

News Media Guild Election Rules

(As amended through August 23, 2022)

Nominations, elections, and referenda shall be conducted by a committee of three Guild members in good standing appointed by the News Media Guild Executive Committee. The Elections Committee shall conduct the nominations, elections, and referenda under the terms of the News Media Guild Bylaws and these rules.

1. **NOMINATIONS:** Notification of chapter and chapter branch action, or a petition nomination, must be received no later than midnight of the close of nominations. Such nominations shall be sent to the News Media Guild Elections Committee. Nominations shall be kept on file with the envelope attached, except when a signed petition is received as an email pdf attachment. Nominees shall signify their willingness to run in writing. Notice of nominations shall be sent to unit chairpersons for posting, within five days after nominations close. Copies of nominating petitions and notice of willingness to serve may be sent by facsimile transmission or by an email pdf attachment. The original should be sent to the Guild.

2. **BALLOTING:** An individually addressed mail ballot shall be used in all elections and referendums. Ballots shall be printed by a union printer. They shall be mailed at least four (4) weeks before the close of balloting, except that they shall be mailed no sooner than five (5) days after the close of the candidate acceptance period, and be sent in a sealed large mailing envelope stamped "ballot" on the outside. Ballots shall be mailed by the Elections Committee and shall be returned to a post office box held specifically for each election and referendum. Besides listing the candidates or questions to be voted upon, the ballot shall note at the bottom the date by which it must be received to be valid. Lists of candidates shall be alphabetical.

Included with the mail ballots mailed to the voter shall be a return envelope addressed to a News Media Guild Post Office Box, and a second inner ballot envelope that will fit in the return envelope. There shall also be included the following instructions (the content of which is part of these rules):

"After marking your vote on the enclosed ballot, fold its face in. Do not otherwise mark the ballot. Place the folded ballot in the smaller envelope and seal it. Do not sign or otherwise mark the smaller envelope containing the ballot. Place the smaller envelope containing the ballot in the addressed return envelope. Sign your name, and further print your name and address on the addressed return (outer) envelope. No ballot returned in an unsigned return envelope will be counted. No ballot returned in a return envelope without your printed name and address will be counted. Only ballots in the official return envelope in the News Media Guild Post Office Box when mail ballots are picked up for counting will be counted. This procedure is designed to assure the secrecy of your ballot. Your signature on the outer envelope is to assure that the ballot is being cast by an eligible voter. The election rules on the handling of the official return envelopes and the counting of ballots are such that there is no chance your signature can be compared with your vote."

All inner ballot envelopes shall be uniform in all respects and without distinguishing marks. A list of the names and addresses to whom ballots are mailed shall be kept.

The Elections Committee shall be provided with a copy of the mailing list in effect at the time of the mailing of ballots. One copy of the list shall be made available for the News Media Guild office staff use to handle incoming calls and other inquiries.

Ballots are to be placed in a secured area, and only members of the Elections Committee shall have access to the ballots.

At the close of balloting, the ballots shall be collected by at least two members of the Elections Committee or one member of the committee and one person designated by the committee, except that such person shall not be a candidate in an election for which there is a contest. Ballots shall then be taken to the News Media Guild office for tallying. The identity of the member, indicated on each return envelope, shall be checked against the membership list, before opening the return envelope. Every inner ballot envelope shall then be removed and separated from the return envelope. The inner ballot envelopes shall then be intermixed, and the ballots are then removed. An immediate count shall be made of the total number of ballots and such count recorded. Notice of the date of tallying shall be announced and observers shall be permitted. A notice of the winners shall be sent to the membership the next day after the tallying.

In tallying ballots, the Elections Committee shall not count any ballot where the member:

- a. fails to place the ballot in the inner ballot envelope;
- b. fails to sign the return envelope;
- c. fails to print his or her name on the return ballot envelope, unless he or she provides other objectively verifiable information on the envelope as to his or her identity; or
- d. fails to return the ballot in the official return envelope to the designated post office box by the stated deadline.

The number of unused ballots shall be noted after the original mailing of ballots and made part of the record of the election. The number of remaining ballots shall be counted at the end of the election—noting the number of additional ballots mailed after the original mailing—and shall be made of the Elections Committee record.

3. ELIGIBILITY: It is the responsibility of the members to exert their registration to vote by keeping their addresses current in the News Media Guild files. If a member in good standing does not receive a ballot, she or he shall, as provided in Section 9 of these Rules, apply directly or through her or his unit chairperson to the Elections Committee, or through the Guild office which shall notify the committee, for a ballot during the time balloting is open, and if found by the Elections Committee to have been skipped, he or she will be sent a ballot. The return ballot envelope of such a second ballot shall be stamped “privileged”.

During elections and referendums, the Elections Committee members shall visit the post office box to pick up returned envelopes for re-mailing as “privileged” ballots, under Section 9 of these Rules. Any such re-mailings shall be documented by the committee. Only an Elections Committee member shall mail out “privileged” ballots.

Ballots shall be kept for a minimum of one year, and until such time afterward as any election, the dispute shall be settled, and be available for inspection.

Election notices shall be mailed to all affected bureaus 15 days before the nominating period starts for annual officer elections. The nomination notice period may be reduced to 10

days for special elections to fill vacancies. Notice for all elections shall be by first-class mailing to members' homes not less than 15 days before the election.

Midway through the nominating period or 10 days before its expiration, whichever is later, the Elections Committee shall cause to be mailed a reminder notice including a list of offices and districts by states and department and nomination or lack of nominations to date. This notice shall be mailed even if there is no nomination. This notice shall designate nominees who have and have not accepted nominations.

Immediately upon the conclusion of the five days after nominations close, the committee shall cause to be mailed to all affected bureaus a list of nominees.

All election notices and announcements shall carry the date and year mailed. Copies of all Elections Committee mailings, including results, shall be sent to members of the Executive Committee and Representative Assembly.

The Elections Committee shall be the judge of the qualifications of candidates. The decision may be appealed to the Executive Committee.

4. MEMBERSHIP LISTS: The Administrator shall supply, on the written request of any candidate, the names by service and branch of members within the jurisdiction of the office to be filled. Candidates obtaining such lists shall be required to sign a statement acknowledging and agreeing to the following:

“This membership list is confidential and may be used only for purposes of mailing campaign literature or personal contacts for campaign purposes. The names shall not be made public in any form, nor made available to others for any purpose other than that of contacting members for campaign purposes.”

The Guild will comply with all reasonable requests of any bona fide candidate for office to distribute by mail or otherwise, at the candidate's expense, campaign literature in aid of such person's candidacy to all members in good standing, in the appropriate unit(s) or part(s) thereof. The Guild will not discriminate in favor of or against any candidate concerning the use of the lists of members. Whenever the Guild or its officers authorize the distribution to members by mail or otherwise, of campaign literature on behalf of any such candidate or on behalf of the Guild itself concerning such election, similar distribution at the request of any other bona fide candidate shall be made by the Guild, with equal treatment as to the expense of such distribution. In the event of a referendum or a ratification vote, under Sections 5 and 7 of these rules, the Guild will comply with all reasonable requests, by any Guild member(s) in good standing, at the expense of said members to distribute literature to the appropriate members, consistent with the provisions of this paragraph.

5. REFERENDA: Notice of any referendum to amend the By-laws shall include the exact language as it is to appear on the ballot. Written notice shall be mailed to members not less than 25 days before the election and by bulletin board notice mailed to branches not less than 7 days before the election.

6. SPECIAL ELECTIONS: To fill an officer vacancy, the following procedure and time limitations shall be imposed:

- a) The Executive Committee votes to call an election.
- b) Nominating period shall start 10 days after notices are mailed.
- c) Nominating period shall not be less than five days.
- d) Candidate acceptance period shall end on the fifth day after the close of nominating period. Elections Committee shall immediately mail a list of nominations to affected bureaus.
- e) Balloting shall not start later than 10 days after the candidate acceptance period and shall run for 21 days.
- f) any ballot received afternoon on the 21st day (or immediately thereafter if the 21st day falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday) of balloting will be rejected as untimely.
- g) Notice requirements shall be followed as stated in Section 3, above, of the Election Rules. Balloting procedures shall be followed as stated in Sections 2 and 9 of the Election Rules.

7. RATIFICATION OF PROPOSED COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS: Upon the direction of the Executive Committee, and notwithstanding any other provision of these rules, the Guild shall conduct collective bargaining agreement ratification votes according to one (1) of the following three methods:

1. Electronic Ratification

A. Notification.

The Elections Committee of the Guild shall send by mail and email to all members in good standing who are employed in the appropriate bargaining unit(s), to their last known addresses and e-mail addresses, notification of a ratification vote, which will be held by electronic means, concerning the acceptance or rejection of a proposed collective bargaining agreement. Said notification shall advise members of the date of the ratification vote and means for doing so.

B. Voting Process

The notification sent by mail and email will provide detailed instructions regarding the electronic voting procedures, which will be administered by a third-party vendor to ensure anonymity and security of the vote. The member will be asked to vote for or against ratification, with a “Yes” or “No” in response to the question: “Do you vote to accept the proposed Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Guild and (name(s) of the Employer(s))?”

Upon the decision of the Elections Committee, additional issues or questions including, but not limited to, strike authorizations may be included in or added to the ballot questions.

C. Tallying of Ballots.

The third-party vendor shall tally the ballots and provide the results to the Elections Committee, including information on the total ballots cast, and the results of the balloting. Notice of the result shall be sent, via email, to the membership the next

working day after the tallying, or as soon thereafter as practicable. The Guild may report by percentage the membership voting to accept or reject tentative contract agreements.

2. Mail Ratification

A. Notification.

The Elections Committee of the Guild shall mail to all members in good standing who are employed in the appropriate bargaining unit(s) at their last known home addresses notification of a ratification vote, which will be held by mail, concerning the acceptance or rejection of a proposed collective bargaining agreement. Said notification shall advise members of the dates set forth below.

B. Distribution of Ballots.

On a date to be determined by the Executive Committee, the Elections Committee of the Guild shall mail to each member a ballot, following the balloting procedures set out in Section 2 above, to be marked for or against the ratification of the “Yes” or “No” in response to the pointed question: “Do you vote to accept the proposed Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Guild and (name(s) of the Employer(s))?” Upon the decision of the Elections Committee, additional issues or questions including, but not limited to, strike authorizations may be included in or added to the ballot questions.

C. Return of Ballots.

The ballots shall be returned to the News Media Guild Elections Committee post office box. The completed ballots shall be received at said post office box no later than a date and time to have been determined by the Executive Committee.

D. Tallying of Ballots.

The ballots shall remain in the post office box until a time and date have been determined by the Executive Committee. They shall be collected by, at least, two members of the Elections Committee, or one member of the committee and one person designated by the committee, and taken to the News Media Guild office for tallying. The identity of the member, indicated on each return envelope, shall be checked against the membership list, before opening the return envelope. Every inner ballot envelope shall be removed and separated from the return envelope. The inner ballot envelopes shall then be intermixed, and the ballots are then removed. An immediate count shall be made of the total number of ballots and such count recorded. Notice of the date of tallying shall be announced and observers shall be permitted to attend the tallying. A notice of the result shall be sent to the membership the next working day after the tallying, or as soon thereafter as practicable. The Guild may report by percentage the membership voting to accept or reject tentative contract agreements.

3.. In-person Voting at Unit Meetings

A. Where deemed appropriate by the Executive Committee, ratification of contracts may be conducted by secret paper ballot at unit meetings or by roll call votes.

B. Notice of at least one (1) week will be given to all members through email. The notice shall state the time, date, and place of the meetings(s), and the form of the question to be voted upon.

C. A member of the Elections Committee, or a person appointed by the Elections Committee shall be present to supervise and conduct the balloting.

D. The Executive Committee shall designate one of the two following approval methods for contract ratifications at in-person meetings.

- 1) Secret Paper Ballot Method - A member may request an absentee ballot if he/she cannot attend the meeting. To be honored, such request must be made in writing bearing the member's signature (facsimile transmissions or emails with a pdf attachment of the absentee ballot request to the NMG office bearing the member's signature is acceptable no later than the second (2nd) day after the notice of the ratification meeting. The Elections Committee will send by 2nd-day mail, a ballot to be returned to the NMG Election Mailbox. It is the member's responsibility to return the ballot at his /her expense to the NMG elections mailbox to timely arrive to be counted. Ballots will be retrieved from the election mailbox at 3:00 p.m. on the day of the ratification meetings and will be counted simultaneously or immediately after the ratification meeting are conducted. In the event the roll call vote method is used, any validly requested and timely submitted absentee ballot will be counted at the time the roll call vote is taken.
- 2) Roll Call Method. Unit members shall be informed by email that ratification will be taken by roll call at the in-person meeting. A teleconference shall be established so that all members may vote. Minutes of the meeting shall be kept and submitted to the Guild Secretary-Treasurer. There shall be no absentee ballots for ratification votes conducted by the roll call method.

E. The Election Committee (or their designees) will be provided with a list of eligible voters, which shall reflect any absentee ballot(s) issued. No person may cast a ballot who is not on said list. Any person in attendance at the unit meeting who previously requested an absentee ballot will not be issued another ballot.

F. Voting by proxy is prohibited.

G. For paper ballot ratifications - after balloting, the Elections Committee (or their designees) shall, in view to all members, begin the tallying of the ballots and create a record of

the results. Ballots that are spoiled because the intent of the voter cannot be ascertained will not be counted, and the tellers shall report the same on a ratification report to be transmitted to the Elections Committee. The Elections Committee shall collect the tallies of the ballots from the unit meeting(s) and shall announce the combined result in the manner specified in Section 1 (D) above.

8. MONITORING:

It shall be the responsibility of the Administrator to prepare an Elections Calendar for approval by the EC at its first regular meeting each calendar year. Such calendar shall include a chronological listing of all regular elections, offices to be filled, and dates for the following: bulletin board notices, filing periods, candidate acceptance deadlines, mailing ballots, balloting, counting of ballots, etc.

In reporting election results, the Elections Committee shall report to the EC on News Media Guild compliance with election rules, including the dates on which notices and ballots were mailed and other data needed for evidence of compliance.

CAMPAIGNING: Use of the News Media Guild stationery for campaign literature is prohibited. Upon their request, one campaign statement from each qualified EC, TNG Convention, or RA candidate shall be sent with the list of candidates mailed to all branch chairpersons for bulletin board posting. Such statements of no more than 200 words shall arrive at the News Media Guild office no later than the deadline set for candidate acceptance, five days after the close of the nominating period. NMG shall print these candidate statements, if provided, in all annual elections, and special elections if possible, before the mailing of ballots. Stories should strive for equal space or balance about candidates in election stories, and solicit statements, background, and photographs from all candidates. The language in this section shall be carried in all election notices, including lists of candidates.

9. PRIVILEGED BALLOTS

1. Reports of Missing Ballots.

All reports of missing or undelivered ballots shall be made to the Guild office in writing. Members may make such reports by facsimile transmission or e-mail. To be valid, reports of missing or undelivered ballots must be received at the Guild office within 15 days of the mailing of ballots.

2. Issuance of Privileged Ballots

A privileged ballot shall be issued to members who have properly filed a report of a missing ballot.

Privileged ballots will not be issued to members who have misplaced or otherwise lost a ballot. Privileged ballots must be received by the close of balloting to be counted. At the time of tallying, the return envelope stamped “privileged” shall be opened and the inner ballot integrated with the other inner ballots to be intermixed, as provided in Section 2.

Should the Elections Committee receive both a regularly sent and privileged ballot from a member, the Elections Committee shall include the privileged ballot in the tally, and shall not tally the regularly-sent ballot, except that the Election's Committee retains the authority to investigate such matters as fraud, and therefore do not count either ballot, where appropriate. The Elections Committee shall remove the member's regularly sent ballot, segregate it from other ballots, and preserve it without opening the return envelope.