

Missouri NOW Bylaws

Section 1. NAME

The name of this organization shall be the "National Organization for Women in Missouri" written as Missouri NOW

Section 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of Missouri NOW shall be to coordinate efforts on the state level to provide communication among chapters and task forces, and to assist in the functioning of NOW in Missouri in accordance with the purpose of NOW (National Bylaws, Section 2).

Section 3. MEMBERSHIP

Any person who is a member of NOW and who has paid Missouri State NOW dues shall be a member of Missouri NOW. No person who subscribes to NOW's purposes shall be excluded from membership, segregated or otherwise discriminated against within this organization because of race, creed, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, economic status, marital status, parenthood, sexual orientation or lifestyle.

Section 4. STATE OFFICERS/EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The elected officers shall be known as the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall conduct the business of Missouri NOW between the meeting of the State Council and report at the next State Council meeting any business conducted.

- A. Each officer shall serve a one year term.
- B. Qualifications
 - 1. All elected Missouri State Officers shall have been members of NOW for one year and Missouri NOW for one year immediately prior to election with the exception that a candidate who has been a member of NOW for one year immediately prior to the election, who is currently a NO NOW member and who has previously been an officer of a NOW chapter or state board of another state shall be eligible for election should there be no active member of Missouri NOW eligible and will to assume the position.
 - 2. State officers must support NOW's purposes and NOW's five (5) priority issues:
 - A Elimination of violence against women
 - B Reproductive rights
 - C Gay/Lesbian rights
 - D Elimination of racism
 - E Constitutional equality
- C. The elected State officers shall be:
 - 1. President or two (2) Co-Presidents
 - 2. Vice-president
 - 3. Treasurer
 - 4. Secretary
 - 5. Legislative Director

- D. The President or Co-Presidents shall:
1. Call State Council meetings
 2. Preside at State Council meetings and the State Conference
 3. Be the chief spokesperson/s for Missouri NOW in accordance with National NOW policies
 4. Facilitate cooperation between chapters
 5. Communicate with the National Office and relay national communications to chapters
 6. Promote and assist in the organization of new chapters
 7. Appoint task forces with the consent of the State Council
 8. Conduct day-to-day business of the organization
 9. Carry out the wishes of the State Council and Missouri NOW membership
- E. The Vice-President shall:
1. Assist the President in the duties of that office and act as President in the President's or both Co-Presidents' absence.
 2. Be responsible for membership and chapter development and advisement
 3. Be responsible for implementation of the affirmative action plan of Missouri NOW
 4. Be responsible for coordinating at least two (2) state actions each year.
 5. In the event of a vacancy in the office of President or Co-President, the Vice President shall automatically assume that office. (This shall not be considered a term of office.)
- F. The Treasurer shall:
1. Receive all funds of Missouri NOW and shall deposit them in appropriate Missouri NOW bank accounts.
 2. Prepare a budget for approval by State Council
 3. Approve disbursement of these funds by check in accordance with the approved budget
 4. Keep records of receipts and disbursements and make a report at each State Council meeting and the State Conference
 5. Have all accounts reviewed annually prior to the State Conference by a committee appointed by the State Council. The committee shall consist of three members, one of whom shall be a state officer other than the treasurer.
- G. The Secretary shall:
1. Keep a record of the proceedings of the meetings of the State Council and the State Conference.
 2. Prior to each State Council meeting, review the minutes of the previous meetings so as to bring any incomplete business to the attention of the State Council for action.
 3. Maintain a list of state officers, chapter officers and task force chairs and a record of state, chapter and task force activities.
 4. Keep National NOW apprised of changes to Missouri NOW officers, bylaws and any other information deemed necessary by the State Council or National NOW
 5. Keep a copy of the most current bylaws of Missouri NOW and of each NOW chapter in Missouri
 6. Conduct Council correspondence not specifically assigned to others.
- H. The Legislative Director shall:
1. Coordinate legislative action in the state.
 2. Keep abreast of pending legislation related to NOW's purposes
 3. Notify the State Council of needed legislative activity

4. Assist state task forces with legislative activity
5. Act as liaison among the state task forces and between each task force and the State Council
6. Act as liaison between Missouri NOW and other organizations dealing with legislation

Section 5 STATE COUNCIL

- A. The State Council shall consist of:
 1. The Executive Committee (elected state officers)
 2. Two representatives from each chapter in the state of Missouri
 3. Two at-large members elected at the State Conference to represent Missouri9 NOW members-at-large. They shall have been a member of National NOW and Missouri NOW for one year immediately prior to the election.
 4. One representative from each task force
 5. A member appointed as Newsletter Editor by the State Council
- B. The state council shall manage the affairs and control the funds and property of Missouri NOW and adopt necessary rules and regulations, provided none of the Council's action conflict with the actions or directives of the membership or are inconsistent with the purposes of the organization
- C. Any powers not specifically mentioned in these bylaws shall reside with the State Council.

Section 6 CHAPTERS

- A. Each chapter in Missouri formed according to the National Bylaws shall be considered a chapter in the state and shall have two (2) votes on the State Council
- B. The Chapters shall provide the Council Secretary with a list of their officers and a copy of their current bylaws

Section 7 TASK FORCES

- A. State Task Forces shall be created by resolution at the State Conference or by the President or Co-Presidents with approval of the State Council. They shall be formed to implement state priorities and needs as defined by the State Council or the State Conference. The Task force chair and/or the voting representative to the State Council of each task force shall be selected by members of that task force. All Task Force members shall be NOW members
- B. Any official actions and/or statements by a Task Force shall be subject to approval by the State Council or the President or Co-Presidents when the State Council is not in session. Failure to comply with this section may result in dissolution of a task force by a simple majority vote of the State Conference or by a 3/4 majority vote of the State Council, after two weeks written notice to the Task Force Chair.
- C. State Task Forces shall submit progress reports to the State Council at each Council meeting.
- D. The Council shall have the right to dissolve any Task Force which has not submitted a report for a period of six(6) months and/or any Task Force which has achieved its objectives as outlined in an implementing resolution or Council directive
- E. Task Forces shall be dissolved when their mission is completed.

Section 8 MEETINGS

- A. The State Council shall meet at least quarterly

- B. In the event the President fails to call a quarterly meeting, a meeting can be called by any state officer. Special meetings may be held upon call of the President or upon request of the presidents of two chapters or the president of one chapter and one state officer.
- C. Notification of meetings to officers, and chapter and task force representatives shall occur a minimum of two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting, with the exception of grievance meetings covered by Section 14 A
- D. Each member of the State Council shall have one (1) vote, with the exception of the chairperson of the State Council who shall vote only in the case of a tie.
- E. A quorum shall consist of at least two (2) state officers and three (3) others, at least two (2) of whom must be chapter representatives.
- F. Meeting of the State Council shall be open to all NOW members in Missouri

Section 9 STATE CONFERENCE

- A. The State Conference shall be the general membership assembly of all NOW members in accordance with National Bylaws
- B. The State Conference shall be convened in the 2nd or 3rd quarter of each year. The Missouri NOW State Council shall set the exact date and place of the Conference giving each NOW member in Missouri at least thirty (30) days notice.
- C. Each member in attendance who has been a member of National NOW and Missouri Now at least ninety (90) days prior to the state conference shall be issued credentials showing s/he has the right to vote and shall have one vote. Those voting shall elect the State Officers and member-at-large representatives, formulate general policy and adopt state priorities.
- D. A quorum shall consist of 25% of the Missouri NOW members credentialed at the conference plus two (2) members of the Executive Committee and two other State Council members.
- E. Business shall be conducted only at scheduled plenary sessions

Section 10 NOMINATING COMMITTEE

- A. There shall be a nominating committee of at least two (2) Missouri NOW members to be solicited and appointed by the State Council at least three months before the State Conference. The State Council shall make every effort to have one of the committee members originate from the chapter in which the State Conference is held.
- B. The nominating committee shall not endorse candidates but shall:
 1. Accept nominations
 2. Determine that each nominee meets eligibility requirements as described by these bylaws
 3. Report to the State Conference

Section 11 ELECTIONS

- A. Elections for State Officers and at-large State Council members shall be held at State Conference
- B. At least thirty (30) days prior to the State Conference the Council shall notify each NOW member of the elections format which shall allow for nominations to be made from the floor of the conference
- C. The officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the duly credentialed delegates present whose preferences are counted on a single ballot. If there are more than two persons running for the same office preferential balloting shall be used.

- D. The elected officers and the at-large State Council members shall take office immediately following the State Conference.

Section 12 VACANCIES

Vacancies shall be filled by any Missouri NOW member who meets the criteria for the vacant office and shall be chosen through majority vote at a State Council meeting after all chapters have been notified of the vacancy and given an opportunity to submit nominations.

Section 13 GRIEVANCES

- A. Grievances shall be submitted in writing to the State Council and any member named in the grievance at least 30 days before the State Council meeting at which the grievance is to be presented as an agenda item. The meeting shall be closed to all but members of the council, the member(s) named in the grievance, the member (s) submitting the grievances and a NOW endorsed mediator, if a mediator is requested.
- B. The grievance shall be resolved using the grievance procedure adopted by National NOW. Unresolved grievances may be submitted to the National Board.

Section 14 REMOVAL OF STATE OFFICERS

- A. If the membership of an elected officer or appointed council member has lapsed for longer than 45 days, the office shall be considered vacant and shall be filled according to the provisions of Section 12.
- B. The State Council may by a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of the members present at a regularly scheduled or special meeting (after 30 days written notice to involved parties and voting members of the State Council of consideration of the questions) remove from office any officers if the council determines through the grievance procedure that the actions of such officer are contrary to the purposes of Missouri NOW.

Section 15 DUES

The State Council shall have the power to set state dues by a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote of State Council.

Section 16 NEWSLETTER

- A. The newsletter editor shall oversee the preparation and distribution of a newsletter on a schedule set by the State Council.
- B. The newsletter's content shall represent the state's membership and its diversity and shall be a vehicle for communication among chapters, the State Council and the state membership.
- C. The Executive Committee reserves the right to refuse any article for publication

Section 17 PROCEDURES

- A. State Council and State Conference sessions shall be conducted by consensus or according to the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order
- B. The fiscal year shall run from September 1 to August 31.

- C. Any funds belonging to Missouri NOW that may be received by a member of the State Council other than the treasurer shall be sent to the treasurer within a period of 15 days of receipt for deposit in the Missouri NOW account/s unless a change in procedure is approved by a majority of State Council.
- D. Upon a change in state officers, each departing state officer shall turn over all Missouri NOW property in their possession to the succeeding state officers.
- E. Each state officers shall be provided with a copy of the National NOW policy manual and the Missouri NOW bylaws.
- F. Missouri NOW shall have the power to enter into coalitions by a vote of 2/3 of the state council.
- G. Approved expenditures made on behalf of Missouri NOW shall be reimbursed within a period of 30 days of receipt of documentation by the treasurer.

Section 18 AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

- A. Proposed amendments to the bylaws shall be submitted to the Secretary in writing and presented to the membership in the call to conference. An amendment shall be considered adopted when approved by a 2/3 majority of the votes cast at the State Conference
- B. Amendments by the bylaws shall take effect at the close of the State Conference at which they were approved unless otherwise specified by the State Conference
- C. Revised sections of the bylaws or a complete version of the bylaws shall be provided the membership of Missouri NOW in the next issue of the state newsletter.

Adopted August 2003