

CONSTITUTION
OF THE
NDRLCA

2009

North Dakota Rural Letter Carriers' Association

REVISED

**NORTH DAKOTA
RURAL LETTER CARRIERS'
ASSOCIATION**

CONSTITUTION

2009 - Revised

All New Language is in Bold Print

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ARTICLE I
Name

The name of this Association shall be the "North Dakota Rural Letter Carriers' Association." The North Dakota Rural Letter Carriers' Association (NDRLCA), by its Secretary-Treasurer, maintains custody and control of the State Association name as well as any State Association logo or symbol. Unauthorized use of the State Association name, logo, or symbol shall be addressed by the filing of an internal union charge or legal action or both.

ARTICLE II
Purpose

The purpose of this Association shall be to unite all rural letter carriers in the state for mutual benefit, to seek improvement in the condition of all members by any honorable and business like means, to promote a fraternal spirit among its members, to promote the welfare of every member and of the service and to uphold civil service rules. It shall not affiliate with outside or striking organizations.

ARTICLE III
Members

Section 1. Member in Good Standing. A member in good standing is a member who has made timely payment of dues and has not voluntarily withdrawn or been expelled or suspended by the Association.

Section 2. Classifications.

A. Bargaining Unit Member. Membership is open to the following rural carriers:

- 1. Regular Carriers (Designation Code 71), including regular carriers who are in Injured-on-Duty/Leave Without Pay (IOD/LWOP) status and assigned to (980-989) rural routes;**
- 2. Part-Time Flexible Rural Carriers (PTFs, Designation Code 76);**
- 3. Substitute Rural Carriers (Designation Codes 72 and 73);**
- 4. Rural Carrier Associates (RCAs, Designation Codes 78, 74, 79);**
- 5. Rural Carrier Reliefs (RCRs, Designation Code 75);**
- 6. Auxiliary Rural Carriers (Designation Code 77); and**
- 7. Rural Carriers in the Armed Forces of our country, provided they were members when their duty began. Bargaining Unit Members in good standing are entitled to all voting rights and to hold both elective and appointive office at all levels of the Association.**

B. Retired Member. Retired membership is open to Rural Carriers who were members in good standing at retirement on an annuity. Eligibility for Retired membership expires on June 30 of the year following retirement. Failure to pay dues for one full membership year terminates Retired membership. However, a Retired carrier whose membership has lapsed, due to extenuating circumstances, may apply for reinstatement to the National Secretary-

Treasurer by providing proof of prior membership and the current year's dues. The National Secretary-Treasurer shall present the request for membership to the National Board for a decision. Retired Members in good standing are entitled to all voting rights with the exception of ratification of National Agreements. Retired Members may not be elected to National office.

C. Associate Member. Associate membership is open to Rural Carriers who were members in good standing and are now either working in other non-managerial Postal Service jobs or have left the service and are not receiving an annuity. Failure to pay dues for one full membership year terminates Associate membership. Associate Members shall not be entitled to vote or to hold elective or appointive office in the Association.

D. Retired Associate Member. Retired Associate membership is open to Associate Members who have retired on an annuity. Eligibility for Retired Associate membership expires on June 30 of the year following retirement. Failure to pay dues for one full membership year terminates Retired Associate membership. Retired Associates may not apply for reinstatement. Retired Associate Members shall not be entitled to vote or to hold elective or appointive office in the Association.

E. Honorary Member. Honorary membership may be bestowed by the Association at the National Convention upon recommendation of the National Board. Honorary Members shall not be entitled to vote or to hold elective or appointive office in the Association.

Section 3. Restrictions.

Inasmuch as it is an unfair labor practice under the Labor Management Relations Act (LMRA) for any employer (including persons acting in that capacity) to dominate or interfere with the administration of any labor organization, it follows that employers, while they may be members, may not be candidates for office or serve as officers.

Members are prohibited from participation in the Association while serving in managerial or supervisory positions, such as Officer-in-Charge (OIC), Acting Supervisor (204-B) or Postmaster Relief (PMR) or acting in any capacity normally performed by a manager. Activities assigned to the QWL/EI process by agreement of the NRLCA and USPS are not considered management functions. Members who accept managerial positions shall be deemed to have resigned from all elected and appointed positions within the Association and the QWL/EI process and shall be prohibited from holding any elected or appointed union positions for a period of one year from the last day served in that capacity.

Section 4. Affiliation.

All persons eligible for membership in this Association, as defined in Article III, Sections 1, 2 and 3, and living or working in an organized or unorganized county or unit, and, upon payment of per capita dues as set by the National, State, and Local Association, may become a member of this Association.

Section 5. Dues.

A. Annual State Per Capita dues shall be defined as follows per membership classification plus the National per capita dues as defined in the National Constitution.

B. Regular Rural Carriers;

- 1. Ten and three tenths (10.3) times the basic annual salary at step 1 of a 40-hour evaluated route, divided by 2080, as of the beginning of the preceding dues year.**
- 2. Two dollars (\$2.00) local dues and**
- 3. Four dollars (\$4.00) steward training fund**

C. Part-Time Flexible Rural Carriers;

1. Ten and three tenths (10.3) times the basic annual salary at step 1 of a 40-hour evaluated route, divided by 2080, as of the beginning of the preceding dues year.
2. Two dollars (\$2.00) local dues and
3. Four dollars (\$4.00) steward training fund

D. Substitute Rural Carriers;

1. Three and Forty two hundredths (3.42) times the basic annual salary at step 1 of a 40-hour evaluated route, divided by 2080, as of the beginning of the preceding dues year.
2. Two dollars (\$2.00) local dues and
3. Four dollars (\$4.00) steward training fund

E. Rural Carrier Associates;

1. Ten and three tenths (10.3) times the basic annual salary at step 1 of a 40-hour evaluated route, divided by 2080, as of the beginning of the preceding dues year.
2. Two dollars (\$2.00) local dues and
3. Four dollars (\$4.00) steward training fund

F. Rural Carrier Reliefs;

1. Three and Forty two hundredths (3.42) times the basic annual salary at step 1 of a 40-hour evaluated route, divided by 2080, as of the beginning of the preceding dues
2. Two dollars (\$2.00) local dues and
3. Four dollars (\$4.00) steward training fund

G. Auxiliary Rural Carrier;

1. Three and Forty two hundredths (3.42) times the basic annual salary at step 1 of a 40-hour evaluated route, divided by 2080, as of the beginning of the preceding dues year.
2. Two dollars (\$2.00) local dues and
3. Four dollars (\$4.00) steward training fund

H. Retired Rural Carriers;

1. Twenty Four (\$24.00) dollars for the NDRLCA;
2. Two dollars (\$2.00) local dues and
3. Four dollars (\$4.00) steward training fund

I. Associate Member;

1. Ten and three tenths (10.3) times the basic annual salary at step 1 of a 40-hour evaluated route, divided by 2080, as of the beginning of the preceding dues year.
2. Two dollars (\$2.00) local dues and
3. Four dollars (\$4.00) steward training fund

J. Retired Associate Member;

1. Twenty Four (\$24.00) dollars for the NDRLCA;
2. Two dollars (\$2.00) local dues and
3. Four dollars (\$4.00) steward training fund

K. When the National Dues increase the state dues will increase at the same percentage.

Section 6. Family Plan.

- A. In addition to the above defined amounts, for those who have authorized deduction of such dues, annual State Auxiliary Per Capita dues shall be designated as follows, plus the National Auxiliary per capita dues as defined in the National Auxiliary Constitution.
- B. Regular Rural Carriers; 9.00

- C. Part-Time Flexible Rural Carriers; 9.00
- D. Substitute Rural Carriers; 9.00
- E. Rural Carrier Associates; 0.00
- F. Rural Carrier Reliefs; 9.00
- G. Auxiliary Rural Carriers; 9.00
- H. Retired Rural Carriers; 7.00

These amounts shall be deducted pro-rata from NRLCA State Association dues by the NRLCA and remitted to the National Auxiliary quarterly.

Those NRLCA members who have signed an authorization for deduction of dues and do not wish to participate in the Family Plan may request a refund of Auxiliary dues. Such refund request must be made in writing to the NRLCA Secretary-Treasurer not more than twenty (20) days and not less than ten (10) days prior to the beginning of each NRLCA fiscal year.

ARTICLE IV Subordinate Units

Section 1. Subordinate Units. Any county, or group of counties, wishing to form a rural carrier unit of this Association as a single county unit, or a multiple county unit, or to annex to another county or group of counties for the purpose of forming a larger unit; or to secede or withdraw from an organized unit of counties; shall require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all carriers in said county or counties initiating such action, or a petition, properly drawn and executed, with a two-thirds (2/3) of the signatures of all carriers within the county initiating such action, in the formation of a new unit, secession, or an annexation, but shall require the consent and approval by majority vote of a quorum of the remaining members of the existing unit. **No Unit's Constitution shall conflict with the NRLCA Constitution.**

Section 2. Officers. The State Association whose units elect delegates to the state convention shall elect their officers by vote of elected delegates provided those delegates were elected by individual ballot of the membership of the unit which they represent.

Section 3. Trusteeship.

- A. The President, with approval of the State Board, may place in trusteeship any Local Association Unit or subordinate body for any of the following reasons.
 - 1. To uphold the principles and integrity of this Constitution.
 - 2. To correct corruption or financial malpractice.
 - 3. To assure performance of collective bargaining representative.
 - 4. To restore Democratic procedures.
 - 5. To otherwise carry out the legitimate objectives of the State Association.

- B. The Trustee shall assume immediate control and authority of the Local/County/District Association, with full authority over the Officers and property thereof. The Trustee shall continue to act in such a capacity for the duration of the Trusteeship.

- C. **Hearing.** A trusteeship hearing shall be held before committee of three members within 30 days of imposing trusteeship. The members shall be selected as follows: one member selected by the State Board, one selected by the Unit in trusteeship and a chairman selected by the other two members. The committee shall have sole discretion regarding the conduct and procedures of the trusteeship hearing. Only Bargaining Unit Members may serve on this committee. No member of this committee shall be chosen from the Unit in trusteeship. The committee shall report its findings and recommendations to the President as soon as practical following the hearing. The State Board shall determine whether to continue or to terminate the trusteeship.

- D. Upon a petition filed with the President, no earlier than six (6) months after the appointment of the Trusteeship, and at six (6) month intervals thereafter, any party may request termination of the Trusteeship. The President, acting on such petition, or at the time, may terminate the Trusteeship and restore government to the Local/District/District Officers.**
- E. Any party not satisfied with the decision of the President shall have appeal rights as provided under Article XI (the Appeals section of the State's Constitution)**

ARTICLE V Officers

Section 1. Officers.

- A. The Officers of this Association shall consist of the President, Vice-President, and Secretary/Treasurer who shall be elected for one year or until their successors are elected and installed and an Executive Committee of three members to be elected, one each year, for a three year term. No member shall be eligible for office in the North Dakota Rural Letter Carriers' Association who has not been a continuous member for three consecutive years prior to his/her nomination.
- B. The Executive Committee shall be elected, one from each of the three districts comprising the state as follows:
1. District #2 to be comprised of the counties of Bottineau, Griggs, Rolette, Towner, McHenry, Pierce, Eddy, Sheridan, Wells, Foster, Burleigh, Kidder, Steele, Barnes, Stutsman, Logan, Emmons, and McIntosh.
 2. District #1 will be comprised of all counties to the East of District #2.
 3. District #3 will be comprised of all counties west of District #2.
- C. Each District will elect its own Committee-Person.

Section 2. Duties.

- A. President
1. The President shall be the general executive officer of the Association and in accordance with the constitution, by-laws, and other regulations and instructions of the Association, shall have general direction of its affairs. His/her duties shall include:
 2. To preside at all meetings of the State Convention and Board of Control and enforce all laws thereof.
 3. To appoint all committees not otherwise provided for.
 4. To approve the payment of all just bills against the Association and sign all papers and documents which require his signature to properly authenticate the same.
 5. To construe the meaning of the Constitution, By-Laws, and Rules of the Association. His/her decision in such cases shall be in writing, which shall be filed with the Secretary-Treasurer and shall be binding on all Officers and parties concerned unless the same shall be reversed by an appeal to the following state convention.
 6. To submit to each Annual Convention a written report of his official acts during the preceding year, giving information concerning the condition of the Association and make such recommendations as he may desire regarding its activities.
 7. To perform such duties as may be required by the constitution & by-laws or may be assigned to him by the state convention or the Board of Control.
 8. At the close of each Annual Meeting, he shall make such appointments of special committees as shall have been provided for and shall have the authority to fill all vacancies occurring therein during recess.
 9. He/she shall have the power to grant charters and in conjunction with the Secretary/Treasurer to issue them during the interim between meetings of the Association.

10. He/she shall appoint an editor, with advice and consent of the Board of Control. Such Editor to be selected from the membership of the State Association.
 11. He/she shall see that all Officers are reported to national for coverage under blanket bond.
- B. Vice-President
1. The Vice-President shall preside in the absence of the President or at his request.
 2. In case of death, resignation, separation, disqualification, refusal or neglect of the President to discharge his duties, the Vice-President shall assume the discharge of the same until the next Annual Convention.
 3. If because of death, resignation, separation, disqualification of the Vice-President during the time he/she may be serving as president, the Board of Control shall appoint an acting Vice-President to serve until the close of the next State Convention.
 4. The Vice-President shall submit at each State Convention a written report of his/her official acts during the preceding year.
- C. Secretary/Treasurer
1. The duties of the Secretary/Treasurer include:
 2. He/she shall see that the Board of Control procures a reliable stenographer to keep complete record of the Annual Convention, but records of all other meetings of the Association or the Board of Control shall be kept by him/her or the board may appoint one of the members of the Executive Committee to take his place if so desired.
 3. He/she shall receive and have charge of all funds of the Association, giving a receipt therefore. He/she shall pay by check all properly attested bills against the Association. He shall be prepared to give a true and complete statement of the financial standing of the Association when called up to do so by any of the Officers of the Association.
 4. Conducting the correspondence of the Association and keeping proper record of the same, and submitting such records for examination by the Board of Control when so demanded. The President shall also have full access to all records of the Association.
 5. He/she shall have charge of the seal, books, papers and documents belonging to this Association. He/she shall at the end of the term for which he/she is elected or upon earlier termination thereof and when called upon to do so by the Board of Control, account for and deliver over to said board or his bonded successor in office, all monies of the State Association that may have come into his possession except as may have previously been legally disposed of.
 6. He/she shall close his/her books before the opening of each Annual Convention and deliver the same, together with all supporting vouchers, to the auditing committee who shall report their findings to the convention before its final adjournment.
 7. He/she shall perform such other duties as are usually required of the Secretary/Treasurer of organizations of this nature, or that may be assigned to him by the Convention or Board of Control.
 8. He/she shall keep a complete membership record.
 9. He/she shall furnish the president with a list of Delegates to the State Convention at least five (5) days prior to the annual State Convention.
 10. He/she shall keep in the name of the North Dakota Rural Letter Carriers' Association the funds of the Association in a public depository, the same to be approved by the Board of Control. J. He/she shall make a financial report to each Annual Convention.
 11. In return for office space, heat, lights, and equipment furnished by the Secretary/Treasurer, he shall be entitled to receive the sum of eighteen hundred dollars (\$1800.00) per annum, the same to be paid out of the Association funds.
 12. In case of death, resignation, separation, disqualification of the Secretary/Treasurer during their term, the Board of Control shall immediately appoint an acting Secretary/Treasurer to serve until the State convention when the position will be filled by election.
- D. Executive Committee
1. In Addition to his/her duties in connection with the Board of Control, the duties of an Executive Committee-person shall consist of acting as liaison Officer between the Officers of the Association and the members of his/her district. He/she shall, when at all convenient, visit the different units in his/her district, attending their meetings and in other ways contacting the personnel of the carrier body, lending his influence toward maintaining a strong membership in the Association.

2. In case of death, resignation, separation, disqualification the Board of Control may immediately appoint a successor, unless such a vacancy occurs within thirty (30) days preceding the next State convention, when the vacancy shall be filled by an election.

Section 3. Election.

- A. Nominations of candidates for office shall be open at the first regular session of the annual convention and remain open until Ten o'clock a.m. of the last day. Nominations may be made by acclamation at the open session, by the Nominating Committee which has been appointed by the President of the Association, or by petition signed by ten (10) delegates to the State Convention and handed to the Secretary/Treasurer of this Association prior to said time of ten (10) o'clock a.m. of the last day of the convention.
- B. The evening preceding the last day of the convention, it shall be the duty of the Secretary/Treasurer to have printed sample ballots containing the names of all candidates nominated or the President may appoint a Committee on Elections to take charge of the printing of ballots. At least two posters, with all nominations thereon, shall be posted in some conspicuous place in the Convention Center not later than nine o'clock a.m. of the last day of the convention.
- C. **The election of officers shall be by majority vote, and write-in votes shall not be considered valid. Election shall be by ballot when there is more than one nominee for the same office. When there are more than two nominees for the same office, the one receiving the least number of votes on the third ballot and on each succeeding ballot shall be dropped, until election is accomplished. When there is only one nominee for an office and nominations have been closed, the President or Secretary-Treasurer shall declare that the nominee is elected.**
- D. For those State Associations whose State Officers are elected by State Delegates, the same principle applies as applies for the election of National Delegates. The State Delegate must be elected by individual ballot of the members they represent in their respective unit.
- E. When election of State Officers, or other issues require an individual ballot vote, the units which are entitled to vote, and their number of votes, will be read by the Secretary. The chairperson of the unit delegation will come forward and receive the appropriate number of ballots from the Election Committee. He will distribute these to his voting delegates who will record their vote and return their folded ballot to the chairperson. When called, he will return the appropriate number of folded ballots to the Election Committee. Ballots from all voting units will be combined prior to counting.
- F. Installation of officers shall immediately follow election.

Section 4. Election complaints. Any member not satisfied with the election procedure followed in his/her state convention may appeal to the State Board in writing within thirty (30) days following the close of the convention. The State President shall select a member, the grievant shall select a member, and the two will select a third member to act as chairperson. The Three-person committee shall conduct a hearing and render a decision.

Section 5. Removal.

- A. In case of neglect of duty or violation of this Constitution on the part of any Officer of this Association in the interim of the State Conventions, the Board of Control shall have the power to suspend such Officer after a fair hearing subject to an appeal to the next State Convention.
- B. In case an Officer proves unfaithful to the Association he/she may be impeached and removed from office and shall lose his/her membership in the Association by two-thirds vote of the convention.

Section 6. Vacancy in Office.

- A. Any elected Officer of this Association who shall be separated from the rural service through no fault of his own shall hold office until the next meeting of the Association, unless otherwise determined by the Board of Control. Any Officer who otherwise voluntarily separates himself from the service or Board position shall resign at once and turn over to the State Board all property of the Association in their possession. The Board of Control may immediately appoint a successor, unless such a vacancy occurs within thirty (30) days preceding the next State Convention, when the vacancy shall be filled by an election.
- B. In case of death, resignation, separation, disqualification the Board of Control will appoint a State Steward within thirty (30) days until State Convention when the position will be filled by an election.

ARTICLE VI Meetings

Section 1. State Convention. This Association shall meet annually **on the first Saturday in June** at such places as shall be determined by the previous meeting, but if for any reason, the place prescribed shall be undesirable, the Executive Board shall have authority to change such place by giving official notice through the Unit Secretaries.

Section 2. Delegates.

- A. Each organized Unit shall be entitled to seat one Delegate, **which will be elected by secret ballot or acclamation**, for each eight members, or major fraction of eight members, in good standing. Each duly elected and seated Delegate, as reported by the Credentials Committee, shall be entitled to cast one vote on all questions to come before the Convention.
- B. No delegate can be seated from any County Association whose unit has not paid state per capita tax or given a security for same, and only when holding properly signed credentials.
- C. The Unit Secretary shall notify all members at least fifteen (15) days prior to their spring meeting of the time and place and that there will be election of State Delegates.
- D. Delegate positions vacant at the time of the state convention may not be filled by a vote of the delegates present from the subject unit or from other units.
- E. The person whose name appears first on the units Delegate list shall be considered the chairperson of the unit's delegation, unless otherwise decided by the Delegates. It shall be his/her responsibility to determine if his /her unit has a full delegation of regular Delegates present and if not, to request that the Credentials Committee certify the appropriate number of alternates present as regular Delegates. This to be done prior to the committee's final report. The chairman of the unit delegates shall also be responsible for polling, tabulating, etc. on all ballot votes as described in Section 8. The duly elected and seated delegates shall be entitled to one vote on all questions to come before the convention to be decided by voice or hand vote.
- F. When the chair, parliamentarian, or proper delegate action, requires a roll call vote, the vote shall be on a unit basis. The number of votes to which each unit is entitled, from the Credential Committee Report, will be read by the Secretary. Each unit chairman will poll and tabulate his Delegates, and when vote is called for, will respond: " _____ unit; yes, _____ votes; no, _____ votes."
- G. At the reading of the partial report of the Credentials Committee at the opening session of the Annual Convention, the Delegates shall select seats in that portion of the convention hall set aside for delegates, and at each succeeding session shall take their respective places. As this partial report is completed, additional delegates shall be seated and retain their places as aforementioned.

Section 3. Quorum. Twenty five (25) members in good standing, representing not less than ten units, including a majority of the Officers, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of the Association, but a lesser number than that may adjourn to some future date.

Section 4. Order of Business.

- A. Order of Business
 - 1. Invocation
 - 2. Calling Roll of Officers
 - 3. Naming of members of committees
 - 4. Reading of minutes
 - 5. Report of Officers
 - 6. Report of committees
 - 7. Unfinished Business
 - 8. New Business
 - 9. Election of Officers
 - 10. Selection of convention city
 - 11. Closing
- B. This order of business may be transposed at any time, as occasion may require, by a majority vote of the convention.
- C. The roll call of Delegates and Officers shall be had during each regular session of the convention.

ARTICLE VII National Convention Delegates

Section 1. Eligibility

A. Each state association shall be entitled to representation by one delegate for every 100 members or major fraction thereof and one Delegate-at-Large. Membership shall be based on the number of dues withholding and cash pay Bargaining Unit and Retired Members. In order for a state to receive credit for cash pay members, dues must be received no later than the close of business on the first day of the Convention.

B. Only Bargaining Unit Members and Retired Members in good standing may be nominated, elected or seated as delegates. Such “good standing” status shall be the sole prerequisite for determining eligibility or entitlement to service as a delegate or to any payment or benefit, except that a state may establish reasonable rules to ensure attendance at the Convention.

C. A member who from the time of nomination through the end of the convention holds any position in USPS management or a job which competes with the USPS or this Association shall be ineligible to serve as delegate.

Section 2 . Nomination.

- A. Nominations for National Delegates within each State Association shall be accomplished by submitting nominations on a nominating ballot to be published in the National Rural Letter Carrier in the first issue in March, April and May. Such nominations may include self nominations. Only these official ballots will be accepted. Upon receipt of nomination, the State Secretary shall notify the nominee and the one making the nomination.
- B. Nominations for candidates for National Delegates shall be in the office of the State Secretary/Treasurer at least forty (40) days prior to the opening of the State Convention.

Section 3. Election.

- A. A member must be on the rolls at least 40 days prior to the opening of the state convention in order to be eligible to vote for National Delegates.**
- B. The State Secretary shall prepare a ballot listing the candidates for National Delegate. Instructions on each ballot shall include the number of delegates to be elected, the deadline for return of the ballot and the mailing address of the designated post office box.**

- The number of votes cast on each ballot shall not exceed the number of delegates to which the state association was entitled at the previous convention.
- C. **The State Secretary shall cause the ballot to be mailed to eligible members at least 20 days prior to the opening of the state convention. In addition, the State Secretary/Designee shall arrange for the rental of a post office box for the receipt of the ballots and another for the return of undeliverable ballots.**
 - D. **An envelope marked "Ballot" shall be provided in which to seal the ballot. To permit verification of membership and to maintain the integrity of the voting procedure, an outer envelope, also marked "Ballot" which clearly identifies the name and address of the member, shall also be provided. The sealed envelope containing the ballot shall be placed in the outer envelope by the member and mailed to the designated post office box.**
 - E. **An Election Committee shall be appointed by the State President. No candidate for National Delegate may serve on the Election Committee. After the deadline for receipt of ballots, the Election Committee shall collect and tabulate the ballots at the state convention. The post office box designated for the return of ballots shall be accessible only to the Election Committee.**
 - F. **Any candidate or designee may observe the ballot tabulation. In reporting the results of the election, the candidates shall be placed on a roster in the order of votes received. The number of delegates to which the state is entitled shall be declared regular delegates; the remaining candidates shall be declared alternates**
 - G. **Each state association shall be entitled to one Delegate-at-Large from the roster of elected regular delegates. That position shall be filled by a state officer in ranking order, beginning with the State President. A state officer may not be automatically declared a delegate by virtue of office unless elected by direct vote of the membership. National-Paid Delegates shall be named accordance with the plurality of votes received.**
 - H. **The State Secretary shall prepare credentials in duplicate for the Delegate-at-Large, regular delegates and an appropriate number of alternates immediately following the state convention and send originals to the National Secretary-Treasurer. The duplicate shall be provided to the delegate for identification. The state's seal shall be embossed on the face of credentials**
 - I. **Delegates holding proper credentials shall be seated at the National Convention if their state has paid National Per Capita Tax for members in good standing. The National Secretary-Treasurer shall notify each state association of the status of its National Per Capita Tax at least two weeks prior to the National Convention.**

Section 4. Compensation of State-Paid National Delegates.

- A. **If the Delegate has an unexcused absence, the Delegate-at-Large shall direct the State Secretary/Treasurer to deduct the appropriate daily compensation rate. The Daily rate is defined as mileage plus per-diem.**
- B. **Each state association shall be entitled to one Delegate-at-Large from the roster of elected regular delegates. That position shall be filled by a state officer in ranking order, beginning with the State President. A state officer may not be automatically declared a delegate by virtue of office unless elected by direct vote of the membership. National-Paid Delegates shall be named in accordance with the plurality of votes received.**
- C. **Said Delegate-at-Large shall initiate a roll call of State Delegates at the opening session of the National Convention and each succeeding day.**
- D. **At the close of the National Convention it shall be the duty of the Delegate-at-Large to certify**

to the State Secretary/Treasurer the names of only those Delegates, or their qualified alternates, duly elected at the State Convention for authorized Delegate compensation.

- E. Compensation for the Secretary/Treasurer and the State Steward shall be the same as that allowed the nationally paid Delegate-at-Large.

ARTICLE VIII State Board

Section 1. Members.

- A. There shall be a Board of Control consisting of President, Vice-President, Secretary/Treasurer, and three members of the Executive Committee.

Section 2. Duties.

- A. Each elected Officer shall vote aye or nay on all questions before said board.
- B. The Board of Control is the highest authority in the Association and shall have complete supervision of its affair.
- C. It shall approve all bills paid by the Association.
- D. It shall formulate the rules under which the business of the Association is conducted.
- E. It shall approve a depository wherein shall be kept the funds of the Association.
- F. It shall decide on all questions concerning the Association's business not otherwise delegated to the President.
- G. It shall decide all matters of expenses, mileage and per diem, and payment of leave incurred by Officers or Committees while on Association business.
- H. The Board of Control shall maintain if possible, a newsletter or other publication within the structure of the Association and its Officers and shall finance, supervise and distribute such publication to the current membership and in general regulate its affairs and policies and to provide any other such guidance within the jurisdiction of the Board of Control as provided in Section 5 under Article I.

Section 3. Meetings.

- A. The Board of Control shall meet at least three times a year, the first meeting to take place within forty eight hours of the close of the Annual Convention. Other meetings shall be held on the call of the President or by a call of a majority of the Board of Control, this call to be made in writing to the Secretary/Treasurer. If in the interim between sessions of the board, some question arises that does not seem to call for a regular meeting, a vote by certified mail shall have full weight of a vote in regular session when properly filed with the Secretary/Treasurer.
- B. This board shall meet upon call of the president or by a majority vote of said board to the Secretary/Treasurer when matter of importance arise that need immediate attention during the interim between meetings of the Association.

ARTICLE IX Committees

Section 1. Convention Committees. At the meeting of the Board of Control previous to the annual

convention the president of the Association will appoint at request of the Secretary/Treasurer, with the advice of the Executive Committee, a committee to act on resolutions, a committee to act on credentials, a registration committee, time and place committee, a condolence committee, auditing committee, a constitution and bylaws committee, two sergeant at arms and a chaplain. All committees and appointees shall consist of regular elected delegates.

Section 2. Special Committees. At mid-winter conference each year, the President will appoint a committee that consists of two state board members – one which will be considered chairperson, and three members, one from each district. The purpose will be the selection and awarding of an “Outstanding Member of the Year” award. Such award shall be presented at the annual banquet held at the Annual Convention.

ARTICLE X Steward System

Section 1. Responsibility. Representation, provided for in the National Agreement, shall be accomplished through the Steward System. The NRLCA shall be responsible for the Steward System throughout the Nation. The NRLCA Stewards shall be responsible for processing grievances and appeals through the Grievance-Arbitration procedure. The Association, as the exclusive bargaining agent, is the only organization authorized to represent Rural Carriers in matters of labor-management relations.

Section 2. Role of State Association

- A. State associations, under the direction of the assigned National Executive Committeeman, shall be responsible for the implementation and operation of the Steward System within their state.**
- B. State associations shall recommend to the National Association the name of a member to serve as State Steward, and in conjunction with the State Steward, shall recommend to the National Association the name(s) of a member(s) to serve as the Assistant State Steward(s) and as the Area Steward(s).**

Section 3. State Steward

- A. The State Steward shall be responsible to the State and National Associations for the performance of all duties. The State Steward shall serve a term of office as determine by the state association.**
- B. Duties**
 - 1. Supervise and administer the Steward System within his/her state;**
 - 2. Submit the names of the Assistant State Stewards to the National Office for certification;**
 - 3. Certify the Area and Local Stewards, with notification to appropriate postmasters and the National Office;**
 - 4. Train Assistant, Area and Local Stewards prior to certification, utilizing training materials provided by the National Office;**
 - 5. Provide enhancement training to all Stewards on an annual basis;**
 - 6. Appeal grievances to Step 2 and Step 3, in conjunction with the Executive Committeeman;**
 - 7. Act, or designate another to act, as Steward in the event an Area or Local Steward is unavailable.**

Section 4. Assistant State Stewards

- A. The Assistant State Steward shall be responsible to the State Steward and to the State and National Association for the performance of all duties.**
- B. Duties**
 - 1. Represent carriers in offices assigned by the State Steward;**
 - 2. Serve with the same authority as the State Steward, under his/her direction;**
 - 3. Appeal grievances to Step 2 and Step 3 in the absence of the State Steward and in conjunction with the Executive Committeeman.**

Section 5. Area Stewards

- A. Area Stewards shall be responsible to the State Steward. Area Stewards shall be certified**

in no more than 20 offices in a specific geographic area, as determined by the State Steward. Area Stewards are equal in authority to a Local Steward and have no authority in an office that currently has a Local Steward.

B. Duties

1. Represent carriers in offices assigned by the State Steward;
2. Process grievances through Step 1;
3. Appeal grievances to Step 2 and forward the original file to the State Steward.

Section 6. Local Stewards

A. Local Stewards shall be responsible to the State Steward and have no authority until certified.

B. Selection

1. Any member in a local office or a delivery unit may be elected Local Steward and shall serve until a successor is elected and certified or until he/she resigns. Where a local steward is in place, any member may call for an election in the month of July of every fourth year. An election may also be called for any time the position is vacant, or when a majority of the members submit a petition to the State Steward for approval.
2. Local steward elections require written notification to all members at least 15 days before the date of the election. Election shall require a majority of votes cast by members in a local office or a delivery unit. In the event of a tie vote, the state association, upon recommendation of the State Steward, shall select a steward to serve in that office or delivery unit until a new Local Steward has been elected and certified.
3. When more than one Local Steward has been elected in a delivery unit, a Chief Steward shall be elected by the members of that delivery unit. When an office is comprised of multiple delivery units, a Chief Steward shall be elected from among the current local stewards by all members of that office and shall represent the craft in matters that concern the entire office. A Chief Steward shall be selected by the State Steward in the event of a tie. The Chief Steward for the office shall also serve as the Local Steward for delivery units where no Local Steward has been elected

C. Duties

1. Assist any rural craft employee who feels aggrieved and accompany the grievant during any discussion with management, if the employee desires;
2. Meet with the Postmaster or designee as expeditiously as possible to jointly develop the facts in the grievance file and attempt to resolve the grievance when the Step 1 discussion has failed;
3. Appeal grievances to Step 2 and submit the original file to the State Steward;
4. Represent the rural carrier craft in the office or delivery unit;
5. Maintain certification by attending annual enhancement training and other training as required. Failure to do so will result in decertification by the State Steward.

Section 7. Discipline. Any steward may be disciplined for violation of the Constitution or policies set forth by the Association. The National Board, by a three-fourths vote, may suspend or expel a steward from office. Charges may be filed on the following grounds:

- A. Neglect of duty or breach of the Constitution;**
- B. Conduct detrimental to the welfare and interests of the membership of the Association;**
- C. Conduct which hinders the due process of the grievance procedure;**
- D. Instigating or engaging in acts on the side of management that violate the principles of the National Agreement or Constitution.**

Section 8. Stewards Acting as Managers.

A. State Stewards. Upon acceptance of any supervisory or managerial position with the Postal Service the State Steward shall immediately notify the National Executive Committeeman assigned to their area and the State President and shall be immediately decertified. On return to a craft position the former steward may not resume steward duties for a minimum period of one year.

B. Other Stewards. Upon acceptance of any supervisory or managerial position with the Postal Service all other stewards shall immediately notify the State Steward and shall be immediately decertified. On return to a craft former steward may not resume steward duties for a minimum period of one year.

Section 9. Funding. Primary responsibility for financing the Steward System shall rest with the state association. The National Steward Fund shall provide each state an annual reimbursement of \$4.00 per route, paid quarterly. Upon completion of training and certification of stewards, an additional annual reimbursement of \$4.00 per route shall be provided.

ARTICLE XI

Appeals

Section 1. State

A. A member aggrieved by any action of a state association, officer or steward shall have the right to appeal to the State Board.

1. Appeals must be in writing and be filed with the State President within 30 days of having knowledge of said action.

2. Within 10 days of receipt of the appeal, the State President shall notify all members of the State Board and the assigned Executive Committeeman and shall request that the Charging Party provide a letter outlining the specific charges and any relief sought. This letter of specificity, along with complete documentation, must be returned within 20 days of receipt of the President's request.

3. Upon receipt of the letter of specificity, the State President shall forward a copy to the Charged Party for response. The Charged Party shall have 20 days to respond in writing and provide documentation to the State President.

4. The State Board shall review the Charging Party's letter of specificity, documentation, relief sought and the response of the Charged Party. The State Board is authorized, in consultation with the Executive Committeeman, to take the necessary action to resolve the issue within 30 days. Extension of this 30 day time limit, when necessary, shall not exceed 15 days. The Charging Party(s) and Charged Party(s) (hereafter referred to as the Party or Parties) shall be notified in writing of the decision of the State Board.

B. A Party not satisfied with this decision, or any other action of the State Board on said appeal, shall have the right to appeal to the National Board.

1. This appeal must be in writing and be filed with the President of the National Association within 30 days of receipt of the State Board's decision.

2. Within 15 days of receipt of an appeal, the National Board shall notify the National Appeals Commission. The President shall notify the State President and the Parties that the appeal has been received and forwarded to the National Appeals Commission.

3. Within 30 days, the National Appeals Commission shall investigate each appeal and report its findings and recommendations in writing to the National Board. Upon receipt of the findings and recommendations of the Appeals Commission, the National President shall notify the Parties that the findings and recommendations are before the National Board. The National Board shall render a decision and notify the Parties in writing within a reasonable period of time.

C. A Party not satisfied with the decision of the National Board shall have the right to appeal to the next Convention of the National Association.

1. This appeal must be in writing and be filed with the National President within 30 days of receipt of the National Board's decision. The appeal, if received more than 45 days prior to the National Convention, will be scheduled for that Convention. If received within 45 days of the Convention the appeal may be held until the following National Convention.

2. Within 15 days of receipt of said appeal, the President shall notify the Parties that the appeal has been received and shall be forwarded to a National Appeals Committee.

3. The Appeals Committee shall complete an investigation and report its findings and recommendations in writing to the Parties and to the President of the state association at least 24 hours before the report is presented to the National Delegates.

Section 2. National

A. A member aggrieved by any action of the National Association or Officer thereof shall have the right to appeal directly to the National Board.

1. The appeal must be in writing and be filed with the National President within 30 days of the action.
2. Within 15 days of receipt of the appeal, the National Board shall retain the appeal for investigation, forward the appeal to the National Appeals Commission or, if received within 90 days of the first business session of the National Convention, refer the appeal to the Appeals Committee. The President shall notify the Charging Party(s) of the appeal's receipt and disposition.
3. Should the National Board retain the appeal, it shall investigate, render a decision and notify the Charging Party(s) in writing within a reasonable period of time.
4. Should the National Board forward the appeal to the National Appeals Commission, the commission shall complete an investigation and report its findings and recommendations in writing to the National Board within 30 days. Upon receipt, the National President shall notify the Charging Party(s) that the Commission's report is before the National Board. The National Board shall render a decision and notify the Charging Party(s) in writing within a reasonable period of time.
5. Should the National Board refer the appeal to the Appeals Committee, the appeal shall be handled in accordance with the provisions that follow.

B. A Party not satisfied with a decision rendered by the National Board shall have the right to appeal to the next National Convention.

1. The appeal must be in writing and be filed with the National President within 30 days of receipt of the National Board's decision. The appeal, if received more than 45 days prior to the National Convention, will be scheduled for that Convention. If received within 45 days of the Convention the appeal may be held until the following National Convention.
2. Within 15 days of receipt of the appeal, the President shall notify the Party(s) that the appeal has been received and shall be forwarded to a National Appeals Committee.
3. The Appeals Committee shall complete an investigation and report its findings and recommendations in writing to the Parties at least 24 hours before the report is presented to the National Delegates.

Section 3. Administration

At every level of appeal, members shall be afforded the rights of due process and the right to appeal an adverse decision to the next level. The National Board shall have full authority to intervene to protect the members of this Association. Correspondence shall be by certified mail, return receipt requested. Costs of the state investigation and action shall be borne by the state association; costs of the National Appeals Commission and Appeals Committee shall be borne by the National Association. No legal proceeding may be initiated until the appeal procedures provided herein have been exhausted.

ARTICLE XII LEGISLATION

All legislation to be brought before the North Dakota Governor, State Legislature, or any other State Officer or group of Officers, shall be approved by the Board of Control, and if disapproved by the Board of Control, may be brought up at the next State Convention.

ARTICLE XIII CONFLICTS

All laws and parts of laws in conflict with the foregoing are hereby repealed.

ARTICLE XIV Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Association in cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the constitution or any special rules of order the Association may adopt.

ARTICLE XV

Amendment of Constitution

This constitution may be amended at any State Convention by a two-thirds vote. Amendments shall take effect immediately, unless otherwise ordered by the Convention. The State Board shall have the authority to make interim amendments to the Constitution of the Association when necessary to conform to federal law. Any provision of the Constitution which conflicts with federal or state law, regulation or ordinance shall be inoperative as to those jurisdictions in which said federal or state law, regulation or ordinance is in force.