled (except at its request) or suspended.

(4) Where the registration of a society has been cancelled or suspended, notice thereof shall forthwith be published in the *Gazette*.

(5) Where the registration of a society has been suspended or cancelled, the society shall, from the time of the suspension or cancellation (but if suspended, only while the suspension lasts, and subject also to the right of appeal given by this section), absolutely cease to enjoy as such the privileges of a society, but without prejudice to any liability actually incurred by the society, and any such liability may be enforced against the society as if the suspension or cancellation had not taken place.

(6) A society may appeal from the cancellation of its registration, or from any suspension thereof which is renewed after six months, to a Judge of the High Court.

Dissolution of societies.

72. (1) Subject to the provision of this Act as to the dissolution of societies with branches, a society or branch may terminate or be dissolved in any the following ways—

- (a) upon the happening of any event declared by the rules to be the termination of the society or branch;
- (b) as respect societies or branches other than friendly societies or branches, by the consent of three-fourths of the members, testified by their signatures to the instrument of dissolution;
- (c) as respects friendly societies or branches, by the consent of five-sixths in value of the members (including honorary members, if any), testified by their signatures to the instrument of dissolution, and also by the written consent of every person receiving or entitled to receive any relief, annuity, or other benefit from the funds of the society or branch, unless the claim of that person is first duly satisfied, or adequate provision made for satisfying that claim, and, in the case of a branch, with the consent of the central body of the society, or in accordance with the general rules of the society; or
- (d) by the award of the Registrar in the cases specified in this Act.

(2) The provisions of this Act as to the method of calculating the value of members and the remedy of members and persons dissatisfied with the provisions made for satisfying their claims in the case of the amalgamation or transfer of engagements of a friendly society shall apply to the dissolution of a friendly society or branch.

Instrument of dissolution.

73. (1) When a society or branch is terminated by an instrument of dissolution the instrument shall set forth—

- (a) the liabilities and assets of the society or branch in detail;
- (b) the number of members and the nature of their interests in the society or branch;
- (c) the claims of creditors (if any) and the provision to be made for their payment; and
- (d) the intended appropriation or division of the funds and property of the society or branch, unless the appropriation or division is stated in the instrument of dissolution to be left to the award of the Registrar.

(2) Alterations in the instrument of dissolution may be made with the like consents as are in this Act required for the dissolution of a society or branch, testified in the same manner.

(3) A statutory declaration shall be made by one of the trustees, or by three members and the secretary of the society or branch, that the provisions of this Act have been complied with, and shall be sent to the Registrar with the instrument of dissolution.

(4) The instrument shall not, in the case of a friendly society or branch, direct or contain any provision for a division or appropriation of the funds of the society or branch, or any part thereof, otherwise than for the purpose of carrying into effect the objects of the society or branch as declared in the rules thereof, unless the claim of every member or person claiming any relief, annuity, or other benefit from the funds thereof is first duly satisfied, or adequate provisions are made for satisfying those claims.

(5) The instrument of dissolution and all alterations therein shall be registered in the manner in this Act provided for the registry of amendments of rules, and shall be binding upon all the members of the society or branch.

(6) The Registrar shall cause a notice of the dissolution to be published in the *Gazette* at the expense of the society or branch, and, unless, within three months from the date of the *Gazette* in which the advertisement appears, a member or other person interested in or having any claim on the funds of the society or branch commences proceedings to set aside the dissolution of the society or branch, and the dissolution is set aside accordingly the society or branch shall be legally dissolved from the date of that advertisement, and the requisite consents to the instrument of dissolution shall be considered to have been duly obtained without proof of the signatures thereto.

Dissolution by award.

74. (1) Upon the application made in writing under their hands—

- (a) of one-fifth of the whole number of members of a society or branch; or
- (b) in the case of a society or branch of one thousand members and not exceeding ten thousand, of one hundred members,

the Registrar may by himself or herself, or by any actuary or other person whom the Registrar may appoint in writing under his or her hand, investigate the affairs of the society or branch, but shall give not less than one month's previous notice in writing to the society or branch whose affairs are to be investigated.

(2) The application shall—

- (a) state that the funds of the society or branch are insufficient to meet the existing claims thereon, or that the rates of contribution fixed in the rules of the society or branch are insufficient to cover the benefits assured;
- (b) set forth the grounds on which the insufficiency is alleged; and
- (c) request an investigation into the affairs of the society or branch with a view to the dissolution thereof.

(3) If upon the investigation it appears that the funds of the society or branch are insufficient to meet the existing claims thereon, or that the rates of contribution fixed in the rules of the society or branch are insufficient to cover the benefits assured to be given by the society or branch, the Registrar may, if he or she considers it expedient so to do, award that the society or branch be dissolved, and its affairs

wound up, and shall direct in what manner the assets of the society or branch shall be divided or appropriated:

Provided that the Registrar may suspend his or her award for such period as he or she may deem necessary to enable the society or branch to make such alterations and adjustment of contributions and benefits as will in his or her judgment prevent the necessity of the award of dissolution being made.

(4) The Registrar proceeding under this section shall have all the same powers and authorities enforceable by the same penalties, as in the case of a dispute referred to him or her under this Act.

(5) Every award made under this section, whether for dissolution or distribution of funds, shall be final and conclusive on the society or branch in respect of which the award is made, and on all members of the society or branch, and on all other persons having any claim on the funds of the society or branch, without appeal, and shall be enforced in the same manner as a decision on a dispute under this Act.

(6) The expenses of every investigation and award, and of publishing every notice of dissolution, shall be paid out of the funds of the society or branch before any other appropriation thereof is made.

(7) Notice of every award for dissolution shall, within twenty-one days after the award has been made, be published by the Registrar in the *Gazette*, and unless, within three months from the date on which that advertisement appears, a member or person interested in or having any claim on the funds of the society or branch commences proceedings to set aside the dissolution of the society or branch consequent upon such award, and the dissolution is set aside accordingly, the society or branch shall be legally dissolved from the date of the advertisement, and the requisite consents to the application to the Registrar shall be considered to have been duly obtained without proof of the signatures thereto.

Dissolution of societies having branches.

75. The provisions of this Act respecting the dissolution of societies shall not apply to any society having branches except with the consent of the central body of the society.

Notice of proceedings or order to set aside dissolution.

76. (1) Where a person takes any proceeding to set aside the dissolution of a society or branch, he or she shall give notice of the proceeding to the Registrar not less than seven days before the proceeding is commenced.

(2) Where an order is made setting aside the dissolution of a society or branch, the society or branch shall give notice of the order to the Registrar within seven days after the order has been made.

PART VIII

OFFENCES, PENALTIES AND LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

Offences.

77. It shall be an offence under this Act if—

- (a) a society or branch or an officer or member thereof fails to give any notice, send any return or document, do or allow to be done any thing, which the society, branch, officer, or person is by this Act required to give, send, do, or allow to be done;
- (b) a society or branch or an officer or member thereof wilfully neglects or refuses to do any act or to furnish any information required for the purposes of this Act by the Registrar or by any other person authorised under this Act, or does anything forbidden by this Act;
- (c) a society or branch or an officer or member thereof makes a return or wilfully furnishes information in any respect false or insufficient;
- (d) an officer or member of a body which, having been a branch of a society, has wholly seceded or been expelled from that society, thereafter uses the name of that society or any name implying that the body is a branch of that society, or the number by which that body was designated as such branch;
- (e) where a dispute is referred under this Act to the Registrar, a person refuses to attend or to produce any documents, or to give evidence before the Registrar;
- (f) a society or branch, whether registered or unregistered, pays money on the death of a child under ten years otherwise than is provided by this Act; or
- (g) a parent or personal representative of a parent claiming money on the death of a child produces a certificate of the death other than is in this Act provided to the society or branch from which the money is claimed, or produces a false certificate, or one fraudulently obtained, or in any way attempts to defeat the provisions of this Act with respect to payments upon the death of children.

Bankrupt, etc., not to be officer of a society.

78. (1) No person who is an undischarged bankrupt or has compounded with his or her creditors or has made an arrangement or composition with his or her creditors under the Bankruptcy Act, Cap. 5.04 shall be appointed, or if appointed, shall act as the president, secretary, treasurer, or trustee of a registered society.

(2) Any person acting in contravention of the provisions of this section shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding five hundred dollars.

(Amended by Acts 7 of 1976 and 9 of 1986)

Medical officer or druggist not to hold other office.

79. No person holding any other office therein shall be, or act as, the medical officer or druggist of any society, and any person contravening the provisions of this section shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding five hundred dollars.

(Amended by Acts 7 of 1976 and 9 of 1986)

Offences by societies to be also offences by officers, etc.

80. Where a society or branch commits an offence under this Act, every member of the committee, unless that member is proved to have been ignorant of or to have attempted to prevent the commission of the offence, shall be liable to the same penalty as if he or she had committed the offence.

Continuing offences.

81. Every default under this Act constituting an offence, if continued, shall constitute a new offence in every week during which the default continues.

Punishment of fraud, false declarations and misappropriations.

82. (1) If any person, with intent to mislead or defraud, gives to any other person a copy of any rules, laws, regulations, or other documents, other than the rules of a society or branch, on the pretence that they are the existing rules of that society or branch, or that there are no other rules of the society or branch, or gives to any person a copy of any rules on the pretence that those rules are the rules of a registered society or branch when the society or branch is not registered, that person commits an offence under this Act.

(2) If any person obtains possession by false representation or imposition of any property of a society or branch, or withholds or misapplies any such property in his or her possession, or wilfully applies any part thereof to purposes other than those expressed or directed in the rules of the society or branch and authorised by this Act, he or she shall, on such complaint as is in this section mentioned, be liable to a penalty not exceeding five hundred dollars, and costs, and to be ordered to deliver up all such property, or to repay all sums of money applied improperly, and in default of such delivery or repayment, or of the payment of such penalty and costs as aforesaid, to be imprisoned, with or without hard labour, for any term not exceeding three months:

Provided that where on such a complaint against a person for withholding or misapplying property, or applying it for unauthorised purposes, it is not proved that that person acted with any fraudulent intent, he or she shall not be liable to conviction but may be ordered to deliver up all such property, or may be ordered to repay any sum of money applied improperly, with costs, and in default of such delivery or repayment or of the payment of such costs as aforesaid to be imprisoned, with or without hard labour for any term not exceeding three months.

(Amended by Acts 7 of 1976 and 9 of 1986)

(3) Complaint under this section may be made—

- (a) in the case of a society, by the society or any member authorised by the society, or the trustees or committee of the society;
- (b) in the case of a branch, by—
 - (i) the branch or any member authorised by the branch or the trustees or committee thereof;
 - (ii) the central body of the society of which the branch forms part; or
 - (iii) any member of the society or branch authorised by the central body; or
- (c) in any case, by the Registrar or by any person authorised in writing by the Registrar.

(4) Nothing in this Act shall prevent any such person from being proceeded against by way of indictment, if not previously convicted of the same offence under the provisions of this Act.

Penalty for falsification.

83. If any person wilfully makes, orders, or allows to be made, any entry, erasure in, or omission from a balance sheet of a society or branch, or a return or document required to be sent, produced, or delivered, for the purposes of this Act, with intent to falsify the same, or to evade any of the provisions of this Act, he or she shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding one thousand five hundred dollars.

(Amended by Acts 7 of 1976 and 9 of 1986)

Penalty for ordinary offences.

84. A society or branch, and an officer or member of a society or branch, or other person found guilty of an offence under this Act for which a penalty is not expressly provided shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding five hundred dollars.

(Amended by Acts 7 of 1976 and 9 of 1986)

Special offences in the case of friendly societies.

85. If an officer or person aids or abets in the amalgamation or transfer of engagements or in the dissolution of a friendly society otherwise than as in this Act provided, he or she shall be liable to the penalty imposed by this Act for offences thereunder, or to be imprisoned with hard labour for a term not exceeding three months.

Recovery of penalties.

86. (1) All penalties imposed by this Act or by any Regulations made under the Act, or by the rules of a society or branch, shall be recoverable on summary conviction before a Magistrate.

(2) The penalty shall be recoverable at the suit of the Registrar or of any person authorised in writing by the Registrar or of any person aggrieved.

Limitation.

87. In every case where no time is specially limited for making a complaint for an offence under this Act, such complaint shall be made within three years from the time when the matter of such complaint arose, and not after.

Legal proceedings.

88. (1) The trustees of a society or branch, or any other officers authorised by the rules thereof, may bring or defend, or cause to be brought or defended, any action or other legal proceeding in any court, touching or concerning any property, right, or claim of the society or branch, and may sue and be sued in their proper names, without other description than the title of their office.

(2) In legal proceedings brought under this Act by a member, or person claiming through a member, a society or branch may also be sued in the name, as defendant, of any officer or person who receives contributions or issues policies on behalf of the society or branch within the jurisdiction of the court in which the legal proceeding is brought, with the addition of the words "on behalf of the society or branch" (naming the same).

(3) A legal proceeding shall not abate or be discontinued by the death, resignation, or removal from office of any officer or by any act of any such officer after the commencement of the proceedings.

(4) The summons, writ, process, or other proceeding to be issued to or against the officer or other person sued on behalf of a registered society or branch, shall be sufficiently served by personally serving that officer or other person, or by leaving a true copy thereof at the registered office of the society or branch, or at any place of business of the society or branch within the jurisdiction of the court in which the proceeding is brought, or, if that office or place of business is closed, by posting the copy on the outer door of that office or place of business.

(5) In all cases where the summons, writ, process, or other proceeding is not served by means of such personal service or by leaving a true copy thereof at the registered office of the society or branch as aforesaid, a copy thereof shall be sent in a registered letter addressed to the committee at the registered office of the society or branch, and posted at least six days before any further step is taken on the proceeding.

(6) Where proceedings are taken against a society or branch for the recovery of any penalty under this Act, the summons or other process shall be sufficiently served by leaving a true copy thereof at the registered office of the society or branch, or at any place of business of the society or branch, within the jurisdiction of the court in which the proceeding is brought, or, if that office or place of business is closed, by posting the copy on the outer door of that office or place of business.

(7) Where the person against whom the proceedings are to be taken is himself or herself a trustee of a society or branch, the proceedings may be brought by the other trustees or trustee of the society or branch.

PART IX

FEES: FORMS: REGULATIONS: EVIDENCE

Fees.

89. A scale of fees to be paid for matters to be transacted or for the inspection of documents under this Act may be prescribed by the Minister, and all such fees shall be paid by means of stamps.

Forms.

90. (1) The forms to be used for registration shall be those contained in Part I of the Second Schedule or such other forms as are prescribed.

(2) The acknowledgment of registration of a branch and of any amendment of the rules of a branch shall be in the forms provided in Part II of the Second Schedule.

(3) Every annual or other return, abstract of valuation and other document required for the purposes of this Act shall be made in such form and shall contain such particulars as the Registrar prescribes.

(4) A receipt under this Act endorsed upon or for the repayment of a mortgage or other assurance shall be in the form set forth in Part III of the Second Schedule, or in any form specified in the rules of the society or branch or any schedule thereto.

(5) Applications for certificates of births and deaths under this Act shall be in such form and under such regulations as may be approved of by the Minister.

(Amended by Act 6 of 1976)

Regulations for carrying out Act.

91. The Minister may make regulations respecting registration and procedure under this Act, and the duties and functions of the Registrar, and the inspection of documents kept by the Registrar under this Act, and generally for carrying this Act into effect.

(Amended by Act 6 of 1976)

List of officers to be evidence of appointment.

92. The list mentioned in section 7(2) and any change therein communicated by the secretary of a society under section 23 shall be signed by the secretary, and when received by the Registrar shall be entered in the register, each entry being initialled by the Registrar, and a copy of any such entry, purporting to be certified under the hand of the Registrar, shall, without any further proof of the signature of the Registrar, be *prima facie* evidence in all Courts of justice that any person named therein has been duly appointed to the office or for the purposes therein set forth.

***Evidence of documents.**

93. Every document purporting to be signed by the Registrar, or any inspector, or public auditor or valuer under this Act, shall, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, be received in evidence without proof of the signature.

* Original sections 90, 93, 96 deleted by Act 7 of 1976.

FIRST SCHEDULE

(Section 7(3))

**MATTERS TO BE PROVIDED FOR BY THE RULES OF SOCIETIES
REGISTERED UNDER THIS ACT**

1. The name and place of office of the society.
2.
 - (a) The whole of the objects for which the society is to be established;
 - (b) The purposes for which the funds thereof shall be applicable;
 - (c) The terms of admission of members;
 - (d) The conditions under which any member may become entitled to any benefit assured thereby;
 - (e) The fines and forfeitures to be imposed on any member; and
 - (f) The consequences of non-payment of any subscription or fine.
3. The mode of holding meetings and right of voting, and the manner of making, altering, or rescinding rules.
4. The appointment and removal of a committee of management (by whatever name), of a treasurer and other officers, and of trustees, and in the case of a society with branches, the composition and powers of the central body, and the conditions under which a branch may secede from the society.
5. The investment of the funds, the keeping of the accounts, and the audit of the same once a year at least.
6. Annual returns to the Registrar of the receipts, funds, effects, and expenditure and numbers of members, of the society.
7. The inspection of the books of the society by every person having an interest in the funds of the society.
8. The manner in which disputes shall be settled.
9. In case of dividing societies, a provision for meeting all claims upon the society existing at the time of division before any such division takes place, and also in the case of friendly and cattle insurance societies.
10. The keeping of separate accounts of all moneys received or paid on account of every particular fund or benefit assured for which a separate table of contributions payable shall have been adopted, and the keeping of separate account of the expenses of management, and of all contributions on account thereof.
11. (Except as to cattle insurance societies) a valuation once at least in every five years of the assets and liabilities of the society, including the estimated risks and contributions.
12. The voluntary dissolution of the society by consent in a friendly society of not less than five-sixths in value of the members, and of every person for the time being entitled to any benefit from the funds of the society, unless his or her claim be first satisfied or adequately provided for; and in a cattle insurance society by consent of three-fourths in number of the members.
13. The right of one-fifth of the total number of members, or of one hundred members in the case of a society of one thousand members and not exceeding ten

thousand, to apply to the Registrar for an investigation of the affairs of the society, or for winding up the same.

SECOND SCHEDULE

(Section 49,50 and 90)

FORMS

PART I

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF REGISTRATION OF SOCIETY

The Society is registered as a [*friendly society, cattle insurance society, benevolent society, working-men's club, or specially authorised society*] under the Friendly Societies Act, this day of

Signature of Registrar.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF REGISTRATION OF AMENDMENT OF RULES

The foregoing amendment of the rules of the Society is registered under the Friendly Societies Act, this day of

Signature of Registrar.

PART II

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF REGISTRATION OF BRANCH

The is registered as a branch of the Society [and of the branch of the same] under the Friendly Societies Act, this day of

Signature of Registrar.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF REGISTRATION OF AMENDMENT OF BRANCH RULES

The foregoing amendment of the branch rules of the is registered under the Friendly Societies Act, this day of

Signature of Registrar.

PART III
FORM OF BOND

Know all men by these presents that we, *A.B.* of one of the officers of the Society [or of the Branch of the Society] having its registered office at, in the Island of, and *C.D.* of (as surety on behalf of the said *A.B.*) are jointly and severally held and firmly bound to *E.F.* of, *G.H.* of, and *I.K.* of, the trustees of the said Society [or branch], in the sum of to be paid to the said *E.F.*, *G.H.*, and *I.K.*, as such trustees or their successors, trustees for the time being, or their certain attorney; for which payment well and truly to be made we jointly and severally bind ourselves, and each of us by himself or herself and each of our heirs, executors, and administrators, firmly by these presents.

Dated the day of in the year of our Lord

Whereas the above bounden *A.B.* has been duly appointed to the office of of the Society [or of the branch of the Society] having its registered office situate as aforesaid, and he or she, together with the above bounden *C.D.* as his or her surety, have entered into the above written bond, subject to the condition hereafter contained: Now therefore the condition of the above written bond is such, that if the said *A.B.* do render a just and true account of all moneys received and paid by him or her on account of the said society [or branch], at such times as the rules thereof appoint, and do pay over all the moneys remaining in his or her hands, and assign and transfer or deliver all property (including books and papers) belonging to the said society [or branch] in his or her hands or custody to such person or persons as the said society [or branch], or the trustees or committee of management thereof, shall appoint, according to the rules of the said society [or branch], together with the proper and legal receipts or vouchers for such payments, then the above-written bond shall be void, otherwise shall remain in full force.

Signed and delivered in the presence of [*two witnesses.*]

FORM OF RECEIPT FOR REPAYMENT OF MORTGAGE OR FURTHER CHARGE

The trustees of the Society [or the branch of the Society] hereby acknowledge to have received all moneys intended to be secured by [state particulars.]

Signed [*Signatures of Trustees.*]

Trustees.

Countersigned [Signature of Secretary.]

Secretary.

THIRD SCHEDULE*(Sections 89 and 91)***FRIENDLY SOCIETIES REGULATIONS****Short title.**

1. These Regulations may be cited as the Friendly Societies Regulations.

Accounting.

2. The Committee of Management of every society shall cause proper books of accounts to be kept, including a cash book and a register arranged to show the subscriptions of each member of the society and the various benefits paid out by the society to its members.

Contribution Cards.

3. The Committee of Management shall issue to every member a contribution card in a form to be approved by the Registrar and it shall be the duty of the secretary or some one appointed for that purpose by the Committee of Management to enter thereon from time to time all payments of subscriptions made by the member; and also all amounts received by such member for sick relief; and no card shall be issued unless and until it is signed by the secretary and countersigned by the president.

Contribution Cards to be Returned on 31st December in Each Year.

4. Every card whenever issued shall be returned to the secretary as soon as possible after the 31st December of the year of its issue, and no card for the following year shall be issued to a member until he or she shall have returned his or her card for the previous year.

Audit of Contribution Cards.

5. All cards returned by the members shall be kept by the secretary and submitted for audit together with the accounts of the society.

Closing and Audit of Accounts.

6. The accounts of every society shall close on the 31st day of December in every year, and shall be submitted not later than the 31st day of January in each year to audit at the costs and charges of the society to a person nominated by the Minister or if no such person be nominated then to a person nominated by the society and approved by the Minister.

Auditor not to be a Member of Society.

7. No person shall audit the books of any society of which he or she is a member.

Auditor to Furnish Report, etc.

8. The person to audit the accounts of a society shall send to the Registrar within two months of such accounts being submitted to him or her for audit, a copy of the society's balance sheet made out to the 31st day of December previous together with a special report showing whether or not any of the funds or effects of the society have been misapplied or wrongly withheld by any person or persons.

Penalty for Breach of Regulations.

9. Any person acting in contravention of the provisions of these regulations is liable on conviction before a Magistrate to a penalty not exceeding five hundred dollars.

(Amended by Acts 7 of 2006 and 9 of 1986)

Fees.

10. The fees in the scale set out in the Schedule to these Regulations shall be taken by the Registrar in respect of the matters in such scale enumerated.

SCHEDULE TO THE REGULATIONS

(Regulation 10)

SCALE OF FEES

	\$. c.
Examining rules submitted with the object of registration under section 7	4.80
Registering rules of society under section 748
Granting a certificate of registration of rules of a society under section 7.....	.48
Supplying bonds to officers under section 5048
Issuing to a society an acknowledgment of registration under section 948
Examining any proposed alteration or amendment of rules under section 11—	
Not exceeding five rules.....	1.20
Exceeding five rules	2.40
Registering amended rules under section 1172
Issuing to society acknowledgment of registration of amended rules and that same are not contrary to section 1172
Cancelling or suspension of registration under section 71	1.20
On hearing and determining of disputes under section 63	9.60
Registration of special resolution under section 69.....	.60
Registration of copy of special resolution as memorandum of association under section 66.....	1.20
Cancelling of registration of society on conversion into a company under section 66	3.60
Hearing of application of trustees desiring amalgamation or transfer of engagements under section 65.....	2.40
Registration of dissolution of society and making award under sections 72 and 73	4.80

Registration of branch societies under section 14	2.40
Acknowledgment of registration of branch society and of amendment of branch rules	1.20
Issuing certificate of change of name	1.20
Registration of each new trustee or new trustees registered together.....	.60
For every document required to be authenticated by the Registrar not chargeable with any other fee.....	1.20
For every inspection of any documents relating to one and the same friendly society	.60
On sending each year to the Registrar a return under section 26 of the Act ...	1.20
