

Conference Standing Rules Guidelines

(Revised June 1, 2022)

Standing Rules are related to the administration of a group or organization and are supplementary to the *Constitution and Bylaws* of the organization (United Methodist Women dba United Women in Faith). They are of a semi-permanent nature. Standing Rules cannot conflict with the *Constitution and Bylaws*. If there is a conflict between the Constitution and Bylaws and the Standing Rules, the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws prevail.

Changes and additions to the Standing Rules are to be approved by the voting members of the conference or district organization, typically at the Annual Meeting. Standing rules may be adopted by a majority vote and may be amended by a two-thirds vote without previous notice or by a majority vote with previous notice. (*Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*)

General suggestions for your Standing Rules

- Design for your individual conference or district.
- Be brief. Do not reproduce what is already in the *Constitution and Bylaws*.
- Do not include items that you are likely to want to change often. That type of information is better contained in a set of procedures.
- Avoid planning your programs through the Standing Rules
- Keep language positive rather than restrictive (as if someone is being punished).

Examples of introductory statements

Heading: Standing Rules of _____ Conference or _____ District, United Methodist Women dba United Women in Faith.

Date of adoption and revision: Adopted with revision (list date), by the Conference Organization of _____ Conference United Women in Faith.

Preface: The United Women in Faith of _____ Conference will function in accordance with the *Constitution and Bylaws* for the conference organization of the United Methodist Women dba as United Women in Faith as adopted by the United Women in Faith national organization.

These Standing Rules are supplementary thereto.

Suggested topics to include in Standing Rules. Every item applies to every context.

- Nominations, Elections, and Appointive Procedures
- Committees (those in addition to any named in *Constitution and Bylaws*)
- Elected/Appointed Leaders (those in addition to those named in the *Constitution and Bylaws*)
- Meetings
- Funds
- Minutes, Records, Files, Directory, Designated Mailings, Publicity
- Resources
- Equipment and Property Owned
- Relationships to Institutions
- Distinctive Legal Requirements
- Provisions for amending the Standing Rules

Content suggestion by topic

Nominations, Elections, and Appointive Procedures

1. Define method of voting at Annual Meeting: Acclamation, show of hands, roll call, ballot, etc., including voting in a virtual/hybrid setting.
2. Indicate who can vote at the Annual Meeting.
3. Define circumstances and process when abstention of vote would be warranted.
4. Determine method and timeline for slate of nominees to be presented to conference or district Executive Committee and then to local units.
5. Provide an inclusive slate (age, race, marital status, employment, geographical, etc.).
6. Stipulate if a nominee must sign a statement agreeing to uphold PURPOSE of United Methodist Women dba United Women in Faith (§1902, *The Book of Discipline 2016*).
7. Specify date newly elected officers assume office (January 1 recommended).
8. Recommend date for transfer of files from outgoing to incoming leaders.
9. Define term and tenure for additional elected leaders.
10. Outline process for filling vacancies.
11. List appointive leaders.
 - Purpose of appointed position

- Who appoints
 - Who approves
 - Define term and tenure
12. Establish nominating procedures for the election of three voting delegates to the jurisdiction quadrennial meeting

Committees

For any committee required by the *Constitution and Bylaws* list any specifics that are in addition to those things spelled out in the Bylaws. (Do not repeat information already in the Bylaws.)

- Additional members or resource people other than those named in the *Constitution and Bylaws*.
- Determine if additional members, ex-officio members have voice and/or vote.
- Require each committee to determine its procedural guidelines.
- Make provision for a presiding officer if president is absent.
- Determine if the Committee on Nominations will attend Executive Committee meetings and if so, how often (members do not have to vote; only the chair can vote).
- Authorize president to organize a conference call or virtual meeting.
- Determine what constitutes a “mail ballot” in accordance with the laws of your state.

Committee on Nominations

- Determine the composition and number of the committee between 5 to 11 members.
- Establish procedures for specific nominations as required by the *Constitution and Bylaws*.
- Describe provisions for members of the Committee on Nominations visiting district meetings and events to observe potential leadership.

List any Additional Committees

If the conference/district constitutes an additional committee, there should be a clear definition of its (1) task, (2) function, and (3) membership.

Elected/Appointed Leaders

Do not list each officer’s/leader’s functions as detailed in the *Constitution and Bylaws*. What are the expectations beyond those stipulated in the Bylaws? The following are examples of things to be considered for inclusion in Standing Rules.

- Specific information for each leader—additional duties or responsibilities and additional committee memberships.

Meetings

- For those meetings designated by Bylaws (Annual Meeting, Mission u) note the time of year and location (if, for example, determined to be rotated among districts).
- Determine the process for deciding if a meeting will be virtual/remote (including phone and/or video), in person, or hybrid.
- Determine representation to groups such as annual conference boards and agencies as required, and other United Women in Faith related ecumenical groups and at whose expense.
- Define pattern of attendance for the Assembly and at whose expense.

Funds

- Establish method for determining amount of Administration and Membership Development Funds; (e. g. on annual recommendation of the finance committee).
- Set audit date and procedure for conference and district audits.
- Establish date for turning over books to newly elected treasurer.
- Determine voucher procedures (i.e., time limits for turning in expense accounts).
- Determine procedure for determining rate for travel expenses. For example, assign the Finance committee the responsibility for determining reimbursement rates and allowable expenses.
- Determine who provides expenses if a conference officer is invited to visit a local unit.
- Determine honoraria and Love Gifts (criteria and amounts).
- Determine any Mission Recognition (criteria and amounts).
- Establish policy for use of unused district/conference funds at the end of the year (i.e., keeping small balance, remitting remainder to the United Women in Faith national office).
- Define any accumulative accounts (amount per year).
 - Assembly
 - Jurisdiction Quadrennial Meeting
 - Other events
- Provide pattern for jurisdiction funding.
 - Define procedure/policy for advancing funds.
 - Specify what events conference pays expenses for and for whom.
 - Describe restrictions on solicitation of funds.

- Allow for unexpected conference expenses fund.

Minutes, Directory, Designated Mailings, Records

- Minutes (Mandatory in every conference)
 - Where and how long to be kept
 - Provision for proof reading or auditing minutes before distribution
 - Timeline for distribution
 - To whom distributed
- Permanent records and files
 - Place for storing
 - What is to be kept (i.e., minutes, conference directories, items of historical significance, financial records)
 - Who is responsible? (Bylaws state that secretary serve as custodian of all records and official papers.)
- Optional
 - Directory/Annual Report (at minimum provide a list of elected leaders in districts and conferences, kept by secretary). Standing Rules might indicate:
 - Format of the directory and/or annual report
 - What is to be included
 - Who is responsible for preparation
 - Time for publication and distribution
 - To whom to be distributed
 - Communications with districts and or local groups – unless noted elsewhere indicate:
 - Who is responsible?
 - What is included?
 - Time schedule?

Courtesies

- Define provisions for hospitality for special guests at meetings.
- Determine expressions of sympathy, congratulations, Gifts in Memory, etc.

Resources

- It is suggested that the practices of your conference in relation to the sale of resources at conference and district events be spelled out.
- Determine a method for authorization of distribution of materials at conference and district events and describe any limitations (e.g., are flyers, brochures, exhibits to go through the planning committee, who cannot distribute materials).
- It should include a statement on the use and integrity of the United Women in Faith logo. The logo is only to be used to identify the organization's work, communications, and programs. It may not be used by individuals for personal purposes, nor is it to be used for commercial purposes in connection with the sale of good or services, with or without the expectation of profit, by organizations other than United Women in Faith.
- Determine who will receive Mission Resource Center mailing service.
- As needed, describe plans for recognizing program achievements.

Equipment and Property Owned

List equipment owned and location where it is used/stored.

- Determine who will keep an inventory list of all equipment.
- In those conferences where the organization of United Methodist Women (and those dba United Women in Faith) holds title to property, Standing Rules may need to contain descriptions of property, where the legal papers (i.e., deeds) are located.
- If funds are held by the conference that require decision-making as to spending, the process for making such decisions should be outlined, including how to handle wills, bequests, etc. Legal requirements should appear here as well as in a section on distinctive legal requirements.

Relationship to Institutions

If a national mission institution is within the boundary of the conference the following guideline is suggested

- Description, including historical connection
- Purpose
- How is United Methodist Women dba United Women in Faith related and what is the procedure for determining representation on the board of the national mission institution? Who pays the expenses of representatives?

Distinctive Legal Requirements

Check the legal requirements in the state, such as the need to be an incorporated body, or registered to do business. Record such requirements and registrations in your Standing Rules.

Provisions for Changes in Standing Rules

Example: The Standing Rules are procedural statements and are supplementary to the current *Constitution and Bylaws* of the Organization (state year). No standing rule is in order that conflicts with those documents. The Standing Rules are designed to ensure continuity of procedures. They may be amended at any meeting of the conference (district) organization by a majority vote of the voting members of the conference (district) organization when 30 days previous notice has been given, or when no previous notice has been given, by a two-thirds vote of the voting members of the conference (district) organization.