

AMENDMENT NO. 19

AMENDMENT OF FORMER ARTICLE 17: OATH OF OFFICE; AND FORMER ARTICLE 22: OFFICIAL SEAL, FLAG AND LANGUAGES

DESCRIPTION OF CHANGES
PROPOSED BY THE
CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

AMENDED CONSTITUTION AS PROPOSED
BY THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

Title: The title of former Article 22 has been changed from “Official Seal, Flag and Languages” to “Commonwealth Unity.”

Section 1: No change (This is former Article 17, Section 1.)

Section 2: The date “1978” has been substituted for the words “official seal” on the official seal. The color Marianas Trench blue has been specified for the seal. (This is former Article 22, Section 1.)

Section 3: No change (This is former Article 22, Section 2.)

Section 4: None (This is former Article 22, Section 3.)

Section 5: This specifies that Saipan is the capital of the Commonwealth. (This is new.)

ARTICLE XIX: COMMONWEALTH UNITY

Section 1: Oath of Office.

All members of the legislature and officers and employees of the Commonwealth and its political subdivisions taking office shall take and subscribe to the following oath or affirmation:

I do solemnly affirm (or swear) that I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America, the applicable provisions of the Constitution, laws and treaties of the United States of America, and that I will faithfully discharge my duties to the best of my ability (so help me God).

Section 2: Official Seal.

The official seal of the Commonwealth shall consist of a circular field of Marianas Trench blue having in its center a white star superimposed on a gray latte stone, surrounded by the traditional Carolinian mwaar consisting of the following flowers: langilang, flores mayo, angagha, and teibwo, on the outer border, and the words encircling the mwaar, “Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands” and “1978.”

Section 3: Official Flag.

The official flag of the Commonwealth shall consist, on both sides of a rectangular field of blue, a white star in the center, superimposed on a gray latte stone, surrounded by the traditional Carolinian mwaar. The dimension of the flag, the mwaar, the star and latte stone shall be provided by law.

Section 4: Official Languages.

The official languages of the Commonwealth shall be Chamorro, Carolinian and English, as deemed appropriate and as enforced by the legislature. The legislature may provide that government proceedings and documents shall be in at least one of the three languages. This section shall not be subject to judicial review.

Section 5: Capital.

Saipan shall be the capital of the Commonwealth.

SCHEDULE ON TRANSITIONAL AND RELATED MATTERS

Section 8: General Transitional Provisions.

a) Except as provided in this Schedule, amendments to the Constitution shall take effect immediately after ratification by the voters.

b) Laws in force in the Commonwealth on the day preceding the effective date of any constitutional amendment that are consistent with the Constitution as amended shall continue in force until they expire or are amended or repealed.

c) Any amendment proposed by this Convention that is submitted to the people for ratification at the same election as an amendment proposed by the legislature that relates to the same subject shall supersede the legislature's amendment if both are ratified irrespective of the number of votes each amendment receives. The legislature shall make no law inconsistent with this provision or that otherwise interferes with the right of the people to vote on the amendments proposed by the Convention. No amendments to the Constitution by legislative initiative shall be presented to the voters at the November 1995 general election or subsequently, other than House Legislative Initiative 9-1, until the people have had an opportunity to decide whether the legislature should continue to have this authority.

d) These transitional provisions shall remain in effect until their terms have been executed. Once each year the attorney general shall review the foregoing provisions and certify to the governor which have been executed. Any provisions so certified shall be removed from this Schedule and no longer published as an attachment to the Constitution. The attorney general shall publish each certification in a newspaper of general circulation.

Former Article 19 has been renumbered as Article 17.

majority). (This combines and amends former Section 2(b), Section 2(c), 2(d), and 5(b).)

Section 4(d): A constitutional amendment approved by the voters becomes effective immediately, or as provided in the text approved by the voters. (This is new.)

d) If a constitutional amendment or consent of the Commonwealth is approved by the voters, it shall become effective immediately or as provided in the text approved by the voters.