

Missouri State Women's Political Caucus Bylaws

Adopted July 25, 2020

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this organization shall be Missouri State Women's Political Caucus (referred to as MOWPC), a state affiliate of the National Women's Political Caucus (referred to as NWPC).

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

1. The purposes of MOWPC are:
 - A. To increase women's participation in the political process;
 - B. To increase the number of feminist women in elected and appointed positions;
 - C. To support women candidates who will work for women's issues and who will employ women in decision-making roles in their campaigns and office staffs;
 - D. To work for the repeal of discriminatory laws, especially laws which discriminate on the basis of gender;
 - E. To win equality for women;
 - F. To draft and support legislation that complies with the principles of human equality and that concerns the needs of women.
2. In pursuit of these goals, MOWPC is dedicated to eradicating bias, both explicit and implicit, in all its forms, including, but not limited to: sexism, racism, anti-Semitism, ageism, violence, socioeconomic status, ableism, sexual orientation, gender identification, political ideology, national origin, ethnicity and discrimination on the basis of religion. Furthermore, MOWPC is dedicated to ensuring reproductive freedom.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

1. Membership in MOWPC shall be open to all people who support the purpose and goals of the organization and who pay dues by a method to be determined by the state board.
2. Dues:
 - A. State membership dues and categories of membership shall be determined by the state board, approved at a state meeting and take effect in January of the following year, NWPC and local Caucuses set their own dues rate(s) and schedule.
 - B. A member in good standing is defined as one who is current in local, state and national dues.

- C. Any person who resides outside a local caucus area may join the MOWPC and the NWPC, as an at-large member.

3. Local Caucuses:

- A. Support the purposes and goals of the MOWPC and the NWPC.
- B. Shall be governed by local bylaws, approved by the state board, which shall, at a minimum:
 - 1. Provide for a democratically-elected leadership;
 - 2. Provide for holding regular, open meetings;
 - 3. Not be inconsistent with state and national bylaws, published rules and policies.
- C. Shall submit proposed bylaw amendments to the State President to ensure compliance with MOWPC bylaws and NWPC bylaws and rules before adoption.
- D. Shall consist of at least six members.
- E. Shall elect two representatives and at least one alternate to the state board.
- F. Shall furnish the state Caucus with a mailing list of new members and renewals each quarter and a roster of officers and/or contacts after each election which will be shared with NWPC. Notification of changes in a local executive board position should be made to the state Caucus when they occur.
- G. Shall have as a rule and embodied in their bylaws, that a diverse membership is actively sought. "Diverse" is used to refer to individuals who self-identify with those groups historically discriminated against and/or are underrepresented based on disability, gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

4. Dual Memberships:

- A. A member may belong to more than one local Caucus, by paying local, state and national dues to one local Caucus and paying only local dues to any additional Caucus joined upon proof of previous payment of state and national dues.
- B. A member may represent only one local Caucus on the state board or at a state convention in any one year.

ARTICLE IV. STATE BOARD:

- 1. Representatives on the state board:

- A. The state board shall consist of two democratically-elected representatives and one alternate from each local Caucus plus the state officers. An effort should be made to establish multi-partisan representation in selection of delegates of each Caucus.
 - B. A person who is active and interested in the state organization and lives in an area where no local Caucus exists can become a voting member of the state board for a term of two years upon meeting the following requirements:
 - 1. Is a member of the state and national Caucus.
 - 2. The state board votes to accept the member.
2. Duties of the state board:
- A. Shall conduct the business of the state organization, including oversight of the budget.
 - B. Shall encourage and promote communication within the state.
 - C. Shall elect, from its membership, a representative and alternates to the NWPC Steering Committee for a term of two years.
 - D. Shall elect a nominating committee at its first meeting of the year in which a state meeting is being held.
 - 1. The committee shall consist of at least five members, with representation from each local Caucus. Any candidate for state MOWPC office shall be prohibited from membership on this committee.
 - 2. The duties of the nominating committee shall be to coordinate nomination and filing procedures and to assure that at least one candidate files for each elective office.
 - E. Shall conduct a state meeting at least once every two years.
 - F. May call a statewide business meeting with twenty days written notice to each caucus for urgent business.
 - G. Will coordinate a program of affirmative action to make membership in the caucus available to people of all races, creeds, colors, economic status, national origins, sexual orientations, political parties and ages.
 - H. Shall have the power to remove a state officer and/or a national representative for:
 - 1. Failure to perform the duties of the office.
 - 2. Conduct conflicting with the purposes and goals of the MOWPC.

3. The State Board may agree to remove an elected officer from the Board should she miss three meetings in a twelve month period without an acceptable excuse.

I. Shall appoint a replacement to fill an unexpired term when a vacancy occurs due to the removal or resignation of a state officer or national representative.

3. The state board will meet in person or by conference call not less than three times yearly. A quorum for purposes of conducting business shall consist of one member, whether a state officer, representative or alternate from at least 60 percent of the local Caucuses.

ARTICLE V OFFICERS:

1. Officers shall be elected by a majority of the voting delegates at a state meeting for a term of two years.

2. A vacancy in the office of President shall be filled by a First Vice President who is chosen from among the newly-elected Vice Presidents and nominated from the floor in an election held immediately following the election of Vice Presidents. Vacancies in other elected offices shall be filled by the State Board.

3. Duties of Officers:

A. President

1. Coordinates and organizes the state board
2. Chairs the state board meetings
3. Chairs the state meetings
4. Will be responsible for all meeting notices and for notifying each board member of state board meetings.
5. Communicates leadership changes at state or national level to all local Caucus presidents. Shares bylaw changes, national board meeting minutes and other key information from NWPC and MOWPC to local chapter officers.
6. Shall be accessible and responsive to local Caucus officers.
7. Shall ensure MOWPC and local Caucuses are in compliance with NWPC's bylaws, rules, policies and procedures.
8. May appoint a parliamentarian, historian, newsletter editor and chairs of standing and special committees, with the approval of the state board.
9. Acts as ex-officio member of all committees except the nominating committee and except where otherwise specified in these bylaws.

10. Performs such other duties as provided by the state bylaws and the state board.

B. First Vice President

1. In the absence of the President, the Vice President selected under Article V, Section 2, shall serve as President.
2. Shall serve as resource and counsel to the President.
3. Be official spokesperson for MOWPC upon request of the President.
4. Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the President.

B C. Caucus Development Vice President

1. Works with the President and State Board to develop new Caucuses in the state.
2. Coordinates and organizes communication with and support to local Caucuses.
3. Develops and coordinates programs to recruit and retain members; and report to the State Board on activities to retain and increase membership.

D Records Vice President:

1. Shall collect and be responsible for all official records.
2. Shall provide for minutes to be taken at state board meetings.
3. Will receive and compile proposed bylaw revisions prior to the state meeting.
4. Shall file any necessary report on state activities with the NWPC.

E Finances Vice President:

1. Keeps an itemized accounting of all receipts and disbursements.
2. Shall disburse money upon approval of the state board.
3. Shall report at the state board meetings, including distribution of the financial reports and most recent bank statement.
4. Shall sign all checks drawn on the organization.

5. Shall file current state board membership lists with the national office and remit membership dues on a quarterly basis.
6. Shall maintain security of account information.
7. May be bonded if necessary.
8. Shall serve as a member of the budget committee.

F. Endorsement Vice President:

1. May chair an Endorsement Committee.
2. Is responsible for identifying all women candidates who are eligible to be endorsed by the MOWPC and sending them a current MOWPC Questionnaire.
3. Shall make recommendations about endorsements and funding of screened candidates and present to the MOWPC Board for approval.
4. Shall make a final report to the Board after the November general election.
5. Investigates, monitors and reports on Missouri state legislator races and the U.S. Congressional elections from Missouri to the state board and local caucuses.
6. Serves as a contact for those candidates interested in Caucus support, both at local and state levels.

F. G. Legislative Issues Vice President:

1. Researches current legislation in Missouri and U.S. congress that is identified with the purposes stated in these bylaws and report and disburse the information to state and local caucuses.
2. Coordinates lobbying efforts with MOWPC and with other groups on specific legislation.
3. Initiates drafting efforts of specific legislation that is in accordance with the purposes of MOWPC.

H. Education and Training Vice President:

1. Chairs the Education and Training Committee.
2. Assists the state Board and local Caucuses to develop and coordinate training and education programs to enhance the skills of the MOWPC members and potential candidates for elected and appointed office.

3. Oversees the organization of campaign skills workshops; and works with the State Board to develop and organize education and training projects specifically designed to increase participation of under-represented women in the campaign process.
4. Works with the Vice President for Communications to ensure that MOWPC publications; news releases and other media reflect MOWPC's commitment to affirmative action.

I. Communications Vice President

1. Chairs the Communications Committee.
2. Works with State Board on the development of state communications that will inform readers of and encourage their involvement in MOWPC activities;
3. Works with the Vice President for Education and Training on development and implementation of a program to advise and train local Caucuses on subject matter appropriate to the MOWPC.
4. Oversees the continued enhancement and maintenance of the MOWPC web page and make recommendations on its content; post to other social media and make recommendations for enhanced communications to all members across the state.
5. Makes recommendations to the board regarding state-of-the-art developments and ways to enhance the presence of the MOWPC.

J. Membership Vice President

1. Chair a membership committee
2. work with local caucus membership chairs and the MOWPC Board to coordinate recruitment and retention programs.
3. shall report to the State Board on activities to retain and increase membership.
4. shall assist the Development Vice President in efforts to develop new state caucuses.
5. Shall work with the Diversity chair to encourage diversity within the organization.

K. Diversity and Outreach Vice President

1. Encourage local caucuses to seek women of diverse background as members.
2. Chair a state Diversity committee composed of 2 members from each local Missouri caucus.

3. Report to the Vice President for Diversity and Outreach at NWPC and serve as requested on any NWPC diversity committee.
4. Facilitate communication of ideas and data between local, state, and national diversity committees.

ARTICLE VI. ENDORSEMENTS:

1. State Caucus endorsement policies will comply with those of NWPC. The state Caucus officers will ensure that each local Caucus complies with state and national policies for endorsing women candidates.
2. The MOWPC may endorse candidates under the following conditions:
 - A. The state board has notified each local Caucus of the proposed race in which endorsement is to be considered no less than one week prior to the endorsement
 - B. The endorsement is approved by a majority of the state board members. Proxy voting will be accepted for endorsement.

C. The State Board may choose to early endorse a previously endorsed MOWPC candidate as long as she signs a statement affirming that her positions on Reproductive Rights, ERA and access to childcare have not changed.

3. Local Caucus's may endorse under the following conditions:
 - A. A local Caucus may endorse in a race that is included in that Caucus' geographic area. Geographic area is defined as that area from which the membership of the Caucus is drawn.
 - B. A local Caucus who wishes to provide assistance to a candidate who lives outside that Caucus geographic area may endorse that candidate if there is no local Caucus in the geographic area or if the local Caucus in that area has already endorsed the candidate.
 - C. A local Caucus may endorse a candidate in a statewide race only if that candidate has already been endorsed by the MOWPC state board or if the state board has taken no action in that race within sixty days prior to the primary or sixty days prior to the general election.
 - D. A local Caucus will endorse in its local name only.

ARTICLE VII. STATE MEETINGS:

1. MOWPC shall meet at least once every 2 years to renew programs and priorities and to elect state officers. In years without a general membership meeting, the state board shall provide an annual report to the membership.
2. State Meeting:
 - A. Each member in good standing must receive sixty days written notice of a state meeting. The notice is to include time, place and day of the meeting, a request for letters of intent from those wishing to run for state office; and a request for submission of any proposals of bylaw revisions.
 - B. Letters of intent to run for state office and proposals of bylaw revisions must be submitted no less than thirty days prior to the convention.
 - C. Each local Caucus shall receive a second notice of the statewide meeting no less than fifteen days prior to the meeting which will include listings of proposed bylaw revisions and of those persons who have filed for state office elections.
 - D. A minimum delegation of six votes will be allotted to each local caucus.
 - E. A local caucus will get additional votes based on its paid membership count on a date determined by the state board. Each chapter will get an additional vote for every 25 paid members (6-34 members = 6 votes, 35-49 members = 7 votes, 200 members = 14 votes, etc.). In no instance will a Caucus have more than 20 votes.
 - F. Each local caucus will elect/select a Delegation Leader, delegates and alternative delegates to the state convention based upon those known to be attending and with the goal of achieving the diversity of the caucus. A delegate will be limited to one vote and proxy voting is prohibited. Delegates must be members in good standing as of the day of the convention.
 - G. Elected state officers that attend the convention will automatically be a credential state delegate and eligible to vote. They will not be able to vote with the local delegation. Proxy voting is prohibited.
 - H. A state meeting must have at least one representative from 60 percent of the caucuses in the state organization for voting purposes. Each representative must be current in their dues.

ARTICLE VIII: NEW CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT:

1. MOWPC will encourage development of new Caucuses in areas of the state without a local Caucus.
2. Anyone proposing to form in a community where another local Caucus already exists shall submit for approval by the state board its justification for the need for another local Caucus in that area. Local Caucus leadership will be notified and consulted before any action is taken.

3. A new Caucus shall be accepted as a local Caucus by a majority vote of the state board when all of the requirements have been satisfactorily met.
4. Challenges of local Caucuses will be decided by the state board.

ARTICLE IX: NATIONAL CONVENTION:

1. Each state Caucus will be allotted a total number of voting delegates based on its paid membership on a date determined by the NWPC.
2. Each local Caucus will be offered at least one delegate. The remaining delegates allotted to MOWCP shall be divided to local Caucuses in proportion to their percentage of paid membership.
3. Each local Caucus delegation leader or president will determine how the local Caucus votes are distributed within the delegation. If no one is present from a local Caucus, the local president must specify in writing to the state president to whom those votes will be assigned at least a week in advance of the convention. It is appropriate for the local Caucus president to decline the votes of the local Caucus; she may cast all or none.

ARTICLE X: CHALLENGES:

1. Challenges of local Caucuses will be decided by the state board.
2. If the state board denies a local Caucus request for membership, the request and letter stating the reasons for denial must be submitted to the NWPC.
3. State challenges will be heard by the NWPC.
4. Local challenges will not be voted on by the Caucuses involved.

ARTICLE XI: DISSOLUTION:

In the case of the dissolution of MOWPC, the state board shall distribute any assets after the discharge of all liabilities to NWPC.

ARTICLE XII: INDEMNIFICATION:

1. Generally, except as otherwise provided in this Article, the MOWPC shall indemnify its officers to the greatest extent permitted. To the extent that State statute requires the Board of Directors to make certain findings before the MOWPC is obligated or permitted to indemnify an officer, the MOWPC shall have no liability to any such person unless the Board, acting in good faith, makes all required findings.

2. Notification: Promptly after receiving a written threat, demand, or notice that any person will commence or has commenced an action, suit or other proceeding for which MOWPC may be obligated to indemnify a person under the Bylaws, the effected officer shall promptly give written notice to the President. A person's failure to promptly notify the MOWPC president shall only relieve the NWPC of its liability under this Article to the extent that such delay or failure materially prejudices the MOWPC's defense of such claim.
3. Not Exclusive: The indemnification provided herein shall not be exclusive of any other rights to which those seeking indemnification may be entitled under applicable law, the Bylaws or any agreement with MOWPC or a vote of the membership.

ARTICLE XIII: PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Unless otherwise indicated, the rules contained in the most current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the MOWPC in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws.

ARTICLE XIV: AMENDING BYLAWS

1. The state and local Caucuses must incorporate mandatory bylaw revisions from NWPC without a vote within six months of their passage.
2. The state board may submit bylaw changes for approval at any membership meeting of MOWPC, provided the timelines in Article VII are followed. Changes must be approved by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting. Proxy voting is prohibited.