2027-2029 LWVMN Policy Positions Review Guide

The League Program is the grassroots method by which LWV supports our mission through education and advocacy. All League action, advocacy, and education are based on support for League Positions and League Principles. League action in support of League Positions may be taken only in those areas where there is member understanding and agreement.

The LWVMN ***Program for Action***[1] details those LWV Principles and public policy position statements. Some positions are adopted at the national level by LWV US. Others are adopted by LWV Minnesota. The public policy position statements serve as the basis for the national, state and local Leagues to take action. The **Policy Positions Review** is the process that local Leagues use to review and suggest changes to the *Program for Action*. State governmental issues (i.e., our policy positions) can be chosen for study, review, concurrence, or modification. Ultimately, delegates at Convention vote on any changes. (Note: Resolutions and legislative priorities are not part of Policy Positions Review).

How do we change the *Program for Action*?

Local LWVs review the *Program for Action* and recommend what to do: drop or update an existing policy position, or add a new position.[2]

They may decide that a position is no longer relevant and LWVMN should **drop** the position. Or they could decide that LWVMN needs a **new** position. A new position must be supported by a study and member consensus. A study committee collects information through research and writes both a report and consensus questions. Members statewide review the report and questions to reach consensus on a position. Delegates typically vote on a proposed study at Convention, and the study typically takes about two years to complete.

They may decide the language of one of our positions is out of date; this would require an **update**. An update committee collects information through research and issues a report. If during the research process the update committee determines that a change to a position is desired, it converts to a study and consensus questions are developed, shared with local Leagues, and ultimately voted on.

Please note that LWVMN may only change LWVMN's positions in our *Program for Action*, as LWVMN has no authority to alter LWVUS positions.

Could we change our *Program for Action* without a study?

Yes. LWVMN could adopt a **concurrence**. This is a policy position already adopted by another LWV (usually another state LWV). This other LWV has already completed the study process and developed a position via consensus.

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[1] Article XIV of LWVMN's bylaws, the *Program for Action* consists of the implementation of LWVUS Principles, LWV US public policy positions, and state and local policy positions. You can read the current policy positions in our *Program for Action* by going to https://lwvmn.org/where-we-stand/.

[2] See LWVMN bylaws Article XIV, Section 3 regarding Convention action.

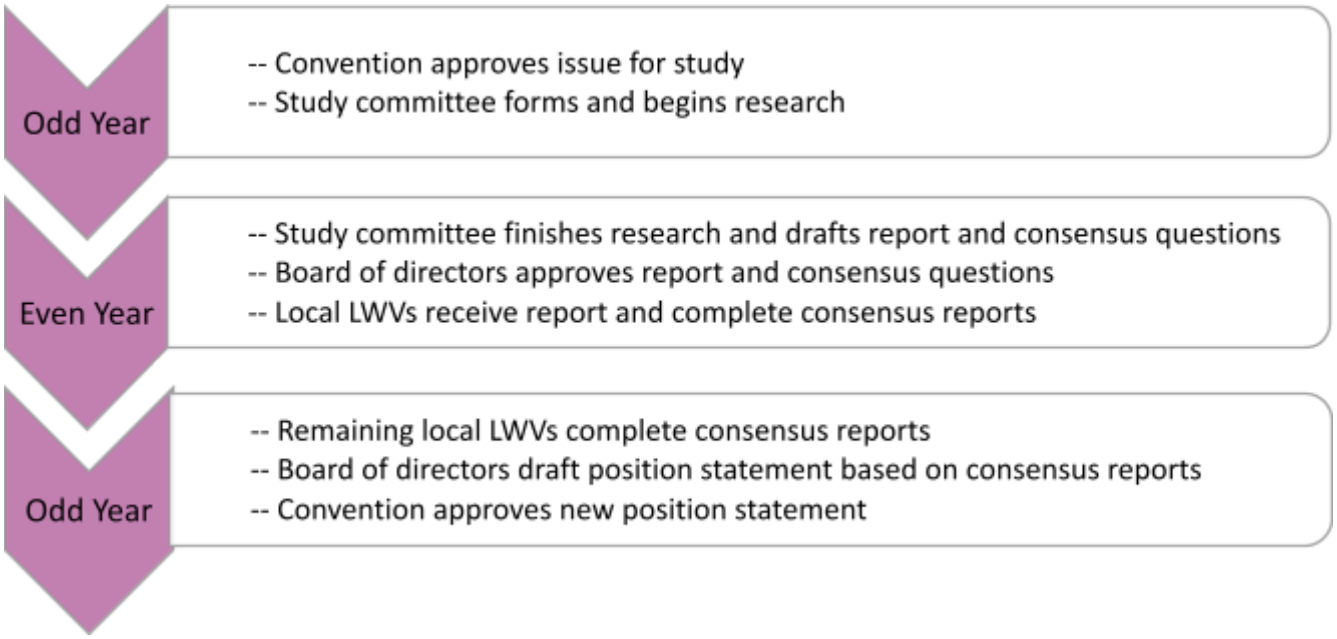
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What if we just need more information on a position already in our *Program for Action*?

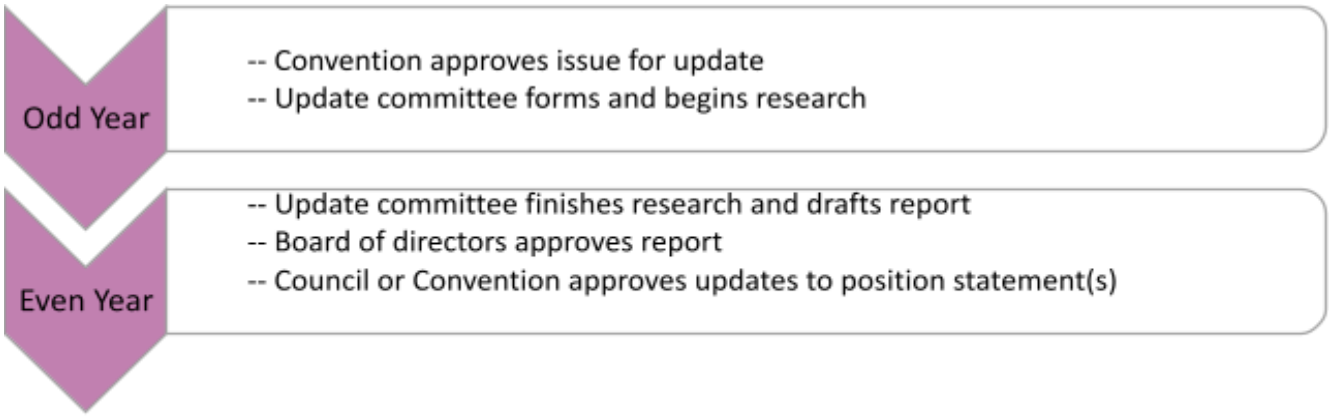
Delegates could vote at Convention for a committee to write a **briefing paper**. LWVMN created the briefing paper process in 2009 to answer members' questions about issues on which we have positions. A briefing paper provides a well-researched and objective summary on an issue in our *Program for Action*. A briefing paper **does not** change *Program for Action* positions.

You can see how each process unfolds below:

Study Process

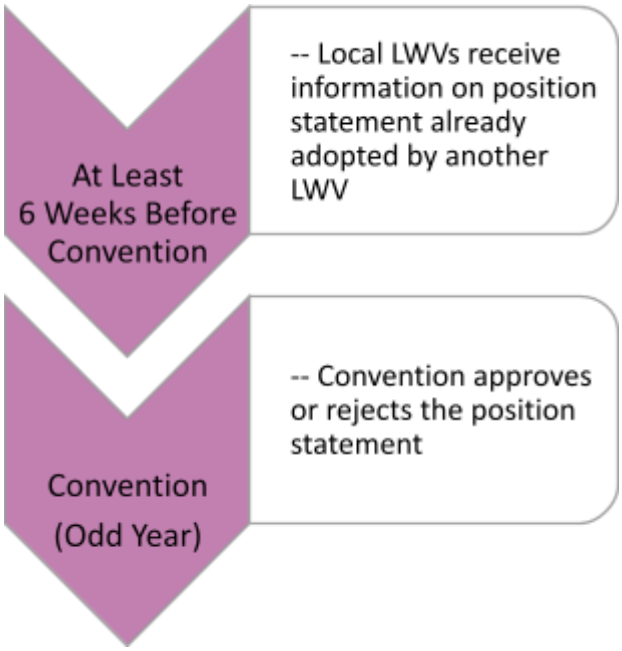


Update Process

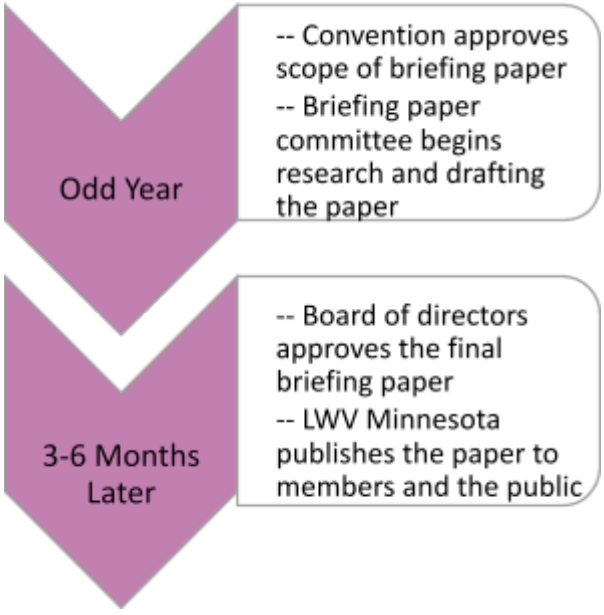


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Concurrence Process



Briefing Paper Process



What is the timeline for Policy Positions Review and changing or authorizing the *Program for Action* at the upcoming Convention?

- November 2026: Policy Positions Review process introduced at the November 5th Presidents' Call and then again on Dec. 3.
- December 2026: Policy Positions Review Survey made available to local LWVs by Dec. 1, 2026.
- January/ February 2027: Local LWVs complete Policy Positions Review survey to make suggestions for *Program for Action*.
- March 1, 2027: Deadline to complete the survey.
- March 2027: LWVMN announces recommended *Program for Action* topics. Survey results reviewed at the March 22nd LWV Minnesota board of directors meeting.
- June 2027: LWV Minnesota Convention votes on the *Program for Action*

What should a local LWV consider when suggesting a study, update, or briefing paper topic?

- First and foremost: what is our existing position? If we do not have one, do we want to conduct a study? If we have a position, is it up to date? If we do not understand the position, would a briefing paper be useful?
- Can the issue be solved by governmental action? Would LWV involvement make a difference?

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- Is LWVMN qualified to study this issue? Or would it duplicate work of some other organization more suited for the study?
- Is the topic timely or a current hot issue?
- Will the topic attract new members or increase the interest of current members?
- Does the **local League** have the resources (i.e. funding, volunteers, or staff) to support the study? Does the local League have someone willing to lead the necessary committee?

How do local LWVs submit suggestions for *Program for Action* to the board of directors?

Local LWVs should complete a Policy Positions Review survey after consulting with members at the local level. This can be done at a meeting, by a telephone poll, or by an online survey method.

You may wish to provide additional comments explaining a particularly contentious issue or one which has very limited interest (e.g., only one member).

The Policy Positions Review Survey form has several sections. The first section is your name and the name of the local LWV you are reporting for.

The second section allows a local LWV to communicate what they propose to do with existing *Program for Action* positions:

- **Drop** – remove the position from the *Program for Action* so that no action can be taken on the issue without a new study. A detailed explanation why should be included.
- **Update** – keep the position but change the language to replace outdated terminology or add clarification to words and terms. Detailed suggestions about what should change should be included.
- **Briefing Paper** – keep the position but provide more information to members. Detailed questions that the local League has and reason for needing more information should be included.

The third section allows a local LWV to describe a topic for a new study.

The **Policy Positions Review Survey** (one per local League, please) **is due March 1, 2027.** If you have questions, please contact Sam Streukens, sstreukens@lwvmn.org.

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