

## **NFRW Removal Policy-Standing Rule**

We all know that the removal of an officer or a member is occasionally a necessary evil. However, such a removal should be a very rare instance and only for the most egregious infractions. Removing someone because you don't care for them, or they do things differently than you would do them, or some perceived slight, as examples, are never reasons to remove an officer or a member.

Most of the time, members are unaware of their transgression(s), and will work to remedy the situation if they are made aware. Sometimes, problems are a result of a failure in leadership. It is your responsibility as leaders to make every effort to work with the member to fix the situation(s) before resorting to removal. There are methods to retrain or even discipline members when needed that don't require removal. [see NFRW Discipline Policy]

If you are going to remove an officer or a member the process must be, in all cases, fair and transparent. There can be no rush to judgment or failure to be clear about allegations and presentation of proof.

This policy supersedes all processes you may or may not have in your bylaws, special rules, or standing rules, or parliamentary authority. Any club or federation operating under the umbrella of NFRW will utilize the following process if an officer or a member must be removed.

**NFRW will NOT be involved in your club or state disputes. We do NOT encourage removal proceedings but are providing a fair process. We will not be able to monitor or mediate your conflicts. It is expected that club and state leadership will exercise good judgment and discretion but, ultimately, any actions taken are your responsibility.**

### **I. To remove a member from membership**

1. A member may be removed from membership for any of the following reasons:
  - a. Failure to pay dues by March 1.
  - b. Endorsement or support of an opposition candidate or ticket.
  - c. Failure to uphold the policies and objectives of the club, the federation, or NFRW as stated in bylaws, special rules, or policies.
2. If an allegation of wrongdoing is made, the club or federation president, with the approval of the executive committee, will appoint a special committee from the club's membership, with no more than half of the committee from the executive committee, to investigate the allegations. The work of this committee is considered strictly confidential. The committee will make a report, and any recommendations to the executive committee for consideration.
3. If it is the recommendation of the committee and the executive committee to move forward with removal of a member, a letter must be sent to the member outlining the specific charges and a general overview of the proof of such allegations. It is wise to send such charges via certified mail, or another method that provides proof of receipt. Failure to accept certified mail is not grounds for the member to claim she did not know of the charges.
4. The member must be given adequate time to present a defense, at a minimum 30 days from receipt of the charges.
5. The club president will work with the member to find a mutually convenient date to hear presentation of the charges and the supporting proof, as well as the member's defense. This meeting will be considered a special meeting of the executive committee and the purpose of the meeting stated in the call will be "The consideration of a member's status". In the event a club is large enough to have both an executive committee and a board of directors, the consideration of removal will be at a special meeting of the board of

directors.

6. One person will present the charges and proof on behalf of the executive committee or board. A member will be granted at least as much time to present her defense as was given to present the allegations. A member may bring counsel if she chooses. This meeting will be held in executive session and proceedings shall be confidential. Minutes must be kept. The quorum requirement for the executive committee or board stands.
7. Once all sides have presented, the member will be asked to leave the room and the executive committee will consider the charges, the proof, and the defense. The motion to remove must be made, seconded, and the vote will be by ballot. A two-thirds affirmative vote will be required for removal. The member may have a representative in the room (not herself) during the counting of the ballots.
8. Once the voting has concluded, the member will be called back into the room and told of the result. The ballots will be destroyed at the conclusion of the meeting. If the member is unable to stay during the deliberations, the president will send a letter informing her of the result.
9. If, after 30 days since the notification of charges was received, the member refuses to agree to a date, the committee may proceed with the special meeting and consider the charges.

Once a member has been removed from membership, she is no longer eligible for membership in any NFRW club, nor as a member-at-large.

## **II. For a Club to remove an elected Officer**

1. An officer may be removed from office for any of the following reasons:
  - a. Failure to pay dues March 1.
  - b. Endorsement or support of an opposition candidate or ticket.
  - c. Failure to uphold the policies and objectives of the club, the federation, or NFRW as stated in bylaws, special rules, or policies.
  - d. Failure to perform her duties as defined in the bylaws, in writing by the President or Executive Committee, or by direction of the club.
2. If an allegation of wrongdoing is made, the club's president, with the approval of the executive committee, will appoint a special committee from the club membership, with no more than half from the executive committee, to investigate the allegations. The work of this committee is considered strictly confidential. The committee will make a report, and any recommendations to the executive committee for consideration.
3. If it is the recommendation of the committee and the executive committee to move forward with the removal of an officer, a letter must be sent to the officer outlining the specific charges and a general overview of the proof of such allegations. It is wise to send such charges via certified mail, or another method that provides proof of receipt. Failure to accept certified mail is not grounds for the member to claim she did not know of the charges.
4. The club president will work with the officer to find a mutually convenient date to hear presentation of the charges and the supporting proof, as well as the officer's defense. This meeting will be considered a special meeting the purpose of the meeting stated in the call will be "The consideration of an officer's status". The officer must be given adequate time to present a defense, at a minimum 30 days from receipt of the charges.
5. Because the removal is of an officer duly elected by the club, the special meeting is of the club, not just the Executive Committee. The quorum requirement for the club stands. In the event a club is large enough to have both an executive committee and a board of directors, the consideration of removal will be at a special meeting

of the board of directors.

6. One person will present the charges and proof on behalf of the executive committee. The officer will be granted at least as much time to present her defense as was given to present the allegations. The officer may bring counsel if she chooses. This meeting, although of the primary members of the club, will be held in executive session and proceedings shall be confidential. No guests or associate members may attend. Minutes must be kept.
7. Once all sides have presented, the officer will be asked to leave the room and the club will consider the charges, the proof, and the defense. The motion to remove must be made, seconded, and the vote will be by ballot. A two-thirds affirmative vote will be required for removal. The officer may have a representative (not herself) in attendance during the counting of the ballots.
8. Once the voting has concluded, the officer will be called back into the room and told of the result. The ballots will be destroyed at the conclusion of the meeting. If the officer is unable to stay during the deliberations, the president will send a letter informing her of the result.
9. If, after 30 days since the notification of charges was received, the officer refuses to agree to a date, the club may proceed with the special meeting and consider the charges.
  10. If, after the executive committee makes a recommendation to remove an officer, you fear on-going, egregious activities, by a two-thirds vote of the executive committee, the officer may be relieved of her duties until the club has heard and voted on the charges, and a temporary replacement may be named.

**An officer who is removed from office, whether by a club or a federation, does not automatically lose her membership. A separate vote, requiring a motion and a two-thirds affirmative vote, must be taken to remove the officer from membership at all levels of the federation and may be done at the same meeting.**

### **III. To remove a NFRW or Federation Officer**

1. An officer may be removed from office for any of the following reasons:
  - a. Failure to pay dues by March 1.
  - b. Endorsement or support of an opposition candidate or ticket.
  - c. Failure to uphold the policies and objectives of the club, the federation, or NFRW as stated in bylaws, special rules, or policies.
  - d. Failure to perform her duties as defined in the bylaws, in writing by the President or Executive Committee, or by direction of the federation.
2. If an allegation of wrongdoing is made, the federation's president, with the approval of the executive committee, will appoint a special committee from the members of the Board of Directors, with no more than half from the executive committee, to investigate the allegations. The work of this committee is considered strictly confidential. The committee will make a report, and any recommendations, to the executive committee for consideration.
3. If it is the recommendation of the committee and the executive committee to move forward with the removal of an officer, a letter must be sent to the officer outlining the specific charges and a general overview of the proof of such allegations.
4. It is wise to send such charges via certified mail, or another method that provides proof of receipt. Failure to accept certified mail is not grounds for the member to claim she did not know of the charges.
5. The federation president will work with the officer to find a mutually convenient date to hear presentation of the charges and

the supporting proof, as well as the member's defense. This meeting will be considered a special meeting of the Board of Directors and the purpose of the meeting stated in the call will be "The consideration of an officer's status".

6. The officer must be given adequate time to present a defense, at a minimum 30 days from receipt of the charges.
7. Because the removal is of an officer duly elected by the federation, the special meeting is of the Board of Directors on behalf of the membership, not just the Executive Committee. The quorum requirement for the Board of Directors stands.
8. One person will present the charges and proof on behalf of the executive committee. The officer will be granted at least as much time to present her defense as was given to present the allegations. The officer may bring counsel if she chooses. This meeting will be held in executive session and proceedings shall be confidential. No guests may attend. Minutes must be kept.
9. Once all sides have presented, the officer will be asked to leave the room and the Board of Directors will consider the charges, the proof, and the defense. The motion to remove must be made, seconded, and the vote will be by ballot. A two-thirds affirmative vote will be required for removal. The officer may have a representative (not herself) in attendance during the counting of the ballots.
10. Once the voting has concluded, the officer will be called back into the room and told of the result. The ballots will be destroyed at the conclusion of the meeting. If the officer is unable to stay during the deliberations, the president will send a letter informing her of the result.
11. If, after 30 days since the notification of charges was received, the officer refuses to agree to a date, the Board of Directors may proceed with the special meeting and consider the charges.
12. Given geographic issues, the special meeting may be held by Zoom, or another electronic format, provided that the officer being proposed for removal and the person presenting the evidence are both seen on the screen by all in attendance. Anyone who speaks must be visible to all in attendance. The motion to remove will be made and seconded orally, and the voting will be done via email. The email ballots will be kept for 30 days after the meeting, and the member proposed for removal is entitled to view the unredacted emails during this time.
13. If, after the executive committee makes a recommendation to remove an officer, you fear on-going, egregious activities, by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors, the officer may be relieved of her duties until the federation has heard and voted on the charges, and a temporary replacement may be named.

**An officer who is removed from office, whether by a club or a federation, does not automatically lose her membership. A separate vote, requiring a motion and a two-thirds affirmative vote, must be taken to remove the officer from membership at all levels of the federation and may be done at the same meeting.**

#### **IV. Appeal of removal, whether from membership or from office**

- 1) A member who has been removed from membership or from an office has a right to appeal the decision no later than 15 days after the vote to remove has taken place.
- 2) To appeal, the member must show clear and convincing evidence that the removal action was taken improperly or that new evidence has surfaced that would have led to a different outcome.
- 3) The appeal, and any evidence, must be presented in writing to the president. Electronic submission is sufficient.
- 4) The president will forward the appeal to:
  - a) the executive committee (or board, if applicable) in the case of a membership removal.

- b) the club members in the case of a club officer's removal.
  - c) the federation Board of Directors in the case of a federation officer's removal.
- 5) The motion required during an appeal is "Shall the decision of the body stand?" A two-thirds affirmative vote shall grant the appeal. A voice vote is not appropriate in this case; a counted vote is required, though not necessarily a ballot vote.
- 6) In the case of a club officer's removal, she is granted one written appeal to the state federation executive committee, within 15 days of the results. The state federation executive Committee will consider the appeal, along with documentation from the club, before issuing its decision. No hearing is required; a two-thirds affirmative vote is required to grant the appeal.

**Documentation required:**

NFRW will not make any changes to the database or recognize different officers until the following documentation is submitted and approved by the NFRW President:

- a) An exact copy of the call to the meeting at which the removal is considered.
- b) A copy of the documentation showing the offending member has been notified.
- c) A proper, approved copy of the minutes at which a vote was taken, to include the names of all present, the motion(s) made, and the vote tally.
- d) A copy of all supporting documentation and any rebuttal documentation from the member.

**Regardless of the nomenclature used in your bylaws, if it functions as an executive committee, it is considered the executive committee for the purposes of this policy. If it functions as a board of directors, it is considered the board of directors for the purposes of this policy.**

**In all cases where the President is required by this policy to take action, and it is the President under consideration for removal, such actions shall be accomplished by the First Vice President. If the First Vice President fails to complete required tasks, it shall be the duty of the Secretary to complete the actions.**

**This policy does not affect removal actions completed before the adoption date of this policy.**

**A Word on Resignations**

**A vote to accept a resignation is merely a ceremonial formality and IS NOT REQUIRED in NFRW. You CANNOT refuse to accept a resignation, whether from membership or from an office. Once it is made, either orally or in writing, it is considered effective immediately unless otherwise stipulated.**

Adopted by the NFRW Board of Directors on May 24, 2023.