

# 2024 Bylaws of the National Writers Union

Amended and Adopted at the **March 2024 virtual Special Delegate Assembly**



**Bylaws of The National Writers Union, Adopted March 16, 2024**

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## Article I. Name

This Organization shall be known as National Writers Union, ,; Referred to herein as NWU, .

## Article III. Purpose

A) The purpose of the NWU, shall be to promote and protect the rights, interests, and economic advancement of members; to organize writers to improve professional working conditions through collective bargaining action; and to provide professional services to members.

B) The NWU, commits itself to representing the interests of the full range of writers in the US. in all genres, media and formats. These include writers of diverse cultures, ethnicities, politics, religions and racial identities; writers of all ages and all sexual/gender orientations; writers with disabilities; and writers at all levels of economic and commercial success.

## Article IV. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of NWU, shall begin January 1 and end on December 31.

## Article V. Membership

A) NWU, shall be composed of writers eligible for membership over whom NWU, has jurisdiction.

B) Membership in NWU, is open to all qualified writers. No one shall be barred from membership or discriminated against in any way within the Union on account of race, age, sexual orientation, disability, national origin, religion, or ideology.

C) Qualifications for membership are as follows: You are eligible for membership if you have published a book, play, three articles, five poems, one short story, or an equivalent amount of newsletter, publicity, technical, commercial, government or institutional copy. You are also eligible for membership if you have written an equivalent amount of unpublished material and you are actively writing and attempting to publish your work. Evidence of meeting these qualifications should be provided in a good faith statement of these works at the time of application.

D) Each member in good standing of NWU, has the right to nominate and vote; to express opinions on all subjects before the Local Union; to attend all membership meetings and express views, arguments, and opinions on all matters and business, including candidates for office; to meet and assemble freely with other members; and generally, to participate in the activities of the Local Union in a responsible manner in order to present and discuss factually and honestly the issues and personalities upon which the membership must base its decisions. These rights shall be subject to the rules of procedure governing meetings and other uniform rules and regulations contained in the and in these Bylaws and other official rules of the NWU, .

E) A member, in exercising the foregoing rights and privileges, shall not take any irresponsible action which would tend to jeopardize or destroy, or be detrimental to, either NWU, , or the International Union as organizations, or their free democratic heritage, or which would interfere with the performance by this Local Union or the International Union of its legal or contractual obligations as a collective bargaining agent, or interfere with the legal or contractual obligations of this Local Union as an affiliate of the International Union.

F) Violations or abuse of these rights and privileges of membership, or engaging in conduct prohibited by this section, shall be considered conduct unbecoming a union member.<sup>1</sup>

G) The membership shall strive to maintain free relations with other organizations; to do all in its power to strengthen and promote the labor movement;<sup>1</sup>

## Article VI. General Principles

A) Every member has the right to participate in collective bargaining and to vote on contracts and agreements with publishers, employers, or others for whom he or she writes. Every member, in his or her professional endeavor, has the duty to respect and support the collective bargaining decisions and activities of all NWU,

B) Majority rule shall prevail in all union decisions, unless a greater number is stipulated by these Bylaws. Every member shall promote the acceptance and implementation of fair terms for writers, as enunciated in bargaining objectives and model and standard contracts of the NWU,.

C) The strength of the NWU, rests in the solidarity of its members. The union's effectiveness depends on its success in democratically translating the individual energies of writers into collective decision and action.

D) NWU, is committed to freedom of the press, freedom of speech, and freedom of expression in all media, including print, film, and electronic media of any sort. NWU is committed to full public access to information and to the means of

distributing ideas or information.

## Article VII. Membership Meetings

### A. General Rules of Procedure

1) Questions of a parliamentary nature not already stipulated by the and these Bylaws shall be decided by Robert's Rules.

2) A quorum for a Local Chapter meeting shall be set by each Local Chapter.

### B. Delegate Assembly

The Delegate Assembly shall meet once every **two** years.

### C. Executive Board

The Executive Board shall meet once annually.

### D. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall meet at least three times annually.

### E. Local Chapter membership meetings

Local Chapter membership meetings shall be held at least once quarterly.

### F. Local Chapter Steering Committee

Individual Local Chapter Steering Committees shall meet at least every other month.

## Article VIII. Structure of the Local

### A. General Membership

The membership is the highest authority of the NWU and shall exercise that authority in elections and referenda.

### B. Local Chapters

The NWU,, shall be organized in Local Chapters. Local Chapters shall be established in a defined geographical area. **At-Large members who do not reside in the jurisdiction of any other Local Chapter will be serviced by the National Office. They shall be represented on the National Executive Board by members elected at a ratio of 1 to 100 members.**

## C. Delegate Assembly

- 1) The Delegate Assembly, composed of delegates elected by the members of each Local Chapter, is the legislative and policy making body of the NWU, subject to the authority of the members.
- 2) The Delegate Assembly shall meet every **two** years. Meetings shall be open to members. The Delegate Assembly shall adopt plans, resolutions, and regulations necessary to carry out the aims of the NWU, and to implement its program and matters of national policy.
- 3) No less than 8 weeks preceding the regular meeting of the Delegate Assembly, Units shall complete elections for delegates. Members must be in good standing (i.e. paid-up members) at the time of their nomination.
- 4) By virtue of the office they hold, Executive Committee members are national delegates, commencing with the Delegate Assembly following their election and ending when they cease to hold office. Regardless of whether they have been elected Delegates by their Units, each Executive Committee member shall be entitled to cast one vote as Delegate.
- 5) Units and Members through their Delegates planning to submit resolutions to any Delegate Assembly shall send copies of same to the national office as soon as possible, in accordance with deadlines established by Rules and Procedures of the Delegate Assembly. The national office shall disseminate these resolutions to other Delegates together with any resolutions that the Executive Committee plans to submit, the financial report, the meeting's proposed agenda and the names and addresses of all delegates.
- 6) The Delegate Assembly shall elect the chairs of the Community Action Program (CAP) and may delegate whatever authority it has in accordance with these Bylaws.
- 7) Chairs of the BizTech, Journalism, Book and Digital Media Divisions shall be elected **according to the procedures set forth in Article XXIII, Section 6.4.** The Delegate Assembly may delegate whatever authority it has in accordance with these Bylaws. Except as otherwise provided herein (e.g., the Elections Committee), Delegates may volunteer to serve on those committees and in those Divisions to which their primary genre of writing belongs.
- 8) Special Delegate Assembly meetings shall be called by the President when:
  - a) So instructed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Committee, and
  - b) By a referendum vote of the membership representing a majority of Units (chapters), provided that those units represent at least 60% of the total NWU, membership.

9) The Delegate Assembly shall set dues at its regular meeting. Dues cannot be raised except by vote of the membership in accordance with Article 47 of the.

10) Bylaws, election rules, and referenda procedures shall be subject to approval by the Delegate Assembly.

11) Count: The number of members in each Unit, for the purpose of delegate allocation, shall be determined by the average number of monthly per capita dues paid by the Local to the International on behalf of the members of the Unit for the six month period ending on the last day of the month preceding delegate nominations. Units shall also elect one or more alternate Delegates to the Delegate Assembly to replace any delegate unable to serve at the same time of the election of Delegates. The number of alternates may be less than but not more than the number of regular delegates. Alternates will be seated with full voting rights at that assembly only to replace an elected Delegate unable to serve. The replacement of an elected delegate by an alternate is temporary and only for so long as the elected delegate is unable to perform his or her duties. Only when a delegate resigns, moves out of the chapter's jurisdiction, lapses as a member, or is otherwise unable to function as a delegate on a permanent basis, may an alternate permanently replace an elected delegate. The order of filling such vacancies shall be according to number of votes received (i.e., the highest vote-recipient in the alternate election will be the first designated to fill the first vacancy, and so on in like manner.

### DELEGATE ALLOCATION TABLE

(Adopted 1997 Delegate Assembly)

# of members in Chapter	# of delegates	# of members in Chapter	# of delegates
1-75	3	976-1050	16
76-150	4	1051-1125	17
151-225	5	1126-1200	18
226-300	6	1201-1275	19
301-375	7	1276-1350	20
376-450	8	1351-1425	21

451-525	9	1426-1500	22
526-600	10	1501-1575	23
601-675	11	1576-1650	24
676-750	12	1651-1725	26
751-825	13	1801-1875	28
826-900	14	1876-1950	29
901-975	15	1951-2025	30

12) Referenda: The Delegate Assembly may direct that a matter of Union policy be decided by mail referendum.

13) The EC, in the process of planning the assembly, will adopt a set of draft rules to be approved as the first order of business of the Delegate Assembly.

**14) Delegate Assembly Resolutions Rules:**

1. A call for resolutions shall be submitted to Delegates no later than 8 weeks preceding the regular meeting of the Delegate Assembly. The call shall be accompanied by a copy of these rules.
2. A resolution must be submitted (“signed”) by at least ten Delegates or submitted by a duly constituted NWU Division or Committee or by action of the National Executive Board or the National Executive Committee.
3. Except as provided in Rule 4 below, Delegate resolutions must be submitted to the First Vice President at least 14 days prior to the start of business of the Delegate Assembly.
4. After the resolution due date, resolutions may be submitted only (a) by official action of duly constituted NWU Divisions or Committees, (b) by the National Executive Board or National Executive Committee, (c) in accordance with rules adopted by the Resolutions Committee for the consideration of resolutions introduced by Delegates after the cutoff date for advance resolutions, or (d) by two-thirds vote of the Delegate Assembly to suspend the rules. The Resolutions Committee shall set deadlines for submissions by standing committees, divisions, the NEC,



and the NEB, and shall establish procedures under which last-minute resolutions can be considered by the Delegate Assembly.

5. In reviewing resolutions, the Resolutions Committee may:

- a) Determine that the resolution be considered as submitted or combined with one or more resolutions of similar content.
- b) Require clarification, or more information, from the maker(s).
- c) Recommend that action on a resolution be postponed; or recommend that the resolution is inappropriate for DA consideration.
- d) Initiate resolutions of its own, according to the format set out below.

6. The Resolutions Committee may create a "Resolutions Consent Calendar" made up of resolutions perceived to be non-controversial and widely supported. Such a "consent calendar" will be presented to the Assembly for a single vote without debate. Any three delegates may request that an item be removed from the "consent calendar."

7. The fiscal impact of a resolution must be verified by the Treasurer. If a fiscal impact has not been verified by the Treasurer, the resolution will not be considered.

8. Resolutions must be submitted electronically or on disk to be viewed electronically at the DA.

9. All resolutions must conform to the specified format and must provide all required information. Resolutions that do not address all required components (fiscal impact, resources needed, staff or leader time requirements and parties responsible for implementation) will not be considered.

10. The Resolutions Committee will enforce the guidelines for resolutions and eliminate ineligible resolutions.

11. Once a Chapter or Unit certifies its delegate elections and notifies the National Office of its election results, Delegates will receive a packet that includes information regarding the format and deadline for DA resolutions.

## RESOLUTION FORMAT

All resolutions for the Delegate Assembly must be submitted using the format below:

- a) Full Text of Resolution

- b) Fiscal Impact: Provide cost detail for ALL cost items contained in the resolution, including proposed source of funding. (Fiscal impact information must be verified by the Treasurer before any resolution with a fiscal impact can be reported out of the Resolutions Committee.)
- c) Responsible Parties: Provide specific information about who is expected to implement this resolution.
- d) Resources Needed: Provide detail regarding the officer or staff time or NWU National Office resources that will be needed to implement this resolution. Have these resource people been consulted regarding this resolution and provided input regarding the effort needed to implement it?
- e) Contact Person(s): Who should be contacted for more information regarding this resolution? Please provide ALL contact information.
- f) Resolution Sponsors: List At least ten (10) Delegates for resolutions not submitted by Divisions, or Committees, or the Executive Board or Executive Committee.

#### D. Executive Board

The Executive Board shall be comprised of the Executive Officers and one Chair from each Unit. Each Unit Chair shall have one vote per 100 members or major fraction thereof. However, no Unit representative shall be entitled to less than one vote. Units with more than 800 members shall be entitled to send the Unit chair and may send additional representatives at their own expense in accordance with the one vote per 100 members or major fraction thereof. trus

1. The Executive Board shall approve the annual budget prepared by the Executive Committee.
2. The Executive Board shall meet at least once annually to review and assess the implementation and progress of the decisions and policies adopted by the Delegate Assembly.

#### E. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee (EC) shall consist of the Executive Officers. The EC shall administer the national affairs of NWU,, raise funds and keep the national treasury, organize and provisionally charter new Units, publish a national newsletter, administer national services, and coordinate standing committees and direct the Local union's organizing activities. The EC shall be responsible to the Delegate Assembly and exercise only those powers set forth in these Bylaws and those delegated to it by the Delegate Assembly.

1. The EC's duties shall include organizing and setting the preliminary agenda for the delegates' meetings. The President, subject to the approval of the EC, shall maintain a national office and hire and direct the activities of a national executive director and any other paid national staff.
2. The EC shall publish a national newsletter, to be sent to all NWU, members, that shall reflect the diversity of opinion among members. Equal space shall be made available for all candidates for executive office. The President, subject to EC approval, shall hire the editor.
3. The EC shall provide an annual financial report and other reports. Minutes of EC meetings shall be available to all Units' presiding officers and to all members upon written request.
4. The EC shall meet not less than three times a year. For urgent matters, the President may poll the EC members by telephone or by email to reach a decision. The President shall announce meetings and agenda to EC members three weeks in advance and shall send such announcements and agenda concurrently by email and postal mail to each unit's presiding officers and delegates. EC meetings shall be open to all Union members.
5. The EC and the Treasurer shall prepare an annual budget for approval by the Executive Board.
6. All candidates for any Executive Committee position must obtain **five (5)** signatures of members in good standing to qualify for nomination.

## F. Bargaining Councils

- 1) Bargaining councils negotiate agreements between the NWU and publications; Bargaining councils are composed of members whose work has been published by or who have worked on assignment for the publisher with which negotiation is proposed. (The term publisher shall be understood for these purposes to include any publication, publishing house, business, or employer for which a member works as a freelancer.) Bargaining can also be initiated by the President or 2<sup>nd</sup> VP (Vice President for External Organizing) when the EC determines it is in the interest of the union. In this case, a bargaining committee shall be composed of the 2<sup>nd</sup> VP and such NWU members as may be needed, including members who would have been eligible for a bargaining council.
- 2) All NWU members who write for the publication targeted by a bargaining council are eligible to participate in the council's decisions.
- 3) The negotiating team shall consult with the Advisory Committee on Bargaining, who shall advise the negotiating team of the union's bargaining guidelines and provide other assistance as needed.

## G. Trade Committees/Divisions

1) Units are encouraged to organize and strengthen Trade Committees and Divisions composed of members who write in the same genre, to develop information and strategy about their fields, provide grievance assistance, elaborate model contracts, carry out other writer self- help activities in line with the goals of the NWU, .

2) Trade groups may include, but shall not be limited to Journalism, Nonfiction, Fiction, Poetry, Small Press, Digital Media, and Business/Technical Writing.

## Article IX. Local Headquarters

The union will maintain its headquarters in New York. The union's books, accounts and membership list shall be maintained at the national office.

## Article X. Local Staff

The President, subject to approval by the EC, shall employ staff members, including the editor of the newsletter. Where qualifications are approximately equal, preference for Union members and staff shall be balanced with our commitment to affirmative action hiring.

## Article XI. Other Bodies

Other bodies not elsewhere described by these Bylaws shall be established by the President and approved by the Executive Committee, subject to approval by the Executive Board at its next regular meeting. The Executive Committee shall appoint the leaders of these bodies.

## Article XII. Structure of the Chapters

### A. Formation & Activity of Chapters

1. Chapters that meet and maintain the following requirements shall petition the Executive Board for recognition: Twenty-five or more members residing in geographic proximity to each other. (The geographic proximity requirement shall not apply to the At-large Chapter.)

2. Chapters shall elect a Steering Committee that Shall consist, at a minimum, of

Chapter Chair and Chapter **Treasurer**.

3. Chapters shall recruit members, initiate Bargaining councils, and carry out educational and grievance activities on behalf of writers. Chapters may raise funds and shall direct the use of their funds, in accordance with Article 35 of the .
4. Chapters shall be autonomous in conducting their Chapter affairs, except as otherwise stipulated in these Bylaws and the , and may carry out any other activities that advance the goals of the NWU, .
5. Each Chapter (except the At-Large Chapter) shall hold regular meetings, including not fewer than four general membership meetings per year.
6. Chapters shall be responsible in their jurisdiction for matters concerning membership and discipline, including expulsion of a member from the Union. No disciplinary action shall be taken against a member except according to procedures guaranteeing a fair hearing and appeal, as provided in Article 31 of the .
7. The Chapter shall also elect delegates to the Delegate Assembly in accordance with the Delegate Allocation Schedule adopted by the 1997 Delegate Assembly.
8. The National Executive Committee shall establish financial policies and procedures for the Union. The Treasurer shall disburse Chapter funds when requested by the appropriate Chapter provided that requests have been preapproved and meet the documentation requirements established under these policies. The Treasurer shall provide reporting of income and expenditures to the Chapters twice a year.

## **Article XIII: National Officers and Duties**

**As one of NWU's core governance bodies, the National Officers are collectively responsible for keeping the day-to-day operations of our Union running smoothly.**

### ***Section 1 — Scope of power***

**As outlined in Article VIII (Structure of the Local) and Article XIV (Powers of Administration), the National Officers are accountable to the Delegate Assembly, and as such shall exercise only those powers set forth in these Bylaws and those delegated to it by the Delegate Assembly.**

### ***Section 2 — Remit and responsibilities***

**As outlined in Article VIII (Structure of the Local), National Officers shall be responsible for organizing regular National Officer meetings, facilitating**

communication and coordination between Union units, and fostering community throughout our Union. They shall administer NWU's national affairs, maintain NWU's financial and member records, and make routine Union decisions. They shall also have the duty of being responsive to NWU members, to whom they are ultimately accountable.

### ***Section 3 — Roles***

The governance body known here as National Officers shall be composed of a President, a First Vice-President, a Second Vice-President, a Recording Secretary, a Treasurer, three (3) National Officers-at-Large, and three (3) Trustees, for a total membership count of eleven (11). All eleven roles shall be elected positions.

#### **1) President**

It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all National Officer meetings of the Union, sign all orders on the treasury authorized by the Union, countersign all checks issued by the Treasurer against accounts of the Union when ordered by the Union, enforce the provisions of these Bylaws, and appoint committees not otherwise provided for. They shall be a member ex-officio of all committees.

The President, subject to the approval of the rest of the National Officers, shall maintain a national office and hire and direct the activities of a national executive director and any other paid national staff. The President, subject to National Officer approval, shall hire an editor as needed for a national Union magazine. The President shall schedule and create agendas for regular National Officer meetings.

#### **2) First Vice-President**

The duties of the First Vice-President shall be to assist the President in their duties. Should a vacancy in the office of President occur, the First Vice-President shall assume the President's office and duties until the next regular election. The First Vice-President shall chair the Resolutions Committee at the Delegate Assembly and establish and coordinate organizing initiatives, be a member of the Grievance and Contract Committee, and coordinate other programs.

### **3) Second Vice-President**

**The Second Vice-President shall create and chair programs to recruit new members, organize new Units, and promote union bargaining campaigns. They shall also coordinate the activities of the Advisory Committee on Bargaining, and shall submit an annual report on bargaining, including general bargaining regulations and guidelines prepared by the National Officers for the approval of the National Executive Board. Other duties may include establishing and coordinating the national grievance structure, coordinating the use and maintenance of the national database, and developing and coordinating leadership training and other programs designed to expand the capacities of the Units.**

### **4) Recording Secretary**

**It shall be the duty of the Recording Secretary to keep a correct record of the proceedings of our Union, sign all orders on the treasury authorized by our Union, read all documents and conduct the general correspondence received by our Union which does not pertain directly to the duties of the other officers of our Union and keep same on file for future reference. The Recording Secretary shall bring to the attention of the membership of our Union any correspondence upon which the membership must take action.**

**The Recording Secretary shall also be obligated to secure copies of the current versions of all of our Union's procedural and legislative materials. They shall update this information as often as necessary, but must furnish the National Office with a current, updated version no later than sixty (60) days after the ratification of any resolution or supplement.**

### **5) Treasurer**

**It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to raise funds and keep the national treasury, work which may include (but shall not be limited to):**

- a) keeping NWU's books;**
- b) preparing an annual budget for approval by the National Executive Board;**

- c) providing an annual financial report, along with any other relevant reports, for the National Executive Board;
- d) overseeing the distribution of Union funds to specific units;  
and
- e) making all Union records available for regular auditing by Trustees, as outlined in these Bylaws.

It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to receive all dues, fees and all other income of the Union for any fund from any source and to give official receipts for same. The Treasurer shall write all checks drawn on Union funds and report in writing at every National Officers meeting giving the amount of monies received and paid out during the previous calendar month, divided as between the various income and expenditure classifications, and the remaining balances in the fund accounts of the Union.

**6) National Officers-at-Large (3)**

National Officers-At-Large shall be responsible for supporting and supplementing the above seats as needed.

**7) Trustees (3)**

Trustees shall be responsible for conducting semiannual audits (every 6 months) of all books and records of the National Writers Union with a Certified Public Accountant, starting from the first day of the fiscal year. Their primary task shall be to ensure that all NWU resources (money/assets) are used for legitimate Union purposes as authorized by our membership in accordance with these Bylaws. This responsibility shall include ensuring that NWU is properly complying with [OLMS legal requirements](#) for financial reporting, recordkeeping, bonding, and loans.

***Section 4 — Succession***

Vacancies in these offices shall be filled by special election, except that a vacancy in the office of President shall be filled by the 1st Vice-President for the remainder of the president's term. The National Officers shall designate an elected National Executive Board Member to fill the 1st VP vacancy until the special election.



## Article XIV. Powers of Administration

A) The membership is the highest authority of this Local Union and shall be empowered to take or direct any action not inconsistent with these Bylaws; the membership shall exercise that authority in elections and referenda, in general meetings of units, and in bargaining councils.

B) Between such meetings and votes of the membership, the Delegate Assembly shall be the highest authority of the Local Union and shall be empowered to act on behalf of the membership.

C) Between meetings of the Delegate Assembly, the Executive Board shall be empowered to act on behalf of, and take action assigned to the Delegate Assembly and shall be accountable to the Delegate Assembly.

D) Between meetings of the Executive Board, the Executive Committee shall be empowered to act on behalf of and take action assigned to the Executive Board and shall be accountable to the Executive Board.

E) Between meetings of the Executive Committee, the President shall be empowered to act on behalf of, and take action assigned to the Executive Committee and shall be accountable to the Executive Committee.

F) The Executive Committee shall mediate any dispute that arises between Units, and if that mediation is unsuccessful, the dispute may be appealed in accordance with these Bylaws.

## Article XVI. Standing Committees

Standing Committees, which shall conform to the rules stipulated under Article 44 of the shall include an Elections Committee, an Advisory Committee on Bargaining (ACB), a Community Action Program (CAP) Committee, the Grievance and Contract Committee (GCC), **and the Solidarity and Political Education Committee.**

### A. Advisory Committee on Bargaining (ACB)

The Advisory Committee on Bargaining shall be chaired by the one of the Vice Presidents as appointed by the President,, and consist of said Vice President, President, at least two bargaining council representatives (when such exist), a member of the Grievance and Contract Committee , the division chairs, or other persons as are appointed by the President and approved by the Executive Committee. The ACB shall formulate general guidelines for bargaining with publishers and assist the bargaining councils to implement the policies. The ACB shall review for conformance with national policy any contracts or agreements with publishers that have been negotiated by bargaining councils. Such contracts or agreements cannot be signed or put into force until the President or the ACB

has reviewed them and submitted them for legal review. If the ACB concludes that a draft agreement is not in conformance with national bargaining guidelines and policy, the ACB will work with the bargaining council to resolve the problem. If the bargaining council and the ACB are unable to resolve differences, the matter will be submitted to the EC for resolution. The bargaining council may appeal the EC ruling to the EB for final resolution.

## B. Election Committee

**See Article XXIII, Section 3.3.**

## C. Grievance and Contract Committee

1. The Grievance and Contract Committee (GCC) shall consist of the National Grievance Officer, the National Contract Advisor, the Grievance and Contract (GC) Coordinator, the Grievance and Contract Committee Chair, and all active grievance officers and contract advisors. . The President and First Vice President shall be ex-officio members. It shall meet regularly to review and evaluate the work of the committee.

2. The National Grievance Officer, National Contract Advisor, GCC Chair, and GC Coordinator must be active Grievance Officers and/or Contract Advisors. (This requirement will not apply to the National Grievance Officer at the time of the 2021 election. If the NGO elected in 2021 is not an active Grievance Officer and/or Contract Advisor, the new NGO shall undergo formal Grievance and Contract training within six months of taking office.) The GCC Chair, National Grievance Officer, and National Contract Advisor will be nominated by the GCC and be elected by the delegates at the Delegate Assembly. Terms shall begin at the end of the Delegate Assembly at which the officers were elected and run until the end of the following Delegate Assembly.

3. The National Grievance Officer and the National Contract Advisor may each select an Assistant Officer. The Assistant National Grievance Officer must be an active Grievance Officer and the Assistant National Contract Advisor must be an active Contract Advisor.

4. In the event the GCC Chair, the National Grievance Officer, and/or the National Contract Advisor resigns, cannot fulfill the duties of the office, or complete the term of office, the GCC shall elect a new Interim GCC Chair, Interim National Grievance Officer, and/or Interim National Contract Advisor, as the case may be, to serve the completion of the term of office..

5. If the President and/or First Vice President has not undergone formal NWU Grievance and Contract training, that person shall undergo formal training within six months of taking office.

## D. Attendance Requirements

All Members holding an elected position are required to attend:

- a. Two out of every three meetings expected of their office or position.
- b. Failure of any elected official to comply with the above attendance rules shall result in automatic removal from office, and they shall not be permitted to run for any elective office for the balance of the term of office from which they were removed, except as a Delegate.

## Article XVIII. Per Diem Expense Policy

The Executive Officers may approve Per Diem and transportation expense reimbursements up to maximum amount allowed by the International Union. The Local Union shall pay no lost time except by explicit approval of the Executive Committee. The Local Union shall pay a representative or member who is performing necessary duties for and on behalf of the Local Union during a time for which s/he would be otherwise compensated by the employer. The amount of lost time should never exceed the amount that the Local Union representative member is being compensated by the Local Union.

## Article XIX. Formation and Activities of Units

A. Units shall elect a Steering Committee that shall consist, at a minimum, of a Chair (or two co-Chairs) and a **Treasurer**. The Unit shall also elect delegates to the Delegate Assembly, raise funds, recruit members, initiate bargaining councils and recruit members thereto and carry out educational and grievance activities on behalf of writers. Units shall be autonomous in conducting their Unit affairs, except as otherwise stipulated in these Bylaws and may carry out other activities that advance the goals of the National Writers Union.

B. Units shall maintain a mailing address. (A mailbox rented in the Unit name is sufficient. A mailing address in care of someone else is not allowed.) This requirement can be waived upon application to the President provided an alternative, adequate means of communication be established

C. Units shall maintain a phone number in the Unit name. This requirement can be waived upon application to the President provided an alternative, adequate means of communication be established.

D. Each Unit shall hold regular meetings, including not less than four general membership meetings per year. (This requirement does not pertain to the At Large Unit.)

E. Units shall be responsible in their jurisdiction for matters concerning membership and discipline, including expulsion of a member from the Union. No disciplinary action shall be taken against a member except according to

procedures guaranteeing a fair hearing and appeal, as provided for in these Bylaws and in Article 31 of the .

F. Once a month the 3rd Vice President (IOVP) shall distribute to the Unit Chairs each unit's membership list, to include member's names, mailing addresses, phone numbers, genres, and email addresses. Unit Chairs are empowered to use these lists for union-related business.

## Article XX. General

All Local Union Officers, Committees, and other members handling funds or other property of the Union shall, at the completion of their duties, turn over all papers, documents, funds and/or property to the properly constituted Local Union officers.

## Article XXI. Salaries and Stipends for Officers

The salaries of NWU, President, 1st VP, 2nd VP (EOVP) and 3rd VP (IOVP) and Treasurer in full for services rendered by each of said officers shall be the following sums per annum.

A. President, sixty-four thousand, two hundred dollars and no cents (\$64,200.00) (full-time).

B. The stipends and salaries for the three Vice Presidents, (deemed part-time positions), will be \$500 a month, the **Treasurer** will receive \$1,500 a month, and the Recording Secretary will receive \$450 for in-person meeting of the EC, EB or DA and \$45 for each conference call meeting of the EC or EB to be paid upon submission of an invoice by the Recording Secretary following an EC vote approving the minutes prepared.

C. Each of the three trustees shall receive \$200 for each of the semi-annual Trustee Audits in which they participate in person.

D. The National Grievance Officer shall receive a monthly stipend of (\$300) on a quarterly basis, for a stipend of \$3,600 annually. The National Contract Advisor shall receive a monthly stipend of (\$300) on a quarterly basis, for a stipend of \$3,600 annually.

E. The Grievance and Contract Coordinator shall receive a stipend of \$500 per month. Additional expenses are subject to the NWU Pre-Approval Policy.

F. Two to three facilitators of the GoCa training sessions will receive a stipend of \$150 per training session each.

G. In addition, the salaries may be adjusted annually in accordance with changes in the cost of living based on the current formula as developed by the International Executive Board.

H. The President shall receive, in addition to salary, fringe benefits medical-surgical health insurance, dental, vision and life insurance, and three weeks vacations the first year and four weeks in subsequent years.

I. The President and any EC officer, if a need is determined and voted on by the EC may receive a cell phone with equipment and service paid for the NWU.

J. From time to time a unit may hire an individual to assist with various tasks/projects on their behalf. Upon submission of a proposal to the EC and an affirmative vote by the EC, these types of payments shall be honored, subject to any applicable policies and procedures.

## Article XXII. Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended by presenting a motion in writing to the Delegate Assembly meeting. The motion setting forth the amendments shall be read to that meeting. A favorable vote of two-thirds of the Delegate Assembly is required for adoption.

## Article XXIII. Elections

**As a democratic Union, our members hold the highest decision-making power. Elections are the way in which our power is institutionalized, allowing members to elect the people who represent them.**

### ***Section 1 — Cadence and timing***

- 1) One-member-one-vote elections for National Officers, Trustees, and Delegates shall take place by secret ballot every two years in late Spring, in advance of the biannual Delegate Assembly.**
  - a) These biannual national elections shall be completed by May 30 of each election year and the newly elected members shall take office on July 1 of their election year.**
    - i) Except in the case of the 2024 election, which shall be completed by June 15, with newly elected officers taking office on July 1.**

- b) The intervening period shall be used to facilitate officer turnover, and to give the Election Committee time to address any potential election issues.
- 2) Elections for leadership roles in Trade Divisions and Chapters (e.g., Chairs, Treasurer, Steering Committee) shall also be held at minimum every two years, though they may also be held yearly if a Division or Chapter so desires.
- a) The overall procedures of these Unit elections must comply with NWU Bylaws and any applicable state and federal laws, but Divisions and Chapters may set the specific timing of their own internal leadership elections as best fits their respective units.
  - b) Newly elected Trade Division and Chapter Chairs shall be installed at the next regular meeting of each of their respective Divisions or Chapters, which shall also be scheduled no more than one month after the relevant election.

***Section 2 — Eligibility to Hold Office***

- 1) Only members in good standing (dues up-to-date) of the NWU may hold elected offices. The term of good standing shall be one year for all elected positions, except for Chapter and Division Steering Committees.
- a) In the case of any dispute or discrepancy regarding a candidate's membership history, said candidate may petition the Trustees, who will interface with the Treasurer, the National Office staff, and relevant technical vendors to determine the scope of the discrepancy. The Trustees will then submit a report along with a final judgment to the Election Committee.
  - b) Petitions for appeal must be sent to the Trustees within seven (7) days of notification of the candidate's ineligibility. The Trustees shall decide upon the appeal within ten (10) days of receiving the appeal. [See *Section 5.1.c of this Article.*]
- 2) A member shall not simultaneously hold two elected positions on the National Executive Board (which comprises all National Officers and one Chair from each Unit). Exceptions being:

- a) If a member has been appointed by the National Executive Board in an interim capacity to fill a vacant seat while a Special Election is being conducted; and
- b) National Officers, who may never hold more than one National Officer position, even in an interim capacity.

### **Section 3 — Election Committee**

#### **1) Remit**

All NWU Elections shall be organized with the support of the Election Committee.

- a) Elections for National Officers, Trustees, and Delegates shall be organized and supervised by the Election Committee directly.
- b) Elections for leadership roles in Trade Divisions and Chapters shall be organized and supervised by the Divisions and Chapters themselves. They may consult with the Election Committee, as needed.
  - i) For Trade Division elections, the Election Committee will act in a supervisory capacity. [See *Section 6.5.a of this Article.*]
- c) The Election Committee shall retain authority to independently decide election disputes in accordance with the NWU's Bylaws.
- d) Petitions for recall, for both national elected roles and Chapter and Division leadership, will also be under the purview of the NWU Election Committee, following the procedures set forth in this Article.

#### **2) Responsibilities**

The Election Committee is responsible for giving members of our Union a voice by facilitating equitable, member-led democratic elections.

- a) Election Committee members shall maintain a diplomatic relationship with all candidates, and shall not discriminate nor show any favoritism to any candidates, including current

**Officers who are candidates.**

- b) The NWU Communications Manager shall ensure all relevant communication pertaining to elections (e.g., voting procedures, vote totals, etc.) is accessible to membership.**

### **3) Composition**

**The Election Committee shall be a standing committee of the NWU, and shall remain open to all members in good standing with at least one year of membership on the books immediately prior to nomination.**

**The Election Committee shall be composed of between 3 and 5 members in good standing who are appointed by the National Executive Board, and who are not running for office.**

- a) As a standing committee that may be called to duty at any moment, the Election Committee shall maintain a minimum of three active members at all times.**
  - i) The Election Committee shall be non-hierarchical in structure, and shall work as a coalition to execute their duties.**
  - ii) Members of the Election Committee shall name a point of contact from among their membership to manage the [electioncommittee@nwu.org](mailto:electioncommittee@nwu.org) inbox and field communication from members and NWU leadership.**
- b) Should a member of the Election Committee accept nomination to run for National Office, Trustee, Delegate, or Trade Division or Chapter leadership, they must resign from the Election Committee.**
- c) Should Election Committee membership drop below the three-member minimum, or to an even number, the National Executive Board shall assume the responsibility of recruiting enough new members to once again meet that threshold.**
  - i) It shall be the responsibility of the Election Committee point of contact to alert the National Executive Board to the committee's membership dropping below the three-member minimum.**



- ii) **This recruitment process should begin as soon as the NEB is alerted to a vacancy by the remaining members of the Election Committee.**

#### **4) Logistics**

- a) **The Election Committee shall retain an official nwu.org email address through which membership can contact them with questions, and submit petitions for candidacy.**
- b) **The announcement of the national election and call for nominations, as well as the subsequent list of candidates for office, shall be sent by the Election Committee to all members in good standing via the email addresses they have listed in the NWU's membership database.**
  - i) **Members without an email address, or whose email bounces, shall be sent the announcement and call for nominations via USPS to the mailing address they have listed in the NWU's membership database.**
- c) **Announcement and Call for Nominations**
  - i) **The initial call for nominations shall be sent no later than eight (8) weeks prior to the commencement of the actual election. The Election Committee shall send at minimum one follow-up reminder, timed as it sees fit. It is recommended, when practicable, that the biennial call for nominations be issued no later than March 1.**
  - ii) **The call for nominations shall contain the officer positions to be filled; the term of office for each position; the procedures for nominations; the deadline for nomination submissions; candidate eligibility requirements; delegate positions to be held by virtue of holding the elected office, if any; the dates and times of the election period; and any other federally and/or state mandated notifications.**
  - iii) **The nomination period shall be open for at least two (2) weeks, and shall close at least four (4) weeks before the scheduled election start date.**
- d) **Announcement of Candidates and Format of Ballot**

- i) The Election Committee shall provide the names of those members running for each open elected office; these nominees will be presented, in writing, along with candidate statements, to the members in good standing at least three (3) weeks before the circulation of the ballot.**
- ii) The circulation of the ballot shall be considered the official “start” date of the election.**
- iii) If an email bounces, the Election Committee will make every effort to get in touch another way, such as by phone call, an alternative email address, or USPS. Members may proactively request a ballot via USPS if they do not have or cannot access email.**
- iv) Prior to the scheduled election, the Election Committee may organize virtual “meet the candidate” calls for members to interact with and ask questions of nominees. Should the Election Committee choose to organize such an opportunity, they must ensure that it is open to all candidates equally.**
- v) The Election Committee shall facilitate the voting process for members via online voting software and organize reasonable accommodations for members who may not have access to email or internet, or are not able to use the chosen online voting software.**
- vi) Candidates shall be listed on ballots alphabetically by surname.**
- vii) Each candidate shall be identified on the ballot by their Unit (Trade Division and/or Chapter, according to the nominee’s petition for candidacy).**
- viii) The election period shall be open for no less than fifteen (15) days.**
- ix) Write-in candidates shall be permitted, but will be required to meet the qualification standards set forth in this Article to be counted as valid by the Election Committee.**

- e) Should an open position receive no nominations in time for an official Election, the Election Committee shall notify membership of said vacancy at the time of voting, and shall set a date for a Special Election no less than three and no more than six months from that date. [See *Section 8.1 of this Article.*]
- f) The Election Committee shall notify all members in good standing of election results no more than one week after the completion of the election via the email address they have listed in the NWU's membership database. Results will also be posted on the NWU website.

#### ***Section 4 — Voting***

- 1) All national elected positions shall be elected through simple plurality of those voting.
  - a) As national races, National Officer and Trustee positions shall be voted on by the entire NWU membership.
  - b) As races for Delegate are necessarily Chapter-specific, those positions shall be voted on solely by members of their respective Chapters.
- 2) All members in good standing by the nomination deadline shall be eligible to vote.

#### ***Section 5 — Elected National Positions***

- 1) Candidates for elected national positions (*i.e.*, National Officers, Trustees and Delegates) must be members in good standing with at least one year of membership on the books immediately prior to nomination.
  - a) The Election Committee will verify candidates are eligible to hold office in accordance with these Bylaws and any other applicable federal and/or state regulation.
  - b) The Election Committee shall notify candidates as to their eligibility at least three (3) weeks before the scheduled start of the election.
  - c) Candidates who have been determined ineligible to run for office shall have the right to appeal the finding to the Trustees

**[See Section 2.1.a of this Article]. Such appeal must be made within seven (7) days of notification of the candidate's ineligibility. The Trustees shall decide upon the appeal within ten (10) days of receiving the appeal.**

- 2) To declare their candidacy, nominees must submit a petition to the Election Committee. Petitions must include:**
  - a) the candidate's mailing address, email address, and phone number, as well as their primary organizing unit(s) — *i.e.*, Chapter and/or Trade Division; and**
  - b) a statement may also be submitted, not exceeding 300 words, which may include (but not be limited to) details about:**
    - i) any previous Union leadership roles the candidate has held;**
    - ii) any relevant organizing experience and/or training the candidate would like to share;**
    - iii) the candidate's perspective on the organizing strategies currently in use by our Union; and/or**
    - iv) the candidate's intended approach to fulfilling the responsibilities associated with the role in question (especially as regards financial or auditing experience, in the case of Treasurer and Trustee roles).**
  - c) Candidates for National Officer and Trustee roles shall also submit signatures of two (2) fellow members in good standing. (Digital signatures, sent to the Election Committee by email, shall be allowed.)**
- 3) Candidate statements shall be included in the announcement of candidates for office sent to members by the Election Committee in advance of the scheduled election, and provided to members again when they are given final access to the ballot.**
  - a) Candidates may also participate in a virtual “meet the candidate” call in the three weeks prior to the scheduled election, should the Election Committee choose to organize such an opportunity.**
  - b) As races for Delegate are necessarily Chapter-specific, the**

**Election Committee will work in collaboration with each Unit's current Chairs to organize such calls.**

***Section 6 — Trade Divisions and Chapters***

- 1) Candidates for Trade Division and Chapter Chairs (and, where relevant, Treasurer) must be NWU members in good standing with at least one year of membership on the books immediately prior to nomination.**
- 2) Candidates for Steering Committee roles in both Chapters and Trade Divisions must be NWU members in good standing. (To establish SC participation as an on-ramp to greater NWU leadership, no good-standing minimum shall be required.)**
- 3) The elected Steering Committee may vote to appoint additional members to the Steering Committee in the interim between elections.**
  - a) The Steering Committee shall not appoint Alternate Delegates. Alternate Delegates must be elected according to provisions of *Article VIII*.**
- 4) Trade Divisions and Chapters shall be empowered to organize and supervise their own elections, so long as nothing in that process runs counter to these Bylaws.**
  - a) This autonomy shall extend to election timing, as well as the number of chairs and Steering Committee members an individual Chapter or Trade Division chooses to elect.**
  - b) Under this provision, Trade Divisions are empowered to still select their chair(s) by caucus vote at the Delegate Assembly, following historical NWU precedent.**
- 5) The Election Committee will be available to Chapters for advice and consultation on elections “best practices” (e.g., timing, candidate statements, ballot technology, etc) as needed.**
  - a) For Trade Division elections, the Election Committee will act in a supervisory capacity.**
- 6) If a Unit Chair or Treasurer is unable to continue in office, either because of a lapse in membership or transfer to another Chapter or Trade Division, the Steering Committee shall appoint a replacement to serve until a special election can take place. This person shall be**

known as the Acting Chair or Acting Treasurer. The Chair or Treasurer duly elected will serve until regularly scheduled elections.

- 7) One Chair from each Chapter and Division shall be entitled to serve as a “Delegate *ex-officio*” at the Delegate Assembly
- 8) Chapter and Trade Division Leaders shall notify the National Office of election results no more than one week after the completion of the election. Results will also be posted on the NWU website.

#### ***Section 7 — Union staff***

Union staff members, like all others who participate in Union activities, are entitled to express opinions about matters of Union policy and leadership.

- 1) Staff may not use their position or Union resources to influence NWU elections.
- 2) Election tasks performed by NWU staff must be carried out in a neutral manner.

#### ***Section 8 — Vacancies and Special Elections***

- 1) Should an open National Officer, Trustee, or Delegate position receive no nominations in time for an official Election, the Election Committee shall notify membership of said vacancy at the time of voting, and shall set a date for a Special Election no less than three and no more than six months from that date.
  - a) In the case of Delegates, it shall be the responsibility of the unit with an empty position to organize and activate their members during the period preceding the Special Election, to ensure there are candidates ready to run.
  - b) Should a national elected position (including Delegate) be vacated for any reason, the Election Committee shall be responsible for organizing and supervising a Special Election to fill it no less than one month and no more than three months from that date.
    - i) The only exception to this procedure is for a vacancy in the office of President, which shall be filled by the First Vice-President for the remainder of the President’s term.
    - ii) The National Executive Board shall designate a

**currently elected NEB Member to fill the vacated National Officer role as an interim until a Special Election is completed for that now-vacated role.**

- iii) In the case of a Trustee position with less than four (4) months left on the term, the position shall be allowed to remain vacant provided no more than one (1) total Trustee position is vacant.**

### ***Section 9 — Recalls***

**Any union member in good standing can start a petition process to recall a fellow member from a position of elected leadership or representative appointment.**

- 1) To activate a recall petition, a member in good standing must get the endorsement, via digital signature, of at minimum twenty-five percent (25%) of the total votes received in the relevant Election.
  - a) All signatures shall be dated. A signature shall be no more than ninety (90) days old at the time of submission in order to be considered a valid signature.**
  - b) For recalls of representative appointments, the endorsement threshold shall be twenty-five percent (25%) of the average vote total of the previous three Elections.****
- 2) Any recall petition that meets the required threshold of endorsement shall be submitted to the Election Committee.**
- 3) The Election Committee shall verify the validity of the signatures before commencing with a Recall Election.**
- 4) A vote to recall shall be held within sixty (60) days of receipt of a petition submitted to the Election Committee.**
- 5) Recall Elections shall not be scheduled if a petition is received within one hundred eighty (180) days of the expiration of that officer's term.**
- 6) The Election Committee shall send notice of the recall petition to every member in good standing via the email address they have listed in the NWU's membership database.
  - a) Members without an email address, or whose email bounces, shall be sent the petition via USPS to the mailing address they****

have listed in the NWU's membership database.

- 7) The Election Committee shall then facilitate a yes-or-no vote within the relevant membership body about sustaining the recall. The deadline for votes about sustaining the recall shall be no less than four (4) and no more than six (6) weeks from the date the notice of the recall petition was sent out.
- 8) The Election Committee shall announce the results of the recall petition vote to members no less than one (1) week after the results have been returned.
- 9) Should a recall petition be sustained, that office shall be declared vacant and will be filled via a Special Election in accordance with the Bylaws.
- 10) The Election Committee shall be responsible for organizing and supervising a Special Election to fill the vacated seat, in accordance with the procedures set forth in this Article.
  - a) For recalls of a representative appointment, the responsibility of appointing a replacement for the vacated role shall fall to the National Executive Board.
- 11) If a recall is not approved by a majority of those voting in the recall election, no new petition for that specific officer shall be considered valid if received prior to one year from the date that the recall election results were certified.
- 12) Any officer who is named in a recall petition shall be recused from any considerations or proceedings concerning such petition.