

LWVSHR Nonpartisan Policy

The purpose of the League of Women Voters is to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government. The League is nonpartisan in that it does not support or oppose any political party or candidate. However, it does take action on public issues based on positions reached by member consensus.

Although the League encourages its members to be politically active as individuals, it requires members to keep their political preferences to themselves when volunteering for the League, and it limits the political activities of Board members to preserve the League's nonpartisan position. Perception of partisanship damages what the League tries to achieve.

All Members:

- Must keep League activity and political activity separate and distinct
 - May not distribute League materials and political party or candidate materials at the same time
 - May not distribute partisan petitions or campaign information at League-sponsored events
- Must refrain from publicly identifying their political preferences while working on voter service activities

Board Members Working on Voter Service Activities:

- May attend informational political meetings and serve as election officials
- Must refrain from displaying their political preferences in public spaces where they are also identified as board members**
- May make financial contributions to candidates, as long as the Board member's name is not then used to solicit additional funds
 - Must avoid hosting meetings that are primarily focused on fundraising for political candidates

Elected Board Members:

- Have a special responsibility to ensure that the nonpartisan policy of the League is clear and uncompromised
 - Must not work in a significant way in a candidate's campaign
- Who have particularly sensitive portfolios, such as president, local action chair, and voter services chair, must not engage in visible partisan activity during their terms of office
 - Must not hold an official position in a political party organization or in any organization that endorses candidates for public office
- Must not speak or work in any way against a League position
- May serve on any public board, commission, committee or coalition that does not have a competing interest with the League; however, that person must make clear that she/he does not represent the League unless officially designated by the Board as the League representative

Note: If there is doubt about the appropriateness of an activity, the Board member should ask for a decision from the Board. The political activities of a spouse or relative are considered separate and distinct from those of a Board member.

Off-Board Directors/Nominating Committee:

- May engage in political activity since they are not voting members of the Board

The nonpartisan policy shall be reviewed annually by the incoming Board.