

# **POLICIES and PROCEDURES for LWVSNM 2022**

## **POLICIES**

(Board Approved 3-7-2022; Member Approved 4-9-2022; revised 09.05.22)

### **I. NONPARTISAN POLICY**

The League of Women Voters of Southern New Mexico (LWVSNM), a nonpartisan political organization encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences policy through education and advocacy. The League does not support or oppose any political party or candidate; it is political in that it takes positions on selected governmental issues, which is done only after members study and reach agreement.

The LWVSNM recognizes the role of the political parties in our form of government and believes that participation in the activities of the political parties is an essential ingredient of citizen responsibility. While the League urges its members to be politically active, certain constraints are necessary in order to maintain the nonpartisanship of the organization. The LWVSNM Board of Directors has established the following guidelines:

- A. The Board has the responsibility of maintaining the fact of the nonpartisanship of the organization.
- B. All members, including Board members, may engage in the following activities: signing nominating petitions, serving as election officials, serving as clerical volunteers for candidates for office. All other political activities in which a Board member may wish to engage should be subject first to his/her own scrutiny, and, in case of question, should be discussed with the Board.
- C. The President, the Voter Service Director, the chair of voter registration and the editor of the Voters' Guide may not take an active, visible role in a campaign for a political candidate.
- D. If campaigning for or against non-League Issues, Board members must identify their interest as personal and not League-sponsored.
- E. Any Board member who plans to run for elected office must submit his/her resignation to the Board immediately upon filing a declaration of candidacy

*Originally Adopted About 1968 • Reviewed Annually at the April Annual Meeting*

Approved 4.9.22

## II. MEMBERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

### A. League Positions

Once League (local, state, or national) takes a position on an issue, members may not identify themselves as League members in publicly expressing an opinion that is in opposition to a League position.

### B. Representing League

Members representing the League in the community should be sensitive to their responsibilities. When acting in public as League representatives, members must not allow partisanship to be discernable. These members should be fully aware of League positions. It is the obligation of the Board to make the representative aware of relevant League positions.

### C. Serving on Commissions

Members may serve on governmental commissions at their own discretion. If the appointment is League-related, the appointee should be fully aware of the League positions as they relate to the commission's responsibilities.

### D. Member Candidacy

There should be no special notice in the VOTER of the candidacy of active League members.

### E. League Meetings

Members in the leadership roles at unit and other public meetings have the responsibility to ensure the nonpartisanship of the meeting and its environment.

[SEE ONLINE GUIDELINES PROCEDURE]

### F. League Roster

The League's roster is not to be made available for non-League use without Board consent.

Adopted 4.13.19 • Revised 4.10.21

## III. JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION (JEDI)

LWVSNM is an organization fully committed to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion in principle and in practice. Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion are central to the organization's current and future success in engaging all individuals, households, communities, and policy makers to strengthen democracy.

Adopted 4.13.19 • Revised 4.10.21

## **IV. BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **A. Organizational Responsibilities (In alignment with the LWVUS)**

1. Make decisions on behalf of LWVSNM, putting the interests of the organization before personal and professional interests.  
**[SEE ELECTRONIC VOTING PROCEDURE]**
2. Work collaboratively and embrace different perspectives.
3. Fulfill legal responsibility of ensuring that the organization complies with the applicable federal, state, and local laws and adheres to its mission.
4. Support and affirm the organization's mission.
5. Serve as a liaison with individuals interested in the League's mission in outlying areas.
6. Serve on committees as needed.
7. Work collaboratively with other nonprofit, nonpartisan organizations.
8. Only Board of Directors-approved petitions may be circulated at League meetings.

### **B. Fiduciary Responsibilities**

1. Ensure adequate financial resources are available for the League's mission.
2. Review and understand LWVSNM financial statements.
3. Understand and approve the League's budget ensuring that the budget reflects the overall strategic direction and promotes the long-term fiscal health of the League.
4. Approve new expenses not reflected in the annual budget greater than \$50.
5. Ensure that the appropriate annual audit is performed.
6. Financially support the organization (as appropriate to an individual's means).
7. Ensure compliance with grants, donations or other revenue sources that are accepted by the League with full knowledge of conditions that must be met upon receipt.

### **C. Planning and Development Responsibilities**

1. Collaborate in implementing the Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategic Action Plan (JEDI SAP).
2. Participate in and support program planning.
3. Organize and conduct unit meetings to discuss and study individual topics; when applicable, such meetings shall follow the study process.

**[SEE STUDY PROCESSES PROCEDURE]**

4. Develop the strength of the Board itself through training, self-assessment, and Board education.

**D. Conflict of Interest Loyalties**

1. Review conflict of interest bylaw annually and revise as needed.
2. Manage conflicts of interest as they arise.

Adopted 4.13.19 • Revised 4.9.22

**V. SCREENING/TRAINING MEMBERS WHO WORK WITH VULNERABLE GROUPS ON BEHALF OF THE LWVSNM**

The LWVSNM Board is committed to the protection of children, youth, students, and vulnerable groups with whom League members interact. Therefore, screening and training are required on a regular basis in line with local, state, and federal regulations. Project proposals are to be approved by the Board.

Adopted 08.02.21

**VI. FINANCIAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR LWVSNM**

These policy and procedure guidelines are designed to establish management systems that assure the maintenance of and support for fiscal responsibility when personnel changes in the League.

**A. Board Authorities and Responsibilities**

1. The Board of Directors, hereinafter referred to as “the Board,” has the authority to execute any financial policies it deems to be in the best interest of LWVSNM, hereinafter referred to as “the League,” within parameters of the League’s articles of incorporation, bylaws and federal, state and local laws.
2. Annually, the Board shall review the League’s insurance requirements.
3. The president, together with the Board, has the responsibility to ensure compliance with these policies and procedures.
4. The Board is responsible for reviewing, amending and approving all financial reports as presented by the treasurer as accurate and complete of the League’s operation.
5. The Board shall arrange for an annual review of the League’s financial records that may be conducted by an accountant or other person with financial skills as determined by the Board.

**B. Safeguards and Controls**

1. Disbursements for non-budgeted items, unless \$100 or less, require prior consent of the Board. Items of \$100 or less may be approved by the President. This may be accomplished by e-mail if payment is time sensitive and could result in a late-payment charge if approval is delayed until the next Board meeting.

2. No checks may be written to “cash” or “bearer.” Reimbursement of a holder of the checkbook can be done by an alternative signer on the account.
3. A check must identify the amount of the check and the recipient prior to signing.
4. Only officers authorized by the Board may sign checks.

### C. Treasurer Financial Roles and Responsibilities

#### Reimbursement of Expenses

1. Establishment of Committee/Study Group Budgets
  - a. On-going Committee/Study Groups
    - i. By the March meeting of each year the chairs of on-going committees and study groups shall submit an estimate of their projected spending for the upcoming League year (May 1-April 30) to the Board
      - a. Examples: Copying and distribution of committee reports
      - b. Such fees shall not exceed \$100 per year.
2. Vouchers
  - a. League members who incur expenditures on behalf of the League must complete a Reporting Financial Expenses form and submit it to the treasurer. The form must include
    - i. Clearly stated use of the funds so the appropriate budget item can be determined by the treasurer
    - ii. Receipts supporting the claim. No reimbursement will be made without supporting receipts clearly identifying those items applying to a League expense.
      - a. Board members are encouraged to submit vouchers even if they wish to donate the expense (check box on form) so the League may have an accurate data to prepare the next year’s budget requirements.
3. Travel
  - a. Officers and Chairs shall submit to the Board a request for reimbursement for real expenses associated with attending approved League meetings
    - i. One-Day Events -This may include registration fees and transportation.
    - ii. Multi-Day Events (excluding LWV National Convention)
  - b. Requests, generally not exceeding \$100/day, must be submitted to the Board for approval at least one month in advance.
4. Reimbursements must be submitted to the treasurer and approved by the Board prior to the event and are subject to budget limitations.
  - a. Final expense reimbursement requests must be made on form “Reporting Financial Expenses,” (available on the League’s website or through the Treasurer) complete with receipts and in accordance with budgets established in C1 above, and will in no case exceed the amount approved by the Board prior to the event.
5. In-Kind contributions shall be reported on the same reporting form.
6. Expenses shall be charged to the appropriate budget line item. In-kind contributions will be noted in the revenue section of the Budget as In-kind contributions.

7. The Treasurer shall oversee the collection and recording of annual membership dues, with support of the Director of Membership.

[SEE DUES PROCESS PROCEDURE]

*revised 09.05.22*

## **VII. PUBLICIZING NON-LEAGUE EVENTS**

- A. The LWVSNM may on occasion receive requests from other organizations to help publicize their events, meetings, and communication messages. The League has multiple avenues in which to assist other organizations with publicity or to educate the public. Communication avenues include the LWV website, League news media releases, emails to League membership, letters-to-the-editor, social media, signs/posters, among others.
- B. Prior to approving such requests for publicity/promotion of outside organizations' activities, the League Board shall review the following parameters.
- C. The League may assist with publicity/promotion if:
  1. The event/activity/meeting is for a non-profit or educational organization;
  2. The event is non-partisan (excluding election campaigns and activities) and is educational in nature;
  3. Fees collected or donations encouraged in the promotion are to support the non-profit and/or its activities; in the case of a for-profit organization, donations are collected or encouraged only if the funds raised are for non-profits or for community needs that support the mission of the LWV (voting, elections, homelessness, poverty, inclusiveness, less-fortunate children/families, elderly, etc.);
  4. The goals of the event/activity are to educate the public, to give input, and/or to hold decision-makers accountable;
  5. The event/activity is limited to advocacy on positions that the League supports; in the event the activity does not fall within the League's advocacy topics, a unanimous consensus of the Board must be met;
  6. The event does not financially benefit any member of the LWVSNM Board.
  7. The publicity will have a finite timeline.
- D. If the LWVSNM Board determines that one or more of the parameters will be met, it may approve the request for assistance of communication and publicity via a Board vote.
- E. Any Board member that is a current member of the requesting organization must abstain from voting.

*Original Draft from LWVNM; revised 11.15.19*

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Guidelines for Meetings Procedure:**

## JEDI

Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) is a basis for all of our work that includes decisions about studies, positions, programs, advocacy, and actions. We want members and participants to feel safe and respected and to know that alternative points of view are valued. We welcome all individuals who support our mission of empowering voters and strengthening democracy. Regarding the current diversity fund, the focus is on age, ethnicity, and volunteer skills.

## Guidelines for Online Meetings

The following are guidelines for working together online:

1. Comments, questions, and critiques need to be related to an issue or topic, not about people. Guest speakers deserve opportunity to make their presentation. Members and/or participants will receive equitable time for discussion.
2. In Zoom meetings, the virtual “hand-raising” feature will be used to speak one time; follow-up can occur in the “chat box.” To speak again, get in line by again raising your virtual hand.
3. Keep your microphone muted when not speaking. If you are in line to speak, unmute your microphone immediately before your turn. Remember to mute it again after you have spoken. In small groups, items 2 and 3 may not be necessary.
4. If you are a person who speaks a lot, try listening more; if you are a person who listens a lot, try sharing your perspective more.

Approved 04.09.22

## Electronic Voting Procedure:

Circumstances may arise that a vote on an issue is required by a majority of the Board of the League of Women Voters of Southern New Mexico (Board) outside of a regularly scheduled Board Meeting. In such circumstances, a vote may be conducted via emails after discussion among the Board.

- A. Approval of a President, or Vice President in the absence or availability of a President, is necessary to bring the vote forward electronically. Reasons for the President to deny an electronic vote shall include, but not be limited to:
  1. An expenditure that exceeds the budget or is deemed by a President as excessive and should be considered at a Board meeting;
  2. Complexity of the issue that would best be resolved during a regular meeting;
  3. An issue that is not time sensitive and can be part of an upcoming Board meeting agenda.
- B. Electronic voting shall follow a process, which includes:

1. Following approval to bring a motion forward, an email shall be sent by a Board member to all other Board members. It shall include a brief explanation of the issue, followed by a motion that includes the prefix, "I move that...".
2. In reply (to all), a second to the motion is required for further consideration. Should the motion not receive a second, the motion is considered dead and the matter is closed.
3. Following a second to the motion, the Secretary (or President in the absence of the Secretary), will inform the Board when the discussion period commences and when it will end. Email discussion among all Board members is allowed over the subsequent two calendar days (48 hours), after which Board members will be asked to vote unless the motion has been withdrawn.
4. Votes should not be submitted prior to the end of the discussion period. The Secretary (or President in the absence of the Secretary), will inform the Board when the voting period commences and when it will end. Votes must be sent within the next calendar day (24 hours) of the Secretary's notification.
5. The Board Secretary (or President in the absence of the Secretary), shall:
  - a. Notify Board members that their votes should clearly be stated as "Aye/yes," "Nay/No," or "Abstain" and shall include the voter's name;
  - b. Tally the votes and notify all Board members of the vote outcome;
  - c. Record the date, motion, and vote total in the next set of Board minutes, indicating the vote was conducted electronically.

Adopted 9.21.20 • Revised 11.16.20

## LWVSNM Diversity Fund Guidelines

The Diversity Fund, established by Meredith Machen, advances LWVSNM's goal of having a more diverse membership.

The cost of membership fees and related outreach expenses can be subsidized, in part or in full, by drawing from the Diversity Fund. The membership award intended for anyone who meets one or more of the following criteria:

1. Will add diversity to the membership as a whole; including diversity in age, ethnicity, or volunteer skills.
2. Is recommended for a scholarship from the Diversity Fund by a local League officer or LWVSNM Director.
3. Is a student member of a local League or a student member-at-large. (All students 16 years of age or older may join for free. The U.S. and N.M. Leagues waive their fees for students.)



4. Agrees to become an active member of the LWVSNM, preferably in a specific activity or in a project that has been approved by LWVSNM.

The balance in the Diversity Fund will be monitored by both the Treasurer and the Membership Chair and will be reported annually as part of the year-end Financial Report. LWVSNM may direct additional funds into the account and/or raise funds specifically to augment the Diversity Fund in order to maintain its viability in the future.

A board member may bring to the board a proposal for paying the dues of a prospective non-student member from the Diversity Fund based on the prospective member's contribution to the diversity of the organization with respect to ethnicity, age, skill set relevant to LWV SNM needs. Generally, this will be a one-time payment of dues, but may be extended beyond one year with the approval of the board. LWVSNM Board action December 21, 2020.

Revised 4.9.22

## LWV Study Processes

Consensus is an agreement among a substantial number of members, reached after study and group discussion at meetings called unit meetings. No voting takes place to reach member agreement. Consensus is not a simple majority, nor is it unanimity; rather it is the overall sense of the group as expressed through the exchange of ideas and opinions. In the consensus process, the Study Committee does not produce a statement with which members agree or disagree. Rather, the Study Committee uses questions to guide discussion, after providing background materials prior to a consensus meeting. (Non-members may not participate in consensus meetings, though experts may be available to answer questions.)

Concurrence is the act of agreeing – or concurring- with a previously formulated statement or position. Leagues may concur with a statement or position arrived at by another League, a position stated by a study committee based on its research or reflecting widely held views, or a position of long standing that they wish to reaffirm. In preparing for Concurrence, the Study Committee and Board must approve the statement before it is sent to members for consideration; the study committee presents the statement and background material.

Additional guidelines are available in the LWV “Handbook for Successful Consensus Meetings” ([https://www.lwvsnm.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/LWVNM-consensus\\_meetings-handbook.pdf](https://www.lwvsnm.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/LWVNM-consensus_meetings-handbook.pdf)).

Adopted and Approved 04.09.22

## **DUES PROCESS PROCEDURE**

- A. The LWVSNM fiscal year runs from May 1 through April 30 each year. Beginning in April, during the time of the Annual Business Meeting, the collection of annual dues for the upcoming fiscal year shall commence.
- B. Annual dues are \$65 per member per year; For additional member(s) who live in the same household, the dues are \$32.50 per member per year.

- C. Student members (16 years and older) shall pay no annual dues as long as they are enrolled as a student.
- D. Those who have served the League for 50 years or longer are considered lifetime members and are entitled to complimentary membership and are entitled to all rights/services as other dues-paying members.
- E. The collection of dues is as follows:
  - 1. Dues may be collected through cash, check, or electronic means, with each transaction recorded by the Finance Director;
  - 2. The League shall communicate to all members as to the amount and timeline for paying of their dues.
    - a. Dues payment reminders begin in May via printed or electronic means;
    - b. Any member who has not paid their yearly dues by the end of August shall receive a reminder by the Treasurer or Membership Director;
    - c. A final reminder shall be made by the end of September, indicating all dues must be paid by in order for members to be listed in the League directory.
    - d. Persons who pay dues November 1 through April 30, will pay one-half of the yearly dues amount; the Treasurer will record their membership for the second half of the fiscal year (November 1 through April 30).
  - 3. The Board may determine whether a League member/potential member shall be granted a one-year complimentary membership due to hardship or other extraordinary circumstances.

Approved 09.05.22