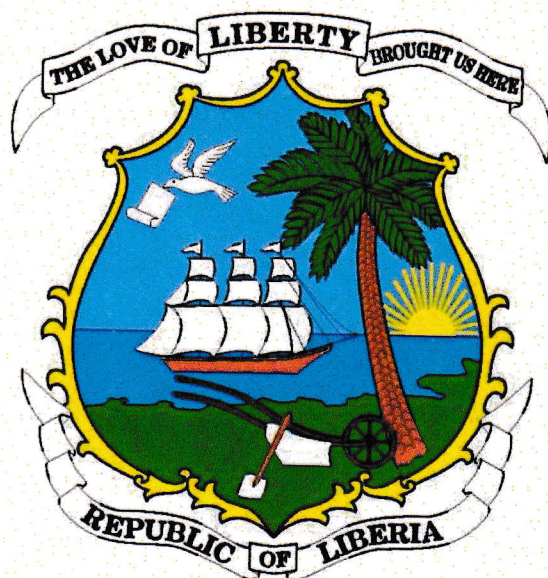


Ministry of Internal Affairs, R. L.



Administrative Regulations
for
County Councils

June 26, 2023
Monrovia, Liberia

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Forward

In an era where the dynamics of governance and public administration are constantly evolving, the principles of decentralization have become pivotal in ensuring efficient and responsive local governance. As we navigate the complexities of modern society, the need for decentralized decision-making and county councils has become more apparent than ever.



This regulation, dedicated to the cause of decentralization and the establishment of county

councils, signifies our unwavering commitment to fostering stronger, more self-reliant local communities. It is with great pleasure that we introduce this framework, which embodies our vision of participatory democracy and grassroots empowerment.

Our journey towards decentralization is rooted in the belief that governance is at its best when it is closest to the people it serves. County councils will be the linchpin of this transformation, ensuring that the voices of our citizens are not only heard but also actively involved in shaping the policies and services that impact their daily lives.

We understand that decentralization is a process, not an event, and this regulation is a significant step in that process. It represents a shared commitment to creating a more transparent, accountable, and effective system of governance. The empowerment of counties as local government units will enhance service delivery, promote economic growth, and foster a stronger sense of community.

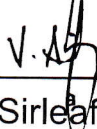
As we embark on this journey of decentralization and the establishment of county councils, we invite all stakeholders to join hands in realizing this vision. This regulation is a testament to our dedication to the principles of local autonomy and subsidiarity.

We are confident that, together, we can build a more vibrant and participatory democracy, where the aspirations and needs of our local communities are at the forefront of our governance agenda.

Sincerely,

Minister
Ministry of Internal Affairs

Ordered by the
Authority of the Ministry of Internal Affairs
on this 3rd day of April 2023



Varney A. Sirleaf, MINISTER

Introduction

Since the end of the armed conflict in 2003, the Government of Liberia has continued to demonstrate its commitment to democratic governance reforms. The Government's policy on decentralization is articulated in the National Policy on Decentralization and Local Governance launched in 2012. President George M. Weah signed the Local Government Act and the Revenue Sharing Act into law respectively in 2018 and 2022, consistent with government's priorities enshrined in the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD).

The Local Government Act and the Revenue Sharing Act are the enabling legislations that provide for greater participation of the citizens in governance, more equity in economic resources decision-making, and more local ownership of, and responsibilities for, making decisions that impact local communities. The goal is to take government closer to the people, establish semi-autonomous local government structures, and increase participation of the citizens in the planning and management of development nationwide.

Chapter 2 of the Local Government Act defines the powers, and authority of local governments, and calls for establishment of local government structures including County Councils. These Administrative Regulations are promulgated to guide the process of selecting qualified persons, representative of county organizations, inclusive of women and youth, and people with disabilities. They will also be used as a guide for establishment, administration and governance of county Councils, pursuant to Chapter 2, Sub-section 2.3 and Chapter 9, Sub-section 9.4 of the Local Government Act.

The process of developing this Administrative Regulations involved consultations and collaboration with members of the Legislature, National Elections Commission, Governance Commission, policy-level county officials, and members of civil society organizations.

PART I

General Provisions

1.1 Application

These Administrative Regulations for the establishment, administration, and governance of County Councils shall apply to all local government structures, and functions; and to all county organizations whose representatives shall constitute county councils. (Authority: *Local Government Act, Chapter 1 Sub-Section 1.4*)

1.2 Definition

The following words, when used in these Administrative Regulations, unless otherwise defined therein, shall have the following meaning (s):

Chief: The elected Chief or appointed Acting Chief who is currently serving as the administrative head of a chiefdom, clan or general town.

(Authority: *Local Government Act, Chapter 1 Sub-Section 1.5; and Chapter 2 Sub-section 2.15y*).

Community Leader: The elected or selected head of a community not headed by a Town chief (Authority: *Chapter 2 Sub-section 2.4f*).

Community Service: Mandatory work done in a town, clan, chiefdom, district, city, township, Community or borough as part of every citizen's civic responsibility; or mandatory work done in lieu of non-payment of taxes certified by a community leader. (Authority: *Local Government Act, Chapter 1 Sub-Section 1.5; Chapter 2 Sub-section 2.4*)

County: The first level political sub-division of Liberia. (Authority: *Chapter 1 Sub-Section 1.5*)

County Council: A selected body of a county having regulatory, representative, and confirmatory functions and powers. (Authority: *Chapter 1 Sub-Section 1.5*)

County Organization: The recognized, first level umbrella organization representing all of such similar organizations in the county. (Authority: *Local Government Act, Chapter 2 Sub-section 2.3*).

Local Government: A sub-national authority organized to share authority with the central government. (*Authority: LGA Chapter 1 Sub-Section 1.5*)

Ordinance: Means an order governing behavior, action or procedure in a local area; a local law made by a county local government authority, or a sub-county local city or township authority. (*Authority: LGA Chapter 2 Sub-section 2.2a*)

Paramount Chief: The elected or appointed acting administrative head of a chiefdom. (*Authority: Chapter 1 Sub-Section 1.5*)

People with Disabilities: People who are physically or mentally challenged. (*Authority: Chapter 1 Sub-Section 1.5*)

Select: Means to agree and choose. (*Authority: Chapter 2 Sub-sections 2.3 and 2.4*)

Town Chief: The selected administrative head of a town. (*Authority: Chapter 1 Sub-Section 1.5*)

Youth: Any person between the ages of 18 to 35 years. (*Authority: Chapter 1 Sub-Section 1.5*)

PART II

Composition of Members of County Council

The Local Government Act set forth the qualification criteria for selection of members County Council. The Act requires that members shall comprise a selection of qualified persons, who are representatives of county organizations, and inclusive of women, youth, and people with disabilities. The County Council of each county shall be comprised of the following nine (9) members distributed as follow:

(Authority: Local Government Act, Chapter 2 Sub-sections 2.3).

2.1 Composition of County Council

The following shall constitute members of County Councils.

2.1 a County Council of Chiefs

The County Council of Chiefs shall select three (3) representatives as follow:

- One (1) Head of the Council of Chiefs
- One (1) Chief
- One (1) Elder appointed by the County Council of Chiefs.

2 b County Women Organization

The County women organization shall select one representative as follow:

- One (1) Representative

2 c County Youth Organization

The County Youth Organization shall select two (2) representatives as follow:

- One (1) Male
- One (1) Female

2 d County Organization of People with Disabilities

The County organization of people with disabilities shall select one representative as follow:

- One (1) Representative

2 e County Organization of Civil Society Associations

The County Organization of Civil Society Associations shall select two (2) representatives. One of these shall be the head of the organization as follow:

- One (1) Male
- One (1) Female

PART III

Selection Procedures and Methods

3.1 The National Elections Commission

Consistent with Chapter 9, sub-section 9.4 of the Local Government Act, which mandates collaboration with other central government institutions to facilitate development and operations of regulations and guidelines, the county branch of the National Elections Commission in each county shall preside over the process of verification of county organizations and the confirmation of representatives selected for membership in county council.

3.2 Verification Methods

Pursuant to Chapter 2 Sub-sections 2.3 and 2.4 of the Local Government Act, the process of verifying county organizations and confirming persons preferred for membership in County Councils shall be a two-step method to be employed by the county branch of the National Elections Commission as follow:

- 3.2 a Verification of county organizations shall be done by review of their records of operations pursuant to Sub-section 2.3 of the Local Government Act.**
- 3.2 b Confirmation of persons preferred for membership in county council shall be done by review of documentation consistent with criteria outlined under Sub-sections 2.4 of the Act.**

3.3 Initiation of Process

The Minister responsible for local government shall initiate the process of verification and confirmation as follow:

- 3.3 a The Minister shall formally request the Chairperson of the National Elections Commission to authorize the local county branch of the Commission in each county to:**
 - Serve as the authority for verification and confirmation in each county
 - Verify documentation of all county organizations cited in the Local Government Act
 - Confirm (or reject) persons preferred by the county organizations based on criteria outlined in sub-section 2.4 of the Act.

- 3.3 b The Minister shall authorize the Superintendent in each county to inform the county public that the process of choosing representatives to County Councils has begun. He or she shall also formally instruct county organizations to inform their member organizations accordingly.

3.4 Public Information

The process of informing the county public shall include, but not be limited to the following:

- Posting of written notices in public places
- Public service announcements in local newspapers and on radio stations.
- Radio interviews and discussions regarding the importance of the County Council and the importance of public participation in the process
- Radio discussions advocating importance of implementing free and fair process of selecting representatives to the County Council.
- Use of other means of communication including, but not limited to use of local languages and Town Criers to inform the public in the towns and villages.

- 3.5 Heads of county organizations cited under Chapter 2, Sub-section 2.3 of the Local Government Act shall inform their various member organizations *fourteen (14) days* prior to the date set for the process of selection of their representatives to the County Council.

PART IV.0

Selection of Representatives to County Council

The Minister responsible for local government shall set the official date for selection of representatives to County Councils and shall inform county superintendents accordingly. County superintendents shall formally inform heads of relevant county organizations of the official date; and authorize them to meet on the said date to select their representatives.

4.1 Verification of County Organizations

The *local county branch* of the National Elections Commission shall formally request, review and verify the following documentation of the relevant county organizations attesting to their status twenty-one (21) days prior to the date set for selection of representatives to county councils:

- Copies of Article of Incorporation, by-laws, and evidence of compliance as a certified non-profit Liberian association.
- Copy of the Annual Report of the organization's operations for the previous year detailing its operational activities including the roster of member organizations in the county.

4.2 Suspension of Status

A county organization which does not satisfy the verification criteria at the time of review shall be given ten (10) days to correct the conditions in question. A county organizations which fails to satisfy any of the verification requirements shall have their status suspended and shall not participate in the selection process. The local county branch of the National Elections Commission shall inform the county superintendent of its decision. The Superintendent shall in turn, inform the Minister responsible for local government.

4.3 Selection of Representatives

All county organizations certified by the local county branch of the National Elections Commission shall proceed to conduct the process of selecting their representatives to county councils.

- 4.4 The process of selection shall be conducted in a public place with *not less than 60%* of the members of county organizations participating.
- 4.5 The process of selection shall be *recorded in the minutes* with documentation indicating that the nominees were selected in a free and fair manner.
- 4.6 A Copy of the minutes and report of the selection process shall be signed by leaders of member organizations present, and shall form part of the documentation to the Minister responsible for local government.

4.7 Disputes over Selection Process

All disputes over the process of selecting representatives shall be settled amongst members of the county organizations involved. In cases where members of county organizations cannot resolve their disputes, they may seek redress through the office of the Minister responsible for Local Government.

- 4.8 No county local government official shall intervene in matters involving internal disputes over selection processes within county organizations.

PART V

Procedure for Verification and Certification

All members selected and recommended by the county organizations shall undergo a verification and certification process. The process shall be conducted by the local county branch of the National Elections Commission. The purpose of this process is to ascertain that members selected by each county organization meet the minimum qualification requirements set forth in Chapter 2 Sub-section 2.4 of the Local Government Act. The verification process shall also serve as the basis for certification of council members by the Minister responsible for local government.

5.1 Date of Verification and Certification

The Minister responsible for local government shall specify the date and official venue for verification of representatives selected for membership in County Councils. The Minister shall inform leaders of all of the county organizations concerned through the County Superintendent about the date and venue of the verification and certification processes.

5.2 Criteria for Membership of County Council

Pursuant to Chapter 2, Sub-section 2.4 of the Local Government Act, the following shall constitute the criteria for selection of members of the County Council:

- No member of a county administration shall be a member of a county Council
- A member of county council shall be a Liberian citizen
- A member of county council must have obtained the age of twenty-five (25) years.
- A member of county council must be of good moral standing
- A member of county council must have a minimum capacity to speak in the local language or read and write English.
- A member must be a taxpayer OR must have performed a minimum of 144 hours of community service in the year immediately prior to nomination; and such service must be certified by nominee's community leader or town chief.

5.3 Verification Procedure

On the date and venue set by the Minister responsible for local government, the local county branch of the National Elections Commission shall verify that representatives selected to county councils meet the qualification criteria as follow:

(Authority: Local Government Act, Chapter 2, Sub-section 2.4).

5.3 a No member of a county administration shall be a member of a county council.

Application: The *local county* branch of the National Elections Commission shall verify that no nominee to the County Council is currently a member of the county administration. Members of county administration include, but are not limited to County and statutory district superintendents, county inspectors, assistant superintendents, district commissioners; mayors, county and district education officers, representatives of sector ministries and agencies assigned in the county, et cetera.

5.3 b Members of County Councils shall be Liberian citizens.

Application: Nominees for county council shall present proof of citizenship. Proof of citizenship shall be one (1) of the following:

- Liberian Birth Certificate
- Liberian Passport
- Voter Registration Card issued by the NEC
- Liberian National Identification Card by the NIR

5.3 c Members of County Councils shall have obtained the age of twenty-five (25) years.

Application: Nominees for county council shall present proof of qualifying age as follow:

- Liberian Birth Certificate
- Liberian Passport
- Voter Registration Card issued by the NEC
- Liberian National Identification Card by the NIR

5.3 d Members of County Councils shall be of good moral standing.

Application: Nominees for county council shall show proof of good moral standing as follow:

- Notarized letter from Town Chief, or Community Leader attesting that nominee is a peaceful citizen with good moral character.

5.3 e Members of County Councils must have minimum capacity to speak in local language, or read and write English.

Application: Nominee for county council shall show minimum capacity to speak in local language, or read and write English as follow:

- Local Language: Nominee must verbally express his/her desire to be a member of county council in his/her a local language; OR
- English: Nominee must express his/her desire to be a member of county council in writing using correct English grammar.

5.3 f Members of County Councils

- Must be a taxpayer; or
- Must have performed a minimum of 144 hours of community service in the year immediately prior to nomination. Community service must be certified by nominee's community leader or town chief.

Application: Representatives for county council shall give evidence as follow:

- **Taxpayer**

A representative who is a taxpayer shall show evidence by making available, his or her official tax identification number along with official receipt of tax paid to the Liberia Revenue Authority for the year immediately preceding the year of selection, OR

- **Community Service**

Nominee who has not paid taxes to the LRA in the preceding year, must show evidence that he/she has performed 144 hours or six (6) days of community service work in his/her local community in the year immediately preceding the year of selection.

▪ **Evidence of Service**

The evidence of having performed the required community service shall be by submission of a notarized letter from the nominee's Town Chief or Community Leader attesting that nominee has indeed performed said services for the year immediately preceding the year of selection.

5.3 g Disqualification

All nominees who do not satisfy any of the criteria cited above shall be disqualified by the *local county branch* of the National Elections Commission. The Minister responsible for local government shall inform the relevant county superintendent who, in turn, shall inform the relevant county organization about the decision. The Superintendent shall request the county organization affected to select and submit another representative as a replacement.

5.4 Certification of Members of County Councils

5.4 a Upon completion of the verification process, by the local county branch of the National Elections Commission, the Minister responsible for local Government shall preside over the process of certifying members of the County Council.

5.4 b The Minister responsible for local government shall award certificates to all members of the County Council. The Minister shall award a Certificate of Accreditation to each Member of County Council thereby qualifying him or her to serve their respective counties for the period ascribed in the Local Government Act.

PART VI

Organization and County Council

The leadership of the County Council shall comprise the following officers:

- Chairperson
- Vice Chairperson
- Heads of Council Committees

6.1 Election of Council Leadership

Pursuant to sub-section 2.7 of the Local Government Act, members of county council shall elect their officers from within their own ranks and without external interference. The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and heads of Council Committees shall be elected by members of the County Council based on a simple majority of the total membership.

6.2 Council Chairperson

The Chairperson of the County Council shall be the head and official spokesperson of the Council.

6.3 Council Vice Chairperson

The Vice Chairperson shall be the principal assistant to the Chairperson. He or she shall oversee the general administration of the Council and the Council Support Office.

6.4 Council Committee

Pursuant to Sub-section 2.7 of the Local Government Act, and Sub-section 4.6 of the Revenue Sharing Act respectively, the following four (4) Council Committees shall be established as follow:

- 6.4.1 Committee on County Administration
- 6.4.2 Committee on County Treasury
- 6.4.3 Committee on County Development Planning
- 6.4.4 Committee on Legislative Affairs and Ordinances

6.5 Head of Council Committees

Each Council Committee shall be headed by a Chair. The members of the County Council shall elect a Chair for each of the Council Committees cited above.

6.6 Tenure of Council Members

Pursuant to sub-section 2.5 of the Local Government Act:

- 6.6 a** Members of County Council shall serve for a period of four (4) years. They shall be eligible for re-election for an additional four-year term and no more, provided that the member continues to enjoy the conditions under which they were so selected.
- 6.6 b** County Council members shall serve their full four-year term for which they were selected and certified except based on the changed conditions within their county organizations.
- 6.6 c** Pursuant to sub-section 2.11, removal of a Council member shall be for cause, determined through due process; and by a vote of two-thirds of the total membership of the Council. This shall also be approved by the Minister responsible for local government.
- 6.6 d** A Council member who wishes to contest to fill a post in the legislature may do so:
 - Provided that she/he shall resign from the county council six months to the date of the stipulated general or mid-term election.
 - and one month following National Elections Commission's declaration for a bi-election.
- 6.6 e** A council member who wishes to accept a political appointment in government may do so; provided that upon acceptance of said appointment, he or she shall resign from the County Council.
- 6.6 f** The procedures outlined in these regulations for selection and verification of representatives to county councils shall not apply retroactively and shall not affect current members of County Council.

6.7 Annual National Conference of County Councils

There shall be an Annual National Conference of County Councils of all counties of Liberia under auspices of the Minister responsible for local government. The annual Assembly shall provide the platform for experience sharing and capacity building reinforcement.

6.8 County Council Support Office

Consistent with Sub-Section 2.10 of the Local Government Act, each County Council shall maintain a County Council Support Office comprising (a) Administrative Officer and (b) Legal Officer, both of whom shall be civil servants subject to the Civil Service Standing Orders.

6.8 a Duties of Council Administrative Officer:

The primary duties of the Council Administrative Officer shall include:

- providing administrative support services such as organizing and maintaining Council records and database.
- maintaining confidential Council documents and records; organizing Council meetings, and overseeing Council finances, and assets; and
- Facilitating communication, coordinating Council's administration system and general workflows, and developing procedures to make the Council workplace more efficient.

6.8 b Qualification Requirements:

The Administrative Officer of the County Council shall:

- Be a college graduate with a degree in Public Administration, Management or the social sciences and related fields.
- Have a minimum of five (5) years of work experience in administration or management.

6.8 c Duties of County Council Legal Officer

The Legal officer shall act as the resource and principal advisor to the Council on legislations, regulations, ordinances, policies and procedures. He or she shall provide legal, and legislative advice and drafting services to County Council in a professional and impartial manner.

Legal Officers of County Councils shall be persons who are genuinely interested in legislative drafting work with the likelihood of making legislative drafting a career. Duties of the Council Legal Officer shall include but shall not be limited to the following:

- Brief Council members on legal and policy questions
- Undertake drafting assignments, assess proposals and determine the most legally appropriate approach
- Correctly interpret the Local Government Act and the Revenue Sharing Act and related laws in ways that seek to resolve issues between the County Council and the County Administration

- Provide policy options using oral or written platforms.
- Interpret technical legal language into plain English to facilitate understanding of Council members
- Consider all potential legal issues, make recommendations on possible options to Council before drafting legislation

6.8 d Qualification Requirements:

The County Council Legal Officer shall:

- Be a college graduate with a degree in Law from an accredited university school of law.
- Have a minimum of five (5) years of work experience as a legal practitioner with focus in legal drafting; and examining and interpreting legal documents.

6.8 e Reporting relationship: Council Administrative officer and Council Legal officer

There shall exist a cooperative, reciprocal, and interdependent relationship between the Council Administrative Officer and the Council Legal Officer. They shall both report to the County Council through its Vice Chairperson who shall have principal responsibility to oversee the general administration of the Council Support Office.

6.8 f Financing of Council Meetings

Pursuant to Sub-section 2.8 of the Act. costs related to Council meetings such as travel, daily subsistence allowance, lodging, feeding and Annual Assembly shall be borne by the County Administration from the annual county budget. Except that the County administration, in collaboration with the minister responsible for local government may seek donor funding support to augment said expense.

PART VII

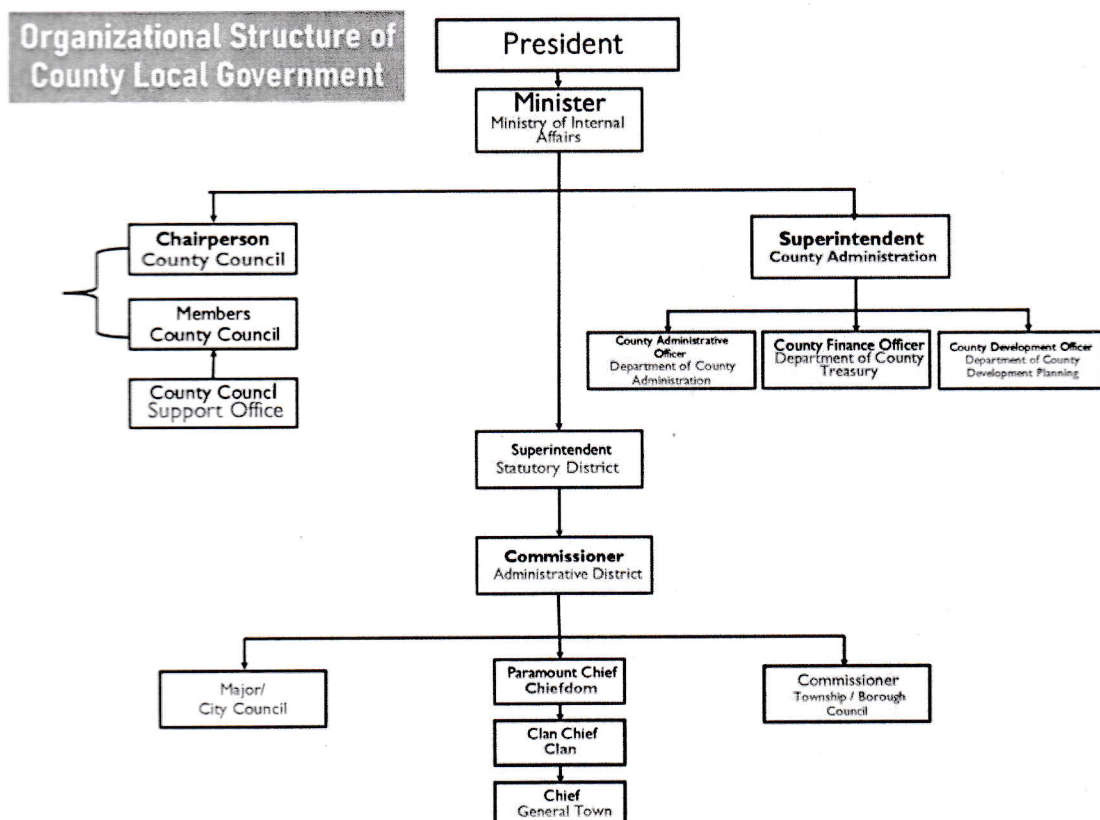
County Local Government

The new organization and structure of county local government shall be consistent with Sub-sections 2.2 and 2.13 of the Local Government Act. County local governments shall comprise:

- *County Council*; and
- *County Administration*.

The new structure of county local government shall be as outlined in the organizational structure under figure 1.1 below.

Figure 1.1: Organizational Structure of Local County Government
(Authority: Local Government Act, Sub-sections 2.2 and 2.13)



7.1 The County Council

The County Council shall serve as the Statutory Office of County Government. The powers and authority of the County Council are outlined in Chapter 2, Sub-section 2.2 of the Local Government Act.

7.2 County Administration

The County Administration shall serve as the Executive Office of County Government. The duties, functions and powers of the County Administration are outlined in Chapter 2 Sub-sections 2.13a thru 2.14e of the Local Government Act.

7.3 Local Government Powers and Structures

All county local governments and sub-county local governments (city, township and borough) shall be responsible for the overall management and development of their respective jurisdictions as outlined in Chapter 2 sub-sections 2.1 and 2.2 of the Local Government Act.

7.3 Local Government Powers and Structures

All county local governments and sub-county local governments (city, township and borough) shall be responsible for the overall management and development of their respective jurisdictions as outlined in Chapter 2 sub-sections 2.1 and 2.2 of the Local Government Act.

7.3 a Powers and Authority of Local Governments

Consistent with the Constitution of 1986, the Local Government Act affirms that Liberia is a unitary state sub-divided into counties for administrative purposes; and counties shall be divided into administrative and statutory districts, cities, townships, boroughs, chiefdoms clans and general towns. The powers and authority of local governments shall be as follow:

- Undertake functions devolved or delegated to counties by central government;
- Promote reconciliation, peace, and socio-economic development;
- Ensure the maintenance of law, order, and security in collaboration with the national security agencies;
- Promote good governance in local government administration;
- Make and enforce local policies and ordinances which do not conflict with the laws and policies of the Central Government;

- Formulate and implement county development plans;
- Raise local revenues as provided for by law;
- Ensure effective implementation of central government programs, projects and services in the county;
- Ensure that programs, projects, and services of non-governmental organizations are consistent with central and local governments' plans;
- Assume all functions of central government ministries, agencies and commissions as shall be determined in schedule set in the Administrative Procedure manual for local governments; and
- Carry out other functions which may be imposed by law or are incidental to the above.

7.3 b Powers and Authority of County Council

A County Council shall be established within each county with the following powers:

- Promulgate county ordinances, rules and regulations for the promotion of peace, unity, reconciliation, maintenance of public order and security, and the delivery of basic public goods and services consistent with law;
- Impose local taxes, rates, duties, fees, and fines within limits prescribed by the Legislature;
- Establish rules to govern the activities of the Council and the administration of the Council Support Office;
- Authorize the issuance of certain licenses, and operating permits designated by the legislature;
- Approve the annual county budget;
- Approve the county development plan and its implementation;
- Recommend to the President through the minister responsible for local government, the establishment of agencies deemed necessary for the good governance of the county; and
- Perform such other actions in furtherance of the aforementioned powers cited above.

7.3 c Other Duties and Responsibilities of Members of County Council

In all Council activities, members of the County Council shall also be guided by the following:

- Be aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- Be aware of the county's financial limitations in their decision making.
- Maintain the financial integrity of the County.
- Maintain confidentiality of Council matters including council decisions until they are officially made public.
- Represent the County and act in the best interest of the county.
- Attend all Council meetings, participate in all Council sessions and make objective and unbiased decisions.
- Accept responsibility for council decisions.

7.3 d Oversight Authority

Pursuant to Sub-section 2.2 of the Local Government Act, County Councils have the oversight authority to:

- Request the County Administration or its representatives to appear before the County Council. The County Administration or its representatives shall appear before the County Council on matters under the jurisdiction and authority granted to County Councils pursuant to Chapter 2 Sub-section 2.2 of the Local Government Act.
- Request and receive appropriate written data and information from the County Administration to fulfill its responsibilities.
- Hold special sessions based on resolution signed by three (3) members of the County Council as deemed necessary for a special session. Except that said resolution shall state the reason for the special session; and shall submit same to the Chairperson for action. The special session shall be held not more than 30 days after the submission of the resolution.

7.3 e Powers and Authority of County Administration

The County Administration shall have the following powers and functions:

- Manage the overall administration of the county, consistent with the Liberian Constitution and laws and the various ordinances and regulations of the county;
- Coordinate maintenance of law, order and security in collaboration with the national security agencies;
- Supervise the preparation of the county annual budget and other periodic budgets;
- Supervise the preparation and implementation of the county development plan, consistent with the central government's national development plan and the goals of promoting women's empowerment, gender equality as well as youth empowerment and inclusion;
- Supervise preparation of the county annual performance report for submission to the County Council and the President of Liberia through the Minister responsible for local government on matters of the county including security and the general and specific circumstances and status of the county , its administration and fiscal status;
- Supervise national programs and projects in the county;
- Coordinate the work of representatives of the ministries and agencies of the central government in the county; and
- Perform other duties as may be determined by the County Council and/or the President of Liberia.

PART VIII

Relations between County Council and County Administration

Consistent with the Local Government Act, the County Council and the County Administration shall ensure a cordial working relationship; the county Council shall complement the County Administration through a cooperative, interdependent, and mutually beneficial relationship

- 8.1 Officers of the County Council and County administration shall apply due diligence and avoid possible usurpation of functions at all times.
- 8.2 Issues arising from interpretation of the Local Government Act and the Administrative Regulations regarding their roles and responsibilities shall first be channeled through the Minister responsible for local government.
- 8.3 Members of County Council and the County Administration shall collaborate at all times in their engagements with the citizens in town hall meetings county-wide especially on matters regarding preparation of the annual budget, development planning and the setting up of implementation schedules for all development projects.
- 8.4 County Development Plans, Budgets and Implementation Schedules shall be developed collaboratively; and enacted by County Councils to ensure adherence.

PART IX.0

Participation of Citizens in County Decision-making

The Participation of the citizens in decision-making is essential for the development of the county. The County Council shall adopt processes that facilitate direct engagement with local citizens in decision-making and gives full consideration to their inputs in making development decisions.

9.1 Council Decisions

In order to verify that County Council decisions are widely disseminated as required under LGA 2.8(b), the County Council shall ensure that all decisions and applicable documents from its meetings are disseminated to reach the widest range of County citizens. These will include public service announcements, radio interviews, notice boards, town criers, notices in local print media, and other appropriate means of communication.

9.2 Council Meetings

To ensure broad based citizens' participation in County Council meetings as required under LGA section 2.8(c) the County Council shall give notice to the public of its meetings. The Council shall give a minimum of seven (7) calendar days public notice before each meeting. Notice shall include the date, time, venue and agenda for the meeting. The Council shall welcome the public to witness its meetings.

9.3 Public Notices

The Council's notices to the public shall be in English and in applicable local languages. The council shall use appropriate communication means that can reach the widest range of county citizens.

These shall include regular written and verbal public information services including use of newspapers, radio/television announcements, information dissemination in English, local vernaculars and traditional town criers; public service announcements, radio interviews, notice boards, town criers, notices in local print media, billboards, and issuance of public notices in designated public places; and other appropriate means of communication.

9.3 Broadcasting of Hearings

The Chairperson of the Council may allow, whenever possible, the live broadcasting of County Council meetings including periodic town hall meetings and consultations especially regarding with citizens' participation in county-wide annual budget hearings, development of county development plans and implementation schedules and practices.

PART X.0

County Development Planning and Budgeting Guidelines

The following guidelines are being promulgated against the backdrop that decentralized public financial management is in gradual transition until county councils and county administrations build capacity to achieve full fiscal autonomy.

10.1 National Budget Circle

The national budget circle of the Republic of Liberia runs from *January 1st through December 31st* of each year.

10.2 The County Budget

The County's Development Plan and Budget is an integral part of the national development plan and budget. The County Council shall approve the County Development Plan and Budget for timely inclusion and allocation of funds in the national budget each following year.

10.3 Period for Planning and Budgeting Consultations

The County Development Planning and Budgeting process includes consultations with the county public in the clans, chiefdoms, and districts, cities, and townships. The process shall commence and conclude in the Dry season from December to April of the year BEFORE the next national budget year.

10.4 The County Budget Approval Process

The County Administration shall submit the County Development Plan and Budget to the County Council for its review and approval four (4) months prior to commencement of next year's national budget circle.

10.4 a The County Council shall act on the County Development Plan and Budget and return same to the County Administration within not more than twenty-one (21) business days.

10.4 b The County Administration shall submit the approved County Development Plan and Budget to the Minister responsible for local government not later than three (3) months prior to the preparation of Budget Policy Notes as indicated on the Budget Preparation Calendar to be issued by the Minister responsible for finance and development planning for inclusion in the national budget for the following year.

- 10.4 c** In the case the County Council disapproves said budget in whole or in part, Council shall return same to County Administration stating its reservations and rationale for disapproval. The County Administration shall prepare its response, thereby addressing the Council's concerns following which it shall re-submit said budget with the required clarifications and seeking Council's concurrence.
- 10.4 d** In situations where the County Council delays approval action beyond the 21-day period, the county administration may expend not more than one-twelfth (1/12th) of the proposed recurrent component of the budget each month; except that the county administration shall not expend project budget funds until full approval is obtained from the Council.
- 10.4 e** In situations where approval delays by the county Council is beyond 42 days, and tends to have impact on overall public management, including political and security implications, the Minister responsible for local government shall intervene to ascertain collaboration between the County Council and the County Administration.

PART XI.0

Transitional provisions for County Financial Management

11.1 When budgets are approved by the County Council, the following steps shall ensue:

- The county Administration shall submit the approved County development Plan and Budget to the Minister responsible for local government.
- Following approval of the national budget by the Legislature, payment requestsshall be submitted to the Minister responsible for local government along with all relevant supporting documentations.
- The Minister shall verify all supporting documentations to ensure that the request for payment is consistent with the budget approved by the County Council.
- Upon verification, the Minister shall issue a Release to the bank authorizing payments.
- These provisions shall apply until county administrations have full financial and fiscal management capabilities.

PART XII

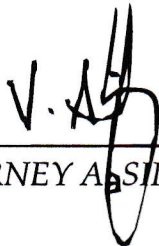
Integrity in County Local Government Service

All officials in county local government service shall demonstrate responsible behavior and conduct at all times. Responsible behavior of those in positions of public trust is essential to good governance. Members of County Council and County Administration shall:

- 12.1 Maintain ethical conduct at all times in their work.
- 12.2 Ensure a respectful workplace that is free of harassment, intimidations and disrespectful behavior.
- 12.3 Adhere to the *Civil Service Standing Orders* and the *National Code of Conduct for Public Officials and Employees* of the Government of Liberia. These Administrative Regulations for County Councils have the full force of the Local Government Law of 2018 and the Revenue Sharing Law of 2021; and shall apply to all county organizations whose representatives shall constitute County Councils in the Republic of Liberia.

Ordered by the
Authority of the Ministry of Internal Affairs

on this _____ of _____ 2023.



HON. VARNEY A. SIRLEAF, MINISTER