**The Duchy of The Southern Pass Charter**

In Treaty together, we, the Signatories Branches of the Empire of Medieval Pursuits within the Kingdom of Summaria, do unite for the mutual aid, defense, benefit and Friendly Cooperation of our Respective branches. As such we agree and ordain that united, we shall henceforth be:

**The Duchy of The Southern Pass**

The Duchy of the Southern Pass **(the “DSP”)** is founded to unite the Mid-Southland Baronies and Fiefs of the Kingdom of Summaria. The Charter shall reflect all such future Duchy member branches as an addendum to the original charter.

The purpose of the Duchy of the Southern Pass is to bring together many of the great branches **of the Southeastern part of the Kingdom** **of Summaria** in watchful defense of its southern lands and coast. To share knowledge, strength, resources, and camaraderie and to increase the membership of each of its constituent parts.

Time Period / Place: The Duchy of the Southern Pass acknowledges and includes within this charter the time periods of each branch based upon their specific charter.



Heraldry: sable, an eye irised red atop a tower between three mullets in chevron argent

**SPECIAL NOTICE: The following does not supersede an individual Branch charter but is set forth for the governance of the Duchy.**

**Article I**

The Duchy is subject to the laws of the Kingdom of Summaria. Any changes to Kingdom law will supersede any and all rules set herein that are affected by the change in the law.

1. **Membership of Branches in the Duchy**:
2. Any Branch may petition to become a member of the Duchy of the Southern Pass (hereinafter “Duchy”).
	1. The Duchy is centered on the mundane town of Evergreen Alabama, for the purpose of Challenge.
3. Any Branch requesting to join or leave the Duchy must petition **the Council of the Southern Lords (the “CSL”)** (see Article III).
4. Branches must meet the stated membership requirements **of Summaria and the EMP** at all times.
	1. If any Branch dissolves, disbands, or collapses any members from the affected Branch are welcome and free to join any of the remaining groups, or the Duchy itself.

**Article II**

1. **Duchy Leadership**:
2. All Duchy Lords must be paid members in good standing with the EMP, and their Branch,
3. All Duchy Lords must agree to be a Lord of their branch for a period not less than one (1) year in order to maintain continuity; in the case of an interim or emergency Lord change in a Branch, the new Lord will assume the responsibilities of his/her predecessor within the Duchy.
4. All Duchy Lords are expected to participate in events, appropriate meetings, and Duchy functions to the best of their ability.
	1. We understand that some leaders may have difficulty traveling as Duchy Branches are widely dispersed.
	2. They are expected to be appropriately active within their Branch and, within reason, with their fellow Branches.
	3. They are expected to appropriately utilize social media and other electronic media to stay connected to members and leadership of other Branches.
	4. **Any Lord who does not meet these criteria may, upon vote of 2/3 of the non-breaching Lords, be expelled from the CSL, and their fief shall lose its vote until any such breach is remedied to the satisfaction of the Duke/Duchess**
5. All Duchy Lords must remember they are servants of the Duchy.
6. All Duchy titles are null and void following the end of their service term.
7. At no time can a member in a leadership position use that position for favors, monetary or otherwise.
8. All Lords are expected to assist with recruiting efforts so others can enjoy the fun!
9. **Duke or Duchess of The Southern Pass**:
10. The Duchy will be served by a Duke/Duchess; known as the Duke/Duchess of the Southern Pass.
11. The title of Duke/Duchess of the Southern Pass will be the default title however, titles should reflect the cultural recreation of the person who holds the seat (Jarl, Shiek/Shaykhah, etc.)
12. A seated Duke/Duchess of the Southern Pass will simultaneously retain their position in their respective branch.
13. **Responsibility of the Duke/Duchess of the Southern Pass**:
14. Oversight of the Council of Lords.
15. Ensure the independent operation of constituent Branches.
16. Defend the domains of the Duchy from all threats.
17. Strive to grow the realms of the DSP.
18. Oversight of the Council of Lords and Branches within the Duchy.
	1. The Duke/Duchess of the Southern Pass **does not** reserve the right to make/enforce any changes to the branches within the Duchy.
	2. The Duke/Duchess of the Southern Pass **does not** have voting rights within the branches of the Duchy of which they do not belong.
19. Act as an appellate body for any citizens of the DSP.
20. Oversee the Spring Raids each year.
21. Bestow Duchy Level awards upon the denizens of the Southern Pass (see ART V (A)1-3)
	1. The Duke/Duchess may also award Summarian Accolades to Citizens of the Duchy at the forbearance of the Crown.
22. **FAILURE of the Duke/Duchess** **to fulfill these duties shall be grounds for removal from office (see ART II (E)).**
23. **Selecting the Duke/Duchess** **of the Southern Pass & Aspects of the Office:**
24. Only a Count/Countess, Baron/Baroness, Lord/Lady or a member in good standing of the Duchy is eligible to be a Duke/Duchess of the Southern Pass.
	1. A member in good standing is any individual who has been a member of their branch and paid member of the Empire for a minimum of **more than one year**.
25. The term of the Duke/Duchess of the Southern is a minimum period of two (2) years with no limit to the number of terms that may be served.
26. The Duke/Duchess must defend their seat through combat **(per subsections b and c which follow)** which will be held every two (2) years during the annual Border War.  The Border War will be held each year in or about September, or other designated date agreed upon by the Council of the Southern Pass Lords.
27. The aspiring Duke/Duchess will take the field during the battle to lead the troops. They will wear the minimum EMP armor but do not have to partake in combat but must lead their troops.
28. The aspiring Duke/Duchess may name a champion to fight for them should a tourney format be chosen.
29. When the seat of a Duke/Duchess of the Southern Pass is up for challenge during the Border War, this is called a “Peril Year”.
30. A Duke/Duchess of the Southern Pass may only be challenged, as outlined above, during a Peril Year War. The winner of that competition, whether through war or single combat (as determined by the current Duke/Duchess and the Council of the Southern Pass Lords), will be the new Count/Countess of the Southern Pass. The Duke/Duchess who wins the challenge will take the seat January 1st of each year to allow a transitional period.
31. The group to which the seated Duke/Duchess resides will give up one (1) vote so that the Duke/Duchess will have a voice in the House of Lords.
32. Consorts. The Duke/Duchess of the Southern Pass by Right, may select a consort who will be ennobled with the honorary title of Duke/Duchess respectively but has no authority. (The first dual Duchess’/Shield Maidens will each be afforded all rights, duties and responsibilities equally) It is requested, however, that the Duke/Duchess Consort be treated with the respect due their position. The Title of the consort will be the respective title the Duke/Duchess by Right has chosen to be called.
33. The Duke/Duchess Consort may hold any office within their respective branch as determined by that branch.
34. The Duke/Duchess of the Southern Pass may also choose a bodyguard known as the Count’s Champion (Huscarl, etc.) at their leisure by a tournament to hold such a prestigious title.
35. The Duke/Duchess of the Southern Pass may also choose a War Commander to martial their forces in distant lands (or closer to home) at their leisure.
36. **Removal of a sitting Duke/Duchess**
37. In the event that 2/3rds of the Duchy Lords or population call for removal of a current Duke/Duchess:
	1. The current Duke/Duchess can choose to resign
	2. Otherwise, the Duchy Lords must choose a reasonable time and venue to hold a civil war for the Duchy seat.
	3. Once this location is chosen, the war is hosted, and the winner takes all.
38. **Abdication - Resigning Duke/Duchess** **– Interim Duke/Duchess**
39. In the event that the Duke/Duchess of The Southern Pass is unable to fulfill their tenure in their position and indicate their desire to resign, in writing, the Council of the Lords will be called to address the vacant seat by the Law Giver, and indicate by majority voice vote, their assent to the selection of an “interim” Duke/Duchess. Candidates will be, in order of preference:
	1. The first choice should be a prior Duke/Duchess of the Southern Pass, if they agree.
	2. If there is only one Barony at the time of abdication, the head of the Barony will become the interim Duke/Duchess.
	3. If there is more than one Barony within the Duchy a war or tournament will be scheduled at the pleasure of the seated Duke/Duchess and the seated Baron/Baronesses of the respective Baronies. Only the members of the Barony may fight for their Barony. Mercenaries may not be enlisted for this battle.
40. The incoming Duke/Duchess of the Southern Pass will be “interim” in that they will hold the vacated seat until the next annual Border War. To continue in office, they must defend their seat in combat. Upon defense of their seat, or if not challenged at the next annual Border War, they are then the true and rightful Duke/Duchess of the Southern Pass.

**Article III**

1. **Council of the Southern Lords**
2. The Lord of each branch within the Duchy will be a member of the Council of the Southern Lords **(the “CSL”)** along with the Duke/Duchess of the Southern Pass and will discuss and decide upon current affairs affecting the Duchy or to ensure understanding and action of any new Kingdom laws and/or EMP rules. Those holding other offices within a branch are not part of the CSL.
3. The Duke/Duchess may call a Southern Lords Council as they see fit.
	1. Lords may attend electronically.
	2. Any Lord not able to present may choose a proxy member from their branch **in writing or via electronic mail**, OR,
	3. The Duke/Duchess has the right of proxy for any absent Southern Lords from a council meeting after consultation and agreement between them **in writing or via electronic mail**.
	4. The Duke/Duchess and their Consort together have only 1 vote.
4. **In the Kingdom of Summaria when there is a Kingdom Law vote, for House of Lords, each independent group within the Duchy will be able to vote their own ways to Kingdom issue.**
	1. The Duke/Duchess will **not** control the number of votes withheld inside the Duchy **nor** will the Duke/Duchess force any branch to vote a particular vote.
5. Each Lord may, at their leisure, consult with their officers or populace when voting upon a Duchy matter.
6. The only other member of the CSL is the Law Giver who may comment but has no voting rights or other privileges. Their responsibility is advisory only and to act in a secretarial manner to assist the Duchy with matters of Duchy Law **as set forth in this Charter and its addenda**.
7. They are chosen by a simple majority vote of the Duchy of the Southern Lords Council and serve at their leisure.

**Article IV**

1. **Border Wars**
2. Every year, the Duke/Duchess will host the Border Wars for War Points and bragging rights.
	1. Duchy branches may put in a bid for the War to be held in their local fiefdom through the Council of the Southern Lords, or an alternate, more centralized location may be arranged.
	2. This is to ensure that we are inclusive of all our Duchy fiefs and a sitting Duke/Duchess does not always have the “home field” advantage.
	3. Mercenaries are welcome and encouraged. (**Please note:** you may not ‘purchase’ mercenaries with Duchy goods, services, nor promises; payment must be wholly from within the buyer’s branch.)
3. Every second year, the seat of the Duke/Duchess of the Southern Pass will be in Peril to be won or lost.
	1. A variety of games, frivolities, and shenanigans will be scheduled during the War day/weekend **as determined by the** Duke/Duchess**.** War points will be awarded. Competition is a friendly and fun way to keep the skills of the people of the Southern Pass strong. Participation is encouraged in all aspects of games and competitions. While these competitions may be held at other events, during the Border Wars, War Points will be awarded.

**Article V**

**Other Rules**

1. **Awards:**

As a Duchy in the EMP we have awards that can be handed out for exceptional individuals who excel in a given area. They are as follows with respective accoutrements:

1. Fighting = Order of the Nozgul
	1. Enameled belt token with Duchy device, black sash
2. Service = Order of the Argent Hand
	1. Enameled belt token with Duchy device, white hand
3. Arts & sciences = Order of the Sable Dragon
	1. Enameled belt token with Duchy device, black dragon
4. *Emeritus*
	1. The Emeritus may be added to any award given, for those that have maintained the requirements of their award and have gotten to the point that they are no longer physically capable of doing so. An Emeritus award is permanent.
5. **Membership:**
6. Membership rules are based on the rules of the Empire of Medieval Pursuits.
7. The Duchy, from time to time, may conduct a census of members.
8. Branches must report to the Duchy if their membership goes below the required number.
9. We request Branches report new members so that the Duke/Duchess may welcome them to the Duchy.
10. Branches retain their rights to banish members based on their individual charters.
	1. Any banishments from a branch should be reported to the Duke/Duchess immediately.
11. **Changes to the Charter:**
12. **Any changes to the Charter will require a 2/3 vote of the Council of Lords to amend or append said Charter.**
13. Any member who has suggestions of changes to be made or can think of new things we should incorporate within the Duchy should share this in written format with their Lord who will add it to the agenda of the next Lord’s meeting. Voting will occur at the next subsequent meeting to allow time for the Lords to review/discuss changes with their group’s officers and populace.
14. Official meetings are held quarterly.

**Article VI**

1. **Note to the Populace:**

While our Duchy has very few rules, we do ask that everyone to work and play well together for the greater good of our Duchy. Discrimination, harassment, and/or bullying will not be tolerated. **LEAVE YOUR POLITICS AT THE DOOR - this is not a Political Activist group. If you are easily “offended”, this may not be the group for you. Further, taking in game issues into real life and vice versa will not be tolerated. We are here for escapism, and this only detracts.**

**Three Simple Rules of the Duchy of the Southern Pass:**

1. Be excellent to one another
2. Don’t steal from anyone.
3. If not covered in laws, refer to Rule 1.

All other items not mentioned herein, default to the rules of the Empire of Medieval Pursuits. Any rule contained herein that conflicts with EMP rules, EMP rules will prevail, and the Charter will be amended upon learning of such conflict.

Any inter-Duchy disputes will default to EMP rules of challenged combat (see Addendum II). So be excellent to each other; and remember, this is a fun hobby, don’t screw it up for someone else.

All news, updates, and events, will be posted on Facebook.

**Article VII - Addenda**

Addendum I – MEMBERS OF THE DUCHY OF THE SOUTHERN PASS

Barony of Jotun Heim

Barony of the Port of Krakjavík

The Bahadur Horde

Village of Oak Grove

Addendum II – EMP Challenge Rules Additions

Any challenger not following through with the agreed upon terms of a sanctioned Challenge will be banished from all events within the Duchy (including meetings) until the conditions of the challenge have been satisfied.