



State (Member-at-Large or MAL) Unit Guidelines

A State (Member-at-Large or MAL) Unit is an established entity of the state board and is answerable to it. The official name of a State Unit may be chosen at the time a unit is authorized but is usually “League of Women Voters of Michigan, _____ chapter” with the blank filled in by the county, city, or other jurisdictional identifying description.

A State Unit may be started by initiative of the state board, request of a member at large, or request of a local League.

A State Unit is usually established by the following steps:

1. The idea for forming a new League entity arises through citizen, or member, inquiry, by board initiative or by the development of a State Geographical Unit.
2. The initial informational process may be through a local citizen or member receiving and sharing information about the League, or by the state board identifying the community as a target area and working to distribute information about LWVMI. At the time of initial inquiry or initial identification of a community by the board, a LWVMI coach will be appointed by the state board, usually through the Membership Leadership Development (MLD) coaching team. The State Unit coach will be the resource, motivator, and monitor for the initial effort to establish a State Unit.
3. Once a nucleus of interested people residing in the area is identified, an informational meeting is organized by the State Unit coach and the interested people. An informational meeting:
 - a. introduces the League including the non-partisan nature of the League and the parameters for taking action in the name of the League,
 - b. assesses the level of interest,
 - c. plans an organizational meeting, and
 - d. recruits members for the new group, as well as planning how to recruit members after the informational meeting.
4. An organizational meeting is held when at least 8 members in the jurisdictional area have been obtained. An organizational meeting
 - a. selects a chair, a vice-chair, a secretary, and a treasurer & someone to handle the membership function
 - b. should adopt non-partisan & DEI policies for the unit, or these may be adopted at a subsequent member meeting before the unit is officially recognized.
5. Finances:



State (Member-at-Large or MAL) Unit Guidelines

- a. The fiscal year of the unit must be the same as that of LWVMI (July 1 to June 30). LWVMI has financial oversight responsibility. Once a unit is recognized, the state board will furnish the State Unit a startup fund consisting of \$50.
 - b. New State Units will collect their own dues through the Membership Portal as documented in the Portal Administrative Guide.
 - c. Existing State Units (as of January 2026) may choose whether to collect their dues or have LWVMI continue to collect them. If they choose to have LWVMI collect their dues, the following happens.
 - i. LWVMI will send 20% of each dues payment to the State Unit upon receipt of the year-end financial report and a budget for the ensuing fiscal year (July 1 to June 30). These payments will reflect the fees taken by LWVUS in the dues collection process.
 - ii. The State Unit must collect dues, payable to LWVMI, and must send checks and membership information in a timely manner to LWVMI.
 - iii. The State Unit submits its year-end financial report to the LWVMI VP Membership and Treasurer by August 1st.
6. Recognition of a State Unit by the state board may occur at any time but will happen only if:
- a. The unit has at least 10 members.
 - b. The unit has adopted a non-partisan policy & DEI policy
 - c. The unit has identified an appropriate banking institution or alternative to hold funds of the unit and procedures for accounting for monies received and expended (not until the State Unit is recognized by the LWVMI State Board).
 - d. The unit has developed bylaws.
 - e. Recognition is recommended by the State Unit coach and approved by the MLD coaching team.
7. At the time of recognition, the state board will confirm the continuation of the State Unit coach. That person will be someone familiar with League procedures and policies and may or may not be a resident of the jurisdiction of the State Unit but will be available to the unit and the unit's leadership via Zoom or phone.
8. State Units may distribute state and nationally published League voter service materials. Permission from the state board is necessary for State Units to publish local



State (Member-at-Large or MAL) Unit Guidelines

voter service material or to conduct candidate meetings; please submit your requests to the VP - Voter Service, who will make the decision or consult with the board.

9. Action in the name of LWV may be taken only with permission of the state board, usually through their State Unit coach. For public facing items like videos and community events, consultation with their State Unit coach is required. Members of State Units are encouraged to take action as individuals on League positions.
10. A State Unit may disband upon request of a majority of the members of the unit, or the determination of the LWVMI board. All funds held by the disbanded State Unit will be paid to LWVMI.

Document History:

Adopted August 2001

Revised August 2003

Revised November 2005

Revised 14 October 2017

Revisions approved by State Board February 14, 2026

LWVMI BOARD POLICIES

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy

Note: this policy is shared by the national and state Leagues, and all local Leagues are encouraged to use the same.

Discrimination or harassment of any kind will not be accepted within the League, including but not limited to race, socio-economic status, age, ability status, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, gender identity, or marital status. The League is committed to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, access, and belonging for all people. The League is an organization that respects and values the richness of our community and our members. The collective sum of our individual differences and life experiences represents not only our culture, but our reputation and the organization's mission and achievements as well.

Confirmed by LWVMI Board of Directors: 4-8-24



_____ **Member at Large Unit**

NONPARTISAN POLICY

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influences public policy through education and advocacy. We take action on public policy positions established through member agreement. We do not support or oppose any political party or candidate.

The League of Women Voters recognizes that the League experience uniquely equips members for public life at many different levels and encourages members to use their knowledge and abilities on an individual basis. Non-board members are encouraged to participate fully in partisan activities.

1. Board members shall not run for partisan elective office. Should a board member resign to run for political office, a carefully worded public notice announcing the resignation, avoiding the appearance of endorsing the candidacy, will be released.
2. The MAL Unit Chair and the Voter Service Chairperson and Voter Guide Editor (and visible positions) shall not participate in electioneering (including, but not limited to, public endorsement, making campaign donations, posting yard signs). Other board members may do so.
3. The MAL Unit Chair and the Voter Service Chairperson and Voter Guide Editor (and visible positions) shall not serve in any position in a political party or local caucus.
4. A board member may serve on any public board, commission, committee or coalition. However, that board member does not represent the League unless officially designated as a League representative by the League board.
5. The political activities of a spouse or relative of a board member are considered separate and distinct from the activities of that board member.
6. A board member may not speak publicly against a League position.

Adopted _____

Signed _____ Date _____