

LWVUS
Proposed League Rights and
Responsibilities
AND
Proposed Member Rights and
Responsibilities

September 2022

LWVUS Board and Governance Committee drafted proposed rights and responsibilities:

- Part of Transformation Roadmap (2018);
- Taken from policy, bylaws or nonprofit best practices;
- Clarity on organization-wide expectations;
- Framework for resolving issues of Leagues or members not in alignment with organization;
- Asking for comments from state and local Leagues and members.

League Rights and Responsibilities

https://www.lwv.org/league-management/proposed-league-rights-responsibilities-agreement?utm_source=LeagueUpdate&utm_medium=email&utm_id=08112022

LWVUS will:

- Recognize new Leagues
- Promote Leagues on website
- Organize US conventions
- Support ILOs
- Assist and support state and local Leagues (campaigns, database, logos, tech and legal assistance, advocacy)
- Represent League in national coalitions and work

League Rights and Responsibilities

All Leagues (state and local) will:

- Adopt same first three articles of bylaws, plus DEI and Nonpartisan policies
- Report membership by Jan. 31 in US database
- Comply with branding
- Adhere to federal, state laws and IRS regs
- SHOULD participate in US programmatic work
- Provide updates annual on US surveys, leadership, changes in bylaws
- **Promote and honor member rights and responsibilities**
- State Leagues: responsible for organization of local Leagues, MAL Units and ILOs

Reporting and Interim Measures

- Reported to US Governance Committee
- Members, Leagues or public can report violations

Interim Measures

CEO can enact immediate action (while investigated by Committee):

- Suspend authority to speak for League or use branding
- Suspend access to tools
- Suspend grants
- Release public statement

Enforcement of League Responsibilities

Governance Committee

- Receives report and decides how to address
- If local, then tells state (and state could have addressed it sufficiently)

Steps to be taken:

- Appointment of Taskforce (all US level people)
- Investigation by Taskforce
- Report to Governance Committee with summary of facts and recommended plan for remediation
- Opportunity for League to respond
- Governance Committee majority vote on action to be taken
- Appeal at next Convention or Council possible

Member Rights and Responsibilities

<https://www.lwv.org/league-management/policies-guidance/proposed-member-rights-responsibilities-policy>

“The purpose of the Member Rights and Responsibilities policy is to ensure that all active member of the LWV organization, including Board members and recognized members of state and local League, MALs and ILOs, are committed to maintaining the mission and integrity of the organization, as set forth within the LWV Bylaws and LWV policies, including this policy.”

LWVUS subcommittee of Governance Committee:

Subcommittee for Member Complaint Resolution

(mostly national, but current or former state and local League leader included)

Member Rights

- Enjoy membership at the local, state, and national level.
- Are able to join any local League they choose.
- Elect their local, state, and national leaders in the organization.
- Are eligible to run for leadership positions at all levels of the organization.
- Are entitled to full participation in the League, without barriers on the basis of gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, native or indigenous origin, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socioeconomic status, language, accent, ability status, mental health, educational level or background, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role function, thinking style, personality type, physical appearance, political perspective or affiliation and/or any other characteristic that can be identified as recognizing or illustrating diversity, as stated in the [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy](#).

Member Responsibilities

- Abide by the rules of the LWVUS and the member's state and local leagues as set out in each League's bylaws and official policies, including the [Nonpartisan Policy](#) and the [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy](#).
- Abide by all applicable laws, including federal, state, and local laws.
- Not engage in any behaviors or actions that are harassing, threatening, or physically or verbally abusive toward any LWV member, employee of LWV, or members of the public, and not create an environment that is intimidating, hostile, or offensive. This includes online activity.
- Not commit LWV to any action unless authorized to do so.
- Not act in opposition to a League position or policy when acting on behalf of the League.
- Refrain from making any statement on behalf of LWV or purport to represent LWV through any public medium, including digital social media, unless specifically authorized to do so.
- Comply with [all brand standards](#) to protect the organization's trademark.
- Refrain from using the position of membership to unfairly benefit themselves. Comply with membership dues requirements on a timely basis as part of continued membership.

Reporting

Process for Members: online form and Subcommittee review for possible action

Process for Non-Members: online form and subcommittee review for possible action

Subcommittee determines how to address report, further investigation and resolution.

Subcommittee MAY notify state League and determines which level League is appropriate to respond to report and consider:

- The nature of the complaint
- Who is involved in the complaint
- If the subject of the complaint is an officer of a state League
- Whether the state or local League has the capacity and desire to address the complaint on its own or with support from the subcommittee
- Any policies at the state or local level that may also apply to the complaint or the resolution process

Subcommittee Process

- Subcommittee determines if state or local League can handle the process of investigation.
- Lead Resolution Coordinator assigned by subcommittee to lead investigation and draft report.
- Member has opportunity to respond
- Subcommittee votes on action recommended by Lead Coordinator
- If member does not adhere, can repeat process or recommend revocation of membership to Governance Committee
- If state or local resolution process is used, they may also recommend revocation to Governance Committee

“Per the [Bylaws](#) (Art. III, Sec. 1): “Eligibility. Any person who subscribes to the purposes and policy of the LWVUS shall be eligible for membership.” Therefore, any member who is found to not subscribe to the purposes and policy of the LWVUS—which are summarized in the Member Rights and Responsibilities—is ineligible for continued membership.”

Appeal Process

In writing to Governance Committee

Governance Committee decides to accept or deny appeal and next course of action.

Comment Period

Online form accepted til **Oct. 11, 2022**

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Member Rights and Responsibilities:

<https://www.lwv.org/league-management/policies-guidance/proposed-member-rights-responsibilities-policy>

Ask for focus for **BOTH** League and Member Rights and Responsibilities on the following:

- How would these policies support the work of your League?
- What are questions you have about these policies?
- Does your League have a process in place for when a member (or local League, if you are from a state League) needs support in understanding (or complying with) organizational policies? If so, how does it work?
- Where do you anticipate challenges in implementing these policies in your League? What kind of support would help your League overcome those challenges?
- Is the resolution process in these policies similar to the process your League has used to resolve issues in the past?

Questions to Think About

League Rights and Responsibilities

- Who should be on Governance Committee Taskforce to investigate issues of state and local Leagues? In policy, taskforce is all national members and staff.
- Should the LWVUS CEO have authority to independently take action as an interim measure?
- Should the state League always investigate and make a report to LWVUS if concerning one of their local Leagues? In policy, says that the Governance Committee should consult with the state League.
- Should the appeal be at convention or council? The Bylaws reference this.

Member Rights and Responsibilities

- Should LWVUS have authority to revoke someone's membership?
- Should process be the same for reporting from member as from non-member?
- Should the local or state League always be the first to investigate (whichever level is accused in report)? In proposal, the subcommittee (US) determines if state or local can handle process.
- Should local Leagues have authority to investigate and recommend action as first step?
- Should Governance Committee be final authority for appeal?