

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **NONPARTISANSHIP**

The purpose of this policy is to assure the credibility of the League of Women Voters of West Virginia as a nonpartisan organization which does not support or oppose any political party or candidate. The League does take positions on selected governmental issues after member study and agreement. Although the LWVWV urges its members to be politically active, board members must recognize that as a result of their close identification with the LWVWV, they have a special responsibility to see that their activities do not create an impression of partisanship.

Only the president may speak for the LWVWV on matters of policy. All public statements must be in line with League positions. The president, with board approval, may designate another member to speak in the president's place.

During their terms of office, LWVWV board members:

- Are encouraged to register and vote and to attend nonpartisan candidate meetings.

- May attend partisan rallies, provided they are not conspicuous participants and may perform party tasks such as stuffing envelopes or telephoning, but must not identify themselves with the League when doing so.

- May publicly support issues in keeping with League positions. If a board member disagrees with a League position on any issue, the member should refrain from speaking or writing against the League position. (changed 9/03)

- May seek and hold nonpartisan elective or nonpartisan appointive office. (changed 9/6/03)

- May not run for or hold partisan public office.

- May not make conspicuous financial contributions to a candidate or party in such a way as to identify the League member with said candidate or party.

- May not speak at a public meeting or write for publication on behalf of any candidate or party, hand out campaign literature, or display any conspicuous sign of support for a candidate or party, or an issue which is in opposition to a League position.

A board member shall be eligible for reappointment of the board six months following the cessation of any of the forms of political activity proscribed above. (9/92)\*

The LWVWV may not accept contributions from candidates for public office unless the candidate is a League member being solicited during a League-wide fund drive. Contributions may be accepted from elected officials, using caution to avoid the appearance of partisanship. (11/92)

During all League meetings, the free expression of opinions is encouraged. There are no restrictions on the political activities of spouses of board members. There are no restrictions of the sources on income of board members. (9/92)

The LWVWV encourages board members to become involved in community groups and activities. However, the League name shall not be used to identify the person unless it is a coalition endorsed by the LWVWV to promote League goals. (9/92)

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **REIMBURSEMENT**

1. Board Meetings: Board members will be reimbursed at the rate of 30 cents per mile for travel to board meetings. For overnight board meetings, lodging and a per diem food allowance of \$15 will be paid. (9/92, 1/08)
2. Conventions & Councils: Board members serving as delegates to LWVUS or LWVWV conventions and councils will be reimbursed for registration, travel, hotel and banquet fees, plus a per diem food allowance.
3. Other travel: The president or other authorized League representative on League business will be reimbursed as above.

### **FISCAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

Using the annual budget process, the state board is responsible for recommending the amount of per-member-payment owed by local Leagues and the dues level for members-at-large. (1/96)

### **GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Committees: Each board member may select committee members for distribution of the portfolio work and for the development of future leaders, provided that there is a way to keep committee members active.
2. Reporting: Each board member is expected to provide an annual report to conventions and councils, and additional state board reports. Copies of communications of interest to LWVUS are sent by each portfolio chair to LWVUS. See: LWVWV Communications Reminder.

**COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS**

1. Correspondence: Copies of all correspondence shall be sent to the president. All official League letters are to be sent under the signature of the president and may be cosigned by the portfolio holder.
2. Sharing Member Lists: The general membership list of the League shall not be made available to the public. A list of local League presidents may be made available at the president's discretion.
3. Publication Preparation: Drafts shall be sent to all board members for review and comment. No publication shall be made available to other than board members until such draft review is made, except that an expert may review the draft for content. Credits will be listed on publications at the discretion of the board. (9/92)
4. Publication Distribution: New LWVWV publications shall be sent to all board members, and two copies to local Leagues and MAL-Units. Individual MALs shall receive program materials as listed in "State Board Orientation." MALs enrolled in Units shall be treated as local League members. (9/88)

**ORGANIZATION**

1. Member-at-Large Units: A group of members-at-large wishing to be recognized as an MAL-Unit must have at least 10 members and hold at least four meetings per year. See: Guidelines for MAL-Units.
2. Local League Recognition: An MAL-Unit wishing to become recognized as a local League must fulfill the requirements set forth in the policies of the LWVUS and the LWVWV. See separate state policy "Requirements for Recognition as a Local League." Established Leagues are expected to maintain the standard practices found in "Minimum Responsibilities For Local Leagues."
3. Household members: When two or more members reside in the same household, the full state per-member-payment is charged for the first member and 1/2 PMP for each additional member. State MAL dues are treated in a like manner.

## **PROGRAM AND ACTION**

1. **Study Materials:** State program chairs and their committees are responsible for preparing study material and consensus questions for local League use. Program materials shall be reviewed by the board and consensus questions must be approved by the board.
2. **Legislative Action:** When Action Alerts are anticipated, background information shall be provided to the local League presidents, to state board members, and to MALs.
3. **Responses to National and State Action Alerts:** Portfolio chairs shall be responsible for drafting responses to Action Alerts in their areas, and for sending them out under the president's name, cosigned, if desired.
4. **Consensus:**
  - a. Consensus is based upon agreement among a substantial number of participating members and of Leagues within the state. A statement of position will be approved and announced by the state board. No preliminary report of local League results shall be published or distributed to the membership or the press.
  - b. In counting votes for consensus or concurrence, the individual votes of all MAL members who respond will be counted in the same manner as the individual votes of members participating in local League consensus/concurrence. If five or more MALs participate, the aggregate of their votes will be treated as if it were a return from a local League. (9/01)
5. **Concurrence:** See separate Concurrence Policy.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

The president shall determine the priority of press releases and request that they be drafted by the appropriate person. Releases shall be sent to local Leagues for local use, and to the news media. (9/92)

## **VOTERS SERVICE**

1. **Voters' Guide:** The voters service chair shall prepare election materials on statewide and congressional candidates. Candidate questions shall be approved by the board. Materials should be sent to local Leagues as far in advance of election dates as possible, and may also be sent to MALs at the discretion of the chair and the president.
2. **Debates and Public Candidate Forums:** Questions to be used in state board sponsored candidate debates on forums must be approved by a committee including the president and one other board member. (6/92) No representative of a candidate will be permitted to appear in place of the candidate. (9/98)
3. **Third Parties on the Ballot:** Candidates representing parties entitled to hold a primary in WV or candidates legally qualified to appear on the general election ballot will be included in all LWVWV voters service projects. (1/96)

## **APPOINTMENTS TO GOVERNMENTAL BOARDS & COMMISSIONS**

At the board's discretion, names of appropriate League members may be forwarded to fill vacancies on state appointive boards, commissions and committees. The following criteria shall apply:

1. The board shall be acquainted with the candidate and shall be satisfied that the candidate's qualifications are consistent with the position to be filled.
2. If the board is able to do so, it should suggest more than one qualified candidate for a position.
3. The League may become aware of the imminent appointment to a governmental board vacancy, of a candidate whom it considers truly unqualified for the position. After careful consideration of the reasons for the perceived disqualification, and with the conviction that the appointment will do considerable damage to the success of the League's goal, the board may question the validity of the candidate's qualifications for the position. If the board makes alternate recommendations, it should suggest more than one candidate.
4. The board shall not make recommendations for salaried positions, but may respond to requests for references.

## **POLICY REVIEW AND ADDITIONS**

The president shall appoint a committee to review at least biennially these policies and procedures. See also additional LWVWV policies:

Concurrence Policy  
Disbandment Guidelines  
Guidelines for Conventions and Councils  
Guidelines for Local League Action  
Guidelines for Members-at-Large  
Guidelines for Member-at-Large Units  
Minimum Responsibilities For Local Leagues  
Policy for Handling Grants or Contracts  
Requirements for Recognition as a Local League  
State Board Orientation

**\* Dates found within the text of this publication refer to the month and year in which the state board adopted that policy.**