



## **LWVSFC General Policies (Revised 2.19.19)**

### **Purpose and Policy (Bylaws, Article II, Sections 1 and 2)**

The purpose of the League of Women Voters of Santa Fe County (LWVSFC) shall be to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government. The LWVSFC may take action on selected local government measures and policies in the public interest in conformity with the League of Women Voters of the United States. It shall not support or oppose any political party or candidate.

### **Membership**

1. Any person who subscribes to the purpose and policy of the League of Women Voters shall be eligible for membership.
2. Persons at least 16 years of age who join the League of Women Voters of Santa Fe County shall be voting members of the local, state and national Leagues (LWVSFC, LWVNM and LWVUS). All others who join the League shall be associate members.
3. The LWVSFC membership year is September 1 through August 31. New members joining April through August will have their membership recognized through the following calendar year, thus receiving a 13-17 month membership. Members who fail to pay their dues within two months after they become payable shall be dropped from the membership rolls.
4. The Membership Directory is solely for the use of LWVSFC members. It should be used for League business only.
5. The LWVSFC does not discriminate and works to diversify its membership.

### **Nonpartisan and Political Activity Policy**

1. The LWVSFC Board is responsible for maintaining the organization's nonpartisanship.
2. LWVSFC Officers and Directors who publicly represent the League may not take an active, visible role in a campaign for a political candidate, nor can they publicly support or oppose a political party or ballot issue (unless they are officially speaking for the LWVSFC). Officers and Directors subject to this prohibition would include the President(s), Vice President(s), and Voter Services Chair(s).

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3. All other members, including Board members, may engage in the following activities: signing nominating petitions, serving as election officials, serving as clerical volunteers for candidates for office. Members participating in such political activities must make it clear that they are participating as individuals, not as League representatives.
4. LWVSFC members participating in League-sponsored activities and meetings must not reveal their personal partisanship. Members in leadership roles, such as Board members and Committee Chairs, are responsible for ensuring the nonpartisanship of the event.
5. No petitions and/or campaign materials are allowed at LWVSFC-sponsored meetings and activities unless they are approved in advance by the Board.
6. LWVSFC members may serve on governmental commissions and/or advisory committees at their own discretion. If the appointment is League-related, the appointee should be fully aware of all League positions that relate to the commission's or committee's responsibilities.
7. Board members who wish to engage in political activities beyond those listed above should first subject those activities to their own scrutiny, and, in case of question, should discuss them with the Board.
8. Any Board member who plans to run for elected office should pro forma submit his/her resignation to the Board. The Board should consider the visibility of the Board position in deciding whether or not to accept the resignation.
9. Any candidate for elective office who continues his/her Board membership must not use his/her Board position in campaign appearances or literature.
10. LWVSFC members who are candidates for public office should not participate in the planning of Voter Service activities.
11. There should be no special notice to the membership of the candidacy of a LWVSFC member, either in the VOTER or by Constant Contact.

### **Communications Policy**

1. The LWVSFC speaks with one voice and supports current positions in effect at the national, state, and local levels of the League even though individuals or Board members may have different views. The Board of the LWVSFC is responsible for designating an official spokesperson, who can either speak for the LWVSFC herself/himself or designate an alternative spokesperson.
2. All requests for statements or spokespersons should be referred to the official LWVSFC spokesperson and/or Board with no prior commitment for fulfilling the requests.

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3. Before speaking on behalf of the LWVSFC, members must request the approval of the official LWVSFC spokesperson and/or Board, who will review the content of the proposed presentation to ensure that League principles and positions are not compromised.
4. Once the League (local, state, or national) takes a position on an issue, members may not identify themselves as LWVSFC members in publicly expressing an opinion that is in opposition to the League position.
5. In advocating for or against non-League issues, members must not appear to be representing the LWVSFC; they must identify their interest as personal.
6. The Board has approved the following statements for use by members who wish to make a statement on behalf of the LWVSFC in public gatherings. No prior approval is needed:
  - *"Keep our democracy fit...exercise your right to vote."*
  - *"The League of Women Voters of Santa Fe County urges you to remember that your vote truly counts. A trip to the polls is an investment in our democracy."*
7. All materials distributed under the League name (e.g., press releases, official letters, grant applications, public statements) must have prior approval, either by the Board or the Board's designee. Routine correspondence such as emails or letters regarding logistics, requests for information, or thank-you notes does not require approval.
8. The LWVSFC designated spokesperson and/or the Board can approve standard language to be used in recurring correspondence, such as membership solicitations, Voters Guide copy, Press Releases, the VOTER, etc.
9. Authors of official correspondence/documents must submit copies to the Office Manager for archiving and possible inclusion on the LWVSFC website, in social media communications, etc.
10. Electronic LWVSFC documents should be stored on the LWVSFC's computer and backed-up using an appropriate method. Access to these stored documents should be made available to Officers, Directors, and Committee Chairs, and to the general membership, if requested.
11. All official communications and publications will bear the LWVSFC name, mailing address, phone and website.

### **Collaborations, Partnerships, Co-sponsorships, Etc.**

1. Collaborating to effect change is part of the League's vision of what makes democracy work. In that spirit, the LWVSFC shall seek to participate in community collaborations that are consistent with League principles, positions, and policies. The collaboration may be short or long-term and shall be limited to issue-related advocacy, education of the public, candidate

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forums, and/or facilitation. Community forums and candidate forums must be conducted according to League rules.

2. Collaborations shall be approved by the Board and a LWVSFC member must be approved by the Board as a designated representative. The representative may serve in a leadership position in the collaborative but may publicly speak only to League approved positions on any issue(s) within the collaborative. The representative must be available to participate in required work of the collaborative, actively engage LWVSFC membership in collaboration related activities, and report regularly to the Board on collaboration activity.

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