

**BYLAWS OF
MIDDLESEX COUNTY NOW-NJ**

As amended on May 9, 2011

SECTION 1. Name. The name of this chapter shall be the Middlesex County NOW-NJ Chapter of the National Organization for Women, Inc. (NOW). It shall exist and operate as a unit thereof.

SECTION 2. Purpose. The purpose of the Middlesex County NOW New Jersey Chapter shall be to take action to enable women to participate fully in American society *now*, exercising all the privileges and responsibilities thereof in truly equal partnership with men. This purpose includes, but is not limited to, equal rights and responsibilities in all aspects of citizenship, public service, employment, politics, education and family life, and it includes freedom from discrimination because of sex, marital status, parenthood, lifestyle, sexual orientation, age, national origin, creed, race, religion or socioeconomic status.

SECTION 3. Policy. This chapter shall not take action which is contrary to the National, Regional, or State bylaws or policy. In those cases where there is disagreement with or lack of interest in these policies, the chapter shall refrain from any action or comment external to the organization. Where there are no established policies, the chapter may express itself on any subject which is directly related to the purposes of NOW and will seek the support of National, Regional, and State NOW. If conflicts exist between these policies, National's policies will prevail.

SECTION 4. Membership. Any person who subscribes to NOW's purposes shall be eligible to become a member, and upon payment (or special waiver) of National, State and Chapter dues, and self-selection of the Middlesex County Chapter shall be enrolled as a member of this chapter. No person who subscribes to NOW's purposes shall be excluded from membership, segregated, or otherwise discriminated against within the organization.

SECTION 5. Structure. The structure shall be as follows:

- (a) Chapter Officers shall include a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer and a Campus Liaison Officer.
- (b) These officers shall constitute the Executive Board.
- (c) Representation on the State Board shall consist of a delegate and alternates.
- (d) The chapter shall provide for task forces and/or committees.
- (e) All members in good standing shall constitute the Committee of the Whole.

SECTION 6. Duties of Officers.

- (a) The *President* shall be chief executive officer of the chapter, shall carry out the wishes of the Executive Board and the Committee of the Whole, shall be *ex-officio* a member of all committees and task forces except the Nominating Committee, shall be responsible for the newsletter, shall be responsible for maintaining the chapter website, shall endeavor to follow up and contact anyone who has attended a meeting without joining, shall follow up on non-renewals, shall make prospective members feel welcome, shall organize outreach to recruit new members for the chapter, shall be responsible for orientation and assimilation of new members, shall be a delegate to the Board of Directors of NOW-NJ, shall perform liaison with other organizations and otherwise represent the Committee of the Whole in contacts with individuals and other groups. The President may delegate these duties as s/he deems appropriate.
- (b) The *Vice-President*, in the absence or inability of the President, shall perform the duties of the President, shall keep in close contact with the President, shall assist the President in any way possible, and shall carry out any duties assigned by the President, as needed.
- (c) The *Secretary* shall conduct official chapter correspondence not specifically assigned to others, shall ensure that the President has a copy of all such correspondence, shall take minutes at chapter meetings, shall maintain a file of all official chapter correspondence, and shall send changes in officers to the National Office
- (d) The *Treasurer* shall receive all funds of the chapter, shall disperse these funds by check in accordance with the budget, shall submit written monthly statements for the minutes shall make reports to the Committee of the Whole, to the Executive Board, and to National in the manner set up by the National Board, shall send new membership fees to the National and State Office within 30 days, shall keep complete records of the chapter's financial matters, shall keep records of the

membership of the chapter, shall process incoming requests and applications for membership, shall prepare a list of paid-up members, shall send changes in members' addresses to the National Office, and shall deliver a summary report at the annual meeting.

- (e) The *Campus Liaison Officer* shall conduct outreach to undergraduate and graduate students in Middlesex County, shall present proposed collaboration plans to Middlesex County NOW members for consideration, shall be the "point person" for both Middlesex County NOW and the student organizations when collaborating with students, shall attend any event that Middlesex County NOW co-sponsors with a student organization (in the Campus Outreach Coordinator's absence, another Middlesex County NOW member will attend), shall handle logistics of any collaboration with a student organization, and shall present outcomes of collaborations to Middlesex County NOW members on a regular basis.
- (f) All officers shall attend at least 80% of the general meetings and shall not miss more than three consecutive meetings within a calendar year without due cause.

SECTION 7. Executive Board. Where action is necessary between meetings of the Committee of the Whole, the Executive Board shall act on behalf of the Committee of the Whole, provided that the action is consistent with existing NOW policy. The Executive Board shall report all of its actions and decisions to the Committee of the Whole at the next general meeting. Attempts should be made to reach each officer of the Executive Board for her/his decision. Decisions of the Executive Board shall be made by majority vote of the entire Board.

SECTION 8. The NOW-NJ Delegate.

- (a) The NOW-NJ Delegate shall attend the meetings of the NOW-NJ Board, shall represent the interests of the Committee of the Whole, shall report on meetings to the chapter and its newsletter and direct specific information to appropriate persons, and shall notify the alternate delegate when unable to attend.
- (b) The alternate delegate shall assume the duties of the delegate when the delegate is unable to attend the NOW-NJ Board meeting.
- (c) The Delegate and alternates shall attend at least 80% of the general meetings and shall not miss more than three consecutive meetings without due cause within a calendar year.

SECTION 9. Task Forces and Committees.

- (a) Task Forces and Committees are convened by a majority vote of the Committee of the Whole in order to provide specialized knowledge and activities for the chapter in a specific area of interest or issue that will enable women to participate fully in American society *now*, exercising all the privileges and responsibilities thereof in truly equal partnership with men.
- (b) A statement of purpose, plan of action for the calendar year or balance thereof, and budget requirements for the same period shall be submitted by the Task Force or Committee for approval by the Committee of the Whole by the first business meeting in December of each year. Task Forces or Committees convened during the year are required to submit these items within 30 days of convening
- (c) Only chapter members in good standing shall be eligible to convene, chair, or serve on any Task Force or Committee.
- (d) The Task Force or Committee Chairperson(s) or selected representative, other than the President, shall give an oral report of Task Force or Committee activities at each general meeting. A written summary should be submitted to the newsletter monthly.
- (e) A Task Force or Committee shall be considered for review by the chapter for dissolution if they are inactive for three consecutive months. Inactivity is defined as not holding meeting and/or submitting oral and written reports. Task Forces and Committees are also dissolved upon completion of their specific area of intent or issue.
- (f) All Task Force or Committee records or materials are the property of the chapter and must be returned to the chapter President within 15 days of dissolution. Upon the resignation of any member having possession of Task Force or Committee records, those records must be turned over to the Task Force or Committee within 15 days.

SECTION 10. Committee of the Whole. The Committee of the Whole shall manage the affairs and control the funds and property of the chapter. A quorum of the Committee of the Whole shall be

comprised of five members, including at least two officers. It shall approve the budget, supervise the conduct of the chapter activities and the implementation of general policies and directives. The Committee of the Whole shall meet at monthly meetings or upon the call of the President or 20% of the members. The ultimate authority for chapter action shall reside in the Committee of the Whole, which shall have the authority to overrule the decision of any subunit of the chapter.

SECTION 11. General Meeting. There shall be at least 5 general meetings open to the public each year. The annual meeting of Middlesex County NOW will be held in December.

SECTION 12. Finances.

- (a) The fiscal year shall be January 1 to December 31.
- (b) Any member whose chapter, state and national dues are 90 days in arrears, shall be considered not in good standing and shall after notice be dropped from the rolls and have no privileges of membership, but may be reinstated upon application, receipt and payment of current dues.
- (c) All checks must be signed by the Treasurer, or in the absence of the Treasurer, the President.
- (d) An annual budget shall be proposed at the start of the fiscal year by the Executive Board subject to the approval of the Committee of the Whole.
- (e) The treasury books shall be audited at the end of each fiscal year by a committee of at least 3 members to be designated by the Committee of the Whole one month prior to the annual meeting.

SECTION 13. Nominations. A nominating committee consisting of at least three members shall be formed. The members shall be elected at a meeting of the Committee of the Whole at least two months in advance of the annual meeting. Thirty days notice of elections and nominations shall be given so that every chapter member has a reasonable opportunity to run for office and vote. The nominating committee shall present candidates for office, in writing, to the membership 30 days prior to the annual meeting. Nominations may also be made from the floor.

SECTION 14. Elections.

- (a) The President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Campus Liaison Officer, NOW-NJ Delegate and Alternates shall be elected at the annual meeting by majority vote of the Committee of the Whole, and shall hold office for one year or until their successors take office.
- (b) An officer or NOW-NJ Delegate shall be eligible for no more than five consecutive terms in the same office.
- (c) All Task Force or Committee chairperson(s) must be recommended by their task force or committee and confirmed by the Committee of the Whole at the annual meeting.
- (d) Task Force or Committee chairperson(s) can hold the same office for no more than five consecutive one-year terms

SECTION 15. Special Elections.

- (a) In circumstances requiring the replacement of a chapter officer or NOW-NJ delegate/alternate, a special election must be held at the general meeting after the Committee of the Whole has been notified of the vacancy.
- (b) In circumstances requiring the replacement of a Task Force or Committee chairperson(s), the Task Force or Committee must recommend a replacement to the Committee of the Whole within 30 days of notification of the vacancy.

SECTION 16. Resignations. Any chapter officer, NOW-NJ delegate/alternate, Task Force or Committee chair who wishes to resign must submit written notification to the official chapter address 30 days prior to the effective date of resignation. The Committee of the Whole must be informed of this resignation at the next general meeting.

SECTION 17. Grievances, Revocation of Membership, and Recall of Officers, NOW-NJ Delegate/Alternate, Task Force or Committee Chair

Persons who publicly act contrary to NOW's national, state or local stated purposes and present themselves as NOW chapter spokespersons may be sanctioned in the following manner: officers, the

NOW-NJ delegate/alternate, Task Force or Committee Chair may be recalled, membership may be revoked, or members may be censured if the following conditions have been met:

- (a) Written notification of the grievance must be sent by the aggrieved party to the alleged aggravator and to every member of the Executive Board.
- (b) After receipt of written notification, any alleged aggravator shall be afforded 30 days in which to respond and request a hearing and/or investigation from the Executive Board.
- (c) If the Executive Board by two-thirds vote recommends revocation, censure, or recall, it shall send to every member of the Committee of the Whole written notification of the charges, results of the investigation, and its recommendations; and shall set a date for voting.
- (d) Members must be notified at least thirty (30) days prior to the vote.
- (e) Revocation, censure or recall shall be by 2/3 vote of the Committee of the Whole.
- (f) Any revocation, censure, or recall decision made by the chapter may be appealed through the NOW-NJ grievance procedure. The chapter President will provide copies of the grievance procedure upon request

SECTION 18. Procedure. Except as herein provided, all proceedings of this chapter shall be guided by *Robert's Rules of Order, newly Revised*. For more information, please visit <http://robertsrules.com>.

SECTION 19. Additional Provisions. The chapter may, at any meeting of the Committee of the Whole, adopt implementing procedures not inconsistent with Sections 1 to 18 of the bylaws or with the bylaws of the national organization.

SECTION 20. Amendments. Sections 1 through 19 of these bylaws may be amended or repealed by a two-thirds vote of the membership present at any duly constituted regular meeting, provided that written notice of such proposed change shall be e-mailed or mailed at least 30 days prior to the meeting at which such change shall be submitted to vote.