

Amroth Dwarves

Dwarves tend to live in freeholds, city states ruled by elected kings. Each Freehold is independent of each other, although in times of war, all citystates will have joint military maneuvers, and certain Places, such as the Academy are held in common trust between all citystates.

There is no distinction between men and women in dwarven society. Extended family (referred to as clans) have a strong ties and generally live as a common unit. Children are generally raised in common by the entire Clan, with each adult taking turns at supervising and teaching the children. Property is held by the Clan. While older members of each clan tend to lead, it is believed that every dwarven voice should count. In any family decision, all adults are encouraged to speak up and decisions are usually a majority rule vote. Older children are always present at clan meetings and are allowed to ask questions and make input prior to a vote. This is viewed as training for when they must help make decisions in society.

Upon marrying a cwarven couple may choose to continue in one or another clan, or, if there is a group of likeminded people starting a new clan group, may chose to join that. Marriage and the choosing of clans is as much a political issues as it is for love or tender feelings. When a child is born into a clan, it stays with that clan regardless of its parents movements, but parents with pre-existing children generally elect to stay in the same clan as their children.

No dwarf may vote, run a business, or hold public office (from civil servant up) unless they have spent a twoterm (10 years) in military service. In order to hold high office, such as an assembly officer or to be elected king, a citizen must excel in military service or find other places to display heroic action, as most of the society views men and women of action as the ideal. For this reason, many dwarves spend a period after their first or second twoterm traveling between freeholds and the surrounding land, seeking adventure, excitement and fame..

Education

All citizens have the right to send their children to the Academy, a state run education center jointly funded and ran by all citystates. Students are taught basic skills, reading, writing, limited history, armorsmithing, military skills, public speaking, and social graces (etiquette and diplomacy enough to get along in dwarvish society). Citizens have a right to take advanced study at the Academy. All city states have a branch of the academy for young students to learn basic skills.

Kept

Those who could not/will not perform a military term are considered wards of the state and treated very much as second class citizens, almost slaves of the state. Such wards are often referred to as kept. The kept can not vote, and have no specific rights under the law. If one has family, they would be considered responsible for the wellbeing of the person, and are almost always considered as children no matter the age, otherwise they are appointed an overseer who sees to it they have a place in the public barracks and a task, such as menial labor, to keep them busy.

Conscientious objectors would be considered the same as people with mental illness. If a kept breaks a law or social convention, they are generally punished far more strictly than citizens.

Kept may leave a freehold and would generally be accepted back as long as they were considered to be “well-behaved”, but no other freehold would allow entry to another freehold’s kept. They may be escorted, possibly forcibly, back to the guardianship of their home Freehold.

Government

Most citystates have a democratic government with either an elected king or ruling triad and an elected assembly of peers to help guide the rulers, sit in jury on trials, oversee public works, and explain to the citizens they represent any major law or other decision that must be voted on.

All new laws taxes, tariffs, major public spending, as well as elections of peers and rulers are voted upon by every citizen of the freehold. Voting weeks, called quorums, are considered public holiday and are held twice a year. Very little business not related to voting is done in this time.

The first four days of a quorum are spent in speechmaking and airing ones opinions. The fifth day is spent with the election of peers and making sure peers understand the wishes of the populace. In most citystates, one peer is elected by each clan. The sixth day is for decisions on laws and general elections, and if a term is up, election of a new king or triad. The seventh day, naturally, is used in celebrating the fact that all the smarminess of the politicians is locked up with the politicians and will not infect the day to day activities for another 6 months.

Anyone eligible to vote does. The common phrase is “Every dwarves voice should count”. People who ignore their right and responsibility to the public welfare are considered odd and suspect. Much like the right and responsibility to bear arms, exercising ones voice is a dwarven mandate.