



2025

THE PVO AMENDMENT ACT 2025: THE ULTIMATE YOUTH-LED ORGANISATION SURVIVAL GUIDE

Hey changemakers!

In 2025 The Zimbabwean government has updated the law for non-profits, trusts, and community groups like yours - the Private Voluntary Organisations (PVO) Amendment Act, 2025.

This guide cuts through the legal jargon to give you a clear, actionable understanding of what this means for your youth-led organisation.

Let's break it down.



Who Needs to Register? (The Big Rule)

If your group does any of the following, you **MUST** register as a PVO:

- Works in areas like poverty relief, education, health, human rights, or social development.
- Receives funds or donations from anyone (locally or internationally).
- Collects contributions from the public (like fundraising drives).

 **The Bottom Line:** If you use money from outside your core members to do your work, you need to be registered. No registration = you can't legally operate.

What's New? Key Changes You Should Know



The PVO Board is Back!

A new official board has been created. It includes people from PVOs and different government ministries. This board will have a say in approving registrations.

You Must Report Big Changes

If your organisation goes through a major change, you must report it to the Registrar within one month. Major changes include:

- Changing your main goals (constitution).
- Changing who is in control.
- Changing how your assets will be handled if you shut down.
- Planning to merge with or transfer your registration to another group.

What Happens if You Don't

Follow the Law? ⚠️

Operating without registering, or breaking the key rules, can lead to:

- Hefty fines.
- Jail time (up to 1 or 2 years for some offences).
- Your organisation being shut down..

Tighter Rules on Control & Ownership

The law now looks closely at who really controls and funds an organisation (called "Beneficial Owners" and "Controllers").

- You must disclose these people when you apply.
- This is to prevent organisations from being used for illegal purposes like money laundering.

Your organization must follow these principles.

Know Your Donors: Check where your donations are coming from. If a donor is anonymous, you must be extra sure the money is clean.

Reject Dirty Money: Refuse donations from illegal sources and report them.

Use Funds Properly: Use all money only for the projects you registered for.

Be Transparent: Be able to explain to your donors and community how you spent the money.

Use Formal Banks: Move all money through official bank channels.

No Unfair Discrimination: Don't exclude beneficiaries based on race, tribe, gender, political affiliation, etc. (It's okay to focus on a specific group, like youth, if that's your stated mission).



Summary: Your Registration File Checklist.

Preparing the correct documents is the most critical part of the registration process. Missing or incorrect documents are the main reason for delays and rejections. Use this as your master checklist.

Duly Completed Application Form.

How to get it: You will likely need to collect it from the Office of the Registrar of Private Voluntary Organisations (Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare) or download it from their website if available.

Constitution (with all required clauses, especially Dissolution)

This is your organisation's rulebook. Consult a lawyer or just get a lawyer to your Board who can assist.

Minutes of the Inaugural Meeting

This is your organisation's rulebook. Consult a lawyer or just get a lawyer to your Board who can assist.

List of Board Members with IDs & Contacts.

This is your organisation's rulebook. Consult a lawyer or just get a lawyer to your Board who can assist.

Proof of Physical Address.

You need a Physical Address for your organisation. The Organisation does not have yet. The Founding team/ Founder has one.

Organisational Profile (Optional)

This is not mandatory but its necessary.

Certified ID Copies of Board Members.

National Identity card or Passport work as ID's, certify at Police or a reputable Commissioner of Oath.

Police Clearance for Board Members.

This is critical for background check for your Board Members. You would not want anyone with a criminal record on your Board.



Final Pro-Tips for Submission

Make Copies: Submit photocopies of all documents but bring the original copies with you for verification.

Neatness Counts: Ensure all documents are typed, not handwritten (except for signatures), and neatly organised in a folder.

Consistency is Key: Ensure the organisation's name and details are spelled exactly the same way on every single document.

Seek a Pre-Submission Review: If possible, have an experienced NGO leader or a legal advisor glance over your constitution and application pack before you submit.

Steps to Register

Step 1: Submit Your Application



Submit the complete application pack (all the documents from Step 3) to:

The Office of the Registrar of Private Voluntary Organisations, Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare.

If in Harare 1- Bath Road, Harare, Zimbabwe. P.O. Box CY563, Causeway, Harare.*

It is best to call or visit their website to confirm the exact location and process.

 **Important:** Get a stamped receipt or acknowledgment letter as proof of submission for you to use it where you are asked if you have registers.

Step 3: The Decision

After considering your application and any public objections, the PVO Board will make a final decision.

If Approved: You will receive a Certificate of Registration. This is your license to operate legally. Ensure you understand any conditions attached to the registration.

If Rejected: The Registrar will provide reasons for the rejection. You have the right to appeal this decision.

Step 2: The Review Process & Possible Requests

Once submitted, the Registrar will:

- i. Acknowledge Receipt of your application.
- ii. Review Your Documents to ensure everything is in order and your constitution complies with the Act.
- iii. Publish a Notice (Section 9): A notice of your application may be published in the Government Gazette or a newspaper. This allows the public to view and raise any objections within a specified period (usually 21 days).
- iv. Request More Information: The Registrar may ask for clarification or additional documents. Respond promptly to avoid delays.

Step 4: After Registration – Your Ongoing Duties

Registration isn't the end! To stay compliant, you must:

Notify Changes: Report any major changes (to your constitution, leadership, or address) to the Registrar within one month.

Submit Annual Returns: You will likely be required to submit annual audited financial statements and a report of your activities.

Maintain Good Records: Keep proper financial and administrative records at your office.

Follow the Principles: Adhere to the code of conduct regarding donors, funds, and non-discrimination.



What If Your Application is Rejected?

Don't panic. You have a right to appeal

First Appeal:

Lodge an appeal with the Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare within 14 days of being notified of the rejection.

Second Appeal:

If unsatisfied with the Minister's decision, you can appeal to the Administrative Court within another 14 days.

Be Meticulous:

Double-check all forms for errors and ensure your constitution is clear and compliant.

Pro-Tips for a Smooth Registration

Be Transparent: From the start, be clear about your funding sources and leadership.

Seek Help: If you get stuck, don't hesitate to:

Contact the Registrar's office directly for guidance

Network with other registered youth organisations and learn from their experience.

Consult a lawyer or a resource centre that offers pro-bono services to NGOs for a constitution review.

Getting registered is a key step towards building a credible, sustainable, and impactful organisation. You can do this! Good luck!

This guide was developed with support from:



Contact us at: info@myageafrica.org

Website: www.myageafrica.org

Follow us at: @MyAgeZim / My Age Zimbabwe