

News Media Guild Election Rules

(As amended through Feb. 27, 2025)

Nominations, elections, contract ratifications, and referenda shall be conducted by an Elections Committee of three Guild members in good standing appointed by the News Media Guild Executive Committee. The Elections Committee shall conduct the nominations, elections, contract ratifications and referenda under the terms of the News Media Guild Bylaws and these rules and in accordance with the election calendar set by the Executive Committee.

NOMINATIONS:

For all officer elections, including special elections, notice of the nominations period, along with instructions on how to submit nominations, shall be posted on the Guild's website, circulated by email to union stewards for posting on bulletin boards and for further circulation to unit members, sent by email to members, and posted on any messaging platform used officially for NMG communications with members. Such notice shall be posted for at least ten (10) days before the nominations period opens.

Nominations may be made by signed petition of any three (3) members in good standing and must be received in writing no later than midnight of the close of the nominations period. Such nominations shall be sent to the Elections Committee. Nominations shall be kept on file with the envelope attached, except when received as an email pdf or other digital image attachment. Nominees shall notify the Elections Committee of their willingness to run and serve, in writing, no later than five (5) days after the close of the nominations period. Notices of willingness to serve may be sent by email, facsimile transmission, or by an email pdf or other digital image attachment. The originals should subsequently be sent to the Guild.

For EC and RA elections, the nominations period shall be between September 10 and October 5.

On September 25, the Elections Committee shall cause to be e-mailed to union stewards a reminder notice including a list of offices and districts by states and department and nominations or lack of nominations to date. The reminder notice shall be further posted on the Guild's website, emailed to members at available addresses, and posted on any messaging platform officially used for NMG member communications. This notice shall be posted and circulated even if there is no nomination. This notice shall designate those nominees who have and have not yet accepted nominations.

Immediately upon the conclusion of the candidate acceptance period, the Elections Committee shall cause to be emailed to all union stewards, for further distribution to members and posting on the bulletin board, a list of election candidates, including those uncontested candidates declared elected by acclamation. The list of candidates shall be further posted on the Guild's website, emailed to members at available addresses, and posted on any messaging platform officially used for NMG member communications.

BALLOTING:

Balloting for union office and referenda may be conducted by U.S. mail or electronically as provided herein.

METHODS OF BALLOTING

A. Mail Balloting. An individually addressed mail ballot shall be used in all mail ballot elections and referenda. Such ballot shall also serve as the election notice, stating the dates and method of balloting and the union offices to be filled. Ballots shall be printed by a union printer.

Ballots shall be mailed no sooner than five (5) days after the close of the candidate acceptance period. For EC and RA elections, ballots shall be mailed to members by no later than October 31. Reasonable advance notice of the ballot mail-out shall be given to candidates to permit them to observe the process.

Balloting shall start not sooner than 15 days after the ballots and election notices are mailed by the U.S. Postal Service to members' last known home addresses. To be counted, ballots in EC and RA elections must be received in the designated Post Office Box by no later than November 20.

Ballots shall be mailed in a sealed large mailing envelope stamped "ballot" on the outside. Ballots shall be mailed by the Elections Committee or by a third party contractor, as approved by the Executive Committee and under the auspices of the Elections Committee, and shall be returned to a post office box held specifically for such election or 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 returned and received to be counted. 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. All inner ballot envelopes shall be uniform in all respects and without distinguishing marks.

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 it 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. 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.

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.”

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 News Media Guild office staff use to handle incoming calls and other inquiries. Ballots are to be placed in a secured, locked area, and only members of the Elections Committee shall have access to the ballots.

At the close of balloting, the ballots shall be collected from the designated Post Office Box 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. Candidates shall be given advance notice of the ballot collection, to enable them to observe the process.

Ballots shall then be taken to the News Media Guild office or another appropriate area as designated by the Election Committee for tallying. Notice of the tallying shall be announced in advance to the candidates and observers shall be permitted.

In tallying ballots, 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.

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 their name on the return ballot envelope, unless they provide other objectively verifiable information on the envelope as to their 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 part of the Elections Committee record.

A notice of the vote counts, as certified by the Election Committee, shall be posted on the Guild website and sent via email to stewards for posting on bulletin board and for further distribution to the membership, and shall be posted on any messaging platform officially used for NMG member communications, no later than the next day after the tallying.

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

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.

B. Electronic Voting. The Executive Committee may authorize a third-party election balloting provider to conduct a secure, electronic secret ballot election.

(i) The provider shall follow all U.S. Department of Labor and other governing election requirements and guidelines.

(ii) The notice of election for electronic voting (with instructions on how and when to vote) shall be sent by U.S. mail to members' last known home address not less than 15 days prior to the commencement of the balloting period, but no sooner than five (5) days after the close of the candidate acceptance period. For EC and RA elections, the election ballots and credentials must be sent electronically to members no later than October 31.

(iii) The electronic balloting period shall run for a minimum of 14 days after the ballots/credentials are sent. For EC and RA elections, the electronic ballots must be received by no later than November 20 in order to be counted. The Executive Committee shall specify a deadline and procedure for members to request an electronic ballot if they report not receiving an electronic ballot/credentials.

(iv) The Elections Committee shall supervise the balloting in the same manner as for mail ballot elections and shall ensure the rights of candidates to observe the mail out of election notices, the balloting process, and the tallying of ballots, in accordance with the processes made available by the third-party election ballot provider.

2. **ELIGIBILITY:** It is the responsibility of NMG members to exercise their right to vote by keeping their addresses (both home addresses and email addresses) current in the News Media Guild files. If a member in good standing does not receive a ballot, they shall, as provided in Section 9 of these Rules, apply directly or through their unit chairperson to the Elections Committee, or through the Guild office which shall notify the Committee, for a privileged ballot during the balloting period. The Elections Committee shall examine the circumstances and may authorize the sending of a privileged ballot as appropriate. The return ballot envelope of such a second ballot shall be stamped "privileged".

During the balloting period, Elections Committee members (or a Committee member and a non-candidate individual designated by the Committee) shall periodically visit the designated Post Office Box to pick up undelivered returned envelopes for address correction and re-mailing. Any such re-mailings shall be documented by the Committee. Only an Elections Committee member may authorize the remailing of election materials to corrected addresses or the mail out "privileged" ballots. Similar processes shall be followed with regard to electronic balloting.

The Elections Committee shall give reasonable advance notice to the candidates of the above processes to allow observers.

The Elections Committee shall be the judge of the qualifications and eligibility of candidates and voters. Its decisions may be appealed to the Executive Committee.

3. **MEMBERSHIP LISTS:** The Administrator shall supply, one time during any election and on the written request of any candidate, the names by service and branch, and unit 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 4 and 6 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.

4. **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 e-mailed to members not less than twenty five (25) days before the referendum balloting begins, emailed to unit leaders and stewards not less than seven (7) days before the referendum balloting for posting on bulletin boards. Notice shall also be posted on the Guild website and on any messaging, platform officially used for NMG member communications. At the direction of the E.C., the notice of the referendum may be combined with the referendum ballot.

5. **SPECIAL ELECTIONS:** To fill an officer vacancy, by mail ballot or electronic ballot, the following procedures and time limitations shall apply:
- a) The Executive Committee shall call a special election and set a nominations period and special election timeline.
 - b) A notice of the nominations period, along with the interim vacancies to be filled, the remaining interim term of each vacant office, and instructions on how to submit nominations, shall be posted on the Guild's website, circulated by email to union stewards for posting on bulletin boards and further circulation to unit members, emailed to affected unit members at available addresses, and posted on any messaging platform used officially for NMG communications with members. Such notice shall be posted for at least ten (10) before the nominations period opens. The nominations period shall not be less than ten (10) days. Midway through the nominations period or five (5) days before its expiration, whichever is later, the Elections Committee shall cause to be posted and circulated a reminder notice including a list of vacancies and nominations or lack of nominations to date. This notice shall be posted and circulated even if there is no nomination. This notice shall designate nominees who have and have not accepted nominations.
 - c) The candidate acceptance period shall end on the fifth day after the close of the nominations

period. The Elections Committee shall immediately thereafter e-mail a list of candidates to affected bureaus, voting units, stewards and members. The list of candidates shall also be posted on the NMG website and on any messaging platform officially used to communicate with NMG members. The notice shall include any uncontested candidates declared elected by acclamation by the Elections Committee.

- d) Special election notices shall be mailed to all members in both mail ballot and electronic ballot special elections, at their last known home address, no later than 15 days before the balloting period begins.
- e) Individually addressed mail ballots shall be used in all special mail ballot elections. Such ballot shall also serve as the election notice, stating the dates and method of balloting, the candidates and the interim union offices to be filled. Ballots shall be printed by a union printer. They shall be mailed no sooner than five (5) days after the close of the candidate acceptance period. The balloting period shall be a minimum of fourteen (14) days. The ballots shall be sent in a sealed large mailing envelope stamped "ballot" on the outside. Ballots shall be mailed by the Elections Committee or by a third party contractor, as approved by the Executive Committee and under the auspices of the Elections Committee, and shall be returned to a designated Post Office Box held specifically for such election. Besides listing the candidates in alphabetical order, the ballot shall note at the bottom the date by which it must be returned and received to be counted. Reasonable advance notice of ballot mailing shall be given to candidates to permit them to observe the process.
- f) In the case of an electronic special election, election notices shall be mailed to members' last known home addresses a minimum of fifteen (15) days before the voting period begins. The voting period shall be a minimum of fourteen (14) days. The Executive Committee shall specify a deadline and procedure for members to request an electronic ballot if they report not receiving an electronic ballot/credentials.

6. 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 the following method of electronic ratification, and in accordance with the voting calendar set by the Executive Committee.

1. Electronic Ratification

A. Notification.

The Elections Committee shall send by email to all members in good standing who are employed in the appropriate bargaining unit(s), to their last known e-mail addresses, notice of a ratification vote to be held by electronic means concerning the acceptance or rejection of a proposed collective bargaining agreement. The notice of electronic voting shall be e-mailed not less than fifteen (15) days prior to the start of the balloting period. The notice shall advise members of the dates of the balloting period and the procedures for voting.

B. Voting Process

The email notice will provide detailed instructions regarding the electronic voting

procedures, which will be administered by a third-party vendor, under the auspices of the Elections Committee, to ensure anonymity and security of the vote. The members 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, under the auspices of the Elections Committee, 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 results 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.

D. The Election Committee (or its designees) will be provided with a list of eligible voters in good standing. No person may cast a ballot who is not on said list unless the Election Committee determines that a correction must be made to the list.

E. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot is prohibited.

7. 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, nominations periods, candidate acceptance deadlines, mailing election notices, mailing ballots, balloting period, counting of ballots, etc.

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

8. CAMPAIGNING: Use of the News Media Guild stationery or logo for campaign literature is prohibited. Upon their request, one campaign statement from each qualified EC, TNG Sector Conference/CWA Convention, or RA candidate shall be sent with the list of candidates mailed to all branch chairpersons and unit chairs for bulletin board posting and email circulation. Such statements of no more than 200 words shall arrive at the News Media Guild office no later five days after the close of the nominations period. NMG shall publish on its website these candidate statements, if provided, in all annual elections, and special elections, if possible, before the mailing of ballots. In election stories about candidates, NMG shall strive for equal space or balance and shall solicit statements, background, and photographs from all candidates. The language in this section shall be circulated to 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, or the issuance of balloting credentials, in the event of electronic balloting.

2. Issuance of Privileged Ballots

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

Privileged mail ballots will not be issued to members who have misplaced or otherwise lost a ballot. Privileged ballots must be received in the Elections Committee Post Office Box (or in the case of electronic balloting, received in the designated electronic ballot box) 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 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.

With electronic mail balloting, the third party contractor shall address any issues regarding voter non-receipt of electronic ballot/voting credentials, under the auspices of the Elections Committee, and in a manner that maximizes enfranchisement but ensures that no voter casts more than one vote.

10. OBSERVERS

a. Upon notice of an officer election, each candidate has the right to name an observer to the elections process and make them known in advance to the Elections Committee. Such observers shall be permitted to carry out the functions enumerated below. For electronic elections, a named observer shall be provided access per the observer policy of the third-party election provider.

b. Observers shall be permitted to have the following functions: to observe mail ballot preparation and mail outs; to observe the post office pick up of election materials; to observe the actual vote count and challenge any ballots they deem improper; to submit, in writing, a sworn statement of any evidence of actions that the candidates they represent believe would prejudice the outcome of the election or evidence of irregularities the candidates believe should lead to the overturning of

the election results, followed by a rerun. The Elections Committee may allow other observer functions, as appropriate and upon notice to candidates and named observers.

SAMPLE ELECTION CALENDAR

1. EC approves elections calendar for regular, special, ratification, or referenda votes.
2. Election Committee reviews calendar.
3. Nomination Notice is sent, if applicable.
4. Reminder Nomination Notice is sent, if applicable.
5. Referenda Text is sent, if applicable.
6. Ratification notice is sent, if applicable.
7. Elections Committee determines election candidates and whether an officer election is to be conducted. If no contested election, certifies winner(s) by acclamation.
8. Candidates notified of elections calendar, right to observe, campaigning rules.
9. Election notice mailed (if mail election, with ballots)
10. Election conducted. Elections Committee decides questions.
11. Votes counted.
12. Elections Committee reports outcome to Executive Committee.