Text consolidated by Valsts valodas centrs (State Language Centre) with amending laws of:

30 May 2019 [shall come into force on 26 June 2019];

7 January 2021 [shall come into force on 2 February 2021].

If a whole or part of a section has been amended, the date of the amending law appears in square brackets at the end of the section. If a whole section, paragraph or clause has been deleted, the date of the deletion appears in square brackets beside the deleted section, paragraph or clause.

The *Saeima*1 has adopted and

the President has proclaimed the following law:

**Law on Coats of Arms**

**Section 1. Terms Used in the Law**

The following terms are used in the Law:

1) attributes containing the State coat of arms – honours, medals of honour, emblems, badges, pennants, and other attributes containing the image of the State coat of arms or the principal elements thereof;

2) heraldry – the aggregate of specific conditions to be brought forward for the development of coats of arms;

3) coat of arms – an individual designation or an aggregate of designations developed according to the heraldry conditions which is encompassed in a specific form and represents the State, a local government, or another derived public entity, institution of direct or indirect State administration (hereinafter – the public entity), or a legal or natural person governed by private law.

[*30 May 2019*]

**Section 2. Purpose of the Law**

The purpose of this Law is to specify the procedures for the registration of coats of arms (except for the State coat of arms), their legal protection, and the general principles for their use, and also the procedures for approving attributes containing the State coat of arms.

**Section 3. Submission for the Registration of a Coat of Arms or the Approval of Attributes Containing the State Coat of Arms**

(1) A coat of arms shall be registered and attributes containing the State coat of arms shall be approved by the Ministry of Culture after a relevant submission has been submitted thereto.

(2) A draft description of the coat of arms and information on the owner of the coat of arms (for a natural person – the given name, surname, personal identity number, place of residence; for a legal person – the full name, registration number, legal address) shall be appended to the submission for the registration of a coat of arms. A draft image of the coat of arms may also be appended to the submission.

(3) A draft image of attributes containing the State coat of arms and information on the submitter (for a natural person – the given name, surname, personal identity number, place of residence; for a legal person – the full name, registration number, legal address) shall be appended to the submission for the approval of attributes containing the State coat of arms.

(4) A document on the basis of which the representative of the submitter is operating, if he or she is handling the registration of the coat of arms or the approval of attributes containing the State coat of arms for the submitter, shall be appended to the submission for the registration of a coat of arms or the approval of attributes containing the State coat of arms.

**Section 4. Procedures for Taking the Decision**

(1) The Ministry of Culture shall send the submitted draft description of the coat of arms and the draft image, if such was appended, or the draft image of attributes containing the State coat of arms to the State Heraldry Commission (hereinafter also – the Commission) for assessment within three days from the day of receipt of the submission and indicate the time period for it in which the relevant draft should be assessed.

(2) An official of the Ministry of Culture shall take the decision to register the coat of arms or to refuse to register the coat of arms within six months from the day of receipt of the submission if the draft description of the relevant coat of arms and the draft image has been assessed by the Commission. If the decision to register the coat of arms of a local government has been taken, its description shall be sent to the President for signing.

(3) The official of the Ministry of Culture shall take the decision to register attributes containing the State coat of arms or to refuse to register attributes containing the State coat of arms within one month from the day of receipt of the submission if the draft image of the relevant attributes containing the State coat of arms has been assessed by the Commission.

(4) The decision to refuse to register the coat of arms or to approve attributes containing the State coat of arms shall be motivated.

(5) The official of the Ministry of Culture shall send the decision taken to the submitter within three working days from the day of taking the decision.

(6) The decision taken by the official of the Ministry of Culture may be contested and appealed in accordance with the procedures laid down in the law.

**Section 5. Assessment of the Draft Description and Draft Image of a Coat of Arms and Attributes Containing the State Coat of Arms**

(1) The State Heraldry Commission shall assess the compliance of the submitted draft description and draft image of a coat of arms or attributes containing the State coat of arms with the heraldry requirements, and also their artistic solution and, if necessary, give recommendations to the submitter regarding improvement of the draft description and draft image.

(2) The submitter has the right to participate in meetings of the Commission, to submit additional documents and information if such are necessary for the assessment and improvement of the draft description and draft image of the coat of arms or attributes containing the State coat of arms.

(3) After the draft description and draft image of the coat of arms or the draft image of attributes containing the State coat of arms have been assessed, the Commission shall prepare an opinion on the compliance of the relevant draft with the heraldry requirements, appending a description (signed by the chairperson of the Commission if the Commission has recognised the coat of arms as conforming to the heraldry requirements) and image of the coat of arms or the image of attributes containing the State coat of arms thereto. The opinion shall be signed by the chairperson of the Commission.

**Section 6. Registration of Coats of Arms**

(1) The Ministry of Culture shall establish, maintain, and supplement the Register of Coats of Arms (hereinafter – the Register). A description, image of the coat of arms, information on the owner thereof (for a natural person – the given name, surname, personal identity number, place of residence; for a legal person – the full name, registration number, legal address), and the registration date of the coat of arms shall be included in the Register. An entry shall be made in the Register on the same day when the decision to register the coat of arms has been taken.

(2) The procedures by which information shall be included and updated in the Register and also issued shall be determined by the Cabinet.

(3) The Ministry of Culture shall publish the notification regarding the registration of the coat of arms and the description and image of the relevant coat of arms in the official gazette *Latvijas Vēstnesis* within seven days from the registration day.

(4) [7 January 2021]

(5) The Ministry of Culture shall make public the descriptions and images of the registered coats of arms in the catalogue of coats of arms in the section “Services” of its website within seven days from the registration day thereof.

(6) The submitter shall pay the State fee for the registration of the coat of arms.

(7) The rate of the State fee to be paid for the registration of the coat of arms and the procedures for the payment of the fee shall be determined by the Cabinet.

[*7 January 2021*]

**Section 7. Exclusive Rights of the Owner of a Registered Coat of Arms**

(1) Exclusive rights to a coat of arms may be ensured by the registration thereof. The person in whose name the coat of arms has been registered shall be considered the owner of the coat of arms.

(2) The owner of the coat of arms has exclusive rights to use the coat of arms and to prohibit the use thereof to any other person.

(3) The rights of the third parties in relation to the coat of arms shall enter into effect from the day when the description and image of the registered coat of arms has been published in the official gazette *Latvijas Vēstnesis*.

(4) If anyone infringes the exclusive rights of the owner of the coat of arms, the owner of the coat of arms may turn to the court on the basis of the Civil Law and the provisions of other laws and regulations.

[*7 January 2021*]

**Section 8. Use of the Coat of Arms**

(1) The owner of the coat of arms in whose name the coat of arms has been registered has the right to use it and transfer the rights of use to other persons.

(2) A public entity has the right to use the coat of arms if it has been registered in accordance with the procedures laid down in this Law. The rights of the public entity to use the State coat of arms shall be determined by the law On the State Coat of Arms of Latvia.

(21) A local government council shall, in the binding regulations thereof, determine the provisions for the use of the coat of arms of the local government registered in the Register of Coats of Arms.

(3) Coats of arms as an illustrative or informative material may be used without the permission of the owner of the coat of arms in encyclopaedias and teaching aids, and also in other issues of scientific and reference nature.

[*30 May 2019*]

**Section 9. Legal Protection of a Coat of Arms**

(1) A coat of arms shall be granted legal protection if it is of individual nature and it is new.

(2) A coat of arms is of individual nature if the overall impression left by it is different from the overall impression left by any other registered coat of arms.

(3) Legal protection shall not be granted to such coat of arms which is in contradiction with the public order or moral principles accepted in the society or has not been registered.

(4) A coat of arms shall be considered new if it has not been disclosed to the society by publishing the description and image thereof in relation to registration.

**Section 10. State Heraldry Commission**

(1) The State Heraldry Commission is a collegial authority established by the President which does not have the status of a legal person. The State Heraldry Commission shall create and maintain an informative material base regarding coats of arms and the basic principles for the creation of coats of arms and shall ensure the availability of such materials to the society, assess the heraldic and artistic solutions for the creation of new coats of arms, survey and establish a system of coats of arms, and carry out research, and also perform other obligations specified in the laws and regulations.

(2) The operation of the State Heraldry Commission shall be financed from the funds which, in accordance with the law on the State budget for the current year, have been granted to the Chancery of the President for ensuring the operation of the State Heraldry Commission.

(3) The operation of the State Heraldry Commission shall be determined by this Law and the by-laws of the State Heraldry Commission approved by the President.

**Section 11. Administrative Liability for the Violation of the Provisions in Relation to Coats of Arms and Attributes Containing the State Coat of Arms**

(1) For the use of a coat of arms not registered with the Register of Coats of Arms if it is committed by a public entity, a fine of up to fourteen units of fine shall be imposed on the head of the institution of the public entity.

(2) For the violation of the provisions for the use of a coat of arms of a local government registered with the Register of Coats of Arms, a fine of up to twenty units of fine shall be imposed on natural persons, but a fine of up to thirty-five units of fine shall be imposed on the heads of institutions of public entities or the legal persons.

(3) For the making of attributes, within the scope of economic activity, containing the State coat of arms not approved in accordance with the procedures laid down in the law, a fine of up to twenty-eight units of fine shall be imposed on natural persons, but a fine of up to fifty-six units of fine shall be imposed on legal persons.

[*30 May 2019* / *Section shall come into force on 1 July 2020.* *See Paragraph 3 of Transitional Provisions*]

**Section 12. Competence in Administrative Offence Proceedings**

The administrative offence proceedings for the offences referred to in Section 11 of this Law shall be conducted by the State Police, the municipal police, the administrative commission or sub-commission of a local government.

[*30 May 2019* / *Section shall come into force on 1 July 2020.* *See Paragraph 3 of Transitional Provisions*]

**Transitional Provisions**

1. Coats of arms which have been approved by the heraldry commission until the day of coming into force of this Law shall be registered with the Register of Coats of Arms within one year from the day of coming into force of this Law. Until the moment of registration, Sections 7, 8, and 9 of this Law shall be applicable to such coats of arms and their owners.

2. Sections 4 and 5 of this Law shall not apply to the coats of arms referred to in Paragraph 1 of the Transitional Provisions.

3. Sections 11 and 12 of this Law shall come into force concurrently with the Law on Administrative Liability.

[*30 May 2019*]

The Law has been adopted by the *Saeima* on 1 December 2005.

Acting for the President, Chairperson of the *Saeima* I. Ūdre

Rīga, 16 December 2005