

# REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

## LAW ON MEETINGS

2 December 1993 No I-317

(As last amended on 15 July 2014 No XII-1029)

Vilnius

### CHAPTER I

#### GENERAL PROVISIONS

##### **Article 1. Purpose of the Law**

1. This Law shall lay down conditions of ensuring the constitutional right to assembly unarmed in peaceful meetings and the procedure for protecting national and public security, public order, human health and moral principles embedded in legal acts, other rights and freedoms of individuals when organizing meetings or carrying out an individual action, as well as the liability for violations of this Law.

The right and freedom of persons to assembly unarmed in peaceful meetings or to carry out an individual action may be temporarily restricted upon the imposition of martial law or the declaration of a state of emergency.

2. This Law shall not regulate meetings which take place or are organized by:

- 1) state and municipal institutions;
- 2) the President of the Republic, members of the European Parliament elected in the Republic of Lithuania, members of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania and members of municipal councils for meetings with electors;
- 3) wardens or elders in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Local Self-government;
- 4) State-recognized religious communities and associations in order to perform religious rites at cult premises, cemeteries and other places designated by the law;
- 5) political parties, political organizations, political associations, trade unions which are registered in accordance with the procedure laid down by the law and which arrange meetings of their members and individually invited persons pursuant to their regulations in their own or other legally possessed and used premises;
- 6) public and private legal persons, registered in accordance laid down by the law, in their own or other legally possessed and used territories or premises;

7) natural persons in public places, premises of individual use and common premises if the purpose of a peaceful meeting is to satisfy private interests.

3. The Law also shall not regulate meetings if an event is a sports competition, a concert, a recreational or any other public event.

## **Article 2. Definitions**

1. **Preventive measures** means searching and checking in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Republic of Lithuania the organizers and participants of a meeting and the items carried by them.

2. **Meeting** means a peaceful gathering of persons with the aim of expressing their views and opinions publicly and freely and ensuring the expression of individual's civic engagement in society and the State.

3. **Participant of a meeting** means an unarmed person attending a meeting where he implements the right to freedom of expression and to hold opinions.

4. **Forms of a meeting** means meetings, pickets, demonstrations, processions, parades, other peaceful unarmed meetings.

5. **Parties to a meeting** means meeting organizers, persons authorized by them and participants, municipal administration director or his deputy, police officers.

6. **Venue of a meeting** means a place where organizers and participants of a meeting implement their goals.

## **Article 3. Organizers of a meeting**

The following may organize a meeting or an individual action under the conditions and in accordance with the procedure laid down by this Law:

1) citizens of the Republic of Lithuania and member states of the European Union who are 18 years of age and legally capable;

2) foreign nationals having a permanent residence permit in the Republic of Lithuania, issued in accordance with the law;

3) legal persons registered and operating in the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter: "legal persons").

## **Article 4. Time and venue of meetings**

1. Meetings or an individual action may be held in public places, streets, squares, parks of residential areas and public buildings on all days of the week from 8 am till 10 pm. Upon the

coordination, meetings may be organized at any other time of the day, but only in places with fixed lighting and without disturbing resting of local residents.

2. It shall be prohibited to organize meetings and to hold individual actions in state government and administration establishments, municipal institutions, police facilities, arrest houses, remand prisons, penitentiary institutions, healthcare facilities, also in facilities belonging to the national defence system and the system of the State Security Department of the Republic of Lithuania, facilities of prosecutor's offices and courts, in the Bank of Lithuania as well as in other banks operating in the Republic of Lithuania, nuclear energy companies, enterprises of strategic importance to national security and other enterprises classified as important for ensuring national security.

3. Meetings or individual actions near the buildings of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, the Office of the President of the Republic, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and courts may be organized not closer than 75 meters and near other state government and administration establishments, foreign diplomatic missions, municipal institutions, establishments of the system of the State Security Department of the Republic of Lithuania, the police, the prosecutor's office, the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania, the Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Lithuania as well as near other facilities of the national defence system, enterprises of strategic importance to national security and other enterprises classified as important for ensuring national security – not closer than 25 meters from these buildings and facilities.

In all cases free access to the aforementioned buildings and facilities shall be guaranteed.

#### **Article 5. Acts prohibited during meetings**

The following shall be prohibited during a meeting or an individual action:

- 1) to evidently instigate to violate or to actually violate the Constitution or laws of the Republic of Lithuania by delivered speeches, posters, slogan, audiovisual measures and other actions;
- 2) to violate ethical and moral principles;
- 3) to display the flag or state emblem of Nazi Germany, the USSR or the Lithuanian SSR or the flags, insignia or uniforms a constituent part whereof is the flag or state emblem of Nazi Germany, the USSR or the Lithuanian SSR, images of the leaders of Nazi Germany or the Soviet Communist Party responsible for repressions of the Lithuanian population, symbols or uniforms of Nazi or Communist organizations or the flags or insignia based on the flag or state emblem of Nazi Germany, the USSR and Lithuanian SSR, the Nazi swastika, the Nazi

SS sign, the Soviet hammer and sickle sign, the Soviet five-pointed red star sign, or symbols which are misleadingly similar to them and which belong to unconstitutional organizations, as well as to perform the national anthem of Nazi Germany, the USSR or the Lithuanian SSR.

4) to prepare to carry out or to actually carry out in any other way the acts provided for in the Criminal Code of the Republic of Lithuania.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **PROCEDURE FOR COORDINATING A NOTICE OF A PLANNED MEETING**

#### **Article 6. Procedure and time limit for giving notice of a planned meeting**

1. Organizers of a meeting shall notify in a free format the director of the municipal administration or a person deputizing for him about a planned meeting which will be attended by not more than 15 persons.

The provisions of paragraph 3 of this Article and Article 7 of this Law shall not apply to this type of meetings.

2. Organizers of a meeting must, not later than five working days before the planned day of a meeting, submit a written notice to the director of the municipal administration or a person deputizing for him about a planned meeting, which will be attended by more than 15 persons.

3. A notice of a planned meeting must indicate the following:

- 1) the form and content of the meeting;
- 2) the date of the meeting and the time of its beginning and end;
- 3) the venue of the meeting, the routes of parades and processions;
- 4) the planned number of participants;
- 5) requests to the police concerning the maintenance of public order;
- 6) the name, surname and declared place of residence of the organizer or, if the organizer is a legal person, of his representative.

#### **Article 7. Consideration of a notice of a planned meeting, the procedure and time limit for coordinating such notice; appeal procedure**

1. Having received a notice of a planned meeting, the director of the municipal administration or a person deputizing for him shall set the date for coordinating the notice and inform the organizers of the meeting and the police not later than within one working day about the day and time set for coordinating the notice of the planned meeting.

2. A notice of a planned meeting must be coordinated not later than within three working days from the receipt thereof.

3. A notice of a planned meeting shall be coordinated by the director of the municipal administration or a person deputizing for him, organizers of the meeting and police representatives.

Representatives and specialists of other institutions may also participate in coordination of the planned meeting.

4. A document of coordination of a notice of a planned meeting shall be signed by the director of the municipal administration or a person deputizing for him who will immediately hand in or send a copy of the coordination document to the organizers.

5. When two or more organizers of meetings plan to hold the meetings in the same place at the same time, the right of priority to organize a meeting shall belong to the organizer who was the first to submit the notice to the director of the municipal administration or a person deputizing for him.

The director of the municipal administration or a person deputizing for him shall coordinate with other organizers another possible venue or time of a meeting.

6. When celebrating the public holidays - the Day of Re-establishment of the State of Lithuania on February 16, the Day of Re-establishment of Lithuania's Independence on March 11 and the Day of the State (Coronation of King Mindaugas) on July 6, state or municipal institutions shall be granted the right of priority to choose the venue and time of a meeting.

7. Actions (omission) of the director of the municipal administration or a person deputizing for him or coordination of a notice of a planned meeting may be appealed against in accordance with the procedure laid down in the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Administrative Proceedings.

### **CHAPTER III**

#### **PROCEDURE OF HOLDING A MEETING**

##### **Article 8. Procedure of holding a meeting**

1. A meeting shall be started, lead or chaired and ended by its organizers or persons authorized by them.

2. If the organizers of meeting or persons authorized by them fail to inform within an hour from the beginning of the agreed time of the meeting that the beginning of the meeting is

lagging and, therefore, the meeting does not begin, the meeting shall be deemed to not have been held.

#### **Article 9. Grounds for termination of a meeting**

1. Police officers may terminate a meeting or an individual action when the participants:

1) are armed (with firearms and silent arms, items specifically adapted to do bodily injury, set fire or cause material damage, or items that can be used for such purposes) or have flammable, incapacitating or radioactive substances, alcoholic beverages; are dressed in a military uniform or armed with personal armour (helmets, bullet-proof vests, etc.), hiding their faces with masks or otherwise disguised so that they would not be recognized, if it shows their willingness to violate the law;

2) by using the possibilities of a meeting violate public order and calm, attempt to commit or actually commit crimes against the independence, territorial integrity and constitutional order of the State of Lithuania, or other premeditated criminal acts against human life, health, liberty, principles of morality enshrined in the legal rules, property, person's dignity and honour, public security, government and public order;

3) by driving a vehicle or by other actions impede or pose a real threat to the traffic order and safety, interfere with normal activities of state agencies and organizations or municipal agencies, may create emergency situations in companies or agencies whose activities are related to flammable, explosive, or other dangerous objects the turnover of which is limited by the law;

4) are naked or otherwise violate with their appearance or the items held or displayed by them the principles of morality enshrined in the legal rules;

5) grossly and intentionally infringe the procedure for organizing meetings laid down by this Law (agreed format, venue or time of a meeting).

2. Organizers of a meeting or persons authorized by them shall terminate the meeting when it no longer complies with the content of the notice of the planned meeting.

### **CHAPTER IV RIGHTS, OBLIGATIONS AND LIABILITY OF PARTIES TO A MEETING**

#### **Article 10. Rights and obligations of organizers of a meeting**

1. Meeting organizers, persons authorized by them and participants or a person carrying out an individual action must comply with this Law and other laws of the Republic of Lithuania as well as with the set road traffic, fire protection and other regulations, fulfil the lawful orders and demands of police officers and ensure that the meeting venue is left tidy.

2. Organizers of a meeting or persons authorized by them shall have the right to:

1) call to order a participant of the meeting who violates public order or fails to satisfy the requirements laid down by this Law;

2) request that persons who violate public order or fail to satisfy the requirements laid down by this Law leave the meeting; or ask police officers to exclude such persons from the meeting;

3) terminate the meeting and request that the participants leave it.

### **Article 11. Liability of organizers and participants of a meeting**

Meeting organizers, persons authorized by them and participants or a person carrying out an individual action, who have infringed this Law or other laws of the Republic of Lithuania, shall be in the prescribed manner subject to an administrative action or criminal proceedings, held liable for the caused damage and must reimburse the losses.

### **Article 12. Duties and responsibility of the director of the municipal administration or a person deputizing for him**

1. The director of the municipal administration or a person deputizing for him must ensure in accordance with the procedure laid down by this Law smooth coordination of a notice of a planned meeting.

2. The director of the municipal administration or a person deputizing for him may not obligate organizers and participants of a meeting to take measures the implementation of which requires financial resources, except the measures taken to clean up the meeting venue after the meeting.

3. Having violated this Law, the director of the municipal administration or a person deputizing for him shall be subject to an administrative action in the prescribed manner.

### **Article 13. Rights of Police Officers**

1. Police officers shall have the right to terminate a meeting on the grounds specified in Article 9(1) of this Law.

2. If police officers have information that the organizers or participants of a meeting may be in possession of weapons, items or substances dangerous to human health or life, they may adopt a decision to take preventive measures in the approaches to the meeting venue and notify the organizers of the meeting about this. Police officers may take preventive measures also during an individual action carried out by a person.

#### **Article 14. Duties and liability of police officers**

1. Police officers must take part in the coordination of a notice of a planned meeting.
2. Police officers must provide organizational and other statutory possibilities to organize legitimate meetings, to protect rights and freedoms of organizers, participants of a meeting and other persons, national or public security, public order, and human health.
3. If police officers possess or receive criminal intelligence information about the threats to individual's rights and freedoms, national or public security, public order or public health, they must take additional measures to address these threats.
4. Police officers may not obligate organizers and participants of a meeting to take measures the implementation of which requires financial resources.
5. Police officers shall act in compliance with this Law and other laws of the Republic of Lithuania during meetings.
6. Police officers, hindering to organize legitimate meetings and violating this Law or other laws of the Republic of Lithuania, shall be held liable in accordance with the procedure laid down by the law.

*I promulgate this Law passed by the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania.*

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

DALIA GRYBAUSKAITĖ