

Policies & Procedures

A Manual for State
and Local League Boards

Revised 2017

*League of Women Voters of Texas
League of Women Voters of Texas Education Fund*

The logo consists of the letters 'LWV' in a bold, blue, serif font. A thick, red, brush-stroke-like underline is positioned beneath the letters, starting under the 'L' and extending past the 'V'.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables	3
Introduction	4
Sec. 1. Policies Relating to the Public & Government.....	4
1.1 Nonpartisan Political Policy	4
1.2 Diversity Policy	5
1.3 Public Relations	5
1.4 Public Boards, Commissions, and Committees	5
1.5 Voters Guides	6
1.6 Candidate Debates and Forums	8
1.7 Guidelines for League Websites	11
1.8 Guidelines for League Social Media	12
1.9 Coalitions, Collaborations, and Affiliations	13
Sec. 2. Policies for Local Leagues, State Members, & Leagues-at-Large.....	14
2.1 Relation of State Board to Local League Boards	14
2.2 State Members (Members-at-Large).....	14
2.3 Leagues-at-Large (Member-at-Large Units).....	14
2.4 Full League Status	15
2.5 Withdrawing Recognition	16
2.6 Local League Bylaws	16
2.7 Changing the Organizational Basis of a League.....	18
2.8 Cooperation Among Local Leagues in the Same Political Subdivisions	18
2.9 Consensus/Concurrence in Local Leagues	18
Sec. 3. Administrative Policies for the State Board	18
3.1 Board Meetings	18
3.2 Board Administration	19
3.3 Board Nominations.....	19
3.4 Conflict of Interest	19
3.5 Program.....	19
3.6 Program Review.....	20
3.7 Distribution and Review of Policies & Procedures Manual.....	21
3.8 Editing.....	21
3.9 State Office Environment.....	21
3.10 Record and Document Retention & Archiving	21
3.12 Confidentiality.....	22
Sec. 4. Financial Policies	22
4.1 Local League Support of the State League	22
4.2 Student Members.....	22
4.3 State Members (Members-at-Large).....	22
4.4 Budget	23
4.5 Reserves.....	23
4.6 Contracts	23

4.7	Personnel Policies.....	23
4.8	Purchasing and Contracting	23
4.9	Fiscal Management.....	24
4.10	Investment Policy	24
4.11	Gift Acceptance Policy.....	26
4.12	Reimbursement.....	28
4.13	Financial Policies & Registration Procedures for Convention.....	29
4.14	Board Member Complimentary Tickets Prohibited.....	30
Sec. 5.	Convention and Statewide Conference.....	30
5.1	Convention.....	30
5.2	Statewide Conference	31
Sec. 6.	Legislative Policy	31
6.1	Advocacy Committee	31
6.2	Appointment of Issue Chairs & Coordinators.....	32
6.3	Advocacy Calendar	32
6.4	Advocacy and Local Leagues	33
Appendices	34
	Annual Disclosure of Conflict of Interest.....	34
	Retention Schedule for Business Records and Documents.....	35

List of Tables

Bylaws Calendar for Local Leagues	17
Recommended Asset Mix	25
Convention Deadlines	30
Delegates to State Convention	31
Advocacy Calendar	32
Retention Schedule for Business Records and Documents	35

Policies & Procedures

A Manual for State and Local Leagues

*Adopted as revised by the League of Women Voters of Texas Board of Directors
© July 2005; Revised 2008, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2015, 2016, 2017*

Introduction

Leagues develop policy statements to assist the officers and board of directors in implementing bylaws. Policies are reviewed annually by the board of directors, revised as needed, and adopted by the board. Bylaws and policies together provide the organizational framework for the League and describe the accepted ways of work.

In addition to policies, this manual includes descriptions of procedures, such as appointment of issue chairs, which are done time after time in a routine way and therefore are treated in the same manner as policies. Detailed information for many procedures can be found in a variety of publications from the state League that are published at <https://my.lwv.org/texas/publications>. The League of Women Voters of Texas (LWV-TX) Bylaws and Charter are included in the *League Handbook*. Other publications containing policies and/or procedures include:

- *A Guide to Candidates Forums for Local Leagues*
- *A Guide to Voters Guides for Local Leagues*
- *Handbook for Local League TEF Projects*
- *League Handbook: Vital Information for League Members in Texas*
- *Retention Schedule for Business Records and Documents*
- *State Board Handbook*
- *Trustees' Handbook for the Education Fund*

This manual can assist a local League in its understanding of the interrelated levels of the League. It can also serve as a guide to the areas of work where policy statements are necessary and useful.

Sec. 1. Policies Relating to the Public & Government

1.1 Nonpartisan Political Policy

Members of the state and local League boards shall adhere carefully to the nonpartisan political policy of the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS). Specific procedures to implement this policy include:

- 1.1.1** The president, chairs of the advocacy and education committees, the voters service coordinator, and others the public strongly identifies with the state or the local League, such as the executive administrator, shall avoid political activities while on the board that may give the appearance of partisanship.
- 1.1.2** All state and local board members are encouraged to vote in the primary of their choice.
- 1.1.3** Other state and local board members are encouraged to participate in political activities but must first consult the board if they are in doubt as to whether their activities could compromise the League's nonpartisanship.
- 1.1.4** A board member shall not run for office in a partisan race or accept a partisan appointment.

- 1.1.5** A state board member may accept appointment to, or run for, a local political office if
 - 1.1.5a** the election does not require a party affiliation,
 - 1.1.5b** the board of the local League involved gives approval, and
 - 1.1.5c** the state League board approves.
- 1.1.6** Individuals serving as issue chairs shall avoid activities that could compromise League nonpartisanship. They are encouraged to participate in political activities but must first consult the board if they are in doubt as to whether their activities could compromise League nonpartisanship.
- 1.1.7** The Nominating Committee shall explain to prospective board nominees the League nonpartisan political policy. The state board shall explain to prospective off-board appointees the nonpartisan political policy.

1.2 Diversity Policy

The League, in both its values and practices, affirms its belief and commitment to diversity and pluralism, which means that there shall be no barriers to participation in any League activity on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability.

- 1.2.1** The League recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision-making. The League subscribes to the belief that diversity and pluralism are fundamental to the values it upholds and that this inclusiveness enhances the organization's ability to respond more effectively to changing conditions and needs.
- 1.2.2** The League affirms its commitment to reflecting the diversity of Texans in its board, staff, and programs.

1.3 Public Relations

- 1.3.1** The state board president is the official spokesperson for the state League.
- 1.3.2** Official statements shall be made only by a League president or by a member authorized by the president. Local Leagues should state in their local policies: "The president is the official spokesperson for [name of local League], or a designated League member authorized by the president."
- 1.3.3** League membership lists shall not be made available for non-League use without prior approval of the state or local League board. Gender-neutral language shall be used whenever possible in League communications.

1.4 Public Boards, Commissions, and Committees

- 1.4.1** The League shall take the initiative in recommending people to serve on appointed public boards, commissions and committees. The president shall be consulted on all recommendations. The full board shall approve recommendations if time permits. League members shall have priority for League support over other candidates with similar qualifications.
- 1.4.2** When a League director or off-board chair is appointed to a state board or commission, the state League board shall decide whether or not member shall resign any League position(s) due to potential conflict of interest.
- 1.4.3** Position on support or opposition of political nominees
Under very special circumstances, the League may support or oppose political appointments to a state office, agency, committee, or board with the direct approval of the state board. If the board is not to meet in time for the matter to be considered, the board shall be polled by telephone or email. The League may oppose a nominee only when the nominee clearly

has no qualifications for the job—not when the nominee merely holds opinions that differ from League positions.

1.5 Voters Guides

1.5.1 Local and state League responsibilities

1.5.1.a The state League produces a voters guide that includes all statewide candidates and/or ballot issues. This voters guide also covers candidates for regional office whose regions cover large areas, such as Courts of Appeals judges and State Board of Education members. When reproducing the statewide voters guide, local Leagues may exclude those regional candidates who will not be on their local ballot.

1.5.1.b Local Leagues may produce a voters guide that includes candidates and/or ballot issues that are on the ballots in its designated area. These will include candidates for U.S. representative, state senator, state representative, and county, city, school board, and/or other district elections. If any jurisdiction overlaps two or more local League areas, those Leagues should work together to eliminate confusion and arrive at a consensus as to which League should contact the candidate and what set of questions should be used. If the Leagues are unable to reach a consensus, the Education Committee chair will assign one League to contact the candidate(s) in the overlapping jurisdiction and will decide on the questions to be used. The *League Handbook* has a list of shared U.S. and state districts.

1.5.1.c For additional information and policies, refer to *A Guide to Voters Guides for Local Leagues Voters Guides Best Practices* (LWVUS), and *Handbook for Local League TEF Projects*. Note that local voters guides for candidates may be paid for with Education Fund money and do not require prior approval or supervision by the Education Committee, but voters guides for local ballot issues published in a pro/con format do require prior approval and supervision by the Education Committee.

1.5.2. Other policies relating to voters guides

1.5.2.a Nonpartisan policy. The League nonpartisan policy should always be printed in a prominent place on the front page of a League voters guide. Questions for candidates should be fair, balanced, and nonpartisan.

1.5.2.b Presidential candidates. A voters guide for these candidates is produced only by the national League and is copyrighted. It may be published by the state League adhering to the guidelines required by LWVUS.

1.5.2.c Reproduction by other media. If a state League voters guide is reproduced by local Leagues, newspapers, or other organizations in any media—print or electronic—it must be attributed to the state League and include a statement of League nonpartisanship. The voters guide content concerning candidates and/or issues must be reproduced in its entirety, except that regional races not on the local ballot may be omitted.

1.5.2.d Online voters guides, such as VOTE411, are subject to the same policies as printed voters guides. In particular, if fees for the online software are paid by the state League, all local Leagues will need to notify the state League if they are going to enter ballot propositions with pro/con arguments. The Education Committee chair will assign a supervisor to review the ballot propositions and the pro/con arguments before they are activated in the software.

1.5.3 Instructions to candidates

As soon after the filing deadline as possible, explicit instructions and questions are sent to candidates in a traceable form (VOTE411, USPS delivered, signed mail receipt, or email request return receipt option). Clearly articulate the ground rules for inclusion in the League voters guide, for example:

1.5.3.a Word limitations so candidates know that any responses over the word/character limit will be truncated at that number. (VOTE411 calculates the word count for candidate responses. If a local League is not using VOTE411, include rules for counting/printing words,

numbers, symbols, abbreviations, dates, caps, boldface, italics). If the answer is cut, it is indicated with slash (///) marks.

1.5.3.b No editing for spelling or grammar mistakes so candidates cannot say their answers were changed by the League.

1.5.3.c If the candidate does not respond, "No response from the candidate" will be printed.

1.5.3.d References to opponents or specific persons are not allowed. General references to other political parties may be allowed. If a response is deemed inappropriate, the entire response will be deleted. The candidate will be notified in advance of the voters guide publication and given the opportunity to amend the response before the publication deadline. In place of the inappropriate response, the guide will state, "Candidate's response did not meet the criteria listed in this voters guide."

1.5.3.e Photos of candidates may be included as an optional part of a voters guide; videos may be included as part of an online guide. However, if a candidate does not provide an appropriate response to at least one question, the voters guide should not include a photo or video.

1.5.3.f These rules should be summarized in the voters guide. A copy of the state League instructions to candidates may be requested by contacting the state office.

1.5.4 Unopposed candidates.

Leagues should decide in advance whether to include unopposed candidates. Space limitations may dictate their exclusion, but their responses may be important in providing information to the voter, especially in voters guides placed on League websites.

1.5.5 Write-in candidates

In statewide races, write-in candidates must file a declaration of write-in candidacy with the Texas Secretary of State, and their names are posted in the polling place. However, their names are not on the ballot, and their responses are not included in the state League voters guide. Local Leagues may develop a policy to include local write-in candidates in their voters guide if the filing deadline permits the inclusion of all candidates. This local policy does not apply to regional candidates included in the state League voters guide.

1.5.6 Membership ads

A membership ad for the League should be included in the voters guide and paid for with general League funds, not tax-deductible funds. For example, if a voters guide is five pages and the membership ad is a half page, general League funds would cover 10% of the printing and distribution costs.

1.5.7 Candidate ads

If advertising is used to fund a voters guide, ads from candidates, political parties, and advocacy groups are not allowed. In addition, membership information or announcements from political groups are not allowed. Other ads (products, services) may be used, but a disclaimer should be displayed, such as "Reference herein to any specific commercial product, process, or service does not constitute or imply endorsement, recommendation or favoring by the LWV of XX." Candidates shall not be listed as donors in the voters guide but may be recognized elsewhere.

1.5.8 Ballot-issue voters guides

League positions on Constitutional Amendments or ballot issues must not be included in the voters guide. If the League publishes a fact sheet on its position, it should not be distributed so that it appears as a supplement to the voters guide.

1.5.9 Publication and distribution

Voters guides may be published and distributed in hard copy and should also be made available online through local League websites, www.LWVTexas.org, and www.VOTE411.org. Send local League voters guides to the state League at LWVTexas@LWVTexas.org and to LWVUS at voterinfo@LWV.org.

1.6 Candidate Debates and Forums

1.6.1 League responsibilities for holding debates

1.6.1.a The state League is responsible for organizing debates or forums for statewide offices, such as governor and U.S. senator. Local Leagues without state board approval should not sponsor debates affecting statewide offices. Where appropriate, the state League will invite local Leagues to cosponsor debates involving candidates for statewide office.

1.6.1.b Local Leagues have responsibility for debates or forums for U.S. representative, state senator, state representative, regional candidates, and all local candidates. Leagues should have a written debate policy, including rules, procedures and criteria, and review it annually.

1.6.1.c Since election laws change, the state League will ascertain before each election cycle information regarding any election law changes from the Federal Election Commission (www.fec.gov), the IRS (www.irs.gov), the Federal Communications Commission (www.fcc.gov), and the Texas Secretary of State's office and will consult with local counsel as needed.

1.6.2 Purpose, definitions, and regulations for League debates

1.6.2.a The purpose of debates and forums is to educate the public about issues, allow face-to-face comparisons of the candidates and their positions, and stimulate and increase voter interest and participation in the election.

1.6.2.b The Federal Election Commission (FEC) regulates the conduct of corporate, labor and nonprofit organizations in federal elections, including both 501(c)(3) and 501 (c)(4) organizations.

1.6.2.c Debate. FEC regulations define a debate as an event that (a) includes at least two candidates, (b) is staged in a way that does not promote or advance one candidate over another, and (c) allows the candidates to appear concurrently, in face-to-face confrontations, with opportunities to respond to each other.

1.6.2.d Forum. The FEC defines a forum or other nondebate candidate appearance as a place, meeting, or medium where ideas and views on particular issues are exchanged.

1.6.2.e The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulates radio, television, and cable broadcasters. Under its regulations, a broadcaster that permits a candidate for any public office—federal, state, or local—to use its facilities must provide all other legally qualified candidates for the same office with equal opportunities for use.

1.6.2.f Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rules provide that 501(c)(3) organizations "may not participate or intervene, directly or indirectly, in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office." This prohibition applies to campaigns for public office at all levels—federal, state, and local. A violation of IRS rules could jeopardize the tax-exempt status of the 501(c)(3) organization responsible.

1.6.3 Candidates invited to participate in a League debate must meet all of the following criteria:

1.6.3.a Requirements of the Texas Constitution and/or the Constitution of the United States

1.6.3.b All requirements to be on the ballot according to Texas election laws

1.6.3.c Demonstrate significant voter interest and support by being nominated by a recognized political party in Texas, raising sufficient funds to require reporting under FEC rules for federal races, or showing that a formal campaign is being waged.

1.6.4 General policies for all debates/forums for state and local Leagues

1.6.4.a Forums and debates must be nonpartisan and ensure that all participating candidates will be treated fairly and equally.

1.6.4.b All candidates for the races included on the ballot must be invited to participate. Only qualified candidates should be allowed to participate, and no substitute may stand in for a candidate.

1.4.6.c A letter of invitation should include the criteria for participation, debate/forum format and rules, candidate's acceptance of format and rules, and a waiver for League

distribution of debate content. It should be sent to candidates in a traceable form (USPS delivered, signed mail receipt, or email returned mail receipt).

1.4.6.d The language of the waiver for distribution should be: "The debate or forum content is the property of the LWV and permission must be sought to rebroadcast the debate or forum in its entirety or to print excerpts. Candidates must agree that no portion of the debate or forum will be used in a political advertisement."

1.6.4.e Issues of interest to the general public must be included.

1.6.4.f Meeting must be open to the public, in a place that will not seem to exclude some potential audience, unless conducted for broadcast-only purposes.

1.6.4.g Donations from candidates or political parties should not be solicited or accepted.

1.6.5 Policies for debates/forums for federal races (U.S. House and U.S. Senate)

1.6.5.a Candidate participation guidelines for federal races

1.6.5.a1 A debate or forum must have at least two candidates for each federal office. An empty chair debate (where only one candidate is present) cannot be held as it can be considered by the FEC as an "in-kind" contribution or providing "something of value" to a federal candidate and thus subject to the prohibitions of federal election laws. A single candidate for a federal office may not be a speaker at a debate or forum. The candidate may be introduced and invited to meet and greet attendees at the end of such meetings; however, the candidate should not remain on the stage.

1.6.5.a2 A debate or forum should not start if only one candidate for a federal office is present. If the debate or forum includes several races, the other races may begin while waiting for the late candidate.

1.6.5.a3 If a candidate declines, cancels, or does not appear, the debate or forum may proceed if more than one candidate for the federal office is present. If only one is present, the debate or forum for that office must be cancelled. The moderator may present any factual reasons given by the candidate without editorial comment. If the candidate who cancelled provides a statement, the moderator may read it. If no reason is given, the League should state that it was contacted by the candidate or the campaign and told the candidate would not be able to appear. The League can state that no reason was given for canceling. Attempts may be made to reschedule the debate or forum.

1.6.5.a4 If a candidate refuses to participate, the League president may submit a letter to the editor of local/statewide newspapers stating that candidates are expected to participate and if they do not, they are denying the community an opportunity for public education about them and the issues.

1.6.5.b Debate locations for federal races (FEC regulations)

1.6.5.b1 Nondebate candidate events and appearances (e.g., meet-and-greet) sponsored by the League must be held at a tax-exempt school, college, or university. If the event is not sponsored by the League, it may be held in another location.

1.6.5.b2 Debates may be held at a public (government or school) facility, in-studio television facility, public community facility, or retirement home with good public access.

1.6.6 Policies for debates/forums for state and local races

1.6.6.a Candidate participation guidelines for state and local races

1.6.6.a1 If League money is used, follow the candidate participation guidelines for federal offices.

1.6.6.a2 If the event is advertised as a debate, not a forum or meet-and-greet, follow the candidate participation guidelines for federal offices.

1.6.6.a3 If the event is broadcast, follow the candidate participation guidelines for federal offices.

1.6.6.a4 If the event is not advertised as a debate and is not broadcast and no League money is used, it is still recommended to follow the candidate participation guidelines for federal office. However, one candidate for a contested office could appear, speak and answer questions, as long as all candidates for the office were invited and the event would not damage the nonpartisan reputation of the League by creating the impression that the League favored one candidate over another.

1.6.6.b Debate locations for state and local races

For state and local races, the event may be held in any location that is accessible to the public.

1.6.7 Cosponsorship for all debates/forums

1.6.7.a Cosponsors cannot have endorsed or be affiliated with a candidate or ballot issue and must be approved by the League board of directors. Any group whose leadership has made public statements for or against any candidate, which is known to support a candidate informally, or that advocates for an issue on the ballot should not be asked to be a cosponsor. An exception can be made if both of the two major political parties (Democrat and Republican) are cosponsors.

1.6.7.b The League should take the lead in contacting the candidates, negotiating disputes, and controlling the format for a forum that is cosponsored.

1.6.7.c The League should provide the moderator and timekeeper or should approve of them in advance. The moderator should not be identified as a member of a political party or a friend of one or more of the candidates.

1.6.8 Moderating a non-League forum

1.6.8.a A League may moderate a candidates forum sponsored by another organization as long as the forum conforms to League procedures and principles to ensure a nonpartisan event. The League should provide the sponsoring organization with information about its requirements for candidates forums, including inviting all candidates, allowing equal time for all candidates, placement of any candidate materials, videotaping, etc.

1.6.8.b The sponsoring organization cannot have endorsed or be affiliated with a candidate or ballot issue and must be approved by the League board of directors. The League should not moderate a forum for any group whose leadership has made public statements for or against any candidate, which is known to support a candidate informally, or that advocates for an issue on the ballot.

1.6.8.c The sponsoring organization may take the lead in contacting the candidates and planning the date, time, and location, although the League may provide help upon request. The format of the forum should be agreed upon by the League and the sponsoring organization.

1.6.8.d The League should provide the moderator, timekeeper, and question screener, if possible. The moderator should not be identified as a member of a political party or a friend of one or more of the candidates. Additional volunteers may come from the sponsoring organization.

1.6.9 Candidate forums and the Texas Open Meetings Act

1.6.9.a The Texas Open Meetings Act, adopted in 1967, requires meetings of governmental bodies to be open to the public, including informal meetings. If a quorum of a governmental body, generally a majority of its members, is present at a meeting, it may be subject to requirements of the Texas Open Meetings Act. It is the responsibility of the elected officials and their government entity to determine whether a candidates forum constitutes an open meeting under the Texas Open Meetings Act and, if so, to post notice and arrange for minutes or taping of the meeting.

1.6.9.b If the forum is considered an open meeting by the governmental entity, the League or sponsoring organization should be in contact with the governmental entity to coordinate any arrangements for taping or otherwise recording the forum and to ensure that notice of the meeting states that it is a candidates forum with questions from those in attendance.

The League or sponsoring organization may announce at the beginning that the forum is considered an open meeting under the Texas Open Meetings law and as such is being recorded by the governmental entity and provide information as to how the recording will be available. Anyone who wants to record all or any part of the open meeting should be allowed to do so, according to the provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act.

1.6.9.c If the forum is not posted as an open meeting, the League should follow its own guidelines for broadcasting. (See 1.6.10.)

1.6.9.d If the forum is taped or broadcast, the League should not allow an empty chair debate.

1.6.10 Broadcast policies for all debates/forums not subject to Texas Open Meetings Act

1.6.10.a A radio, television, or cable broadcaster must not edit the debate or forum, and it must be broadcast in its entirety, either live or reasonably soon after the debate. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) requires that a debate or forum must include at least two candidates. The exception is news media reporting on the event.

1.6.10.b Candidates are not allowed to use or edit the recording for campaign purposes.

1.6.10.c Cell phones must be turned off. The moderator should announce that unauthorized videos are not allowed because the FCC requires that the debate must not be edited and must be broadcast in its entirety, except by media reporting on events.

1.6.10.d The content of the recording belongs to the League and its cosponsors. Any use of the recording requires the approval of the League with the caveat that it must be broadcast in its entirety. The recording can be posted in written or streaming audio/video on a League website or another website if approved by the League. It can be broken into segments as long as all segments are available.

Also consult the LWVUS website for:

FAQ's Candidate Forums-Debates—available at

<http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/faqs-candidate-forums-debates>

Guidelines for State and Local League Debates—available at

[http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/guidelines-state-and-local-league-debates-including-\"empty-chair\"-debates](http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/guidelines-state-and-local-league-debates-including-\)

1.7 Guidelines for League Websites

1.7.1 Privacy

The League places a high priority on protecting personal privacy. This policy demonstrates the League's firm commitment to the privacy of our members and website users. It explains what types of information is collected by www.LWVTexas.org and how the information is used.

1.7.1.a What personally identifiable information is collected. League members that register for www.LWVTexas.org and individuals that sign up to receive League electronic communications voluntarily provide us with contact information (e.g., name and email address). The League may use this information for specific, limited purposes. Individuals may always opt out at the time or at any time in the future to stop receipt of messages.

1.7.1.b IP addresses. The League uses individual IP addresses to help diagnose problems with the server, administer www.LWVTexas.org, and collect statistical metrics used to track website visitor traffic.

1.7.1.c Cookies. The www.LWVTexas.org website uses cookie data files to automatically provide better services. Cookies track website visitors and their preferences based on visitor actions. The cookie is placed in the visitor's computer and read when the visitors comes back to the League website. Cookies guide website visitors to the information and features they're particularly interested in. They also let us track visitor usage of www.LWVTexas.org to identify which parts of the website are most popular. Individuals can reject cookies or cancel them by instructing their Web browser accordingly.

1.7.1.d Use of collected information. Personal contact information is used to send individual email alerts, answer individual requests, process individual membership applications, etc. Individuals may opt out at any time, which will cease all communications from the League. The League uses tracked website visitor information to identify which of our features are

most popular and better serve users' needs. Depersonalized aggregate data about League website traffic (e.g., showing how many visitors used which features) may be shared with outside parties.

1.7.1.e Email privacy. Personal information will be shared only with those third-party service providers who perform functions on our behalf, including processing credit card payments, providing customer service, removing repetitive information from customer actions, analyzing data, and providing marketing assistance.

1.7.1.f External links. The www.LWVTexas.org website includes links to external websites. These links do not fall under the www.LWVTexas.org domain, and the League is not responsible for the privacy practices or the content of external websites. Use of any linked website is solely at an individual's own risk.

1.7.1.g Modifications. The League may amend this privacy policy from time to time by posting an electronic notice on the League website. Continued use of the League website after the date that such notices are posted will be deemed an individual's agreement to the changed terms.

1.7.2 Copyright

The League website and materials posted via the website shall be copyrighted using the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 United States License or a similar license.

1.7.3 Disclaimer

The information contained on the League website is provided by the organization for general informational purposes only. None of the information on the website is intended or should be construed to be legal advice or a legal opinion. While every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained on the website is as accurate as possible, omissions and errors may occur. Also, because of the nature of website development, maintenance, and updating, the information contained on the website may not reflect the most current developments. The League and its contributing authors expressly disclaim all liability to any person with respect to the consequences of any act or omission committed based upon reliance in part on any of the contents of the website.

1.7.4 Links

At certain places on the League website, live links to other Internet addresses (aka third-party sites) can be accessed. Such third-party sites contain information created, published, maintained, or otherwise posted by institutions or organizations independent of the League. The League does not endorse, approve, certify, or control these third-party sites and therefore cannot guarantee the accuracy, completeness, efficacy, timeliness, or correct sequencing of information located at such addresses.

1.7.5 No warranty

The information on the League website and third-party sites is provided as is and without warranties of any kind, either express or implied. To the fullest extent permissible pursuant to applicable law, the League disclaims all warranties, express or implied, including but not limited to, implied warranties, express or implied, including but not limited to, implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose. Use of any information obtained from such third-party sites is voluntary and reliance upon it should only be undertaken after an independent review of its accuracy, completeness, efficacy, and timeliness. Reference therein to any specific commercial product, process, or service by trade name, trademark, service mark, manufacturer, or otherwise does not constitute or imply endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by the League.

1.8 Guidelines for League Social Media

1.8.1 League writers are expected to take advantage of the multimedia opportunities to communicate League values of civility, respect, and nonpartisanship in all writing.

1.8.2 Board members, issue chairs, or select individuals as appointed by the president may post without approval. The president will appoint administrators.

- 1.8.3** Postings will reflect support of League issue positions adopted from study and/or consensus, but not support or oppose any political party or candidate.
- 1.8.4** Brand the sites with the official League logo and use the full name of the League. Use a consistent hash tag phrase for official tracking.
- 1.8.5** Use good judgment in writing, posting, blogging, and tweeting of information, photos, or video messages. Heed copyrights and fair use regulations.
- 1.8.6** The president and administrators have the authority to delete any vulgar or erroneous comment(s).
- 1.8.7** Protect personal privacy and account resources from online criminal intent.
- 1.8.8** Post frequently providing valid, relevant, and useful content. Listen and respond to questions and feedback in a timely manner.
- 1.8.9** Review LWVUS resources to maximize League online visibility, engage members, connect with other Leagues, and attract new members and supporters (e.g., *LWV Online: Web, Blogs & Social Networking, Twitter Guide, Twitter Cheat Sheet, Facebook Guide, Items to Enhance Visibility*).

1.9 Coalitions, Collaborations, and Affiliations

1.9.1 League membership in coalitions, collaborations, and affiliations with other groups shall be approved by the state board. The memberships shall be reviewed annually, and local Leagues shall be informed of groups that the state League chooses to join. Joining or resigning from a coalition, collaboration, or affiliation shall be a decision of the board based on the following guidelines:

1.9.1.a After consultation with the issue chair, the Advocacy Committee chair must present to the board information about a group, such as purpose, mission, major goals or activities, reasons for membership, and verification or affirmation of its nonpartisanship.

1.9.1.b The League's representative to each group must be identified when the list is presented to the board by the Advocacy Committee chair, or as soon as possible thereafter, and the representative's role, if any, with the group must be described;

1.9.1.c Fees for joining should be carefully examined for merit and reviewed annually.

1.9.1.d If the League commits to expending funds other than for dues, the League liaison must ensure that nonpartisanship is maintained in order for the expenses to be covered.

1.9.2 Definition of terms

1.9.2.a Coalition. A group with which the League works that is organized around a specific issue or issues and in which the League has an equal opportunity for input into a group's agenda.

1.9.2.b Collaboration. A group or groups with which the League may conduct a single activity, like a forum or survey, or a specific reform effort, like a sunset or campaign finance reform.

1.9.2.c Affiliation. A group with which the League may lobby and from which the League receives information or newsletters but does not determine the agenda.

1.9.3 Criteria for considering League involvement in with groups include:

1.9.3.a The group's major issues mesh with League position on every issue of coalition's concern. The aims of the coalition must be nonpartisan and must not conflict with League positions.

1.9.3.b The group's activities bring added effectiveness to the overall efforts to achieve the League's organizational, advocacy, or educational goals.

1.9.3.c The group's activities bring added effectiveness to the overall efforts to achieve the League's organizational, advocacy or educational goals.

1.9.3.d Expenditures for work with the group, including staff and volunteer time as well as cash and in-kind expenses, are worth the investment.

1.9.4 The League representative to a group of which the League is a member must have the prior approval of the state League president or designee before making any formal or public statement of League position on a specific issue. If the League disagrees with a majority opinion of the group, a public statement of the League's dissent should be issued.

1.9.5 If the group in any way participates in partisan activity (i.e., opposing or supporting a candidate or party), then the League shall withdraw from the group.

1.9.6 League participation in a group and the representative to the group should be approved annually by the state League board of directors.

1.9.7 The group shall never use the League's name on statements, letters, press releases, publications, or any other materials without prior League consent. Such consent is required each time the group wishes to use the League name.

1.9.8 Local Leagues should have a statement in their local League policies regarding membership in local and regional groups.

Sec. 2. Policies for Local Leagues, State Members, & Leagues-at-Large

2.1 Relation of State Board to Local League Boards

2.1.1 The Services to Local Leagues Committee of the state board has primary responsibility for providing training to local League leaders.

2.1.2 Members of the state board are expected to give state League responsibilities priority over local League obligations. Serving on both state and local boards simultaneously may result in conflicting priorities.

2.1.3 State board members should limit attendance at local League board meetings to those occasions when the local League agrees to include the visit on its agenda.

2.2 State Members (Members-at-Large)

Individuals who do not reside in the geographic area of a local League may be members-at-large of the state League (state members) or may choose to join a local League. The benefits of being a state member and guidelines for forming a League-at-large comprised of state members are published in *Starting Strong for State Leagues: Building a League Presence and Local Leagues at the Community Level* at

<http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/starting-strong-building-league-presence-and-local-leagues-community-level>

2.3 Leagues-at-Large (Member-at-Large Units)

2.3.1 The state board authorizes the establishment of a member-at-large unit, known as a League-at-large. A League-at-large is composed of state members who live or work within a common geographic area and have indicated an interest in organizing as a unit and a willingness to meet requirements established for Leagues-at-large. Leagues-at-large shall be established in those communities where feasible. Feasibility is determined jointly by the Services to Local Leagues Committee and the state members in the community and then approved by the state board. Leagues-at large operate under the state League bylaws.

2.3.2 The state board adopts from time to time the minimum number of state members required to establish a League-at-large. The state board appoints an advisor to work closely with each League-at-large.

2.3.3 Leagues-at-large shall meet the following requirements:

- 2.3.3.a** Maintain the current minimum paid membership set by the state board.
- 2.3.3.b** Conduct an annual meeting to adopt a budget and select a leadership team.
- 2.3.3.c** Assign responsibility for membership development, fund development, and voters service.
- 2.3.3.d** Meet regularly—four leadership meetings and four membership meetings annually.
- 2.3.3.e** Publish a newsletter or appropriate substitute periodically.
- 2.3.3.f** Provide training for the leadership team at least once every 2 years.
- 2.3.3.g** Engage in getting to know your community—become familiar with the community’s people, its enterprises, its issues, its history, and its governance. Observing structure and procedures of the various business, education, and governmental bodies with the League-at-large jurisdiction is essential. In addition, various resources in the community, issues needing citizen attention, and channels through which action is possible are important. The information may be published on a website or shared electronically as a potential resource for the League-at-large and its jurisdiction. (For further information on getting to know your community, see "Sec. 2. Understanding and Describing the Community" in the University of Kansas *Community Tool Box* at <http://tinyurl.com/zute98r>
- 2.3.3.h** The chair of the leadership team shall not actively campaign or work in a campaign on behalf of a local candidate or local ballot issue during the term of office.

2.3.4 The state League shall supply to each League-at-large, without charge, 500 state voters guides or one electronic copy of the state voters guide for each statewide election upon request.

2.4 Full League Status

2.4.1 Minimum requirements for local Leagues

Local Leagues shall meet the following minimum requirements to remain in good standing:

- 2.4.1.a** Adopt and adhere to local League bylaws.
- 2.4.1.b** Pay the current per member payment (PMP) set by the membership at state convention in a timely manner.
- 2.4.1.c** Conduct an annual meeting to adopt a budget and elect officers.
- 2.4.1.d** Meet regularly as defined by local League bylaws.
- 2.4.1.e** Provide state League training for officers periodically.
- 2.4.1.f** Submit the following organizational documents no later than June 30 of each year to the LWV-TX executive administrator at lwvtexas@lwvtexas.org:
 - 2.4.1.f1 Annual meeting materials.** Workbook and/or proposed local budget, bylaws, program, policies, and slate of officers and directors or leadership team.
 - 2.4.1.f2 Bylaws.** Amended bylaws as approved at annual meeting.
 - 2.4.1.f3 Officers and board members/leadership team.** Names and contact information for all current local League officers and board members or League-at-large leadership team members.
 - 2.4.1.f4 Organizational structure changes.** For example, change of name, jurisdiction, League status (i.e., from/to local League or League-at-large).
 - 2.4.1.f5 Publications.** Voters guides or other work issued during the year.
- 2.4.1.g** Submit the following financial documents no later than June 30 of each year to the LWV-TX executive administrator at lwvtexas@lwvtexas.org:
 - 2.4.1.g1 Budget.** Annual budget approved by members at annual meeting.
 - 2.4.1.g2 Financial report.** Fiscal year-end financial report. *Note:* Local League financial information is included in LWV-TX annual report to IRS.
 - 2.4.1.g3 IRS Form 990.** Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax. (Photocopy)

2.4.2 To achieve full League status, a League-at-large shall have:

- 2.4.2.a** Existed for at least 1 year.
- 2.4.2.b** Exhibited membership growth and retention.
- 2.4.2.c** Provided at least one leadership training session.

- 2.4.2.d** Accomplished at least one successful finance campaign that involved more than one activity and included community support.
- 2.4.2.e** Exhibited nonpartisanship.
- 2.4.2.f** Maintained leadership team stability.
- 2.4.2.g** Demonstrated familiarity with the community's people, its enterprises, its issues, its history, and its governance.

2.5 Withdrawing Recognition

The Services to Local Leagues Committee works with Leagues-at-large and local Leagues in membership and leadership development and assisting them to remain in good standing. When there is recurring failure to fulfill the minimum requirements for Leagues-at-large in Section 2.3.3 or local Leagues in Section 2.4.1, the procedure to withdraw recognition will be initiated.

- 2.5.1** A meeting of the members of the local League shall be called by the local League board of directors or League-at-large leadership team for the purpose of discussing and voting on disbandment.
- 2.5.2** The state League Services to Local Leagues Committee chair shall be notified of the intention to call such a meeting. If the local board or leadership team is unwilling to call such a meeting, the state board shall call the meeting and notify the local members. (Contact the chair of the Services to Local Leagues Committee at sll@LWVTexas.org.)
- 2.5.3** Members shall be told the purpose of the meeting and that absence from the meeting shall be considered a silent vote to disband unless the member communicates otherwise prior to the meeting.
- 2.5.4** Upon a vote by the membership to disband the local League or League-at-large, the state board shall request the national board to withdraw recognition.
- 2.5.5** Remaining local League or League-at-large funds, securities, and assets shall be handled in accordance with LWV-TX Bylaws, Article IV, Sections 1(c) and 2(b) (relating to distribution of financial resources upon dissolution).

2.6 Local League Bylaws

- 2.6.1** The first three articles of all local League bylaws must be consistent with those of the League of Women Voters of the United States.
- 2.6.2** Any local League bylaws that relate to distribution of financial resources upon dissolution must be consistent with LWV-TX Bylaws Article IV, Sections 1(c) and 2(b) and Article XII, Section 5.
- 2.6.3** Proposed revisions of local League bylaws shall be submitted to the state Governance Committee chair for review and comment at least 2 months before the local League annual meeting.

2.6.4 Committee

A committee to review local bylaws should be appointed early in the League year. The bylaws committee is important to keep the local League running smoothly. Three members should be sufficient: one board member, one nonboard member, and a chair selected from either the board or general membership.

2.6.4.a Responsibilities

2.6.4.a1 Proposed changes to local bylaws. After reviewing suggestions for changes from the local League board and members, the committee is at liberty to propose or not to propose any bylaw changes. Any changes it does propose should be brought to the local board early in the fall, probably no later than the October meeting. Proposed changes approved by the local League board are then submitted to the state Governance Committee chair for review and comment.

Deadlines for this submission are noted in the Bylaws Calendar for Local Leagues on page 17.

2.6.4.a2 Approval by local League membership. Proposed changes that have been approved by the Governance Committee are then presented to the membership in accordance with local League bylaws concerning amendments. The membership may amend, adopt, or reject proposals at the annual meeting. Please note that a bylaw takes effect immediately, unless otherwise specified.

2.6.4.b Additional responsibilities

2.6.4.b1 Review of state bylaws. The local League bylaws committee is charged with reviewing state and national League bylaws in alternating years, and recommending changes. Such changes as the local board approves are submitted for consideration to the state or national League board. The committee chair should insure that this process is completed in time to meet deadlines for submission of proposed amendments. See deadline dates in on page 17.

2.6.4.b2 Review of local policy guide. The local League bylaws committee should review the local League policy guide as required by that guide. Any changes are submitted to the local board for approval, edited, and approved again, then published in the local League newsletter.

2.6.4.c Distribution of amended bylaws. After the annual meeting, the local League secretary shall send electronic copies of the bylaws as amended to the state office and the national office. All local League members should receive copies. However if the changes are minimal, a League may publish the information in their newsletter and request that members update their copies.

2.6.5 Contact person

Questions and proposed bylaws changes should be submitted to the chair of the Governance Committee by email.

2.6.6 Deadlines

Bylaws Calendar for Local Leagues

Date	Event
Aug 31	Deadline for local Leagues to appoint bylaws committee
Oct	Governance Committee chair publishes notice that the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First three articles of all local League bylaws must be consistent with those of the LWVUS. • Proposed revisions of local League bylaws shall be submitted to the chair of the state Governance Committee for review and comment at least 2 months before the local League annual meeting.
Oct 31	Deadline for local League bylaws committee to recommend to the local League board of directors any changes in local League bylaws related to alignment of first three articles of local League bylaws with those of the LWVUS
Dec	Governance Committee chair publishes reminder that Dec 31 is the deadline for submission of proposed local bylaws changes to the chair of the state Governance Committee by Dec 31 in order to receive notification of approval/concerns by Jan 31
Dec 31	Deadline for early submission of proposed changes in local bylaws to the chair of the state Governance Committee
Jan 31	Deadline for chair of the state Governance Committee to convey approval/concerns of proposed amendment(s) to local League bylaws to Leagues that met the early submission deadline
Feb	Governance Committee chair publishes reminder that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed revisions of local League bylaws shall be submitted to the chair of the state Governance Committee for review and comment at least 2 months before the local League annual meeting. • The chair of the Governance Committee will convey approval/concerns of proposed amendment(s) to local League bylaws within 1 month.
Annual meeting	Local League members vote on proposed amendments to each section of the local League bylaws by two-thirds majority. A two-thirds majority is defined as at least two thirds of those present and voting, unless otherwise specified by the local League rules.

Bylaws Calendar for Local Leagues

Date	Event
May	Governance Committee chair publishes reminder to submit amended local League bylaws to the state office and national office by June 1
June 1	Deadline for submission of amended local League bylaws to state office and national office

2.7 Changing the Organizational Basis of a League

2.7.1 A local League is organized either as a municipal League based around a single municipality or as an area League encompassing more than one governmental jurisdiction. Area Leagues may include one or more counties or a large metropolitan area.

2.7.2 A change in the name or organizational basis of a local League or League-at-large requires the approval of the state and national Leagues.

2.7.3 A study of the proposed new area to be served by the local League or League-at-large must be conducted and presented in writing to the state board.

2.7.4 Following approval of the locally recommended change in name or basis of organization by the local membership at an annual meeting, the local League/League-at-large shall forward the appropriate forms to the state board for its consideration, approval and recommendation to LWVUS. (To request forms, contact Services to Local Leagues Committee chair at sll@LWVTexas.org.)

2.8 Cooperation Among Local Leagues in the Same Political Subdivisions

2.8.1 If a League is considering a study that, if a position is reached, would lead to action before a political entity shared by other local League(s), it must notify those Leagues of the possible study in time to allow them to consider whether or not they wish to participate in the study. Ideally, such studies should be jointly considered and jointly adopted.

2.8.2 When two or more Leagues are in the same political subdivision, reciprocal approval is required before taking action before shared governing bodies.

2.9 Consensus/Concurrence in Local Leagues

Local League boards shall determine the process by which consensus/concurrence is reached in their local Leagues in keeping with the procedures found in *LWVUS League Basics*.

Sec. 3. Administrative Policies for the State Board

3.1 Board Meetings

3.1.1 The president shall determine the dates and places for state board meetings with consideration for the cost of the meetings and convenience of all state board members. The written reports of on-board and off-board members to be included in the preboard report shall be in the state office at the time designated in the adopted calendar.

3.1.2 Unexcused absences from two consecutive board meetings or three unexcused absences from board meetings in a biennium shall be considered a resignation from the board. The secretary shall record absences at the direction of the president. The president shall notify the board member in writing of each unexcused absence.

3.1.3 The board may vote by email between board meetings, if necessary, and decisions will be ratified on the consent agenda at the next board meeting.

3.1.4 Board members are serving as members of the League and not in their professional, executive, or administrative capacity.

3.2 Board Administration

An executive committee of the state board may be created to act on behalf of the state board between its regular meetings on items requiring a decision that cannot be postponed until the regular board meeting. The executive committee shall consist of the president, treasurer, secretary, and the vice presidents. The president has the discretion to refer items to the executive committee or the full board between the board's regular meetings. A majority of the executive committee members shall constitute a quorum. Any decision made by the executive committee of the state board must be confirmed at the next regularly scheduled board meeting and reflected in the official minutes.

3.3 Board Nominations

The state League Nominating Committee should, as a courtesy, prior to contacting any potential new state board nominee, notify the potential nominee's local League president.

3.4 Conflict of Interest

3.4.1 Members of the state board shall not receive compensation, such as salaries or stipends, for services rendered, nor shall they sell professional services or products to the League deemed necessary to carry out the mission of the organization.

3.4.2 The executive administrator shall not be a member of the state board. (It is considered inappropriate for those earning a salary or fee to be a part of the decision making body that hires, fires, and determines salary and benefits.)

3.4.3 Members of the state board may accept modest honoraria or gifts for speeches or other activities rendered to others on behalf of the state League. Other honoraria or gifts shall be given to the state League.

3.4.4 In any matter in which a state board member or the member's family has a substantial financial interest, the board member shall refrain from participating in the discussion prior to a vote, refrain from attempting to influence the outcome of a vote, and abstain from voting.

3.4.5 In the interest of openness and transparency, all board members, staff, and issue chairs shall sign an annual disclosure form and include current employment, current service on other boards of directors, and/or family or business relationships with voting or nonvoting LWV-TX directors or employees, whether or not deemed a conflict of interest. See form on page **34**.

3.5 Program

3.5.1 The Education Committee chair presents program recommendations for a new study, concurrence, or review to the state board based on recommendations from issue chairs and from local Leagues in program planning.

3.5.2 The state board formulates its recommendations for a new study, changes in position, or restudy of a state position and sends this proposed program to the presidents of local Leagues and chairs of Leagues-at-large at least 30 days before convention or statewide conference.

3.5.3 Any program recommendation submitted at least 3 months prior to convention, but not included in the board's proposed program, may be brought to the convention floor for consideration by a local League or the state board. A motion to consider requires a majority vote. If consideration passes, the vote to adopt must be held on the following day. A two-thirds vote is required to adopt a nonrecommended study, to amend a state position, or to adopt a state position by concurrence on the floor of the convention.

3.5.4 Any League that plans to propose the adoption of a new position or amendment to a state position by concurrence on the floor of the convention must give notice of its intent to do so at least 6 weeks before the convention. This notice shall be sent to the state League office, which will forward it to all local Leagues, Leagues-at-large, and the state board.

3.5.5 The League that gave notice of intent must then send background information, including pros and cons on the issue, and a rationale for using this form of member agreement to the state office at least 30 days before the convention. The state office will forward this information to all local Leagues, Leagues-at-large, and the state board. See convention deadlines on page **30**.

3.5.6 Convention delegates vote first on studies and any recommended changes proposed by the state board, then on any item voted to receive consideration.

3.5.7 Positions resulting from efforts to reach consensus/concurrence shall be approved by the state board of directors after careful consideration of consensus or concurrence reports, including majority and minority opinions, submitted by all local Leagues, Leagues-at-large, and state members that responded by the announced deadline.

3.5.8 State members and Leagues-at-large are encouraged to participate in state and national studies. The combined results of isolated Leagues-at-large shall be considered as the consensus or concurrence of one local League.

3.5.9 When a League-at-large consensus/concurrence report on a national study item or on national program planning cannot be approved by the full board, it may be approved by the Executive Committee.

3.6 Program Review

The state League shall follow Article X of the LWV-TX Bylaws and the national League guidelines for adoption of program at <https://my.lwv.org/texas/program-planning>. In addition, the following procedures will be used to ensure a systematic review of all current positions:

3.6.1 During state program planning, local Leagues, Leagues-at-large, issue chairs, or the state board can make recommendations for positions that need to be reviewed, updated, or amended.

3.6.2 During the year following convention, the state board may choose one or more positions for program review. The review may be conducted in the summer and fall following the next legislative session. This decision should be based on:

3.6.2.a Local League recommendations for position update

3.6.2.b Any relevant discussion or debate during convention program adoption

3.6.2.c Length of time since the position has been reviewed

3.6.2.d Current legislative positions

3.6.2.e Recommendations from issue chairs

3.6.3 State board selects a Program Review Committee. Effort should be made to include:

3.6.3.a Current and former issue chairs for the position.

3.6.3.b Members of the original study committee.

3.6.3.c Others with knowledge of the subject.

3.6.3.d Education Committee chair (ex officio)

3.6.4 Program Review Committee reviews the selected positions in depth. The committee will do research and perhaps interview other experts. Criteria for the review of the positions include:

3.6.4.a Have LWV-Texas goals been achieved with this position?

3.6.4.b Is the position still relevant?

3.6.4.c Is the position applicable to current public policy issues or concerns? (Have circumstances changed? Are there new laws that impact this position?)

3.6.4.d Is the position clear?

3.6.4.e Is there still member understanding and agreement concerning this position?

- 3.6.5** The options open to the committee with regard to all or any portions of the position are:
- 3.6.5.a** Retain as is (needs board approval)
 - 3.6.5.b** Retain with editorial changes (needs board approval)
 - 3.6.5.c** Formulate new position statement for member concurrence if there is a change of intent (needs member approval)
 - 3.6.5.d** Recommend a restudy for the following biennium (needs member approval)
- 3.6.6** Program Review Committee makes recommendations to the state board no later than the winter board meeting before the convention. The board votes on the committee's recommendations, and if member concurrence or restudy option is approved, it is given to the convention or statewide conference for a vote.

3.7 Distribution and Review of Policies & Procedures Manual

- 3.7.1** After each revision of this policy guide, a notice of revision shall be sent to state board members, issue chairs, members of the Nominating and Budget Committees, local League presidents, chairs of Leagues-at-large, League-at-large advisors, those who provide leadership training for local Leagues, and the staff. The notice shall provide the link to the electronic copy on the state League website.
- 3.7.2** This policy guide shall be reviewed and adopted by the state board in the middle of each biennium. At the end of each biennium, any addenda shall be published.

3.8 Editing

- 3.8.1** Material for public distribution or for distribution to local Leagues and League-at-large shall be edited and cleared according to procedures found in the current edition of the *State Board Handbook*.
- 3.8.2** For all future state League publications, the following shall appear in whichever format is appropriate: "For permission to reprint, contact the LWV-TX."

3.9 State Office Environment

In order to promote a health-conscious environment and to protect our investment, the office space owned by the state League shall be a smoke-free environment. The workplace shall be free of illegal drugs and firearms.

3.10 Record and Document Retention & Archiving

- 3.10.1** The schedule for retention and archiving state League records follows on page **35**. Preliminary drafts of documents should not be saved. Items such as coupons for a drawing or pledge cards for a donation should not be saved after 1 year has lapsed from the drawing or the time the pledge was made, with the exception of pledges of \$100 or more that have not been paid.
- 3.10.2** State board members should send copies of completed documents that need to be retained to the state office by electronic means. State board members should also back up their documents on a regular basis to guard against losses from a computer crash.
- 3.10.3** To preserve the long history of the state League, its historical records are located in the Texas Tech University Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Lubbock, Texas 79409; www.swco.ttu.edu. See Retention Schedule for Business Records and Documents for transferring documents to archives on page **35**.
- 3.10.4** Local Leagues should adopt the retention and archiving schedule of records and documents as applicable. Local Leagues will make arrangements for archiving records in a location that is readily accessible in their local community.

3.12 Confidentiality

Member and donor information is confidential. Except for routine practices such as the information in the *League Handbook* and normal donor recognition, names and contact information will not be released or made public without board authorization.

Sec. 4. Financial Policies

4.1 Local League Support of the State League

4.1.1 The state League receives a portion of its income from local Leagues through a per member payment (PMP) or minimum support payment approved by convention delegates. Local Leagues' support payments may be paid in full any time during the fiscal year ending May 31 or during the fiscal year on the following schedule:

4.1.1.a First payment due in the state office by July 31. At least one fourth of total PMP shall be paid by this date.

4.1.1.b Second payment due in the state office by October 31. At least one half of total PMP shall be paid by this date.

4.1.1.c Third payment due in the state office by January 31. Three fourths shall be paid by this date.

4.1.1.d Fourth payment due in the state office by March 31. Full amount shall be paid by this date.

4.1.2 Local Leagues may pay up to 50% of their state PMP from their Education Fund account. Local Leagues that maintain Education Fund balances with the state League should make requests in writing to the treasurer or state office for this purpose.

4.1.3 State services may be discontinued to a local League that fails to settle in full its PMP account by the end of the state League's fiscal year (May 31). The decision to suspend services shall be made by the state board on a case-by-case basis.

4.1.4 Only delegates from local Leagues that are current in their PMP payments will be allowed to vote at convention or the statewide conference. See convention deadlines on page **30**.

4.1.5 Each local League shall submit the following financial documents no later than June 30 of each year to the LWV-TX executive administrator at lwvtexas@lwvtexas.org:

4.1.5.a Budget. Annual budget approved by members at annual meeting.

4.1.5.b Financial report. Fiscal year-end financial report. (Local League financial information is included in LWV-TX annual report to IRS.)

4.1.5.c IRS Form 990. Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax. (Photocopy)

4.2 Student Members

4.2.1 Student members must be enrolled in an accredited high school or enrolled for at least six semester credit hours per semester as an undergraduate or graduate student at an accredited college or university. It is the responsibility of the local Leagues to verify that the person applying for membership is a qualifying student.

4.2.2 The state League grants a \$10.00 reduction in state PMP for each qualified student member based on the membership roster submitted by local Leagues to LWVUS in February of each year.

4.3 State Members (Members-at-Large)

4.3.1 The Services to Local Leagues Committee recommends an amount for state member dues to the Budget Committee. The state board then approves an amount in the proposed budget. Convention delegates adopt a budget that includes the amount of state member dues.

4.3.2 Member information and state member dues shall be forwarded to a local League when an individual who has joined the League as a state member resides in a local League area.

4.4 Budget

The state board and those appointed to off-board positions shall monitor their expenditures to ensure that their budget allocations are not exceeded. Prior to the Budget Committee meeting, input regarding the following year's budget shall be sought from state board members, issue chairs, off-board committees, and staff.

4.5 Reserves

Sufficient funds should be placed in reserve to meet state League operating expenses for a 3- to 6-month period. The state board should approve a dollar figure for these reserve funds at the beginning of each fiscal year, and that amount should be kept in interest-bearing and/or fixed income account(s). If funds are withdrawn in case of emergency, they shall be restored as soon as possible.

4.6 Contracts

4.6.1 Contracts with agencies, organizations, or businesses for services rendered by state board members or other representatives of the state League on behalf of the League shall be in the name of the LWV-TX, not the individual. Usually the executive administrator or the president of the state League is the authorized signatory on all contracts, letters of agreement, and other official documents.

4.6.2 Contracts that have been signed with individuals for professional services shall be listed in the consent agenda for the next board meeting in order to preserve an official record of said hiring.

4.7 Personnel Policies

4.7.1 The board of directors, acting upon the recommendation of the Fiscal Management and Administration Committee, has the responsibility to hire and release the executive administrator.

4.7.2 Regular and contract employees may be given a membership in the state League (state member) if recommended by the Fiscal Management and Administration Committee chair based if membership will assist the employee in performing the job duties.

4.7.3 Student Interns and Volunteers

4.7.3.a Student interns. Unpaid student interns participate in work activities that serve only their own educational interests and do not regularly perform the routine work of the organization on a recurring basis. Unpaid internships must comply with "The Test for Unpaid Interns" of the FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT found at <https://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.htm>

4.7.3.b Student volunteers. A League student volunteer is a student member of the state League participating in an internship that does not meet all of the criteria for an unpaid internship. In lieu of compensation, the state or local League shall pay the annual student membership fee for the intern as long as the student continues as a volunteer. A League member may pay the membership fee for the League if the member so desires.

4.7.4 Further description of personnel policies and procedures is found in *Personnel Policies and Procedures: A Manual for League Employees* published at <https://my.lwv.org/texas/publications>.

4.8 Purchasing and Contracting

When practical, two or more cost estimates shall be obtained when an expenditure of more than \$500 is anticipated.

4.9 Fiscal Management

4.9.1 All funds of the state League shall be deposited to the credit of the state League in banks and financial institutions recommended by Fiscal Management and Administration Committee for approval by the board.

4.9.2 The president and/or treasurer of the state League are the authorized signatories on the accounts of the state League. The president and treasurer may authorize additional signatories for special accounts.

4.9.3 The president, treasurer, and executive administrator of the state League shall be bonded.

4.9.4 If new accounts are needed or accounts are to be moved, the institution(s) shall be recommended by Fiscal Management and Administration Committee for approval by the board. Authorized signers shall be the president, treasurer, and any others whom they may jointly designate.

4.9.5 At each state board meeting, the state League treasurer shall provide state board members with a budget analysis. Any expenditure significantly in excess of a budget allocation and any revision of the budget must be approved by the state board.

4.9.6 State League fundraising

The state League board and staff shall be responsible for developing the solicitation sources for funding the state League budgets.

4.10 Investment Policy

4.10.1 All funds, restricted or unrestricted, are held by the board of directors as fiduciaries (stewards) for carrying out the mission of the League. The following investment, objectives, and directions are to be judged and understood in light of the overall sense of stewardship.

4.10.2 Delegation

The state board has delegated supervisory authority over its financial affairs to the Fiscal Management & Administration Committee. The Fiscal Management and Administration Committee is responsible for regularly reporting on investments to the full board. In carrying out its responsibilities, the Fiscal Management and Administration Committee and its agents shall act in accordance with this Investment Policy and all applicable laws and regulations. The directors reserve to themselves the exclusive right to revise the policy and/or to grant exceptions to the policy where appropriate.

4.10.3 Objectives

The primary investment objective is to preserve and protect League assets by earning a total return for each fund appropriate to each fund's time horizon, liquidity needs, and risk tolerance. The secondary objective is to appreciate the total value of the portfolio over time, exclusive of growth derived from investments.

4.10.4 Asset mix

Asset mix is the primary determinant of the League's portfolio performance. Asset mix may be changed from time to time based on the economic and security market outlook as well as income requirements. The overall risk level of assets, in terms of potential for price fluctuations, should not be extreme. The primary means for achieving such risk profiles are:

4.10.4.a Balanced diversification between equity and fixed income investments

4.10.4.b Careful control of the risk level within each asset class through avoidance of over-concentration and by not taking extreme positions against the market averages

4.10.4.c Emphasis on stable growth rather than capital gains

4.10.5 Recommended asset mix

Recommended Asset Mix Among Common/Convertible Equities, Fixed-Income U.S. & Corporate Bonds, & Short-Term Cash & No More Than 1-Year Notes

	Common/Convertible Equities	Fixed-Income U.S. & Corporate Bonds	Short-Term Cash & No More Than 1-Year Notes
Short-term reserves	0%	0-50%	50-100%
Long-term reserves	50-90%	10-50%	0-15%
Endowment (see 4.11.5.a)	50-80%	15-50%	5-20%
Local League Education funds	0%	0%	100%

4.10.5.a Endowment is defined as the principal of gifts and bequests accepted with donor stipulations that (a) the principal is to be maintained intact in perpetuity, for a specified period or until a specified event occurs, and (b) only the income on the fund's investments may be expended for general purposes specified by the donor. Income is defined as the increase in the market value of the endowment over the principal of the endowed gift or bequest.

4.10.5.b The actual investment limits shall be determined within these limits by the Fiscal Management & Administration Committee.

4.10.6 Investment restrictions

4.10.6.a The portfolio must be invested at all times in strict compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and all investment decisions shall be made in accordance with the prudent person rule.

4.10.6.b All investment must be U.S. dollar denominated.

4.10.6.c Commercial paper must be rated in the two highest quality classes by Moody's Investor's Service, Inc. (P1 or P2) or Standard and Poor's Corporation (A1 or A2).

4.10.6.d Negotiable certificates of deposit shall be limited in principal amount to FDIC or FSLIC insurance ceilings.

4.10.6.e Not more than 5% of the voting securities of a corporation may be owned.

4.10.6.f No securities may be purchased on margin or leverage.

4.10.6.g No short sale transactions shall be made.

4.10.6.h Transactions in financial futures and options are prohibited.

4.10.6.i No more than 25% of the portfolio shall be invested in any one industry at cost.

4.10.6.j No more than 5% of the portfolio shall be invested in securities (including debt and equities) of one corporation at cost.

4.10.6.k Securities that are traded only in foreign markets shall not be included in the portfolio.

4.10.6.l Only securities listed on the New York Stock Exchange, the American Stock Exchange, or the NASDAQ Over-the-Counter market shall be included in the portfolio.

4.10.6.m All equity investments will satisfy minimum quality rating of B by Standard and Poor's or a 3 safety rating by Value Line.

4.10.6.n No funds ranked below average by Morningstar may be considered.

4.10.6.o Investment in structured notes is prohibited.

4.10.7 Investment criteria based on mission or social responsibility

The state League intends to invest in companies whose business conduct is consistent with League goals and beliefs. Therefore, the Fiscal Management and Administration Committee will use its best efforts to avoid investing directly in the securities of any company known to participate in businesses the board deems to be inconsistent with the goals and beliefs of the League.

4.10.8 Reporting requirements

The performance of the portfolios with regard to this policy statement will be monitored by the Fiscal Management and Administration Committee on at least a quarterly basis. The Fiscal Management and Administration Committee shall:

4.10.8.a Review the assets and net cash flow of the portfolios.

4.10.8.b Discuss the current economic outlook and investment plans.

- 4.10.8.c** Review the current asset mix and compliance with this policy statement and authorize any redirection of cash flow, transfers of assets, or sales/purchases to ensure such compliance within 12 months.
- 4.10.8.d** Receive and consider statistics on the investment performance.
- 4.10.8.e** Review significant revisions to the expected long-term trade-off between risk and reward on key asset classes, dependent on basic economic/social/political factors.
- 4.10.8.f** Review shortcomings of the policy that emerge in its practical operation.
- 4.10.8.g** Annually, the board shall be provided with the following detailed information:
 - 4.10.8.g1** Asset allocation
 - 4.10.8.g2** Investment performance
 - 4.10.8.g3** Future investment strategies
 - 4.10.8.g4** Any other matters of interest to the state board
 - 4.10.8.g5** A summary of all transactions in the fiscal year
 - 4.10.8.g6** A report of investment performance for the year of the portfolios

4.10.9 Cash flow requirements

The Fiscal Management and Administration Committee will be responsible for providing adequate liquidity to meet the League's cash flow requirements in accordance with state board policy.

4.10.10 Withdrawals from reserves

Withdrawals from reserves for current operations are limited to a sum equal to 5% of the average of the past 3 years' market value of the assets. The Budget Committee shall annually budget an amount, if any, to be withdrawn. At the recommendation of the Fiscal Management and Administration Committee, the board may authorize additional withdrawals from reserves.

4.11 Gift Acceptance Policy

4.11.1 The purpose of these guidelines for accepting gifts is to establish rules for accepting gifts to the League; to protect the interests of the donor, the League, and program or event named as the beneficiary of a gift; and to assist in structuring gifts to the League to provide maximum benefits to the donor and the League.

4.11.2 General guidelines

The provisions of this policy apply to all gifts made or offered to the League. The League welcomes expressions of interest and financial support regardless of size or form, from any individual, family, business, corporation, foundation, or similar source

4.11.3 Types of gifts

Commitments to the League and/or payment of same may take the form of one, or a combination, of the following:

- 4.11.3.a** Personal gifts by cash, check, credit card
- 4.11.3.b** Corporate matching gifts
- 4.11.3.c** Corporate or foundation grants
- 4.11.3.d** Multiyear pledges
- 4.11.3.e** Appreciated securities or other readily marketable personal assets (which are sold as soon as possible)
- 4.11.3.f** In-kind goods and services
- 4.11.3.g** Real estate. Before accepting any gift of real estate, the League shall perform a due diligence review of the property, including a title search and a Phase I environmental review. The inspection must be made by a licensed environmental consultant, who must certify, within the context of a Phase I Site Assessment, that no contamination exists before the property may be accepted. The inspection should be performed in general conformance with the scope of ASTM Practice E1 527. The expense of inspection must be borne by the donor unless an exception is approved by the state board. Any expenses associated with the transfer of the property to the League or any due diligence must be borne by the donor.

4.11.4 Criteria for accepting gifts of real estate

Gifts of real estate are acceptable only after all the following nine criteria are met.

4.11.4.a It has been determined that no reasonable possibility exists that the property could be contaminated by toxic waste.

4.11.4.b An appraisal satisfactory to the IRS gift substantiation requirements has been completed, and the League and donor have reached an understanding as to the valuation of the property.

4.11.4.c The effects on and implications for the League of debt, insurance, homeowners' association fees, property taxes, and other carrying costs have been assessed.

4.11.4.d Appropriate steps have been taken to determine if any other liabilities might attach to the property such as leases, contracts, assignments, or servitude.

4.11.4.e All pertinent information regarding the property is supplied by the donor. This would include names of owners and co-owners (and percentage ownership), recent tax statements, address and/or legal description, and description of current use.

4.11.4.f Donor must convey all his/her undivided interest in the real estate, including any mineral interests.

4.11.4.g The League may recover any costs of managing real estate by charging a fee that is determined by the schedule set by the state board.

4.11.4.h The donor must be willing to bear the costs associated with the gift of real estate, such as legal fees, real estate commissions, management fees, and expenses for due diligence, title searches, and appraisals.

4.11.4.i The state board must approve any exception.

4.11.5 Review by counsel

The League will seek the advice of legal counsel in matters relating to acceptance of gifts when appropriate. Review by counsel shall be sought for the following.

4.11.5.a Transfers of closely held stock

4.11.5.b A gift of residence or farm with a retained life interest

4.11.5.c Documents naming the League as trustee

4.11.5.d Gifts involving contracts

4.11.5.e Transactions with potential conflicts of interest that may invoke IRS sanctions

4.11.5.f Other instances in which advice of counsel is deemed appropriate by the gift acceptance committee (See Sec. 4.11.10.)

4.11.6 Restrictions

4.11.6.a The League accepts both restricted as well as unrestricted gifts provided that donor restrictions do not significantly diminish the value of the gift and are consistent with the stated mission, purposes and priorities of the League. As a general rule, unrestricted gifts of cash and marketable securities allow the board of directors the greatest flexibility in directing resources toward those programs that can best strengthen the organization and advance its mission.

4.11.6.b Generally, the League cannot accept gifts that entail significant additional expense for their present or future use, maintenance or administration. Gifts other than cash and marketable securities will be evaluated by considering the following criteria.

4.11.6.b1 Is the gift consistent with the mission of the League?

4.11.6.b2 Is the property marketable?

4.11.6.b3 Are there undue restrictions on the use, display or sale of the property?

4.11.6.b4 What are the risks and costs associated with accepting the gift?

4.11.6.b5 Do any restrictions on the gift outweigh the potential benefits to the League?

4.11.6.c If the value of the gift other than cash or marketable securities exceeds \$5,000, the donor must have a qualified appraisal performed and submitted to the IRS. Gifts valued at \$5,000 or less may be reported at the value declared by the donor or qualified expert. The League will comply with all current IRS regulations regarding charitable contributions.

4.11.7 Gift recognition

4.11.7.a The League will acknowledge and recognize all gifts appropriately and promptly. The League acknowledgement will inform the donor of any benefits provided in exchange for the contribution. Goods and services provided will be considered insubstantial as long as the fair market value of the benefits does not exceed the limits set by the IRS.

4.11.7.b The gift record of a donor whose gift is matched by the donor's company will be credited for the total amount of the individual gift plus the corporate matching gift.

4.11.7.c Upon request, the League will provide gift receipts meeting IRS substantiation requirements for property received by the League as a gift. However, except for gifts of cash or publicly traded securities, no value shall be ascribed to any receipt or other substantiation of a gift received by the League.

4.11.8 Confidentiality

4.11.8.a Gifts may be acknowledged in League publications unless the donor requests anonymity.

4.11.8.b However, all information concerning prospective and current donors, including names and addresses, names of beneficiaries, nature and value of estates or other assets, and planned gift provisions shall be kept strictly confidential by the League, its volunteers, and its staff.

4.11.8.c With discretion, however, and if the donor or executor grants permission, authorized personnel may use selective information for purposes of referral, testimonial, or example.

4.11.9 Donor responsibilities

The ultimate responsibility for asset evaluations, tax deductibility, and/or similar federal, state, and/or local compliance issues rests with the donor and any advisors that the donor shall secure. The League recommends that all donors consult with their own legal tax counsel when planning all gifts, especially noncash gifts or future planned gifts.

4.11.10 Gift acceptance committee

4.11.10.a Members of a gift acceptance committee shall consist of the president, one vice president, the treasurer, and anyone else appointed by the state board.

4.11.10.b A gift acceptance committee is charged with the responsibility of reviewing all noncash gifts and restricted gifts made or offered to the League, properly screening, and with the advice of counsel where needed, accepting those gifts that are deemed appropriate. The gift acceptance committee will make recommendations to the state board on gift acceptance issues as required. The state board must approve any gifts that carry potential legal or financial liabilities for the League.

4.11.10.c The president or the president's designee shall have authority to sign planned giving agreements on behalf of the League. Any agreement that does not meet the conditions of this policy shall require the approval of the state board. The state board reserves the right to accept (or in cases where necessary, to decline) any commitment or gift that is offered to the League.

4.11.11 Changes to gift acceptance policy

This policy shall be reviewed every 3 years by the state board.

4.12 Reimbursement

4.12.1 Reimbursement rates

State board members, those elected or appointed to off-board positions, and staff may request full or partial reimbursement from general operating funds for actual expenses incurred in performance of their League duties, within the constraints imposed by the budget and according to policies found in Sections 4.15, at the following rates:

4.12.1.a Telephone, postage, photocopying, and essential supplies at actual cost

4.12.1.b Travel

4.12.1.b1 Travel by public transportation at actual cost including tips. The least expensive means of transportation that is feasible shall be used.

4.12.1.b2 Travel by private car at current Internal Revenue Service (IRS) mileage rates:

4.12.1.b2a Board member travel may be reimbursed at the rate per mile driven in service of charitable organizations or as an in-kind donation at the business rate.

4.12.1.b2b Staff travel may be reimbursed at the rate allowed per mile for business miles driven.

4.12.1.b2c Parking and necessary tips and fees are reimbursed at actual cost with receipt.

4.12.1.c Lodging at actual cost, allowing one-half room per person unless the board directs otherwise, or unless a single room is required when traveling alone on League business

4.12.1.d Meals and incidental expenses

4.12.1.d1 Currently, budgetary constraints do not permit reimbursement of meals and incidental expenses.

4.12.1.d2 Meals and incidental expenses while away from home overnight are tax deductible as in-kind contributions to the League at current IRS/U.S. General Services Administration amounts and guidelines.

4.12.1.e Registration fees for conferences/workshops at actual cost

4.12.1.f Other types of actual expenses if the board permits

4.12.2 State board members, those elected or appointed to off-board positions, and staff may request reimbursement from restricted funds at the rates listed in the project's budget. Such budgets shall be based on actual costs in keeping with IRS tax-deduction allowances and the League's conservative attitudes toward spending.

4.12.3 Only those requested to attend convention, a state board meeting, or a committee meeting may request reimbursement at the rates allowed. If attendance relates to a project supported by restricted funds, reimbursement shall be according to the project budget.

4.12.4 Those eligible to seek reimbursement shall submit vouchers and supporting documentation to the League treasurer to receive reimbursement and should submit similar information to document expenses for which they are not requesting reimbursement. When those eligible choose not to be reimbursed, they may document their actual expenses without regard to the limits established for reimbursement as long as the expenses are reasonable and customary.

4.13 Financial Policies & Registration Procedures for Convention

4.13.1 No reimbursement from state League funds or convention funds shall be made for those registered as local League delegates or observers authorized by the local League board.

4.13.2 No registration fees shall be paid by those whose expenses are being reimbursed from the convention account or state League accounts.

4.13.3 The Nominating Committee chair and Budget Committee chair are requested to attend the state convention. Depending on the nature of business in a given year, the board may request other off-board leaders to attend. Unless the board directs otherwise, reimbursement for such expenses shall come from the convention budget.

4.13.4 Prior to each convention, the state board shall determine whether the budget permits any reimbursement of those off-board leaders encouraged but not requested to attend. Unless the board directs otherwise, reimbursement for such expenses shall come from the convention budget.

4.13.5 The state board shall invite nominees to the new state board to convention and shall determine in a given year which of their expenses may be reimbursed from state League or convention accounts. Any nominee who accepts such reimbursement must attend as an observer authorized by the state board rather than as a local League delegate.

4.13.6 The convention parliamentarian shall be reimbursed from the convention budget for actual expenses as approved by the state board. The parliamentarian shall be offered a stipend of \$50-\$100 per day, or another amount that is reasonable and customary, for services rendered as long as he or she is a professionally registered parliamentarian. The parliamentarian shall register for the state convention as a visitor.

4.13.7 When the Nominating Committee meets at a statewide conference, the expenses relating directly to the committee meeting may be reimbursed from the Nominating Committee line item of the state League budget, as long as committee members register as observers authorized by the state board.

4.13.8 Expenses of the host League cochairs for convention shall be reimbursed from the convention account at the rates set for state board members. The cochairs shall register as observers authorized by the state board.

4.13.9 Special guests' expenses shall be paid as agreed upon at actual cost to the guest from the convention account unless otherwise specified by the state board. Guests shall register as visitors.

4.13.10 State office staff requested by the state board to attend convention shall not pay the registration fees. Expenses shall be reimbursed from the board meeting line item of the state League budget. Staff shall register as observers authorized by the state board.

4.14 Board Member Complimentary Tickets Prohibited

All board members attending League special or fund development events shall purchase tickets that are not included in registration no matter when/where the event is held. No complimentary tickets should be provided for board members or their guests.

Sec. 5. Convention and Statewide Conference

5.1 Convention

5.1.1 The president shall appoint one state board member to chair the convention committee. The chair will report committee recommendations to the board and work with the host League as a liaison.

5.1.2 The state League shall choose the convention hotel.

5.1.3 The state League shall adopt the budget, including registration fees for delegates and observers.

5.1.4 The state League shall approve all special events.

5.1.5 The state League shall invite all speakers.

5.1.6 The state League shall develop the schedule of events and order of business.

5.1.7 A host and state Leagues shall consult regarding fundraising activities associated with the convention.

5.1.8 Convention deadlines

5.1.8.a Actions required by LWV-TX Bylaws by number of days before convention

No. Days	Action
180	Start preparing convention budget and set registration fee
180	Notify local Leagues to submit proposed state bylaws changes before November 1
120	First call to convention (may advance or postpone date by not more than 14 days)
120	Governance Committee deadline to review proposed state bylaws amendments
90	Deadline for recommendations for program and concurrences from local Leagues to state board

No. Days	Action
42	Final call to convention with specific information 42 days before first plenary
42	Local Leagues that want to propose concurrence at convention send notice to other local League presidents, chairs of Leagues-at-large, and state board
42	State board approves proposed state bylaws amendments and proposed standing rules for convention
30	Nominating Committee report sent to local Leagues and chairs of Leagues-at-large; submitted to convention chair for placement in the convention workbook
30	Proposed state bylaws changes sent to local Leagues and chairs of Leagues-at-large
30	Recommended and not-recommended program sent to local Leagues and chairs of Leagues-at-large
30	Proposed state League budget sent to local Leagues and chairs of Leagues-at-large

5.1.8.b Deposit payment dates to convention hotel per contract

5.1.8.b1 First deposit: 150 days

5.1.8.b2 Second deposit: 100 days

5.1.8.b3 Third deposit: 35 days

5.1.8.b4 Full prepayment of master billed items: 15 days

5.1.9 Delegates to state convention (See LWV-TX Bylaws Art. VII, Sec. 2)

No. Members	No. Delegates
14 or fewer	1 (President/alternate)
15 - 19	President + 1
20 - 29	President + 2
30 - 39	President + 3
40 - 49	President + 4
50 - 59	President + 5
60 - 69	President + 6
70 - 79	President + 7
80 - 89	President + 8
90 - 99	President + 9
Etc.	

The convention shall consist of

- a. the president of each local League or an alternate, in the event the president is unable to attend;
- b. delegates chosen by members of local Leagues as follows: one delegate for the first 15 voting members, and one delegate for every ten additional voting members or major fraction thereof. The official membership count shall be determined by state office records of voting members as of January 1 of the year in which convention is held. Each provisional League and each League-at-large with at least 10 members shall be entitled to one voting delegate; and
- c. the members of the state board.

5.2 Statewide Conference

A statewide conference may be called by the state board, the purpose of which shall be determined by the interest and needs of members, local Leagues, Leagues-at-large, and state board.

Sec. 6. Legislative Policy

This policy applies to all advocacy activities based on state League positions in order to influence any branch of state or federal government. The state board directs overall advocacy efforts by adopting goals and choosing legislative priorities; assigning issues; determining how, when, and by whom strategies shall be developed and implemented; entering into litigation; resolving conflicts among local Leagues regarding jurisdiction or action that cannot be settled otherwise; and directing local League advocacy to state government.

6.1 Advocacy Committee

With input from the membership, capitol corps coordinator, legislative coordinator, and issue chairs, the Advocacy Committee shall develop and recommend legislative priorities to the board for adoption and shall ensure local League and member involvement.

6.1.1 Implementation of legislative priorities is the responsibility of the Advocacy Committee chair, capitol corps coordinator, legislative coordinator, and issue chairs with the concurrence of the president.

6.1.2 Testimony and other written statements, as well as action alerts and *Texas Capitol Action* articles, shall have prior approval of the Advocacy Committee chair and the president.

6.1.3 Issue chairs have the primary responsibility for recommending and implementing action in their areas in conformance with this policy. The coordinator of the Capitol Corps coordinates the work of the Capitol Corps, responding to requests for Austin-based legislative contacts or action, both in the regular session and during the interim. Acting on behalf of the state League, the legislative coordinator maintains an active advocacy presence at the Texas Capitol, promotes priority and active issues, and represents the state League, when needed, at the Capitol, coalition meetings, and with collaborators and affiliates.

6.2 Appointment of Issue Chairs & Coordinators

6.2.1 Reappointment of issue chairs and coordinators

During the last 2 months of each biennium (immediately after state convention), the current chair of the Advocacy Committee will consult with the current president, the incoming president, and others as needed, to gather information to be used in determining which issue chairs, capitol corps coordinator, and legislative coordinator will be recommended for reappointment during the next biennium.

6.2.2 The Advocacy Committee chair will arrange for the state office to send a letter over the outgoing president’s signature reminding the issue chairs and capitol corps and legislative coordinators that their 2-year term is ending and thanking them for their service.

6.2.2.a If the outgoing administration is recommending that they be reappointed, the letter will also ask them to contact the incoming Advocacy Committee chair in early June if they would accept reappointment.

6.2.2.b If the outgoing administration is not recommending that they be reappointed, a personal note will be added to the letter to clarify the intent.

6.2.3 Appointment of new issues chairs and coordinators

An opportunity will be offered at the convention for members to volunteer to be considered for issue chair, capitol corps coordinator, and legislative coordinator positions. The incoming Advocacy Committee chair will immediately upon taking office solicit suggestions from whoever might have knowledgeable recommendations. No person should be selected who is not personally known to the Advocacy Committee chair without getting a second recommendation.

6.2.4 At the first meeting of the new board, the Advocacy Committee will report to the entire board which incumbent issue chairs and coordinators have been recommended for reappointment and will review and recommend any new appointments that are ready for board approval.

6.2.5 Any changes during the biennium will be reported and in the case of new appointments be reviewed and recommended by the Advocacy Committee at the next board meeting.

6.2.6 All issue chairs, capitol corps coordinator, and legislative coordinator will be sent a letter of appointment after board approval that makes clear the term of service and includes a list of duties as well as the request that they refrain from conspicuous partisan activities during their term of service.

6.3 Advocacy Calendar

Month/Year	Action
Apr/even years	At state convention, outgoing Advocacy Committee chair solicits volunteers/recommendations for issue chairs and capitol corps and legislative coordinators. Following state convention, the outgoing Advocacy Committee chair consults with current president, incoming president, and others as needed, re: reappointment/new appointment of issue chairs and coordinators.
May/even years	Outgoing Advocacy Committee chair: Composes letters to current issue chairs and coordinators regarding reappointment. See Sec. 6.6.2, 6.6.2a, and 6.6.2b above. (Mailed by state office under president's signature)

Month/Year	Action
	Updates <i>Program Perspectives</i> with new/updated LWV-TX positions. Sends edits to Communication Committee editor for final editing and formatting. Reviews/updates <i>We Support</i> with new/updated LWV-TX positions in brief. Sends edits to Communications Committee editor for final editing and formatting.
May Annually Even years	Incoming Advocacy Committee chair: Solicits suggestions from knowledgeable persons for organizations to be designated as coalitions, collaborations, and affiliations for the upcoming year. Solicits suggestions from knowledgeable persons on new issue chair and coordinator recommendations. See Sec. 6.2.3 above.
Jun/even years	Advocacy Committee conducts survey of local Leagues on priority issues for the upcoming legislative session.
June Annually Even years Even years	At first meeting of the fiscal year, Advocacy Committee reviews: List of coalitions, collaborations, and affiliations for addition/deletion and makes recommendation to state board for approval. New and returning issue chair and coordinator appointments and makes recommendation to state board for approval. See Sec. 6.2.4 and 6.2.5 above. Priority issue survey results and makes recommendation to state board for approval.
Jul/even years	Advocacy Committee chair composes letter of appointment to all issue chairs and coordinators. See Sec. 6.2.6 above. Include conflict of interest form. (Mailed by state office under president's signature)
Aug/even years	Advocacy Committee chair reviews/updates <i>A Guide for Issue Chairs</i> . Sends edits to Communications Committee editor for final editing and formatting.
Sep/even years	Advocacy Committee chair reviews/edits Legislative Interview Packet for consideration by Advocacy Committee at next board meeting.
Oct/even years	At board meeting, Advocacy Committee reviews questions for legislative interviews and recommends to state board for approval.
Dec/even years	Advocacy Committee chair coordinates planning/implementation of issue chair/capitol corps training with capitol corps and legislative coordinators.
Jan-May/odd years	Advocacy Committee chair oversees legislative action, working closely with capitol corps and legislative coordinators and editor of <i>Texas Capitol Action</i> .
Jun/odd years	Advocacy Committee chair oversees update of <i>Program Perspectives</i> position histories by issue chairs. Sends edits to Communications Committee editor for final editing and formatting.

6.4 Advocacy and Local Leagues

Per LWV-TX Bylaws (Art. X, Sec. 3), local Leagues or members may take action in the name of the League to influence state government only when authorized to do so by the state League.

6.4.1 Action alerts or other requests for action provide automatic authorization to act as directed.

6.4.2 A local League that wishes to initiate its own action before a state elected official or governmental body must first obtain authorization from the Advocacy Committee chair and the president. If the proposed action would affect other local Leagues, the Advocacy Committee chair shall advise the local League whether they must first obtain clearance to act from those Leagues.

6.4.3 If the Advocacy Committee chair grants a local League permission to lobby a state legislator using a local League position, the following applies:

6.4.3.a The local League can lobby only on a bill affecting their area. If an amendment to the bill changes the scope (no longer local but statewide), the local League cannot lobby for the bill.

6.4.3.b The local League must always specify that they represent their local League when lobbying for the position. If they are asked about the state League position, the local League must tell them the state League has no position on the issue.

6.4.3.c The local League may lobby any local state legislator, but if they lobby a nonlocal legislator, they must inform the Advocacy Committee chair. (If they give testimony in a legislative committee, they shall inform the Advocacy Committee chair.)

6.4.4 Leagues must not take action in opposition to state or national program positions. The state League must not take action in opposition to national positions.

Appendices

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TEXAS

1212 Guadalupe #107, Austin, TX 78701 | 512-472-1100 | LWVTexas@LWVTexas.org

LWV-TX Conflict of Interest Policy

Policies & Procedures: A Manual for State and Local League Boards, 2016 (Sec. 3.4)

3.4.1 Members of the state board shall not receive compensation, such as salaries or stipends, for services rendered, nor shall they sell professional services or products to the League deemed necessary to carry out the mission of the organization.

3.4.2 The executive administrator shall not be a member of the state board. (It is considered inappropriate for those earning a salary or fee to be a part of the decision making body that hires, fires, and determines salary and benefits.)

3.4.3 Members of the state board may accept modest honoraria or gifts for speeches or other activities rendered to others on behalf of the state League. Other honoraria or gifts shall be given to the state League.

3.4.4 In any matter in which a state board member or the member's family has a substantial financial interest, the board member shall refrain from participating in the discussion prior to a vote, refrain from attempting to influence the outcome of a vote, and abstain from voting.

3.4.5 In the interest of openness and transparency, all board members, staff, and issue chairs shall sign an annual disclosure form and include current employment, current service on other boards of directors, and/or any family or business relationships with voting or nonvoting LWV-TX director or employee, whether or not deemed a conflict of interest.

Annual Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

_____ I have no conflict of interest to report.

_____ I have the following conflict of interest to report (please specify):

Annual Disclosure of Employment, Relationship, and Service on Other Boards of Directors

_____ I have no employment to report.

_____ I have no other board service to report.

_____ I have the following to report (please specify):

_____ Current employer _____ Family or business relationship with voting or nonvoting LWV-TX director or employee

Other boards of directors on which I currently serve:

My signature indicates that I understand the implications of a League conflict of interest.

_____ Signature

_____ Date

_____ Printed name

Retention Schedule for Business Records and Documents

Record / Document	Retained in Office	Permanent Archives
Financial Records		
A/P, A/R, cancelled checks, invoices, payroll tax returns, statements, etc.	7 years (Must be kept for 6 full years after tax returns are filed because of IRS audit rules)	
Audit reports	7 years	After 7 years
Financial statements (end of year)	7 years	After 7 years
General ledgers, journals	7 years	After 7 years
Tax returns	7 years	After 7 years
Administrative Records		
Bylaws, charter	Current copy and one previous copy	Expired copies
Contracts, notes, mortgages, leases	7 years after expiration	
Correspondence (routine)	7 years	After 7 years
Deeds, mortgages, bills of sale	7 years	After 7 years
Employment applications	3 years	
Insurance policies (expired)	3 years	
Insurance claims, lawsuits	7 years	After 7 years
Minutes of board meetings, conventions, councils, board actions	5 years	After 5 years
Personnel files	3 years after termination	
Property records, including costs, depreciations, reserves, blueprints	Until property is disposed of	After property is disposed of
<i>Texas Voter</i>	6 years	After 6 years
Local League Information		
Achievement goals/awards (final summaries only)	2 years	After 2 years
Bylaws and policies	Current copies	Expired copies
Minutes, publications	2 years	After 2 years
Disbanded Leagues	2 years	After 2 years
Legislative Information		
Legislative interviews	4 years	After 4 years
Testimony	10 years	After 10 years
Issue papers	10 years	After 10 years
Legislative newsletters	10 years	After 10 years
Development Information		
Annual reports	10 years	After 10 years
Actions of contributors	3 years	After 3 years
League Program		
Program planning	5 years	After 5 years
State studies: <i>Facts & Issues</i> , consensus reports, significant background materials	10 years	After 10 years
<i>Voters Guides</i>	8 years (at least 10 copies)	After 8 years (1 copy)
National program: <i>Impact on Issues</i> , other publications	2 years (current edition)	
Completed education projects	7 years	After 7 years