

## **International Karate-do Goju-Kai Association (I.K.G.A.)**

### **The Regulations of the International Karate-do Goju-Kai Association**

The International Karate-do Goju-Kai Association (I.K.G.A.) was established in 1965 by Master Gogen Yamaguchi, the highest ranking master (Saiko Shihan) and he served as its first president until May 20, 1989 when he passed away. His instruction was offered in some twenty countries. With his death, one of his sons, Master Goshi Yamaguchi succeeded him as the second president and the highest ranking master of the association in January, 1990. The honorary title of “Kensei” (the Saint of Karate) was conferred on the late Master Gogen Yamaguchi by the Japan Karate-do Goju-Kai Association and it has been agreed ever since that he is called “Kaiso” (the founder).

The aims of the association are two-fold: (1) to promote and develop Yamaguchi Goju-Kai Karate-do initiated by Master Gogen Yamaguchi; (2) to promote international friendship among its members through the training of Karate-do and to help cultivate the character of the youth in the world so as to contribute to the promotion of world peace. Anyone who is interested in training in Yamaguchi Goju-Kai Karate-do and is willing to conform to these aims and regulations is eligible for membership.

### **Headquarters**

The governing body of the I.K.G.A. consists of the President and Vice Presidents, which will be known as the Presidents Council (hereafter referred to as the “PC”).

The appointment of Vice Presidents, advisers and secretariat staff shall be decided upon by the President and his Presidents Council (PC).

### **Overseas branches**

The I.K.G.A. members shall group themselves into overseas branches, each of which represents the Goju-Kai in the respective countries and such a branch shall be called, for instance, the I.K.G.A. of Canada. The management of an overseas branch shall be undertaken by the local board of instructors presided over by the head of that overseas branch, the “Shibucho” or Branch Chief. In case no “Shibucho” or

Branch Chief is appointed for the country, the management of the branch shall be done by the local board members. The management of the branch shall be democratically handled and it shall represent the interests of all the local members.

The Branch Chief or the board members shall be appointed by the Bloc Director, (in the case of no Bloc Director, the PC will make the appointment), and he/she will be commissioned to carry out the following.

1. To submit a management report of the local branch on request of the Bloc Director.
2. The application for the authorization of the local dojo, the provision of dojo certificates and the collection of fees.
3. The submission of the membership list, the distribution of international membership cards and the collection of membership fees.
4. To submit the application forms for the Dan grades and Instructor Certificates, the provision of such certificates, and the collection of certificate fees.

### **Regional blocs**

The overseas I.K.G.A. members shall be grouped into regional blocs by the decision of the PC and jointly carry out the I.K.G.A. activities in each bloc.

The blocs are listed below as of June 6, 1991.

1. African Bloc
2. Asian Bloc (Including the Middle East)
3. European Bloc
4. Oceania Bloc
5. North American Bloc
6. South American Bloc

To ensure the smooth operation of the bloc-based activities, there may be Bloc Directors appointed by the PC. The director shall coordinate the I.K.G.A. activities within the bloc and ensure that such activities are in the best interests of the I.K.G.A.. a Vice-President can concurrently serve as the Bloc Director if requested by the PC. In case no Bloc Director is appointed, the President or delegated member of the PC shall assume the duties of the Bloc Director.

The Bloc Director shall be commissioned to carry out the following:

1. The supervision and regulation of the bloc and the exchange among country Branch Chiefs within the bloc.
2. The supervision of the instructors within the bloc
3. To keep details of all the Branch Chiefs and instructors in his/her bloc
4. To keep an up to date Dan grading list of the bloc
5. The recommendation for Shihan titles Kyoshi and Renshi within the bloc and the provision of the application forms, and the collection of certificate fees on behalf of the Hombu Dojo.

### **Guidelines for Temporary and Permanent Appointments**

1. In the case of leave of absence or sickness the Bloc Director has the authority to make a temporary appointment of someone in his or her bloc and to notify the I.K.G.A. Hombu Dojo.
2. In the case of death, retirement, suspension, or expulsion, the PC will consult, and the I.K.G.A. President will announce the official appointment.
3. New permanent appointment in the bloc will be recommended to the PC for consideration, then the I.K.G.A. President will make the official appointment.

### **Activities**

The I.K.G.A. shall undertake the following:

1. To issue stickers for individual annual membership.
2. To issue international membership cards.
3. To issue instructors' qualifying certificates.
4. To issue certificates for authorized dojo.
5. The provision of grading tests.
6. To issue Dan Certificates.
7. To issue certificates for Shihan titles.
8. The arrangements for tournaments and training seminars.
9. The publication of textbooks and materials.
10. The publication and dispatch of the I.K.G.A. newsletters.
11. The dispatch of instructors approved by the Headquarters and the Bloc Director. (No instructor will visit another country for teaching purposes without prior approval by the relevant Bloc Directors involved and the Hombu Dojo)

### **Instructors**

Any I.K.G.A. member who holds Third Dan or higher is eligible to be recommended by the Branch Chief for an instructor license issued by the I.K.G.A. Headquarters which cover the following titles

Third Dan	Senior Instructor (Shidojin)
Fourth Dan and Fifth Dan	Assistant Master (Jokyo)

Any I.K.G.A. member who holds Fifth Dan or higher is eligible to be recommended by the Bloc Director for the following shihan licences

Fifth Dan, Sixth Dan, and Seventh Dan	Master (Shihan) Renshi
Seventh Dan and Eighth Dan	Master (Shihan) Kyoshi
Eighth Dan and above	Master (Shihan) Hanshi

Under certain circumstances an I.K.G.A. member who holds Second Dan is eligible to be recommended by the Branch Chief to teach under the supervision of a Third Dan or above and will hold the title of Jun-Shidojin, however there is no official license or certificate for this title.

### **Authorized Dojos**

Any dojo representing the I.K.G.A. must be authorized by and registered with the Hombu headquarters.

One of the privileges of those dojos is the recognized usage of the official name of the I.K.G.A. and the emblem of Yamaguchi Goju-Kai Karate-do. Those who withdraw from or are expelled from the I.K.G.A. shall be prohibited to use the official name of the I.K.G.A. and the emblem of Yamaguchi Goju-Kai Karate-do.

### **International Membership Cards**

All I.K.G.A. instructors and students are required to possess an I.K.G.A. international membership card issued by the I.K.G.A. Headquarters or a passport issued by the I.K.G.A. overseas branch for identification and must include a current I.K.G.A. sticker. Only the holder of the legitimate membership card or the passport is eligible to participate in I.K.G.A. sponsored programs such as examinations, seminars, and championships.

## **Grading Tests**

The grading tests of the varied levels may be carried out by the following instructors:

Junior Instructors (Jun-Shidoin)	Up to 1 <sup>st</sup> Kyu
Senior Instructors (Shidoin)	Up to 1 <sup>st</sup> Dan
Assistant Master (Jokyo)	Up to 2 <sup>nd</sup> Dan
Master (Shihan)	Up to 3 <sup>rd</sup> Dan

All gradings must be at the discretion of the Bloc director and the Shibuchō.

All examinations for 4th dan and above shall be in the presence of Saiko Shihan, or a high ranking master appointed and conducted with the approval of Saiko Shihan and/or the Bloc Director, and must be in accordance with the official grading syllabus of the I.K.G.A..

## **Certificates of Dan and Kyu Grades**

The Kyu grade certificates can be issued and authorized by the branch headquarters of respective countries. The Dan certificates must be issued from the I.K.G.A. Hombu Headquarters in the name of Soke (Yamaguchi Family), the highest ranking master. They shall be divided into two divisions: (1) the junior division (fifteen years of age and under), the highest grade of which may be Second Dan; (2) the senior/adult division (sixteen years of age and above), the qualifications for which shall be as follows:

First Dan	Upon recommendation of the Branch Chief.
Second Dan	A minimum of two years of regular training after the acquisition of First Dan.
Third Dan	Must be a minimum of 23 years of age or older. More than three years of regular training after the acquisition of Second Dan.
Fourth Dan	More than four years of regular training after the acquisition of Third Dan. (Fourth Dan and above must receive the approval of the Bloc Director).
Fifth Dan	More than five years of regular training after the acquisition of Fourth Dan.

These are recommended minimum periods, but may be varied at the discretion of the Saiko-Shihan and the Bloc Director. The detailed qualifications for the application for Sixth Dan and above shall be specified elsewhere.

A probationary system which involves such grades as Shodan-ho or Nidan-ho is optional and can be adopted, and the details for such shall be specified elsewhere.

### **Certificates of Shihan Titles**

Certificates of Shihan titles mean certificates of Hanshi, Kyoshi and Renshi.

Certificates of Shihan titles must be issued from the I.K.G.A. Headquarters in the name of Soke, Saiko Shihan.

A Fifth Dan holder (after 2 years from the date of receiving Fifth Dan) shall be entitled to apply for Renshi Shihan title upon the recommendation of the Bloc Director to the I.K.G.A. Headquarters.

A Seventh Dan holder who has obtained the Renshi Shihan title shall be entitled to apply for Kyoshi Shihan title upon the recommendation of the Bloc Director to the I.K.G.A. Headquarters.

Only the Saiko Shihan can award the title Hanshi

### **Fees**

(The exact fees for the following will be distributed in a separate document. All fees are to be paid in USD)

#### *Dojo License Fees*

All official I.K.G.A. dojos must have a Dojo License issued by the Headquarters. This Dojo License needs to be renewed every 5 years

#### *Individual Membership Fees*

The payment of the individual annual membership fee shall be provided as follows

1. Each country branch (or the bloc) shall collect the fees and forward them to the I.K.G.A. Headquarters.

2. On payment, a membership sticker shall be issued by the I.K.G.A. Headquarters and shall be placed on the membership card, or the identification book (where applicable).

#### *Dan Grade Certificate Fees*

The issue of all Dan Grade Certificates must be done only by the I.K.G.A. Headquarters and must be signed personally by the Saiko Shihan and the Bloc Director.

The fees for Dan Grade Certificates together with the application forms shall be submitted to the I.K.G.A. Headquarters by each country branch or each bloc collectively.

The fees shall be distributed to the I.K.G.A. Headquarters, the bloc and the country branch.

The certificate fees shall be decided by the I.K.G.A. Headquarters.

#### *Instructor Certificate Fees*

The Bloc Director or the Branch Chief shall apply to the I.K.G.A. Headquarters for the Instructor Certificate on behalf of qualified instructors (Shidoi).

#### **Penalty / Disciplinary Action**

When any official member of the I.K.G.A. commits an act which harms the prestige or reputation of the I.K.G.A., and fails to comply with the rules and regulations of the I.K.G.A., the I.K.G.A. shall take appropriate disciplinary action, depending on the severity of the harmful act. (This may include the cancellation of his or her qualifications and licenses, or a punishment such as expulsion from the I.K.G.A.).

**Confirmation**

Each and every Bloc Director and Branch Chief must receive a copy of these amended rules and regulations, read them thoroughly, and must acknowledge that they understand, accept, and agree with the contents of the document, by signing and dating their written oath, and returning it to the I.K.G.A. Headquarters.

**Document History**

- June 6, 1991                   – Original
- December 1, 2008           – Format revision and updated fees
- November 22, 2015         – Full document revision

This document takes effect as of November 22<sup>th</sup>, 2015.