

# **By Laws and Convention Rules of the Libertarian Party of Connecticut**

By Laws of the Libertarian Party of Connecticut

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Convention Rules of the Libertarian Party of Connecticut

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## ***Article I AIMS AND PURPOSE***

## **Section 1 Basic Aims**

1. To further individual freedom.
2. To oppose the initiation of force against individuals.
3. To support each individual's option to defend his freedom in the manner of his choosing.
4. To increase the choices available to the individual both for the exercise and the defense of his own freedom.
5. To improve our understanding of our environment so we may better direct our efforts for freedom with responsibility and justice in an orderly society.
6. To seek out, study and promote methods by which individuals may better deal with each other freely on the basis of exchanging values.

## **Section 2 Purpose**

The purpose of the Party is to move Connecticut in a Libertarian direction by electing Libertarian candidates to public office, promoting individual liberty and engaging in libertarian activism.

## ***Article II PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY***

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Party in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws, any relevant statutes, and any special rules of order the Party may adopt.

## ***Article III MEMBERSHIP***

### **Section 1 Membership Categories**

There shall be two classes of membership, Regular Member and Associate Member. An individual may become an Associate Member of the Party by fulfilling the following requirements:

1. Making application
2. Agreement with the Aims and Purpose of Article I
3. Signing the following statement “I hereby certify that I do not believe in or advocate the initiation of force to achieve political, social, or economic goals.”

To be a Regular Member, an individual must also be a resident of the State of Connecticut and pay the appropriate dues.

### **Section 2 Dues**

Each Member shall be subject to annual dues as established by a two-thirds vote of the State Central Committee.

### **Section 3 Categories of Membership**

Each Regular Member shall be eligible to serve as a State Central Committee Member or as a Judicial Committee Member, and have all rights of Associate Membership. Categories of Members for dues purposes shall be established or modified by a two-thirds vote of the State Central Committee. Each Associate Member shall be eligible to be appointed to committees or to join and represent ad hoc committees or organizations, and to be appointed as a Delegate to the LP National Convention.

### **Section 4 Resignation and Suspension**

1. Any Regular Member or Associate Member may resign at any time providing he has delivered any Party property in his possession to an officer of the Party.
2. The State Central Committee may suspend a Member for failure to maintain all of the qualifications of membership by a vote of two-thirds of the full committee.
3. Notification of suspension shall be delivered to the suspended member who shall then have fifteen days to appeal to the Secretary. If no appeal is filed the membership shall be terminated.
4. Appeal of suspension shall be delivered by the Secretary to the Judicial Committee who shall hold a hearing concerning the suspension. Following the hearing, the Judicial Committee shall rule to either terminate or to continue the member in good standing, but, until the ruling to terminate is delivered to the Secretary, the member shall continue as a member of the Party.

## **Section 5 Roster**

A roster of members and their classes and categories shall be maintained by the Secretary. The official roster shall be published containing only those member's names who have given their written consent to be included.

## **Section 6 Derivative Membership**

Membership in the party shall not serve to automatically enroll anyone in any other group including the national Libertarian Party without his prior and continuing consent as well as the consent of that group.

## **Section 7 Party Property**

All work done under the auspices of the LPCT, whether or not making use of Party resources and materials, becomes the property of the LPCT and must be surrendered upon resignation, suspension, or termination, although the Party may, at the discretion of the SCC, transfer said ownership at any time.

## ***Article IV ORGANIZATION***

### **Section 1 State Central Committee**

The State Central Committee shall be vested with the management of the affairs of the Party. It shall have a maximum size of 40 Regular Members.

It shall:

1. Establish rules for its own operation.
2. Meet at least quarterly (every 3 months).
3. Select officers annually and be empowered to terminate any officer for cause.
4. Administer the affairs of the Party.
5. Establish committees or recognize an existing group as a committee for particular purposes.
6. Recognize and cooperate with Libertarian ad hoc organizations.
7. Accept resignations, select successors and fill any vacancies in offices or committees, and the State Central Committee.
8. Select delegates to any convention or meeting unless a Party Convention or Special Party Meeting makes such selection.

### **Section 2 Officers**

The Officers of the Party shall be a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer, except that the State Central Committee may divide the responsibilities of any office and adjust the titles accordingly. Officers shall be selected by the newly formed SCC at each convention. The term of office shall begin at the close of the Annual Convention and run until the close of the next Annual Convention, or until their successors are elected. Any vacancies between conventions may be filled by the SCC, except that in the case of termination of the Chair, the Vice-Chairman shall be immediately vested in this office, to be reviewed by the SCC at the next regular SCC meeting. Should the Chairman be terminated, and no Vice Chairman is currently serving, this office will devolve next to the Secretary, then Treasurer, then other SCC members by seniority, until reviewed at the next SCC meeting. Unless the SCC acts to change them, the basic responsibilities of office shall be:

1. Chairman: To preside over all party business and to represent the Party in all public appearances, unless delegated by the Chairman or the SCC to another individual.
2. Vice-Chairman: To assist in the duties of the Chairman, and to perform those duties in the absence of the Chairman, or when so instructed by the Chairman.
3. Secretary: To maintain meeting minutes and provide those minutes as instructed, and to assist the Chairman by providing Parliamentary advice and guidance.
4. Treasurer: To maintain the finances and assets of the party and to make all required financial reports.

### **Section 3 Judicial Committee**

The Judicial Committee shall consist of 6 Members, with two chosen at each annual convention for a three year term. Members shall not also be members of the State Central Committee or its committees but may serve on a Platform Committee or a Bylaws Committee. It shall establish rules for its own operation. It shall hold hearings and render decisions on any official action of the Party, officers, or a committee, whenever requested by three or more Members. The Judicial Committee formed under these Bylaws shall also act as the official Judicial Committee of local Town Committees unless a Town Committee has specific provisions otherwise in its Bylaws. If such action is found to be in conflict with any part of the Bylaws, such action shall be declared null and void. To stand for election to the Judicial Committee, a person must have been a Member of the LPCT for at least 6 years, and be a current member, or have been a member for at least 2 years and have been a member of the National LP or an LP affiliate in a different State or Country for at least 4 years, not counting any period of overlap.

### **Section 4 Committees**

Committees may be established for particular functions by either the State Central Committee or the Party at an Annual Convention or Special Meeting. Such committees shall be answerable to the body which established it. All committees, except those established by the By Laws, shall be automatically dissolved upon adjournment of the Annual Convention unless specifically renewed.

### **Section 5 Ad Hoc Organizations**

Libertarian ad hoc organizations are recognized as a valuable function and may be organized on a regional basis or for any other purpose consistent with these By Laws providing there is full and free exchange of such ideas, discussions and projects with the State Central Committee. To receive mailings each organization shall appoint a person for liaison and register with the Secretary.

### **Section 6 Spokesmen**

Spokesmen for the Party shall be designated by the State Central Committee with such limitations as deemed appropriate. Such designation shall in no way serve to limit any individual's or group's freedom of expression providing they properly identify themselves and do not imply Party endorsement.

## **Section 7 Representation**

Representation by any member on behalf of any other member shall be valid only if there is a written, signed agreement between them. Any member may represent the principles, ideas or concepts of Libertarianism from his own point of view, but shall not purport to represent any other person or group without the required consent of each and every person so represented. The selection of a member to perform an official function for the Party shall not serve to relieve him in any way from the requirements of this section.

## **Section 8 Campaigns**

Political campaigns may be operated under section 4 or 5 above, at the discretion of the candidates and the State Central Committee. It is intended that each candidate will organize, finance and operate his own campaign.

## **Section 9 Town Committees**

The State Central Committee shall have the authority to approve the By Laws of a single Town Committee in each town in the state. Once established, that Town Committee shall have the sole authority to nominate candidates for any municipal office or state legislative office when the jurisdiction of such district lies entirely within the geographic borders of the town that town committee serves.

Local affiliates may also select officers to carry out functions according to their own needs and discretion, including, but by no means limited to, the purposes outlined in Sections 1 and 2 of Article I established by these bylaws. Only those registered to vote as Libertarians in the town in question shall be members of that Libertarian Town Committee. Officers in a Town Committee must be dues paying members in the Libertarian Party of Connecticut.

If a local affiliate's bylaws do not provide for a parliamentary procedure, Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall be the default procedure, and these committees may reserve the right to suspend these rules upon a 2/3 vote in any proceeding.

## ***Article V SELECTIONS***

### **Section 1 State Central Committee**

The State Central Committee shall be selected at the Annual Convention. The State Central Committee members must be current Regular Members of the Libertarian Party, and have been such for a minimum of one year continuously prior to the date of the Convention. The Convention shall vote to establish the number of seats to be filled on the Committee. The Convention Rules may authorize specified forms of preferential voting, and a mechanism through which, if no candidate receives a majority, the candidate receiving the fewest votes is removed from consideration. Any member of the State Central Committee who is absent for 3 consecutive meetings is automatically removed as a member of the State Central Committee.

### **Section 2 Officers**

Officers shall be selected by the State Central Committee from amongst its membership, during each Annual Convention, and shall take office at the close of the Annual Convention. If there is more than one nominee for each office, the selection shall be made on a graded system in which each Committeeman rates each nominee for his ability in that office on a scale of 0 to 10. The nominee receiving the highest total tally shall be declared selected, subject to any further requirements established by the Committee in its Rules.

### **Section 3 Judicial Committee**

The Judicial Committee members shall be selected at the Annual Convention to fill any vacancies.

### **Section 4 Committees**

Committees shall have members selected by the body which established the committee in accordance with that body's rules.

### **Section 5 Ad Hoc Organizations**

Ad hoc organizations shall select their members according to such rules as they may establish.

## **Section 6 Eligibility Requirements**

No one shall serve as a member of the State Central Committee, an officer of the Libertarian Party of Connecticut, or an officer of a local affiliate unless he or she is registered to vote as a Libertarian in the State of Connecticut.

## ***Article VI MEETINGS***

### **Section 1 Conventions**

Annual Conventions shall be called by the State Central Committee. Special Party Meetings may be called by the Chairman, the State Central Committee or by 10% of the Members. Such Special Party Meetings may undertake any function authorized for conventions under the provisions of these By Laws.

### **Section 2 State Central Committee**

State Central Committee meetings shall be held on a regular basis with all Members advised of the time, place, and agenda. SCC meetings may be conducted in any manner chosen by the SCC, to include physical meetings, telephone conference, and online formats. It is the responsibility of the presiding officer to ensure that a quorum is present, and to sufficiently ensure the identity of each participant. It is preferred that, when a physical meeting is held, arrangements be made to allow participation by non-SCC members via distance methods. The Convention Rules may authorize the appointment of a committee to to approve Convention minutes.

### **Section 3 Notice**

Notice of all meetings shall be posted on the LPCT website or provided to each Member at least two weeks prior to the meeting except that notice of Conventions and Special Party Meetings shall be provided to each member at least thirty days in advance. No commitments shall be made on any matter not specifically included in the notice. The SCC will determine the method of notification.

### **Section 4 Attendance Records**

The Secretary shall maintain a record of attendance of all meetings.

### **Section 5 Nominations**

During the nominating process self nominations shall take precedence and seconding is not required.

### **Section 6 Observers**

Observers (nonmembers) may attend any Party Meeting or convention, but they may participate in discussions only if requested of the chair in advance and with the permission of the members present. Observers may be excluded from any committee meetings if one third of its members so votes.

## **Section 7 Quorums**

A quorum for the State Central Committee shall be one half of its membership, not counting vacancies. A quorum for a Party Convention or Special Party Meeting shall be one half the delegates, including those represented by proxy, or  $\frac{2}{3}$  the delegates present at the opening of the Convention, whichever is greater. A quorum for the Judicial Committee shall be two-thirds of its membership.

## ***Article VII ELECTRONIC MAIL BALLOTS***

The State Central Committee may transact business by electronic mail. The chair or secretary shall send out electronic mail ballots on any question submitted by the chair or co-sponsored by at least 1/5 of the members of the State Central Committee. The period for voting on a question shall remain open for ten days, unless all members except the Chair have cast votes, or have stated an intention to abstain or be absent during the voting period, by electronic mail to the entire board or committee. If the Chair has not yet voted at the time of the closing of an email ballot, the Chair shall have the opportunity to vote if said vote might be decisive. The outcome of each motion shall be announced promptly and recorded in the minutes of the next meeting, and displayed, with each member's vote identified, on the LPCT website. The number of votes required for passage of any motion shall be the same as that required during a meeting. Motions dispensed through electronic mail ballots satisfy the requirement of giving previous notice.

## ***Article VIII FINANCES***

### **Section 1 Dues**

Annual dues will be applied to the operation of general Party administration expenses at the discretion of the State Central Committee.

### **Section 2 Activities**

Each Committee, Ad hoc organization or Campaign shall be responsible for financing its own operation.

### **Section 3 Notices**

Notice of Special Party meetings shall be financed by the treasury only if requested by the Chairman, the State Central Committee or by 20% of the membership. If such meeting is requested by less than 20% of the Members, they shall finance the mailing themselves.

### **Section 4 Authorization**

Appropriations and other financial transactions shall be in accordance with the rules established by the State Central Committee.

## ***Article IX STATE LAW***

At such time as the Party qualifies to be placed on the Connecticut ballot for all ballot positions without petitioning, or for major party status in the state of Connecticut, the bylaws shall be reviewed for conformity with the provisions of election laws. To carry this out, a bylaws committee shall be formed by the SCC, and a Special Special Party Meeting shall be held. This meeting will conform to all the rules governing Special Party Meetings, except that in order to be a delegate to the Special Special Party Meeting, a person must have been a member of the LPCT or of the national Libertarian Party for a minimum of one year, continuously, prior to the date of the meeting, and must have remained a member until the date of the meeting.

## ***Article X SECESSION***

The Party may withdraw affiliation with the National Libertarian Party by resolution and by amending Article I, Section 2 of the By Laws, in accordance with Article XI Amendments

## ***Article XI DISSOLUTION***

The Party may dissolve itself upon unanimous recommendation of the State Central Committee and a three quarter vote to dissolve at a Convention or Special Party Meeting. In the event of the approval of a dissolution, the State Central Committee shall wind up the affairs of the party and shall distribute all of the assets to other organizations which uphold the principles upon which this Party is formed.

## ***Article XII AMENDMENTS***

The Bylaws may be amended at a convention by a vote of  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the delegates in session upon recommendation by the SCC or a special committee created for the purpose at a previous convention or special meeting, or by a motion from the floor, except that it shall take unanimous consent to change Article I, Section 1, Basic Aims. In the event that the national Libertarian Party should change their "Principles," such change must be ratified by the SCC or the delegates in convention to be effective.

# **CONVENTION RULES**

## **Section 1 Offices**

The incumbent Party Chairman and Secretary shall be chairman and secretary respectively of the Convention.

## **Section 2 Agenda**

The proposed agenda shall be established by the State Central Committee and included in the notification of the convention. It shall consist of at least the following:

1. Reading or Distribution of Approved Minutes of Previous Convention
2. Treasurer's Report
3. Determination of the number of seats on the State Central Committee to be filled.
4. Selection of State Central Committee members.
5. Selection of Judicial Committee members (2 for a 3 year term plus any vacancies to be filled).

## **Section 3 Delegates**

Only delegates may vote on convention business. To be a delegate, a person must have been a Regular Member continuously from 30 days prior to the state of the convention until the day the convention finishes. If a person's Regular Membership expires during the convention, then that person will lose their delegate status. A person must further register with the Secretary of the Convention as a delegate, either in advance or at the convention, and must pay any fee as the SCC shall establish.

## **Section 4 Voting**

Nominations for the State Central Committee and the Judicial Committee shall be from the floor.

The election shall be conducted in the following manner:

- a. Each delegate may cast a ballot with a vote for either none-of-the-above or one vote per candidate for any number of candidates. Every ballot with a vote for none-of-the-above or one or more candidates is counted as one ballot cast. A vote for none-of-the-above shall be ignored if the ballot also includes a vote for any other candidate. The top candidates receiving a majority vote of the ballots cast, up to the number of seats designated to be filled, shall be elected. Tie votes affecting the outcome shall be decided by lot. In the event that this procedure does not elect sufficient members to fill the number of seats designated to be filled, the candidate receiving the fewest votes, and all elected candidates, shall be removed from consideration and another round of balloting held to fill the remaining seats, until all seats designated to be filled have been elected.
- b. Nominations for each candidate may be made by any delegate present on the floor, provided he or she has the candidate's permission. Nominating speeches shall be limited to 5 minutes, split in any

manner between the delegate nominating the candidate, the candidate, and any additional speakers desired by the candidate.

## **Section 5 Amendments**

The By Laws may be amended one section at a time in accordance with the requirements of Article XI: Amendments.

## **Section 6 Platform**

The Platform may be amended at a convention by a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote upon recommendation from the SCC or a special committee established for this purpose, or by motion from the floor. Any proposals except those from the floor will be considered one plank at a time and will receive an updown vote, with amendments considered only if the initial updown vote fails.

## **Section 7 Challenges**

Any action of the Convention may be challenged in writing during the Convention as being in conflict with the By Laws. Such challenge shall be signed by the challenging delegates and delivered to the Secretary who will refer it to the Judicial Committee for a decision. If the challenge is upheld the challenged action shall be null and void, but can be reinstated by a threefourths vote of the Convention.

## **Section 8 Rescinding Actions**

Any actions of the State Central Committee may be rescinded or modified by a twothirds vote upon a motion from the floor.

## **Section 9 Minutes**

The Convention Chair shall appoint a Minutes Approval Committee, to consist of three members, all present at the Convention, exactly one of whom may be a member of the incoming State Central Committee. The Committee shall approve the Convention Minutes within 30 days of the close of the Convention; the approved minutes shall then be posted to the website.