



NJSNA Election Policy

1. Eligible Voters

Eligible voters are individuals who are members of NJSNA for at least a full 2 months dated from the 1st of the month prior to the month the vote is held and they are up to date on their dues. (*For example, the election is May 1st - the individual must be a member of NJSNA continuously since March 1st of the same year. If the election is May 15th the individual must be a member of NJSNA continuously since March 1st of the same year*). Eligible voters must continue to meet all the requirements of membership including being up to date on their dues and current registered nurse licensure on the day that they vote.

2. Election Challenges

a. Timing

An election must be challenged in writing to the Election Committee. All challenges must be filed from the date of nominations are posted until 14 calendar days following the closing of the vote. Failure to file within these timeframes constitutes a waiver of the right to challenge.

b. Grounds for Challenging Election

A challenge may be filed in writing by any NJSNA member eligible to vote. The challenge shall specify the nature of the complaint, including any violation of NJSNA bylaws, procedures or the law, and explain the basis for why the member believes the outcome of the election was affected by the complained of conduct.

The grounds for challenging an election may be based on:

1. Ineligible voters;
 2. Procedures required for conducting the election were not followed;
 3. Procedures or actions directly related to the election applied during the election were unauthorized or contrary to applicable law;
 4. The NJSNA bylaws and policies pertaining to the election were not followed;
- AND,
5. The action had a material impact on the outcome of the election.

c. Process for addressing the election challenge

All written challenges submitted by members eligible to vote are investigated by the 5 member Election Committee appointed by the President. In the event the President is the subject of an election challenge, the Election Committee shall be appointed by the President Elect. The Election Committee shall be comprised of three members of the NJSNA Board of Directors and two region presidents. The NJSNA President shall designate the chair. The committee may hold a hearing if they deem it necessary. The Election Committee will present their decision and recommendations within 30 days after the filing of the challenge to the NJSNA BOD. Decisions made by the Committee members may be appealed to the full NJSNA BOD by filing written notice of such appeal within 10 days after the decision is issued. Pending the decision of the NJSNA BOD, the decision of the Election Review Committee will be in effect. The decision of the NJSNA BOD is final.

- If the election is challenged while in progress, it will continue unless a decision is reached by the NJSNA BOD based on the Election Committee recommendations to stop the election and declare it void.
- If challenged after it is completed, the officers chosen during the election being challenged will take office and remain in office until a decision on the challenge is reached OR until a new vote has been completed and new officers are selected.

Those who are defeated in the new election will step down from office on the date the official announcement is made and the winner will take his/her position.

- Challenging electronic elections: Absent proof of a technical or mechanical irregularity, it shall be assumed the electronic vote count is correct.

If the NJSNA BOD finds that there are sufficient grounds to hold a new election it will set a date for the election and post in the next edition of the *New Jersey Nurse*.

d. Grounds for challenging a voter

A member who desires to challenge the right of another member or members to vote should do so by presenting the challenge to the President. This should be done before the vote is cast. The burden of proof is on the challenged voter to show that he or she is a qualified voter once a challenge is cast. Only members in good standing (dues are up-to-date and hold a current nursing license) will be allowed to vote.

The grounds for challenging a voter are:

- Not being a member in good standing
- Using NJSNA, region funds or money, *or anything of value* donated by his/her employer to finance their campaign
- Acting on behalf of a competing organization to the detriment of NJSNA
- Violating the ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses

e. Grounds for challenging a candidate

Any NJSNA member eligible to vote may contest a candidate's fitness for office based on:

- Not being a member in good standing
- Using NJSNA, region funds or money donated by his/her employer *or anything of value* to finance their campaign
- Acting on behalf of a competing organization to the detriment of NJSNA
- Violating the ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses

3. *Candidates for office*

- a. Any member of NJSNA eligible to vote may submit names of a candidate for office, if the person is qualified and willing to serve.
- b. The Committee on Nominations shall prepare a slate consisting of at least two nominees for each office to be filled.
- c. The Nominations Committee shall publish the slate in the *New Jersey Nurse* or on the web site before the election period.
- d. The biography of each nominee shall be included with the ballot.
- e. If the name of a member of the Committee on Nominations is submitted as a suggested candidate for the ballot of this Association with the permission of that member, said member shall resign from the Nominations Committee.
- f. The candidates must be members in good standing when they are approved for the slate or when they are nominated by themselves or others for office. (This includes write-in candidates.)
- g. The request for nominations must include the offices to be filled, the terms of office, how to nominate and eligibility requirements for nominees.
 - For an ANA position, e.g. delegate to the ANA Membership Assembly, the candidate must be a dual member.
 - Any changes to nomination requirements must be published in the *New Jersey Nurse* and posted on-line at www.njsna.org and posted on-line prior to the first meeting of the Nominations Committee.
- h. If a candidate drops membership at any time from the time the slate is fixed through their time in office, they have 5 business days to correct/restore their membership once notified of the lapse by NJSNA. If not, they will not be eligible for the office prior to the election and their name will be removed from the ballot. Once on the ballot they will

remain, however, votes for the candidate will not be counted. If an elected candidate drops his/her membership after the election the position, will be considered a vacancy to be filled according to NJSNA bylaws.

4. Campaign Practices

- a. No monies received by NJSNA and/or any NJSNA Region from dues, assessments or similar levies *or anything of value*, and no monies or services of a candidate's or a candidate's employer shall be contributed or applied to promote a candidate for NJSNA office. An individual may use personal money or donations (excluding NJSNA or regional money and employer raised funds *or anything of value*) for notices and factual statement of issues not involving the candidates.
- b. All candidates shall be treated fairly, openly, and equitably. Information made available by the Election Committee to one candidate must be made available to all candidates.
- c. Candidates shall refrain from negative campaigning and personal attacks on other candidates or their supporters.
- d. Candidates shall not use the NJSNA website and/or its social media sites; including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter and YouTube for campaigning. An e-blast may be sent by the candidates to NJSNA members for a fee set by the NJSNA CEO and payable to NJSNA and designated to the operations account. All election postings will be monitored by the Nominations Committee. The Committee reserves the right to remove any postings. The Association shall keep the Nominations Committee informed of such postings, as appropriate.
- e. NJSNA staff is not to package or distribute campaign literature. NJSNA staff will not wear promotional materials for any candidates.
- f. Campaign promotional materials, including shopping or tote bags, may be distributed by candidates and their supporters.
- g. Any internal NJSNA policies governing campaign practices and election procedures are to be published in advance of the annual meeting in the *New Jersey Nurse* and online.
- h. Candidates shall ensure that any campaign material issued by the candidate or any supporter contains the statement "The content of this campaign material has been reviewed and approved by Candidate's Name."
- i. Candidates shall not use the NJSNA logo and/or mission statement on campaign materials. Candidates are free to use the convention logo in campaign materials; such use does not imply endorsement by NJSNA.
- j. Candidates may make a statement about their candidacy during candidates' events during the annual meeting. Making such statements during NJSNA sponsored meetings, hearings or educational programming is not permissible.
- k. NJSNA is not responsible for designing or disseminating campaign marketing information for individual candidates or slates of candidates.
- l. Once candidates' have been certified by the Nominations Committee, as requested, the Association will:
 - Post Candidate Statements and photos if available on the NJSNA website and in the *New Jersey Nurse*.
 - At the annual meeting, candidates or persons promoting the interest of candidates, will not distribute literature or other campaign material in the meeting rooms or in manner which block access to the meeting rooms, or place campaign materials on counters or writing tables in the registration area.
 - Each candidate shall be provided with a copy of this Policy and a copy will be published in the *New Jersey Nurse* and on line at www.njsna.org

5. Miscellaneous Issues

- a. Elections shall take place in a secret electronic ballot. Members may request a paper ballot up to one week prior to the first day of voting. All paper ballots must be postmarked no later than the last day of voting. After that it will not be recognized as valid and not counted. A member who requests a paper ballot will be locked out of electronic voting.

- b. The preliminary slate is to be posted in the *New Jersey Nurse* and on www.njsna.org prior to the annual meeting or the vote, whichever is later. Nominations of eligible candidates may be accepted during the annual meeting.
- c. Voting shall not be limited to nominees on the ballot. Voters may write in on the official ballot, the names of other eligible candidates.
- d. Votes shall be counted and results reported to the membership via *New Jersey Nurse* and NJSNA website.
- e. A member who is not on the ballot shall be appointed by the Board of Directors to oversee the election process. This person will report the results to the members (NJSNA Bylaw Article X, Section 4)
- f. Spoiled paper ballots are ballots which are not readable due to damage, have more than one candidate marked for a single position or are not returned in the appropriate envelope to verify the voter.
 - a. An entire ballot will not be thrown out if only one position is in question.
 - b. If a voter fails to vote for a candidate in a position, the Appointed Observers must draw a line through that office and sign so no one can fill in the vote at a later date.
 - c. Spoiled ballots must be totaled and the Appointed Observers must sign off on any spoiled paper ballots
- g. When a voter requests both a paper ballot and votes electronically, the paper ballot will supersede the electronic vote.
- h. A plurality vote shall constitute an election. In case of a tie, the choice shall be determined by lot and conducted by the Appointed Observers.
- h. Terms of office shall be from January 1—December 31.
- i. All ballots and other records shall be preserved for 5 years.

Approved: NJSNA Board of Directors, August 16, 2011

Approved: Terms of office updated: 10/2014

Updated: Nominations Committee, March 2, 2016

Approved: NJSNA Board of Directors, May 24, 2016