We certify this to be the Organisation Rules adopted by the members on 29/8/2021.

Trustee: Lan Trustee:

<sup>1</sup>as amended by the members in accordance with the provisions of the Organisation Rules on the dates set out below.

Date of Members Meeting	Signature of Trustee	Signature of Trustee
4/9/2022	Jonutre	Stari

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Once adopted, the Organisation Rules can be amended in accordance with the provisions of clause 18. If further amendments are made in the future, copies of the previous versions should be retained on file. In the amended version, the amendment table set out on this page should be completed.

# CHINESE GOSPEL CHURCH OXFORD

# **Organisation Rules**

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# Foreword

Organisation Rules is a document that sets out the internal workings of our Church. It sits alongside our Constitution. Both documents should be read together to understand how the Church operates. The distinction between the Constitution and the Organisation Rules is that the Constitution primarily covers matters required by the legislation applicable to Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs) whereas the Organisation Rules primarily covers the Biblical requirements for running a church. The Organisation Rules must always be consistent with our Constitution – if it is inconsistent, the Constitution takes precedence.

The Organisation Rules incorporates our Statement of Faith which sets out the core truths of the Gospel. The charitable purposes of our Church and the activities we carry out must be consistent with our Statement of Faith.

The Organisation Rules also explains the qualifications, privileges and responsibilities of church members and their participation in the decision-making of the church, including the appointment of church leaders, agreeing on ministry priorities and deciding how to use church resources to advance God's kingdom.

Christ is the head of the universal church (Colossians 1:18, Ephesians 5:23). He guides us through the Bible and the Holy Spirit. He also gives us leaders to lead the church and set an example for others to follow. The Bible encourages us to imitate their faith (Hebrews 13:7) and obey them because they are accountable to God (Hebrews 13:17). In our Church, these leaders are called elders, pastors, preachers, and deacons. The Organisation Rules explains the qualifications of the leaders, as well as their responsibilities, nomination and appointment. It also explains the structure of our Church – how Church Members' Meetings, the Board of Elders, Pastoral Team and Coworkers Committee are organised and function.

The Organisation Rules stipulates that certain leaders in our Church are appointed as Trustees. According to the guidelines of the Charity Commission (<u>CC3 – The Essential</u> <u>Trustee</u>), the Trustees are responsible for the overall management of the Church as a charity, including its financial governance and legal compliance. While the Trustees bear the legal responsibility for the Church, spiritual leadership, ministry and pastoral care etc. of the Church are delegated to the Board of Elders as documented in the Organisation Rules.

# 1. Name of Church

- 1.1 The name of our Church is Chinese Gospel Church Oxford.
- 1.2 Our Church is part of the worldwide body of Jesus Christ. It is an independent, nondenominational Christian church.

# 2. Statement of Faith

Our Church accepts the Bible (containing the Old Testament and New Testament only) as the authoritative word of God. We believe and maintain the following:

- 2.1 There is one and only one living and true God. The eternal God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.
- 2.2 The sovereignty of God in creation, revelation, redemption and the final judgment.
- 2.3 The divine inspiration of and infallibility of Holy Scripture, as originally given, and its supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.
- 2.4 The universal sinfulness and guilt of human nature since the Fall, rendering man subject to God's wrath and condemnation.
- 2.5 Redemption from the guilt, penalty and power of sin only through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ (as our Representative and Substitute), the Incarnate Son of God.
- 2.6 The physical resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and his ascension to the right hand of the throne of God the Father.
- 2.7 The necessity of the work of the Holy Spirit to make the death of Christ effective to the individual sinner, granting him repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ.
- 2.8 The indwelling and the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer.
- 2.9 The one holy universal church, which is the Body of Christ, and to which all true believers belong.
- 2.10 Every Christian is a priest to others in that he is a member of a royal priesthood and responsible to Christ for ministering to others.
- 2.11 The expectation of the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

# 3. Christian Ordinances

- 3.1 The Church will conduct baptism and Holy Communion in accordance with the doctrines of the New Testament. The Church understands these sacraments to be symbolic in nature and also means of grace when received by faith. An ordained minister (pastor) will officiate at these ordinances.
- 3.2 Baptism All those who put their trust in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, shall, as an act of obedience and after due preparation, receive the gift of baptism as a sign that

they have turned away from the old life of selfishness and sin, to be identified with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit for a new life of worship and service.

3.3 Holy Communion – The Church will regularly celebrate Holy Communion in remembrance of the blessing of Jesus Christ who gave up his body and shed his blood for the remission of sins. Those who are baptised, duly prepared and in good standing with the Church shall, after personal examination, receive the bread, symbolising the body of Christ and the wine, symbolising his precious blood.

# 4. Marriage and Gender Statements

#### 4.1 Marriage

- 4.1.1 Our Statement of Faith sets out that the Bible is the final authority for all matters of belief and practice. The Church upholds that the teaching of the Bible is that marriage is between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:4-6, Ephesians 5:31-33) and that all sexual practices outside of marriage between a man and a woman are sinful and wrong. This includes homosexual practices (Romans 1:24-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11) regardless of whether or not homosexual marriage is permitted by the laws of England and Wales.
- 4.1.2 This Church holds to the Doctrinal Distinctives on Same-Sex Marriage adopted by the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (FIEC) on this issue. This is available on the FIEC website (<u>https://fiec.org.uk/who-we-are/beliefs/same-sex-marriage</u>).
- 4.1.3 In line with our Statement of Faith it is important that the Church and Church Members in no way condone, promote, assist or encourage adulterous or extramarital sexual practices, whether heterosexual or homosexual.
- 4.2 We recognise that God created us male and female and calls us to live according to our gender identity, which is inseparable from our biological sex determined at conception. Our gender may not be changed or reassigned.

# 5. Objects

The Charity's objects are to advance the Christian Faith in accordance with the Statement of Faith stated herein primarily but not exclusively among people of Chinese descent in Oxfordshire through:

- 5.1 praising and worshiping God and carrying out his will for the Church;
- 5.2 preaching, studying and following the teachings of the Bible;
- 5.3 nurturing the spiritual life of Christians;

- 5.4 promoting Christian fellowship;
- 5.5 spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ;
- 5.6 caring for those in need;
- 5.7 sending missionaries and supporting mission work; and
- 5.8 cooperating with other Christian churches and organisations who share our general aims and beliefs to carry out God's work.

## 6. Church Membership

- 6.1 Those who wish to apply to become a Church member ("Member") must meet the following eligibility criteria at the time of application<sup>2</sup>:
  - 6.1.1 Are age 18 or above.
  - 6.1.2 Have resided in Oxfordshire for at least 6 months.
  - 6.1.3 Have been baptised and are committed to the lordship of Jesus Christ.
  - 6.1.4 Subscribe to the Statement of Faith and Objects.
  - 6.1.5 Subscribe to the Marriage and Gender Statements.
  - 6.1.6 Subscribe to the Constitution and Organisation Rules
  - 6.1.7 Have frequently participated in the Church's Sunday Service during the 6 months immediately prior to the date of application.
- 6.2 Those who satisfy Clause 6.1.1, 6.1.3, 6.1.4, 6.1.5 and 6.1.6 may apply to the Board of Elders to become Associate Members. Such applications are subject to the Board of Elders' approval. Associate Members do not have the right to vote, nominate or stand for election.
- 6.3 Members do not have to give up membership in other churches whose objects and beliefs do not conflict with those of our Church.
- 6.4 Members have the following rights and privileges:
  - 6.4.1 Right to vote, nominate and stand for election.
  - 6.4.2 Right to receive Holy Communion and apply for assistance with weddings and funerals.
  - 6.4.3 Being identified as part of our Church, being nourished by the Church's teaching and fellowship, and benefitting from the pastoral care of the Church.
- 6.5 Members have the following responsibilities and obligations:
  - 6.5.1 Participate frequently in our Sunday Service, commit to our small group(s) and serve the Church with their gifts.
  - 6.5.2 Submit to the authority of Church leaders and subscribe to the Constitution and Organisation Rules, including church discipline.
  - 6.5.3 Support the Church financially and through prayer.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Membership requirements in Clause 10 of the Constitution refer to membership requirements in Clause 6 of the Organisation Rules.

- 6.5.4 Strive to live a holy life and maintain good testimony inside and outside the Church.
- 6.5.5 Participate in Church Members' Meetings.
- 6.6 Application for Church Membership
  - 6.6.1 Applicants must complete an application form, provide personal information as requested and evidence of baptism.
  - 6.6.2 A member of the Board of Elders will arrange to discuss the following with the applicant: (1) how the applicant became a Christian; (2) how the applicant's life has been changed by the power of the Holy Spirit since becoming a Christian; (3) how the applicant sees himself/herself becoming involved in the life of the Church; (4) confirm that the applicant agrees with the Church's beliefs; and (5) confirm that the applicant is willing to fulfil Member's responsibilities and obligations.
  - 6.6.3 The member of the Board of Elders who took part in the discussion with the applicant will then make a recommendation on the application to the Board of Elders. If the Board of Elders proposes to admit an applicant as a Member, two-thirds of its members present and entitled to vote must vote in favour in order for the applicant to be admitted.
- 6.7 A Member who has not participated in any physical or online meeting of the Church within a continuous 12 month period will have his/her right to vote, nominate and stand for election suspended.
- 6.8 Resignation/Cancellation of Church Membership
  - 6.8.1 Members can voluntarily resign from membership by submitting a written letter or email to the Board of Elders.
  - 6.8.2 A Member who has not participated in any physical or online meetings of the church within a continuous 3 year period is assumed to have resigned his/her Membership.
  - 6.8.3 Membership can be terminated through the disciplinary action of the Church.

# 7. Church Members' Meetings<sup>3</sup>

- 7.1 An "Annual General Meeting" (or AGM) is a Church Members' Meeting held each year in accordance with the Constitution. The AGM's agenda includes Members' review and approval of the Church's annual report and financial accounts, appointment of Elders, Pastors, Senior Preachers, Minister-in-Charge, Deacons and Trustees; and other matters.
- 7.2 Besides the AGM, Trustees may convene additional Church Members' Meetings as necessary for Members to discuss and make decisions on pertinent matters.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> "Church Members' Meetings" is the same as "general meetings" in Clause 12 of the Constitution.

- 7.3 The AGM and other Church Members' Meetings will be conducted in accordance with the provisions in this Clause 7 and other relevant provisions in the Constitution.
- 7.4 All Church Members will be given at least 14 clear days' advanced written notice of Church Members' Meetings.
- 7.5 To make decisions at a Church Members' Meeting there must be enough Members there to form a 'quorum'. Our quorum is 30% of all current Members or 10 Members, whichever is higher. A proxy vote will not count towards the quorum.
- 7.6 Most decisions at a Church Members' Meeting can be made by a simple majority (over 50%) of Members present and voting (including proxy votes).
- 7.7 Some significant decisions will require the number of Members voting in favour to be over 75% (including proxy votes).
- 7.8 For the election of Elders, Pastors, Senior Preachers, Minister-in-Charge, Deacons and Trustees, at least two-thirds of the Members present and entitled to vote (including proxy votes) must vote in favour for the individual to be elected.
- 7.9 Voting will be conducted by secret ballot; results will be announced before the end of the meeting.
- 7.10 The Trustees must, within 21 days, call a Church Members' Meeting if they receive a request to do so from at least 20% of the Members. Such meeting must be held within 28 days of the date on which it is called.
- 7.11 Church notices will be sent to the Member's last registered address or email address, which will be regarded as a valid notice.

## 8. Board of Elders

- 8.1 The Board of Elders is made up of Elders, Pastors and Senior Preachers.
- 8.2 The Board of Elders is responsible for directing the affairs of the Church, including spiritual leadership, ministry and pastoral care, etc. This includes nominating and dismissing individuals for election as well as planning and making decisions for various ministries.
- 8.3 The number of members on the Board of Elders who do not receive a salary from the Church must exceed the number of members who receive a salary.
- 8.4 The term of office of a member of the Board of Elders is limited to six consecutive years. At the expiration of the term, he/she must exit the Board of Elders for one year, and may re-join in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Organisation Rules.

- 8.5 The Board of Elders will elect among its members a chairperson and a secretary. The chairperson will be the ex-officio chairperson of the Board of Trustees and Church Members' Meetings. The chairperson must be an Elder.
- 8.6 The Board of Elders must have a minimum of five members. If the number falls below this level, the remaining members of the Board of Elders will appoint additional individuals from among the Deacons and Preachers to join the Board of Elders in order to reach the minimum number required.
- 8.7 The Board of Elders will meet at least once a quarter.
- 8.8 The Board of Elders will invite qualified individuals to serve as Church advisors if necessary.

#### 9. Pastoral Team

- 9.1 The Pastoral Team is made up of all pastors, preachers and lay preachers of the Church.
- 9.2 The Pastoral Team is responsible for supervising and coordinating various ministry departments in accordance with the Church's annual ministry plan.
- 9.3 The Pastoral Team advises the Board of Elders on ministry matters, including the establishment, abolishment, and merger of ministry departments. The Pastoral Team will propose to the Board of Elders an annual ministry plan for the Church prior to 15 November each year.

# **10.** Ministry Departments and Coworkers Committee

- 10.1 The Board of Elders will set up ministry departments as needed, and appoint at least one Elder, Pastor, Senior Preacher, Preacher, Deacon or lay leader to lead each ministry department. The department leader may recruit Church Members as needed to join the department, subject to prior consultation with the Pastoral Team for coordination purposes.
- 10.2 Prior to the AGM, each ministry department will submit its annual report to the Pastoral Team for consolidation and submission to the Board of Elders.
- 10.3 Prior to 1 November each year, each ministry department will propose an annual plan and budget, which will be coordinated by the Pastoral Team for submission to the Board of Elders as a proposed annual ministry plan for the Church.

10.4 The Coworkers Committee is made up of all Elders, Deacons, Pastoral Team members, ministry department leaders and members, and small group leaders. The Coworkers Committee is responsible for discussing day-to-day affairs of the Church in accordance with the annual ministry plan and praying together.

## 11. Pastors, Preachers, Minister-in-Charge

- 11.1 Pastor and Senior Preacher The Board of Elders may propose the appointment of a Pastor or Senior Preacher if necessary. The decision to invite an individual to serve as a Pastor or as a Senior Preacher is made by the Church Members, on the recommendation of the Board of Elders. A Church Members' Meeting will be called for this purpose and at least two-thirds of Church Members present and entitled to vote must vote in favour for the individual to be appointed. The re-appointment of a Pastor or Senior Preacher will be decided by the Board of Elders.
- 11.2 Qualifications: Pastors and Senior Preachers must have the qualifications of Elders described in the Bible (1 Timothy 3:2-7; 1 Peter 5:2-3; and Titus 1:6-9). They must be strong in the faith and good at teaching, gifted at counselling and pastoral care. They must fully subscribe to our Constitution and Organisation Rules.
- 11.3 Minister-in-Charge A Minister-in-Charge will be appointed from among the Elders, Pastors and Senior Preachers. The Minister-in-Charge is responsible for promoting the overall ministry of the Church. The decision to invite an individual to serve as the Minister-in-Charge is made by the Church Members, on the recommendation of the Board of Elders. A Church Members' Meeting will be called for this purpose and at least two-thirds of Church Members present and entitled to vote must vote in favour for the individual to be appointed. The re-appointment of the Minister-in-Charge will be decided by the Board of Elders.
- 11.4 Preachers and staff coworkers: The Board of Elders may appoint preachers and staff coworkers who may receive a salary to assist in Church ministries as the need arises.
- 11.5 The Minister-in-Charge, Pastors, Senior Preachers, preachers and staff coworkers are responsible to the Board of Elders. Each of them may already be a Church Member or may become a Church Member when they take up the role.
- 11.6 The Pastor, Senior Preacher, preacher and staff coworker must enter into an employment contract with the Church if he/she is to receive a salary from the Church. The contract must specify the term of employment (from 1 year to 5 years) and the mutual expectations of both parties. Subject to the requirements of employment law, either party may terminate the contract with prior written notice before the contract expires. If the Board of Elders proposes to terminate the contract, the proposal must be approved by a two-thirds majority of a Board of Elders meeting convened for this purpose. The Board of Elders must act in accordance with the requirements of employment law (if applicable).

- 11.7 The Board of Elders may appoint suitable persons as lay preachers.
- 11.8 The Board of Elders may nominate a person to be ordained as a pastor of the Church. A Church Members' Meeting will be called for this purpose and two-thirds of Church Members present and entitled to vote must vote in favour in order for the resolution to be passed. Prior to nominating the individual for ordination, the Board of Elders must consult thoroughly with the Coworkers Committee.

## 12. Elders

- 12.1 Qualifications: Elders serve the Church as leaders but do not receive salary from the Church. Those nominated as Elders must have the qualifications described in the Bible, including 1 Timothy 3:1-13, Titus 1:6-9, and 1 Peter 5:2-3. The Elder must be a godly person, has good reputation both inside and outside the church, fully subscribe to the Constitution and Organisation Rules and must have served as a Deacon of the Church for over one year.
- 12.2 Election: Elders are nominated by the Board of Elders. Two-thirds of the Church Members present and entitled to vote at a Church Members' Meeting must vote in favour in order for an Elder to be elected for a term of two years.
- 12.3 Responsibilities: Elders and the Pastoral Team jointly shoulder the responsibility of meeting the spiritual needs of the Church. Elders will participate in all pastoral ministries except for those that are required by law to be performed by ordained pastors. Elders will assist with the celebration of Holy Communion. All Elders are exofficio Trustees of the Church.
- 12.4 Term of office: The term of office of an Elder is two years. The Elder will retire at the end of the term. Elders can be re-elected but after serving three consecutive terms they must step down from the Board of Elders for one year.

#### 13. Deacons

- 13.1 Qualifications: Deacons serve the Church but do not receive salary from the Church. Deacons must have the Biblical qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and must fully subscribe to the Constitution and Organisation Rules. A Deacon must have been a Church Member for over a year.
- 13.2 Election: Deacons are nominated for election by the Board of Elders. Two-thirds of Church Members present and entitled to vote at a Church Members' Meeting must vote in favour in order for a Deacon to be elected for a term.

- 13.3 Responsibilities: Deacons assist the Board of Elders in managing the general affairs of the Church, as well as Church resources and their usage. Deacons, if invited by the Board of Elders, may attend Board of Elders meetings.
- 13.4 Term of office: The term of office of a Deacon is two years. Deacons can be re-elected but after serving three consecutive terms they must step down for one year.

# 14. Church Discipline<sup>4</sup>

- 14.1 A Church Member may be subject to church discipline for any of the following reasons:
  - 14.1.1 They no longer affirm (or their conduct is inconsistent with) Clause 2 (Statement of Faith) and/or Clause 4 (Statements on Christian Ordinances and Marriage and Gender).
  - 14.1.2 They commit sin openly.
  - 14.1.3 They refuse to repent of sin committed (including making false and malicious allegations) against another person or Church Member.
  - 14.1.4 They are causing unreasonable division or dissension in the Church.
  - 14.1.5 They are no longer willing to submit to the leadership and authority of the Church.
- 14.2 When a situation with disciplinary implications is brought to the attention of the Board of Elders, the Board of Elders will appoint 2 members to investigate and try to resolve in accordance with biblical principles. They will report back to the Board of Elders.
- 14.3 If the Board of Elders is formally considering whether or not to remove the Church Member from membership, they will write to the Church Member to explain why they are considering removing their membership. The Board of Elders will give the Church Member 21 clear days' notice of a meeting at which they will formally consider whether to propose that the Church Member be removed from membership. The Church Member will be invited to make representations either at the meeting or in writing before the meeting. They can either make such representations themselves or ask a representations when deciding whether to propose removal of the Church Member from membership.
- 14.4 For the Board of Elders to remove a Church Member from membership, two-thirds of members of the Board of Elders present and entitled to vote must vote in favour in order for Church Membership to be removed.
- 14.5 If the Board of Elders proposes to terminate the appointment of an Elder, Pastor, Senior Preacher, Minister-in-Charge, Deacon or Trustee as a result of church discipline

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> This section explains the reasons that our Church may need to exercise discipline and the procedure we will follow based on the Bible's teaching. This Church Regulations must include provisions relating to removal of church membership and church discipline, as the Constitution (e.g. Clause 10.4) cross-refers to the Church Regulations on these points. Accurate and fair records of the disciplinary process should be maintained under Data Protection Act 2018.

or the appointed individual no longer displays the qualities required to fulfil his/her responsibilities, two-thirds of members of the Board of Elders present and entitled to vote must vote in favour in order for the appointment to be terminated. The Board of Elders must act in accordance with the requirements of employment law (if applicable).

## 15. Trustees

- 15.1 The Trustees are responsible for the overall management of the Church as a charity, including its financial governance and legal compliance. While the Trustees bear the legal responsibility for the Church, the spiritual direction, ministry and pastoral care etc. of the Church are delegated to the Board of Elders.
- 15.2 Eligibility: A Trustee must be an Elder or Deacon of the Church. There must be at least 3 Trustees. A Trustee's family member must not be appointed as another Trustee.
- 15.3 Election: The Constitution sets out how Trustees are appointed. Trustees are nominated for appointment by the Board of Elders and appointed by the Church Members. Two-thirds of Church Members present and voting must vote in favour for the individual to be appointed. If the number of Trustees falls below 3, the Board of Elders has the right to appoint one or more Deacons to serve as Trustee(s) in order to reach the minimum number of Trustees required.
- 15.4 The Trustees' scope of work<sup>5</sup> includes (but is not limited to) serving as the legal representatives of the Church, making sure the Church's operations comply with legal requirements, formulating and updating Church policies, applying financial controls, facilitating independent examination (or audit) of Church accounts, overseeing the human resource system, drafting Church budget and integrating the budgets submitted by various ministry departments. The Trustees may form and delegate authority to committees to assist them. The Trustees must meet at least once a quarter.
- 15.5 Term of office: The term of office of the Trustee is two years. Trustees can be reelected but after serving three consecutive terms they must step down for one year.

# **16.** Treasurer and Secretary

- 16.1 The Board of Elders will appoint a Deacon as the Church Treasurer who reports to the Trustees. The Treasurer is responsible for:
  - 16.1.1 maintaining bank account(s), bookkeeping, recording all transactions and ensuring they are properly authorised, completing monthly bank reconciliation and coordinating with independent examiners;
  - 16.1.2 preparing income and expenditure summary for reporting at the Church's Sunday Service; and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The legal duties of trustees as a matter of charity law extend beyond the specific responsibilities set out here.

- 16.1.3 preparing annual financial statements and balance sheet (in accordance with the laws governing charities) for review and sign-off by professionallyqualified independent examiners, which will be presented at the AGM for approval by Church Members.
- 16.2 The Board of Elders will appoint a Deacon or a lay leader as the Church Secretary who reports to the Trustees. The Church Secretary is responsible for:
  - 16.2.1 Organising Church Members' Meetings (including preparing and sending notices, and taking minutes);
  - 16.2.2 making sure that Church Members' Meetings follow provisions of the Constitution and Organisation Rules; and
  - 16.2.3 maintaining the register of Church Members.
  - 16.2.4 Assisting the Board of Trustees in managing human resource documentation of Church employees and volunteers.

## **17.** Policies and Procedures

- 17.1 The Trustees have put in place the following Church policies and procedures to meet legal requirements and guide our operations. They are regularly reviewed and updated as necessary.
  - a) Complaints Handling Policy
  - b) Conflict of Interest Policy
  - c) Disciplinary Procedure
  - d) Donation Acceptance Policy
  - e) Grievance Procedure
  - f) HR Procedure
  - g) Paying Staff Policy
  - h) Privacy Policy
  - i) Reserves Policy
  - j) Safeguarding Policy
  - k) Volunteer Management Policy

## 18. Amendments

18.1 The Board of Elders may recommend changes be made to the Organisation Rules. 75% of Church Members present and entitled to vote at a Church Members' Meeting must vote in favour in order for the Organisation Rules to be amended.