

League of Women Voters of Lake Forest/Lake Bluff Area Political (Nonpartisan/Conflict of Interest) Activity Policy

Adopted April 7, 2020

I. Statement of Policy

The League of Women Voters of Lake Forest/Lake Bluff Area ("League") is a nonpartisan political organization. The League's purpose is to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government and to influence public policy through education and advocacy. The League may act on governmental measures and policies in the public interest. However, the League does not support or oppose any party or candidate. The League Board (Officers and Directors) and members should not only be allowed, but also encouraged, to seek and accept elective or appointive office in government and responsible positions in the private sector. With this objective in mind, the League adopts the following policy:

II. Rationale

The League must be nonpartisan so that:

Its position on an issue can be readily accepted as unbiased and independent;

It will not be obligated to any political party or faction;

It can seek solutions in the public interest based on fresh inquiry and objective study;

Its voter service work will have wide public acceptance and trust; and

Its membership will appeal to individuals of varying political views.

III. Guidelines for General Membership

The League recognizes the importance political parties play in our government and encourages its members to work in the party and for the candidates and issues of their choice. Accordingly, all members, other than the Board President and Vice President of Voter Services, are encouraged to participate in any political party or governmental activity, provided they act as individuals and not in the name of the League.

When a member is acting in the name of the League, that member shall refrain from any partisan display or action of party affiliation or electioneering. For example, at voter registration events or candidate forums or debates sponsored by the League of Women Voters, an individual member may not participate in a visible role as a volunteer if said member has a close personal, family or professional relationship with a candidate that

would create a perception of a partisan bias, or is a campaign volunteer for a candidate participating in the forum or debate. It is the responsibility of each League member to disclose any such relationship when asked to assist at a forum or debate. The Board President and the Vice President of Voter Services shall determine whether the volunteer so disclosing the relationship with a candidate may participate in the League sponsored event. In the absence of a consensus decision, the Board shall make the determination by majority vote.

IV. Guidelines for Board Members

a) Public Office, Boards, Commissions, Committees

The Board President and Vice President of Voter Services shall not run for or hold an elected public office during their respective League term of office. Any Board member seeking public office must notify the Board President who in turn shall notify the Board and seek input. In the case of Board members other than the Board President and Vice President of Voter Services, the Board President will have an informal discussion with the member to determine if a conflict exists. If the Board President determines there is a conflict, the member may appeal the Board President's decision to the Board, in which case the decision by 2/3 majority of the Board is final. Following notice to the Board, the Board President and Board members may accept appointment to national, state or local commissions, boards or committees where such service is not in conflict with League program.

b) Support of Candidates for Public Office

Individual Board members may support candidates of their choice, if they do so as individuals and not in the name of the League. Because of the nature of their positions, the Board President and Vice President of Voter Services may not publicly (including but not limited to social media) support any candidate during their respective League term of office. At candidate debates/forums members should abide by the rules of the event. At any League sponsored events, no Board member may wear or display political materials supporting or opposing any candidate.

c) Public Issues

Board members are free on their own behalf to sign petitions or otherwise speak publicly for or against an issue. The Board President may not speak in conflict with a League position at any League meeting, public meeting or event, or on social media. During the study of an issue and before a League position has been reached, Board members speaking in the name of the League must refrain from making any public statements for or against the issue. After the League position has been reached, the Board President, or a designated representative, may speak or testify publicly at meetings or hearings only in

agreement with the League position. In the interest of projecting the League's non-partisan nature to the public, no petitions may be circulated during any League meetings or League sponsored events unless petitions are in support of League positions. No petitions of any kind may be circulated at candidate debates.

d) Employment

The Board shall evaluate and resolve any questions of conflicts of interest arising from a Board member's employment. Members of the League shall refrain from the use of logos or other references related to their job, their employer, their profession, or their affiliation with any other entity in any League related communications unless such reference is pertinent to the substance of an e-mail or other communication, or is contained in the member's e-mail address.

V. Interpretation

Every League member has a responsibility to be sensitive to community perception of League bias or League candidate support. A potential conflict also exists when there is an appearance that a member's actions may be influenced by a competing interest or duty. Anyone making decisions on behalf of the League should always act based on the best interests of the organization; and no individual associated with the League should use their position for personal and/or business benefit, for the benefit of friends or relatives, or to further any outside interest or personal agenda. This standard applies to all transactions and decisions, whether or not covered by the detailed policies and procedures listed above. Every member is entrusted with seeing that the spirit of these policies is followed and should bring concerns to the attention of the Board President. The Board President may seek the counsel of the Board to determine appropriate action, but ultimately, the President is responsible for seeing these policies are implemented.

VI. Annual Review

A Nonpartisan Political Policy Committee, appointed by the Board President, shall be responsible for the annual review of this policy prior to the League's Annual Meeting. Following such review, the Board shall approve the revised policy. A revised copy of this policy shall be posted on the LWV- LF/LB Area website and a link shall be emailed to members.