

## **Appendix 51 -- Organic Law of the Villagers Committees of the People's Republic of China (1988)**

Source: National People's Congress Database of Laws and Regulations. Available at: [http://www.npc.gov.cn/englishnpc/Law/2007-12/11/content\\_1383542.htm](http://www.npc.gov.cn/englishnpc/Law/2007-12/11/content_1383542.htm)

(For Trial Implementation) 1988.06.01

Standing Committee of the National People's Congress Organic Law of the Villagers Committee of the People's Republic of China (For Trial Implementation)

(Adopted at the 23rd Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Sixth National People's Congress on November 24, 1987, and promulgated by Order No. 59 of the President of the People's Republic of China on November 24, 1987 for trial implementation as of June 1, 1988)

Article 1. This Law is formulated in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China with a view to ensuring self-government by the villagers in the countryside, who will administer their own affairs in accordance with the law, and promoting socialist democracy at the grassroots level, socialist material development, and the building of an advanced socialist culture and ideology in the rural areas.

Article 2. The villagers committee shall be the primary mass organization of self-government, in which the villagers manage their own affairs, educate themselves, and serve their own needs. It shall manage the public affairs and public welfare services of the village, mediate disputes among the villagers, help maintain public order, and convey the villages' opinions and demands and make suggestions to the people's government.

Article 3. The people's government of a township, a nationality township or a town shall give guidance, support and help to the villagers committees in their work. The villagers committees, on their part, shall assist the above people's government in its work.

Article 4. The villagers committee shall support and organize the villagers in co-operative economic undertakings in various forms, such as those for production, supply and marketing, credit or consumption, provide services and coordination for production in the village, and promote the development of socialist production and construction and the socialist commodity economy in the countryside. The villagers committee shall respect the decision-making power of collective economic organizations in conducting their economic activities independently as prescribed by law, and safeguard the lawful right of property and other lawful rights and interests of collective economic organizations, villagers, households operating under contract, associated households or partnerships.

The villagers committee shall, in accordance with the law, administer affairs concerning the land and other property owned collectively by the villagers and disseminate knowledge among the villagers about a rational utilization of the natural resources and the protection and improvement of the ecological environment.

Article 5. The villagers committee shall publicize the Constitution and the laws, regulations and state policies among the villagers; persuade them to perform their obligations as prescribed by law and to take good care of public property; safeguard the villagers' lawful rights and interests; promote unity and mutual assistance with other villages; and carry out various forms of activities conducive to the building of an advanced socialist culture and ideology.

Article 6. In villages where people from more than one nationality live, the villagers committees shall persuade the villagers to enhance the unity, mutual assistance and mutual respect between different nationalities.

Article 7. Villagers committees shall be established on the basis of the distribution of the villagers and the sizes of the population and on the principle of facilitating self-government by the masses. Villagers committees shall generally be established in natural villages; several natural villages may jointly establish a villagers committee; a large natural village may establish several villagers committees. The establishment or dissolution of a villagers committee or a readjustment in the area governed by it shall be proposed by the people's government of a township, a nationality township or a town and reported to a people's & government at the county level for approval after it is discussed and agreed to by a villagers assembly.

Article 8. A villagers committee shall be composed of 3-7 members, including the chairman, the vice-chairman (vice-chairmen) and the members. The members of a villagers committee shall include an appropriate number of women. In villages where people from more than one nationality live, they shall include a member or members from the nationality or nationalities with a smaller population. Members of a villagers committee shall not be divorced from production and may be provided with appropriate subsidies in certain circumstances.

Article 9. The chairman, vice-chairman or vice-chairmen and members of a villagers committee shall be elected directly by the villagers. The term of office for a villagers committee shall be three years, and its members may continue to hold office when reelected. Any villager who has reached the age of 18 shall have the right to elect and stand for election, regardless of his ethnic status, race, sex, occupation, family background, religious belief, education, property status and length of residence, with the exception of persons who have been deprived of political rights in accordance with the law.

Article 10. The villagers assembly shall be composed of villagers at or above the age of 18. The villagers assembly may be attended by villagers at or above the age of 18 or by a representative or representatives of each household. When necessary, representatives of enterprises, institutions and mass organizations located in the village may be invited to attend the assembly. Decisions of the villagers assembly shall be made by a simple majority, either of the villagers at or above the age of 18 or of the representatives of the households.

Article 11. The villagers committee shall be responsible to the villagers assembly and report on its work to the latter. The villagers assembly shall be convened and presided over by the villagers committee. When proposed by over one-fifth of the villagers, the villagers assembly shall be convened. When matters involving the interests of all the villagers arise, the villagers committee shall refer them to the villagers assembly for decision through discussion. The villagers assembly shall have the power to recall members of the villagers committee and hold a by-election.

Article 12. In making decisions, a villagers committee shall apply the principle whereby the minority is subordinate to the majority. In its work the villagers committee shall persist in the mass line, give full play to democracy, carefully heed dissenting opinions and shall not resort to coercion and commandism or retaliation.

Article 13. Members of a villagers committee shall observe the Constitution, the laws, regulations and state policies, be fair in handling affairs and serve the villagers warmheartedly.

Article 14. The villagers committee shall, when necessary, establish sub-committees for people's mediation, public security, public health and other matters. Members of the villagers committee may concurrently be members of the sub-committees. The villagers committee of a village with a small population may dispense with the sub-committees; instead, members of the villagers committee shall have a division of responsibilities with respect to people's mediation, public security, public health and other work.

Article 15. The villagers committee may set up villagers groups, the heads of which shall be elected at group meetings.

Article 16. Rules and regulations for a village and villagers pledges shall be drawn up by the villagers assembly through discussion, reported to the people's government of a township, nationality township or town for the record, and implemented under the supervision of the villagers committee. The rules and regulations for a village and villagers pledges shall not contravene the Constitution, the laws or the regulations.

Article 17. The funds needed by the villagers committee for managing public

affairs and public welfare services of the village shall be decided on by the villagers assembly through discussion and may be raised from local economic organizations and the villagers. The accounts of revenues and expenditures shall be made public regularly for supervision by the villagers and local economic organizations.

Article 18. Persons who have been deprived of political rights in accordance with the law shall be included in villagers groups. The villagers committee shall exercise supervision over them and give them ideological education and help.

Article 19. Personnel of government organs, mass organizations, units of the armed forces, and enterprises and institutions owned by the whole people, which are located in the countryside, shall not join the organizations of the villagers committees; personnel of collectively-owned enterprises and institutions that are not run by the villages may not join the organizations of the villagers committees. However, all the above personnel shall abide by the rules and regulations for the villages and the villagers pledges. When the villagers committees of the villages where these units are located discuss problems related to them and their presence becomes necessary, these units shall send representatives to the meetings.

Article 20. The standing committees of the people's congresses of provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the Central Government shall, in accordance with this Law and in the light of their local conditions, define the steps and formulate the measures for the implementation of this Law.

Article 21. Trial implementation of this Law shall begin as of June 1, 1988.