



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF NEW JERSEY**

**ARTICLE I**

**Name**

Section 1 - Name. The name of this corporation shall be the League of Women Voters of New Jersey. This state League is an integral part of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

**ARTICLE II**

**Purposes and Policy**

Section 1 - Purposes. The purposes of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey are to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government and to act on selected governmental issues.

Section 2 - Policy. The League may take action on state governmental measures and policies in the public interest in conformity with the principles of the League of Women Voters of the United States. It shall not support or oppose any political party or any candidate.

**ARTICLE III**

**Membership**

Section 1 - Eligibility. Any person who subscribes to the purpose and policy of the League shall be eligible for membership.

Section 2 - How Composed. The League of Women Voters of New Jersey shall be composed of members of the League of Women Voters of the United States who are enrolled in recognized local Leagues within the state and state members-at-large (MAL), who shall be state members who reside outside the area of, and are not enrolled in, any recognized local League. State members-at-large may be enrolled as members of an MAL unit. Members who live within an area of a local League or MAL unit may join that League, any other local League, or be a member-at-large of LWVNJ.

Section 3 - Types of Membership.

- a. Voting members shall be those citizens at least 18 years of age who are enrolled in recognized local Leagues, and state members-at-large, including honorary life members. Honorary life members are those residing in the state who have been members of the League for 50 years or more.
- b. Associate members shall be all other members.

**ARTICLE IV**

**Recognition of Local, Inter-League Organizations (ILOs) and Member-At-Large (MAL) Units**

Section 1 - Local Leagues and ILOs. Local Leagues and ILOs are those Leagues and ILOs that have been recognized by the League of Women Voters of the United States.

Section 2 - Recognition of Local Leagues. When there is, in any community in the state, a group of members of the League of Women Voters of the United States which meets the recognition standards for local Leagues as adopted at the national convention, the board of directors of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey shall recommend to the national board that recognition be granted.

Section 3 - Recognition of ILOs. When a majority of the members of a majority of the local Leagues in a county form an ILO to promote the purpose of the League, to adopt program, and to work on matters of common concern, the board of directors of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey shall recommend to the board of directors of the League of Women Voters of the United States that recognition be granted.

Section 4 - Withdrawal of Recognition. In the event of recurring failure of a local League or ILO to meet recognition standards, the board of directors shall recommend that the board of directors of the League of Women Voters of the United States withdraw recognition from the local League or ILO. All funds held by a local League from which recognition has been withdrawn shall be paid to the League of Women Voters of New Jersey, and all funds held by an ILO from which recognition has been withdrawn shall be prorated among the member Leagues.

Section 5 - Member-at-Large-Units.

- a. When a group in a community in which no local League exists wishes to form a League of Women Voters, they may be organized by the League of Women Voters of New Jersey into an MAL Unit.
- b. When a local League has taken steps to disband, but meets all of the standards for recognition as an MAL Unit, the board of directors may recognize that League as an MAL Unit.
- c. The board of directors shall establish rules, standards, and procedures for MAL Units and shall withdraw recognition from an MAL Unit for recurring failure to meet these standards. All funds held by an MAL Unit from which recognition has been withdrawn shall be paid to the League of Women Voters of New Jersey.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Board of Directors**

Section 1 - Number, Manner of Selection and Term of Office. The board of directors shall consist of the officers of the League, 10 elected directors and not more than 10 appointed directors.

The elected directors shall be elected by the convention and shall serve until the conclusion of the next regular biennial convention or until their successors have been elected and qualified. The elected members shall appoint such additional directors, not exceeding 10 as they deem necessary to carry on the work of the League. The term of office of the appointed directors shall expire concurrently with the term of office of the elected directors.

Section 2 - Qualifications. No person shall be elected or appointed or shall continue to serve as an officer or director of this corporation unless that person is a voting member of a local League of Women Voters in the state of New Jersey or a member-at-large of the state League.

Section 3 - Vacancies. The president shall designate a vice president to serve in the absence of the president. In the event of the resignation, disability, or death of the president, the board of

directors shall elect by majority vote one of the vice presidents to fill the vacancy. If no vice president is able to serve, the board of directors shall elect by majority vote another of its members to serve as president. Any vacancy, other than the presidency, occurring in the board of directors may be filled by majority vote of the remaining members of the board of directors.

Section 4 - Powers and Duties. The board of directors shall have full charge of the property and business of the corporation with full power and authority to manage and conduct the same, subject to the instructions of the convention. The board shall plan and direct the work necessary to carry out the program on state government matters as adopted by the convention. It shall accept responsibility delegated to it by the board of directors of the League of Women Voters of the United States. The board shall create and designate such special committees as it may deem necessary.

Section 5 - Regular Meetings. The board of directors shall meet at least quarterly. Notice of the time and place shall be mailed to all members of the board not less than one week before the date of the meeting. No action taken at any regular board meeting attended by three fourths of the members of the board shall be invalidated because of the failure of any member or members of the board to receive any notice properly sent or because of any irregularity in any notice actually received.

Section 6 - Special Meetings. The president may call special meetings of the board of directors, and shall call a special meeting upon the written request of five members of the board. Members of the board shall be notified in writing of the time and place of special meetings at least three days prior to such meeting, provided, however, that during a convention or council the president may, or upon request of five members of the board shall, call a special meeting of the board by handing the members of the board a written notice of the time and place of said meetings.

Section 7 - Quorum. A majority of the members of the board of directors shall constitute a quorum and a majority of the members in attendance at any board meeting shall, in the presence of a quorum, decide its action.

Section 8 - Attendance. If a member of the board of directors fails to attend two consecutive regular board meetings without a valid excuse, her or his office will be considered vacant.

Section 9 - Electronic and Phone Decisions/Meetings. Board members may vote by email according to an e-vote policy approved by the board. They may participate in board meetings by conference call or any other distance method, provided all board members can participate.

## **ARTICLE VI** **Officers**

Section 1 - Enumeration and Election of Officers. The officers of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey shall be a president, four vice presidents, a secretary and a treasurer. The secretary and treasurer may be the same person. They shall be elected by the convention and shall hold office until the conclusion of the next regular biennial convention or until their successors have been elected. The president shall not be eligible for election to more than two consecutive terms.

Section 2 - The President. The president shall preside at all meetings of the organization and of the board of directors except as provided in Section 3 of this article. The president may, in the absence or disability of the treasurer, sign or endorse checks, drafts and notes. The president shall be, ex-officio, a member of all committees except the Nominating Committee, and have such usual powers of supervision and management as may pertain to the office of the president and perform such other duties as may be designated by the board.

Section 3 - The Vice Presidents. The vice presidents shall perform such duties as the president and the board of directors may designate.

Section 4 - The Secretary. The secretary or a duly appointed assistant shall keep the minutes of the conventions and councils of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey and of the meetings of the board of directors; notify all officers and directors of their election. The secretary may have other responsibilities as decided by the officers of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey. The secretary, president or treasurer shall sign all contracts and instruments when so authorized by the board.

Section 5 - The Treasurer. The treasurer shall serve as chief financial officer of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey and shall be an ex-officio member of the budget committee.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Financial Administration**

Section 1 - Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey shall commence on the first day of July of each year.

Section 2 - Financial Support. Financial responsibility for the work of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey shall be assumed annually as follows:

- a. Local Leagues shall pay a per member payment.
  1. Excluded from per member payments are honorary life members.
  2. When two or more members reside at a common address in the same household the local League shall make a full per member payment for the first member and a payment equal to one-half the per member payment for each other member.
- b. Members-at-Large shall pay annual dues to the state League as determined by the convention or council. When two or more members-at-large reside at a common address in the same household, the annual dues for each additional member shall be one-half of the member-at-large dues set for the first member.

Section 3 - Membership Incentive. Each year during which a local League's membership has been increased by 10% or more, said League will receive a 5% reduction on the per member payment.

Section 4 - Budget. The board shall submit to the convention for adoption a proposed budget for the next two fiscal years. The budget shall propose the amount of per member payment to be made by the local Leagues. A copy of the proposed budget shall be sent to each local League president, ILO president and MAL unit leader at least two months in advance of the convention. The board of directors shall be authorized to make appropriate modifications to the budget in the second year of the biennium. If a new PMP level should be deemed necessary in a non-convention year, a special meeting of council must be called to authorize the change. If there is to be a proposed increase in per member payment, local Leagues shall be notified of the amount of the increase at least three months in advance of convention or the specially-called council.

Section 5 - Budget Committee. The budget chair shall be elected by the convention and shall serve until the conclusion of the next regular biennial convention. Nomination for this office shall be made by the current Nominating Committee. The budget shall be prepared by a committee of both board and non-board members. The committee shall be appointed for that purpose within six months of convention. The committee shall serve until the conclusion of the next regular convention; it will review the budget and suggest revisions as needed in the non-convention year.

The treasurer shall be ex-officio a member of the budget committee but shall not be eligible to serve as chair.

Section 6 - Distribution of Funds on Dissolution. In the event of a dissolution for any cause of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey, all monies and securities which may at the time be owned by or under the absolute control of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey shall be paid to the League of Women Voters of the United States. All other property of whatsoever nature, whether real, personal or mixed which may at the time be owned by or under the control of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey shall be disposed of by any officer or employee of the organization having possession of same to such person, organization, or corporation, for such public, charitable, or educational uses and purposes as may be designated by the then board of directors of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey.

Section 7 - Audit. The books shall be reviewed annually by a certified public accountant and formally audited by a certified public accountant at least every other year. The audit shall include both years of the biennium.

Section 8 - Signatories. The treasurer, secretary or president shall sign all contracts and instruments when so authorized by the board.

## **ARTICLE VIII** **Convention**

Section 1 - Place, Date, Call and Notification. A convention of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey shall be held biennially. The time and place of the convention shall be determined by the board of directors. The president shall send a first call for convention to each local League president, ILO president, and MAL unit leader not less than three months prior to the opening date of the convention fixed in said call. Thereafter, the board of directors may advance or postpone the opening date of the convention not more than two weeks from the date fixed in the first call. The president shall send a final call for the convention to each local League president, ILO president and MAL unit leader at least thirty days before convention.

Section 2 - Composition. The convention shall consist of the delegates chosen by the members of the local Leagues, as provided in Section 4 of this article, the presidents of local Leagues or their duly authorized representatives, the presidents of ILOs or their duly authorized representatives, the leaders of MAL units or their duly authorized representatives and the members of the board of directors of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey.

Section 3 - Qualifications of Delegates and Voting. Each delegate shall be a voting member in the state of New Jersey. Each delegate shall be entitled to vote only if that League has met its per member payment responsibilities. The state board may make an exception in the case of proven hardship. Each delegate shall be entitled to one vote only at the convention even though the delegate may be attending in two or more capacities. Absentee or proxy voting shall not be permitted. The convention shall be the sole judge of whether a delegate is qualified to vote.

Section 4 - Representation. In addition to the president or the president's duly authorized representative, each recognized local League shall be entitled to one delegate for any number of voting members up to the first 25 voting members and one delegate for every 25 additional voting members belonging to said local Leagues on January 1st of said year. The record in the state office of paid up voting members shall determine the official membership count for this purpose. Local Leagues must have per member payments paid in full through the quarter preceding convention or council to guarantee representation.

Section 5 - Authorization for Action. The convention shall consider and authorize for action a program, shall elect officers and directors, shall adopt a budget for the next two fiscal years, and shall transact such other business as may be presented.

Section 6 - Quorum. A quorum shall consist of not less than twenty percent of the possible number of voting delegates (other than the board of directors), representing not less than twenty five percent of the local Leagues, for the transaction of business at a state convention.

## **ARTICLE IX** **Nominations and Elections**

Section 1 - Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall consist of five members, two of whom shall be members of the board of directors. The chair and two members, none of whom shall be members of the board of directors, shall be elected by the convention. Nominations for these offices shall be made by the current Nominating Committee. Further nominations may be made from the floor of the convention. The other members of the committee shall be appointed by the board of directors immediately after the convention. Vacancies occurring in the Nominating Committee by reason of death, resignation or disqualification shall be filled by the board of directors. The president of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey shall send the name and address of the chair of the Nominating Committee to local League and ILO presidents and to leaders of MAL units. It shall be the duty of the chair of the Nominating Committee to request through the president of each local League suggestions for nominations for offices to be filled.

Section 2 - Suggestions for Nominations. Suggestions for nominations by local Leagues or ILOs shall be sent by the president or secretary of such local League or ILO to the chair of the Nominating Committee at least three months before the convention. Any member may send suggestions to the chair of the Nominating Committee.

Section 3 - Report of the Nominating Committee and Nominations from Floor. The report of the Nominating Committee of its nominations for officers, directors, budget chair and the chair and two members of the succeeding Nominating Committee shall be sent to local Leagues, ILOs and MAL units one month before the date of the convention. The report of the Nominating Committee shall be presented to the convention on the first day of the convention. Immediately following the presentation of this report, nominations may be made from the floor by any member of the convention, providing the consent of the nominee shall have been obtained in advance.

Section 4 - Elections. The election shall be in the charge of an Election Committee appointed by the president on the first day of the convention. The election shall be by ballot except that, if there is but one nominee for each office, it shall be by voice vote. A majority of those present and voting shall constitute an election.

## **ARTICLE X** **Principles and Program**

Section 1 - Authorization. The governmental principles adopted by the national convention and supported by the League as a whole, constitute the authorization for the adoption of a program.

Section 2 - Program. The program of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey shall consist of (a) League principles and positions, (b) actions to implement those principles and positions, and (c) procedures such as studies and updates, by which new or revised positions are developed. Specifically:

- a. The LWVUS principles referenced in Section 1 form the core of the League's program at all levels. Specific positions on state issues must be approved by concurrence or consensus and reaffirmed biannually at convention.
- b. Any action by the LWVNJ in support of, or in opposition to, a governmental issue shall be based on one or more of the following as they apply at the state level:

- the Principles and/or positions of the LWVUS
- the positions adopted by the LWVNJ

c. Procedures for studying an issue or updating existing positions are outlined below.

Section 3 - General Procedures. Changes to existing state League positions and addition of new state League positions can only take place after study or review at an appropriate level of League. There are three basic methods by which changes to program can be made:

- a. The convention is the normal method by which new studies, reviews and updates are authorized. The convention can also approve a new position by concurrence with a study done by another League, and it can delete an existing position or part of one. For a previously approved program to be carried forward into the new League biennium convention must affirm it. The process by which convention makes all these decisions is described below (Section 4).
- b. Although convention is the normal method for making program decisions, Council can do so as well, under special circumstances. (See Article XI.)
- c. There are also provisions for the board, with local League input, to adopt a new study or update. (See Section 5.)

Section 4 - Procedure for program approval by convention. The convention shall select the governmental issues for concerted study and action using the following procedures:

- a. Local League boards may make recommendations to the board of directors at least three months prior to the convention.
- b. The board of directors shall consider the recommendations and formulate a proposed program, which shall be submitted to the local League and ILOs at least two months prior to the convention.
- c. Any recommendation for the program submitted to the board of directors at least three months prior to the convention, but not proposed by the board, may be adopted by the convention, provided consideration is ordered by a majority vote, and, the vote on adoption comes after a specified time has elapsed to permit proponents to hold caucuses and lobby to obtain support for their proposal. To be eligible for consideration as a non-recommended item, it must be proposed and/or seconded by members of at least three different Leagues or MAL units, and at least two individuals must have committed to serving on the committee, one of who agrees to be Chair. These individuals may be local League members, MALs, or state board members. The final vote may be on the same day as the vote for consideration.
- d. A majority vote of those present and voting shall be required for adoption of subjects in the proposed program. Adoption of a non-recommended program subject requires a two-thirds vote of those present and voting.

Section 5 - Member Action. Members may act in the name of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey only when authorized to do so by the board of directors of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey.

Section 6 - Local League Action. Local Leagues may take action on state governmental matters only when authorized by the board of directors of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey. Local Leagues may act only in conformity with, not contrary to, the position taken by the League of Women Voters of New Jersey.

## **ARTICLE XI**

### **Council**



Section 1 - Nature and Purpose of Council. The term "council" shall refer to a statewide meeting of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey, with specified representation from local Leagues, ILOs, MAL units and the state board, that is called between conventions to transact business requiring member input.

Section 2 - Place, Date, Call and Notification. Council shall be called if the board of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey wishes to change PMP other than at convention. The board may also choose to call council into session to obtain member ratification and discussion of substantial changes in direction, program or financing. The time and place of the meeting shall be determined by the board of directors. The president shall send a formal call to local Leagues and ILO presidents and leaders of MAL units at least thirty days before a council meeting. A special council meeting may also be called by 10 of the local League presidents or ILO presidents.

Section 3 - Composition. The council shall consist of the delegates chosen by the members of the local Leagues, as provided in Section 4 of this article and the members of the board of directors of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey, presidents of ILOs or their duly authorized representatives and leaders of MAL units or their duly authorized representatives.

Section 4 - Representation. In addition to the president or the president's duly authorized representative, each recognized local League shall be entitled to one delegate for each 100 voting members or major fraction (51 or more) thereof.

Section 5 - Powers. The council shall give guidance to the board on program, methods of work, and budget as submitted by the board of directors. The council is authorized to change the program only in the event of an emergency, provided that notice of proposed modifications of the program shall have been sent to the presidents of the local Leagues at least two months in advance of the meeting of the council, and provided also that a two-thirds majority of the members of the council present and voting shall be required to adopt the modifications. The council may adopt a budget for the current fiscal year and shall transact such other business as shall be presented by the board.

Section 6 - Quorum. A quorum shall consist of not less than ten members (other than the board of directors), representing not less than ten local Leagues for the transaction of business at a council meeting.

Section 7 - Qualifications of Delegates and Voting. Each delegate shall be entitled to vote only if that League has met its per member payment responsibilities. The state board may make an exception in the case of proven hardship.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### **National Convention and Council**

Section 1 - National Convention. At a meeting before the date on which names of delegates must be sent to the national office, the board of directors shall elect delegates to that convention in the number allowed the League of Women Voters New Jersey under the provisions of the bylaws of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

Section 2 - National Council. At a meeting before the date on which names of delegates to the council must be sent to the national office, the board of directors shall elect delegates to that council in the number allowed the League of Women Voters of New Jersey under the provisions of the bylaws of the League of Women Voters of the United States.



**ARTICLE XIII**  
**Parliamentary Authority**

Section 1 - Parliamentary Authority. The rules contained in "Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised" shall govern the corporation in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws.

**ARTICLE XIV**  
**Amendments**

Section 1 - Amendments. Amendments to these bylaws may be proposed by any local League board, provided such proposed changes shall be submitted to the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey at least three months prior to a convention. All such proposed amendments shall be sent by the board to the presidents of all local Leagues at least two months prior to a convention together with the recommendations of the board of directors. Amendments to these bylaws may also be directly proposed by the League of Women Voters of New Jersey board of directors without having been first suggested by a local League. The presidents of all local Leagues shall notify the members of their respective Leagues of the proposed amendments. The failure of a local League president to give such notice or failure of any member to receive such notice shall not invalidate amendments to the bylaws which may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at any convention.

**History**

In May 2007:

The words "of citizens" were removed from Article II.  
The references to "paid life members" were removed from Article III.

Both changes were mandated by LWVUS, which wanted the reference to citizens stricken, and which no longer has a "paid life" category.

In May 2009:

Article III.4: New Section on MALs added.  
Article V.9: New Section on eVoting and such added.  
Article VII.2: Paid life members removed, and bylaw setting fiscal year for MALs removed.  
Article VII.7: Possibility of biennial audit added.  
Quorum wording at both Convention and Council clarified.  
Article X: Extensive changes to the definition of program, to allow the board to initiate a study, and to tighten requirements for a non-recommended item to be approved.  
Article XI: Minor clarification of Council rules.