WHAT IS A FRIENDLY SOCIETY?

A Friendly Society is an Unlimited number of persons who joined together to achieve a common financial or social purpose or both. The members voluntarily bind themselves to rules which are capable of variations in the future, subject to a majority of such members agreeing. A Friendly Society is commonly called a “Poor Man’s Insurance”. It cultivates the practice of thrift, self reliance, self help, and assist in fostering community spirit, poverty eradication, and nation building.

Presently there are one hundred and fifty six (156) registered Friendly Society located in different geographical areas of Trinidad and Tobago. There is a membership of about 30,000 and assets amounting to more than $30 million

THERE ARE SEVERAL TYPES OF FRIENDLY SOCIETIES:-

1. FRATERNAL ORGANISATIONS

A Fraternal Organisation is a group of individuals who utilizes secrecy and ritualistic practice to enable associations with persons of common goals and interests exclusively. Another function of this organization is to provide security through benevolent and protective activities, which are designed to provide aid to members in distress.
2. **WORKING MAN’S CLUB**

This Society is used for sporting activities, propagation of culture and social intercourse. Its origin can be traced to ancient Egypt.

3. **RETIREMENT BENEFIT**

As the name implies, members make contributions and a fixed amount is due upon retirement. Many variations to this Benefit are possible.

4. **JUVENILE SECTION**

Several Societies operate Juvenile Sections to cater for children less than sixteen years of age. These Societies provide continuity for the future of the Movement.

5. **YOUTH FRIENDLY SOCIETY IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

This is aimed at encouraging a culture of saving, self reliance and thrift amongst the youth and promoting the other benefits of Friendly Societies to the next generation.

**WHAT BENEFITS DO THE FRIENDLY SOCIETIES PROVIDE?**

**GENERALLY, THE OBJECTIVES OF A FRIENDLY SOCIETY IS TO IMPROVE THE ECONOMIC WELL BEING OF ITS MEMBERS BY PROVIDING:**

- **FOR THE RELIEF AND MAINTENANCE OF THE MEMBERS AND THEIR DEPENDANTS DURING SICKNESS OR OTHER INFIRMITY**
- **IN OLD AGE OR WIDOWHOOD OR FOR THE RELIEF OR MAINTENANCE OF THE ORPHAN CHILDREN OR MEMBERS DURING MINORITY, DURING DISTRESS CIRCUMSTANCE OR IN THE CASE OF LOSS OR DAMAGE TO THEIR PROPERTY.**
• Ensuring money to be paid on the birth of a member’s child or on the marriage of a member or on the death of a member or for the funeral expense of dependants’ relatives of the member

• Providing insurance against fire on the property of a member

• Providing credit and investment opportunities for its members

• Planning and implementing social, cultural and recreational activities and leisure programme for the benefits of members and families

• To assist to purchase, acquire interest in and ownership of freehold or leasehold lands.

Benefits

• Death benefit

• Sick benefit,

• Optical benefit,

• Dental benefit,

• Maternity benefit

• Retirement benefit

• Investment fund
HOW DOES ONE BECOME A MEMBER OF A FRIENDLY SOCIETY

GENERALLY, A PERSON WISHING MEMBERSHIP, IS RECOMMENDED BY A MEMBER. PERSONS WHO HAVE BEEN CONVICTED IN THE COURTS OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO CANNOT BE ACCEPTED AS A MEMBER. EVERY SOCIETY’S BENEFITS DIFFER. AS A RESULT THE AMOUNTS CONTRIBUTED BY MEMBERS WEEKLY OR MONTHLY ALSO DIFFER.

WHAT CONTRIBUTIONS DO FRIENDLY SOCIETIES MAKE TO THEIR COMMUNITIES?

A FRIENDLY SOCIETY HELPS IN BRINGING A COMMUNITY TOGETHER. IT TEACHES THRIFT AND SELF RELIANCE. IT ASSIST IN UNITING ALL THE PEOPLE REGARDLESS OF COLOUR, CREED RACE AND RELIGION. IT ACTS AS A VANGUARD IN FIGHTING THE SOCIAL ILLS OF THE COMMUNITY.

For further information please contact the Office of the Registry of Friendly Societies,
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