

## **1 About this Document**

This document clarifies the policies and procedures of NC Women United. The Executive Committee is responsible for periodic review of this document and recommendations for changes. It may be amended by majority vote at any meeting of the Board.

## **2 Mission, Vision and Goals Statement**

NC Women United (NCWU) is a coalition of progressive organizations and individuals working to achieve the full political, social, and economic equality of all women across North Carolina. NCWU works to build women's power through grassroots activism, community organizing, legislative advocacy, and engagement in the political process.

To achieve full political, social, and economic equality, NCWU advances public policies and laws that:

- Increase the participation of women as voters, leaders, and decision-makers in the political process;
- Ensure freedom from domestic violence and sexual assault;
- Protect and advance reproductive freedom;
- Promote access to training and educational opportunities that lead to meaningful employment;
- Provide full and equal civil rights;
- Recognize and respond to the needs of women and their families for affordable and accessible services, including health care, child care, and elder care;
- Secure pay equity and economic self-sufficiency;
- Eliminate hunger, poverty, and homelessness;
- End discrimination in all areas of public life.

*Adopted NCWU Board meeting February 9, 2004.*

## **3 Membership Procedure**

- I. Inquiries about joining. Be welcoming and enthusiastic about what we can do by working together!
  - a. Internet Inquiries coming to any member:
    - i. Point out that all the information about how to join is on our website: [www.ncwu.org](http://www.ncwu.org) including information about fees, information they need to include and to whom (with address) to send the check and information.
    - ii. Individuals are directed to the website to join as a supporter or student.
  - b. Personal Inquiries coming to any member such as by phone or meeting:
    - i. Point out our website as above.
    - ii. If the inquirer is not Internet savvy, refer to Membership Chair.
    - iii. Membership Chair will follow up by phone to encourage the organization or individual to join or support NCWU.
- II. Procedure to follow for a new member
  - c. The Executive Committee approves the request for special consideration (as described in Policy 5.4) and/or the Treasurer receives and processes the check. The Treasurer makes copies of check, membership form and any other

accompanying information about the organization and FAXes to the NCWU FAX number (received by the exec committee and so available to all committees).

- d. Membership chair arranges for a committee member to contact the new member to
  - i. Updates the membership database with the preliminary information.
  - ii. Contacts new member to verify information and request any missing information (alternate contact, etc.).
  - iii. Welcome to the organization
  - iv. Deliver “new member packet” with instructions for mailing lists and use of the web site, schedule for upcoming meetings, organization directory, list of board members, etc.
  - v. Make sure new member packet is received
  - vi. Answer any questions about meetings and programs.
  - vii. Gather information about interests in participation and forward those to the appropriate committee chairs (e.g. Program, Governance)
  - viii. Reference communications committee contact.
- e. Communications chair arranges for a committee member to
  - i. Add new member to list on the web site
  - ii. Subscribe new members to the appropriate e-mail lists
  - iii. Send confirming e-mail with link to new member section on the web site.
  - iv. If applicable, updates the letterhead to include the new member.
  - v. Reference membership committee contact

### III. Procedure for ongoing updates of membership contact information

- a. Members forward contact information updates to the membership chair
- b. Membership chair sends monthly updated lists to the exec committee and committee chairs and ensures that the directory on the web site is kept current
- c. Communications chair audits members@ncwu.org e-mail subscription list against membership database and reports any discrepancies to membership chair and organization contact.

### IV. Procedure for processing of renewals (see also section 5, Payment of Dues)

- a. Membership chair is responsible for generating mailing labels/e-mail addresses for the renewal notices. Should be ready by fall board meeting.
- b. Membership chair responsible for drafting renewal letter and form for Executive Committee approval. Should be ready by fall board meeting.
- c. First notice of renewal to go out after the fall board meeting which confirms dues amounts for the next calendar year.
- d. Reminder to be sent in the first half of January via e-mail where possible.
- e. Reminder to be sent in mid-February by US Mail to Primary Contact, Billing Contact, and, if possible, head of the corresponding organization saying organization will be dropped from membership if dues remain unpaid by March 31 or if no alternate arrangement has been approved by the NCWU executive committee.

- f. Executive Committee to assign responsibility for processing the renewal notices and reminders.

*Initial NCWU Policy and Procedure Document September 2003. Updated by changing “Information and Advocacy Committee” to “Communications Committee,” May 2004. Updated to replace section II and add sections III and IV, August 2004. Update November 2007*

#### **4 Membership Dues**

- Organization Annual Budget < \$3,500 \$35/year
- Organization Annual Budget \$3,500 - \$100,000 \$75/year
- Organization Annual Budget \$100,000 - \$500,000 \$150/year
- Organization Annual Budget >\$500,000 \$250/year

Individuals may not join as “members” but contributors are welcome as “Friends of NCWU”

- Regular at least \$35/year
- Student \$15/year

*Initial NCWU Policy and Procedure Document September, 2003. Updated with \$35 organizational membership, January 2004.*

#### **5 Payment of Dues**

1. The dues year is the calendar year, the same as the fiscal year.
2. New members may join at any time by paying annual dues. Any organization joining after Oct. 1, will have its membership extended through December 31 of the following year.
3. Current members will be billed for the following year in the fall. If dues remain unpaid on March 31, they will be dropped from membership. This means removing them from the members listing on the web site and in other collateral, unsubscribing their representatives from the members@ncwu.org e-mail list, revoking their privileges to post information on the NCWU Extranet, and treating their representatives as guests without voting rights at membership meetings. Any members who state that they do not intend to renew will be dropped from membership at the time of that notice.
4. Notwithstanding the above, organizations who wish to join NC Women United but who are unable to pay the annual dues when they are due, may apply for alternative treatment. This may be an in-kind donation equivalent to the dues, a pledge of alternate payment schedule for the annual dues, or a reduction in the annual dues based on economic hardship. For renewing members, such application should be made to the Executive Committee by March 1 and the Executive Committee will consider the request before the March 31 deadline. For new members, the application may be made to the Executive Committee at any time.
5. For 2004, replace March dates with dates in June.

*May 2004*

## 6 NCWU and Individual Supporters

The “members” of NCWU are organizations. Only named primary or alternate representatives of member organizations may vote in the election for officers and in other matters considered at the membership meetings. However, as an organization working for all the women of North Carolina, we recognize that enlarging our constituency makes us stronger.

1. Any individual who is a staff member or volunteer for one of the NCWU member organizations is considered a “supporter of NCWU.” It is expected that they will receive and post NCWU information through their organizational representative(s).
2. Any individual who makes a financial contribution to become a “Friend of NCWU” is considered a “supporter of NCWU.” NCWU will make every effort to stay in contact with its “Friends” and provide them with access to  
NCWU documents such as the draft agenda  
NCWU alerts to the extent that they choose this  
NCWU newsletter or other periodic publications
3. Supporters of NCWU may, even if they are not representatives of member organizations,  
Serve on committees  
Be elected to the Board, including the officer positions  
Attend membership meetings and participate in the discussions  
Contact the Policy Council with recommendations and comments
4. Anyone who wishes to represent NCWU as an organizer of a local event coordinated through NCWU will be strongly encouraged to become a supporter if they are not one already.

May 2004.

## 7 NCWU positions on policy issues (Endorsement Policy)

*This section describes the processes related to NCWU taking an official position on a policy issue, and nothing in this section should be interpreted to preclude general discussions of policy at membership meetings.*

1. No one may speak for NCWU on any policy issue unless there has been a vote at a membership meeting to approve a document or motion that takes a position on the issue. The vote may be taken to approve any of the following:
  - a. A general document describing NCWU’s goals
  - b. A document, such as the draft agenda or report card, produced by an NCWU committee
  - c. A motion to support or oppose a specific piece of legislation that has been introduced or is proposed for the current or upcoming session of the NC Legislature or the US Congress
  - d. A resolution<sup>1</sup> that addresses a public policy that is of concern to the women of North Carolina. The “whereas” clauses need not be lengthy or complex, but should provide some background information that ties the resolution to the goals

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<sup>1</sup> In most respects a resolution is treated as any other main motion. However, as described in Robert’s Rules of Order, it is typically a motion that is complex or important and takes a particular form with a preamble of “whereas” clauses.

that the NCWU members have approved. This does not require a specific reference to NCWU language, and resolutions drafted by other organizations are appropriately considered by NCWU.

2. NCWU's action on a policy issue does not bind its member organizations who may each individually consider the issue.
3. Once the membership has passed a motion taking a position on a policy issue, no one may take the opposite position *when speaking for NCWU*. Unless the membership has passed a motion taking a position on a policy issue, no one may take any position on the issue *when speaking for NCWU*.
4. Statements of general policy remain in effect until explicitly repealed by a vote on a separate policy issue following the procedures outlined above.

*May 2004. A draft process for introducing policy issues was deleted and replaced by policy 8, Feb. 2006.*

## **8 NCWU Endorsement Process**

### **8.1 Requirements**

1. This process is intended for use only in instances where the use of NCWU's name in support or opposition to a particular issue or action is requested. This policy is not to be used to commit NCWU's financial, time, staff, volunteer, or other resources in any instance. Proposals that require additional resources should be directed to the NCWU executive committee.
2. In order for any issue/action to be considered for endorsement by the policy council it must:
  1. be consistent with NCWU's mission, vision, and values;
  2. be consistent with NCWU's Women's Legislative Agenda;
  3. be proposed by at least one member (organization) of NCWU through the process described in section 8.2;
  4. require no commitment of resources beyond use of NCWU's name.

### **8.2 Process**

1. Any NCWU member organization that wishes to obtain NCWU's endorsement for a particular issue or action should contact the Chair of the Policy Council to submit the proposal for Policy Council consideration. The Policy Council shall develop a standard form for such proposals and will require this form to be completed prior to considering the issue.
2. The Chair of the Policy Council will contact the other members of the Policy Council and provide details of the proposal. The Chair may do this by conference call, email, or an in-person meeting as he/she sees fit but must allow Policy Council members at least seven (7) days to respond to the proposal if they are doing so by email.

3. The proposal must have approval from a majority of the Policy Council in order for it to be put forward at the next Membership Meeting. Once the Policy Council has decided whether or not to support a proposal, the Chair of the Policy Council will contact the NCWU Executive Committee and the member organization advancing the proposal and advise the organization of the Policy Council's decision.
4. If the Policy Council approves a proposal, the NCWU member may then present this proposal for approval to the full NCWU membership at the next Membership Meeting. To present a proposal to the Membership, a notice describing the proposal must be circulated by email via the "Members" email list at least one week in advance of the membership meeting and the Executive Committee must be notified by the sponsoring member organization that a vote is planned. It is the responsibility of the organization sponsoring the proposal, NOT the Chair of the Policy Council or the Executive Committee to present the proposal to the membership. The sponsoring organization is expected to have representatives available at the Membership Meeting to present the proposal and answer questions.
5. Once the issue has been presented to the Membership at its Monthly Meeting, a vote can be taken if representatives of at least one-quarter of the NCWU member organizations are present. If one-quarter of the organizations are not present, the vote must be postponed until a quorum can be obtained at a monthly membership meeting.
6. When a quorum is present, a vote can be taken and results of the vote will be recorded by the NCWU Secretary. Following the vote at the Membership Meeting, the proposal and results of the initial vote must then be circulated by email to NCWU members by the "Members" email list or by other email channels as necessary or appropriate. It is the responsibility of the organization sponsoring the proposal, NOT the Chair of the Policy Council or the Executive Committee to circulate the proposal to the membership by email, although the organization may work with the Secretary to provide information about the vote. The sponsoring organization is expected to have representatives available by phone or email to answer questions from the Membership.
7. In addition to the votes obtained at the Membership Meeting, NCWU member organizations may submit votes on the proposal in response to the email circulation. These votes may be submitted by email directly to the NCWU Secretary, by the "Members" list, or by voicemail left on the NCWU phone line. Organizations must have at least seven days to respond to the email circulation, but the vote may remain open for longer than seven days at the discretion of the sponsoring member and the Executive Committee. A notice must be provided through the "Members" email list at least 2 days before the vote is closed.

8. Once the vote is closed, the e-mail votes may be added to the votes from the Membership meeting. If at least one-half of the member organizations have voted and if a majority of those voting support the proposal, then NCWU can endorse the issue/action. The NCWU Secretary will announce the results of the vote to the membership by email to the “Members” list. It is the responsibility of the sponsoring member organization to take any steps necessary to finalize NCWU’s endorsement and to forward any further information to the NCWU membership as appropriate and necessary.
9. In any instance, each organization may cast only one vote. In cases where a member organization appears to have multiple votes, that organization will be asked to clarify its vote to the NCWU Secretary. Multiple votes from any organization or its representatives will result in no votes being counted for that member until clarification is provided. Friends and supporters of NCWU are not eligible to vote on proposed endorsements.

February 28, 2006.

## 9 Mailing lists

**Alerts@ncwu.org** will be used for messages that benefit from a wide distribution and are directly related to advocacy for the NCWU goals.

- Subscription to this list is open to all.
- Posting is restricted to representatives of member organizations. Messages from others will be forwarded to a moderator.

**Members@ncwu.org** will be used for messages that relate to NCWU activities and policies. It may be used for short messages that are not directly related to advocacy (e.g. event invitations).

- Subscription to this list is restricted to Board members and primary and alternate representatives of member organizations
- Posting is open to all subscribers without moderation.

Additional lists include:

- **board@ncwu.org** – Open to all Board members
- **program@ncwu.org** – Issues concerning current NCWU programs, for instance Women's Agenda Assemblies, Women's Advocacy Day, ongoing advocacy strategies. Subscription is open to those who are on or want to be on the program committee. Send a message to [info@ncwu.org](mailto:info@ncwu.org) if you need to subscribe.
- **coordinators@ncwu.org**-List for the coordinators of NCWU sponsored events in local communities. Contact [info@ncwu.org](mailto:info@ncwu.org) to be sure you are subscribed.
- [info@ncwu.org](mailto:info@ncwu.org) -Key contacts (typically president, secretary and web manager) willing to field questions from visitors to the website.
- [policychair@ncwu.org](mailto:policychair@ncwu.org)- [Contact](mailto:policychair@ncwu.org) e-mail for the chair of the Policy Council. Direct requests for endorsements or policy-related questions to this address.

Additional restrictions on messages posted to the lists:

- Messages should be brief and focused with, if possible, a web address for more information.
- No jokes, chain letters, junk mail, virus warnings or personal messages.
- No commercial messages or solicitations.
- No partisan political messages.
- No endorsements of candidates or postings of your organization's endorsements.
- All action alerts must be in compliance with limitations placed on 501(c)3 organizations. If you have questions regarding whether something is appropriate, please e-mail [policychair@ncwu.org](mailto:policychair@ncwu.org).
- News articles relevant to NCWU's mission and goals may be posted with a link and brief summary. Full-text posting of articles is not allowed.
- Attachments are strongly discouraged and will typically cause the message to be discarded or to be forwarded to a moderator which would delay its posting.

Violations of the policies shall result in removal of posting privileges or removal from the list.

*Update November 2007*

## **10 NCWU General Fiscal Policies**

A. The NCWU Secretary shall update the Secretary of State web page upon election and/or change in the Presidency position.

B. NCWU operates on a budget that is approved by the board and can be modified only by the board. The NCWU Treasurer shall present at each meeting of the Board of Directors a set of financial documents to include the current balance sheet, the statement of revenue and expenses, the statement of change in net assets, and the statement of cash flows. Between board meetings, the executive committee can authorize spending that exceeds the limits set in the budget but must

1. notify the board before the expense is incurred and halt the expense if there is an objection, and
2. prepare an amendment to the budget for presentation at the next board meeting that shows how this expense can be funded.

C. The NCWU Treasurer shall file the IRS 990-N form by May 15 annually and shall file a Form 1099-MISC for any independent contractors paid more than \$600 and employed by NCWU by January 31st for work in done in the previous calendar year.

D. NCWU Policy on Reimbursements of Board Members' Travel and Phone Expenses

1. NCWU encourages its board members to cover the costs of their participation in the organization (travel, phone, postage, etc.). However, though our budget is small, we understand the importance of covering expenses for those whose participation would otherwise cause them financial hardship. We also acknowledge that those traveling a

relatively long distance are also donating a significant amount of their time.

2. Upon request, NCWU will reimburse travel expenses for board members who travel to a board meeting or the annual membership meeting. The reimbursement is limited to the actual cost of gasoline (if receipts are supplied) or \$.42/mile.
3. Upon request, NCWU will reimburse board members for travel expenses for up to one membership meeting per quarter using the guidelines above.
4. Upon request, NCWU will provide a pre-paid phone card for a board member's use in calling in to membership meetings, board meetings, and committee meetings.

E. Other payments and reimbursements

1. The following guidelines must be observed for any expenses to be paid by NCWU:
  - a. Expenses that will be charged to a committee's budget must be approved in advance by the committee chair.
  - b. Expenses not charged to a committee and all expenses over \$50 must be approved in advance by the treasurer.
  - c. Expenses over \$250 and all expenses that exceed a budget limit, must be approved in advance by the executive committee.
  - d. Committee chairs may authorize reimbursement of travel and phone expenses related to committee work. These shall be subject to the guidelines above for reimbursing board members as well as the general guidelines (b) and
  - e. NCWU does not permit checks made payable to "cash."
2. Reimbursement requests should be submitted to the treasurer with receipts, a description of the expense, and a note as to who approved the expense (treasurer or committee chair). If the guidelines above are not followed, the reimbursement must be approved by the executive committee before it is paid by the treasurer.
3. Checks of more than \$250 must have more than one signature. Checking signing authority shall be held by the President and the Treasurer.

*Updated May 2008*