

The Green Party of New Jersey Bylaws

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Section 1 -- Organization Name and Purpose

This organization shall be known as the "Green Party of New Jersey."

The Green Party of New Jersey is a progressive political party dedicated to achieving economic, environmental, and social justice through both elections and activism. We stand for greater participation by individuals in the decision making that affects our lives and our communities. We uphold a vision based on the four pillars of the global Green movement: ecological wisdom, social justice, grassroots democracy, and nonviolence.

We affirm the Ten Key Values of the Green Party of the United States as affirmed by the Denver Convention in 2000:

1. Grassroots Democracy
2. Social Justice and Equal Opportunity
3. Ecological Wisdom
4. Non-violence
5. Decentralization
6. Community Based Economics and Economic Justice
7. Feminism and Gender Equity
8. Respect for Diversity
9. Personal and Global Responsibility
10. Future Focus and Sustainability

The Green Party of New Jersey will seek and maintain statewide ballot access as allowed by state law.

This will include, but is not limited to, running candidates for local, regional, state, and federal offices in order to gain and retain ballot access. GPNJ will also reserve the right to exercise legal action (i.e. lawsuits, amica curiae, etc.) as necessary where ballot access and status or electoral laws are determined to be unduly restrictive or not in accordance with democratic principles.

Section 2 -- Definitions

"Amendment" means a permanent change to these Bylaws, as described in Section 14.

"Annual Convention" means a statewide meeting of Members, as described in Section 8.1.

"Complaint" means a formal written objection, concern, or protest filed by a Member, described in Section 3.2.

"Committee" means any Standing Committee, Special Committee, or subcommittee thereof.

"Convention" means an Annual Convention or a Special Convention, as described in Section 8.

"Local Affiliate Coordinator" means a Member elected to represent, on the New Jersey Green Council, the interests of Members residing in a region that has chosen to affiliate as a "Local Affiliate," as described in Section 6.2.

"Executive Committee" means the decision-making body described in Section 5.

"Local Affiliate" means a group of Members who meet regularly for participatory action and education, which is officially affiliated with the Party under the provisions of one or more duly adopted Rules, as described in Section 11.

"Member" means an individual who has joined the Party, as described in Section 3.

"Membership List" means the official list of Members and contact information, maintained by the Secretary.

"New Jersey Resident" means a person who spends more than one-half of any given year in New Jersey.

"New Jersey Green Council" means the decision-making and advisory body described in Section 6.

"Officer" means one of the following elected officials of the Party: a Co-Chair, the Secretary, or the Treasurer.

"Party" means the Green Party of New Jersey.

"Petition" means the democratic tool enabling a Member to request consideration of a matter, as described in Section 11.3.

"Ratio" means the Representatives-to-Members ratio established for voting at Conventions, as described in Section 8.3(a).

"Records" means all financial and non-financial documents required to be kept by the Treasurer or the Secretary.

"Representative" means a person delegated by a Local Affiliate to represent its Members and vote on their behalf at a Convention, as described in Section 8.

"Rule" means a formal issuance on substantive or procedural matters that is consistent with and subordinate to these Bylaws.

"Special Committee" means a committee of limited duration established by the Executive Committee as described in Section 4.4.

"Special Convention" means a statewide meeting of Members, as described in Section 8.2.

"Standing Committee" means any of the permanent committees described in Section 4.1.

Section 3 -- Members

Section 3.1 -- Criteria

Membership in the Party is open to all persons who

- (a) pay annual dues to GPNJ, and/or
- (b) are listed as "Green Party" registrants with the State of New Jersey.

Additionally, the Executive Committee may extend membership to New Jersey residents who are not otherwise eligible to register to vote, but who affirm in writing their support for the principles and purposes of the Party as set forth in Section 1.

While the Green Party of New Jersey welcomes participation by minors, only persons of voting age, 18 and over, may hold office in the party. This restriction applies to all Executive Committee Officers, Committee Chairs, National Delegates, Caucus Chairs, and Local Affiliate Coordinators.

Section 3.2 -- Rights

Members in good standing may

- (a) vote, in their Local Affiliate, for Representatives to the Annual Convention or a Special Convention;
- (b) join one or more Standing Committees and vote therein, subject to duly-adopted Rules;
- (c) object formally to any decision, action or policy of the Party or of a Member by filing a Complaint with the Executive Committee; and
- (d) initiate and circulate a Petition as provided in Section 9.3.

Section 3.3 – Responsibilities

Members shall

- (a) participate respectfully in all proceedings;
- (b) fulfill obligations undertaken, unless excused; and
- (c) abide by the letter and spirit of these Bylaws and any duly adopted Rules.

Section 4 -- Committees

Section 4.1 -- Standing Committees

Each Standing Committee is open to participation by any Member in good standing.

(a) The following Standing Committees are established:

(1) Membership Committee, which shall have the following general responsibilities: recruitment of Members; coordinating volunteers; liaison to Local Affiliates and ally organizations; planning and implementation of Annual Conventions and Special Conventions; surveys and informal polls of Members' concerns and views; and issuance of Rules on ethics and disciplinary proceedings.

(2) Finance Committee, which shall have the following general responsibilities: fundraising; dues collection; budgeting; and internal audit.

(3) Policy Committee, which shall have the following general responsibilities: strategic direction; issue research; platform development; drafting position papers.

(4) Communications Committee, which shall have the following general responsibilities: keeping Members informed about Party decisions, policies, and activities; production of Party publications; outreach to the media.

(5) Elections Committee, which shall have the following general responsibilities: review of candidates for public office; and coordination of support for candidates running for public office.

(6) Action Committee, which shall have the following general responsibilities: organize and act on issues surrounding specific topics like fracking, immigration, marijuana, healthcare, etc.

(b) If at any time the Executive Committee determines that a new committee is necessary, it shall have the authority to establish a provisional committee. The Executive Committee shall set forth a statement of purpose and responsibilities for that committee to be published on the GPNJ website under that committee's subpage. That provisional committee shall have full committee rights and responsibilities until the next Annual Convention, where the establishment of the committee is to be voted on by the General Membership by form of an amendment that will be reflected in the bylaws.

Section 4.2 -- Authority

(a) For a Standing Committee to have representation on the Executive Committee, it must contain at least two members

(b) Each Committee may

(1) act on matters within its areas of responsibility, after consent of the Executive Committee;

(2) act on matters involving its own procedures and housekeeping;

(3) issue Rules on substantive or procedural matters, with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee;

(4) recommend actions or alternatives to the Executive Committee; and

(5) implement decisions of the Executive Committee.

Section 4.3 -- Governance

(a) One-Third (1/3) of members of a Standing Committee shall constitute a quorum, except that in no case will one member constitute a quorum.

(b) Voting on any motion shall be determined by a simple majority of Committee members who voted.

(c) Chairs of each Standing Committee are elected at the Annual Convention by the membership, for a one year term commencing June 1. A vacancy shall be filled by vote of the committee members or, if the committee fails to act, by the appointment of the Executive Committee. Neither a Chair nor a Vice Chair may serve longer than four (4) consecutive years in either position on a particular Standing Committee.

(d) The Chair shall preside over meetings of a Standing Committee and shall represent that Standing Committee on the Executive Committee.

(e) In the absence of or at the request of the Chair of a Standing Committee, the Vice Chair shall substitute for the Chair, with the full authority and voting rights ordinarily exercised by the Chair. In the event of a vacancy in the position of Chair, the Vice Chair shall be the acting Chair until the vacancy is filled.

Section 4.4 -- Subcommittees and Special Committees

(a) Permanent or temporary subcommittees may be established by each Standing Committee, as deemed necessary.

(b) Special Committees of limited duration may be established by the Executive Committee to address specific issues or to undertake specific projects that fall outside the purview of the Standing Committees or that require special coordination of activities among Standing Committees.

Section 5 -- Executive Committee

Section 5.1 -- Composition

(a) The following persons shall constitute the Executive Committee: the three co-Chairs, Secretary, and Treasurer (the "Officers" of the Party), and the Chair of each Standing Committee, or the Vice Chair, in accordance with Section 4.3(e).

(b) Officers are elected at the Annual Convention, and serve for terms of one (1) year beginning on June 1 and ending on May 31 the following year. The Elections Committee will be tasked with soliciting nominations one month prior to Convention.

(c) An Officer may serve on the Executive Committee for two (2) full terms in the same office, after which a period of two years must intervene before the person may again hold that office. An exception is made for the office of Treasurer.

(d) After four consecutive full terms of service on the Executive Committee in any capacity, a person may not be re-elected or appointed to the Executive Committee until an interval of two years has elapsed. An exception is made for the office of Treasurer.

(e) Succession shall proceed in the following manner for Officers in the case of vacancy with the next lower position filling the vacancy above, or in the case of an officer or standing committee chair choosing not to move up in the rank determined by this clause, moving to the next position and so on. Officers succeeding positions shall perform all the duties of and act in the full capacity of the position for the duration of that vacancy. After the ranking list is exhausted, remaining vacancies shall be filled by the Executive Committee by appointing a replacement to serve for the unexpired remainder of that Officer's term. Order of ranking list: (1) Chair, (2) Chair, (3) Chair, (4) Secretary. In the case of a vacancy of the office of the Treasurer, the Executive Committee must appoint a replacement Treasurer who meets the state requirements.

Section 5.2 -- Co-chairs

The three Co-chairs of the Party shall rotate presiding at meetings of the Party and of the Executive Committee; issue a call for a Special Convention or a special meeting of the Executive Committee or the New Jersey Green Council when deemed necessary; and perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Party or the Executive Committee.

The three Co-chairs of the Party shall decide together which of them will be members of which Committees, based on each co-chair's skills. All standing committees must have at least one of the Party Co-chairs as a member.

The three Co-chairs of the Party shall be responsible for promoting those issues primarily concerning traditionally disenfranchised groups, and for recruiting for positions of leadership in the Party from among those sectors.

Section 5.3 -- Secretary

The Secretary shall maintain all non-financial Records of the Party, including but not limited to

(a) these Bylaws and any Amendments hereto;

(b) legally binding documents;

(c) all meeting records, including the minutes of the Executive Committee, and the reports of other Committees;

- (d) a copy of the Membership List as provided on a regular basis by the Membership Committee and Treasurer;
- (e) lists of the Local Affiliate Coordinators and their contact information;
- (f) Petitions; and
- (g) Complaints.

Section 5.4 – Treasurer

- (a) The Treasurer shall have charge of the books of the Green Party of NJ and account monthly for all money collected and disbursed.
- (b) The Treasurer will file all required financial reports at State and Federal level. Local affiliate Treasurers will be responsible for their local's reports.
- (c) The Treasurer will also keep records of all dues paying members and provide such records to the Secretary and/or Membership Committee.
- (d) The Treasurer must meet NJ ELEC requirements to be a treasurer of a political party committee.
- (e) The Treasurer may, with the approval of the Green Council, appoint a Deputy Treasurer. Approval must meet the specific majority requirements set forth within these bylaws.

Section 5.4.2 The Deputy Treasurer

- (a) The Deputy Treasurer will act as Treasurer in absence of the Treasurer at GPNJ events.
- (b) The Deputy Treasurer will be the second signatory on GPNJ bank accounts.
- (c) The Deputy Treasurer may collect donations, make deposits, and assist the Treasurer with their duties.
- (d) The Deputy Treasurer will NOT have voting authority on the Green Council, but may give Treasurer reports at Green Council or GPNJ meetings.
- (e) The Deputy Treasurer must meet NJ ELEC requirements to be a treasurer of a political party committee.

Section 5.4.3 Vacancy of Treasurer

In the event of vacancy of treasurer, the Deputy Treasurer may serve as interim treasurer until the executive committee can appoint a treasurer to serve the remainder of the term. Appointment must meet the majority approval requirement of voting in these bylaws.

Section 5.5 -- Executive Committee Staff

The Executive Committee may appoint other Members to assist the Executive Committee. Such Members shall serve at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

Section 5.6 -- Authority

Within the limitations established by these Bylaws, the Executive Committee shall have the authority to decide all substantive and procedural matters that significantly involve the Party as a whole. This shall include but not be limited to the authority to

- (a) delegate decision-making authority or specific tasks to a Standing Committee or to a Special Committee;

- (b) make recommendations to or issue guidance to a Standing Committee or to a Special Committee;
- (c) request specific actions by a Standing Committee or a Special Committee;
- (d) delineate the responsibilities of each Standing Committee and decide any jurisdictional issue that is not resolved by the affected Standing Committees;
- (e) appoint Executive Committee Staff; and
- (f) expel or discipline any Member for good cause, pursuant to Rules and subject to the review of the Membership Committee.

Section 5.7 -- Governance

- (a) Voting on any motion shall be determined by a simple majority of Executive Committee members present, unless otherwise provided for in these Bylaws.
- (b) One Half (1/2) of the non-vacant Executive Committee positions shall constitute a quorum.
- (c) Rules may be issued on substantive or procedural matters.

Section 6 -- New Jersey Green Council

Section 6.1 -- Composition

The Executive Committee members along with the Coordinators of the Local Affiliates and Caucus Liaisons shall constitute the New Jersey Green Council.

Section 6.2 -- Local Affiliate Coordinators

A Local Affiliate Coordinator shall be elected by the Members who reside in a particular county or group of contiguous counties, as authorized by the Members residing in those counties. Each Local Affiliate Coordinator shall serve at the pleasure of their Local Affiliate on the New Jersey Green Council and act as a liaison to the Membership Committee. Local Affiliate Coordinators are required to attend all Green Council meetings, participate in discussions, and vote on all proposals unless excused by a member of the Executive Committee in writing.

Section 6.3 -- Caucus Liaisons

A Caucus Liaison shall be elected by the Members of a Caucus. Each Liaison shall serve at the pleasure of their Caucus on the New Jersey Green Council and is required to attend all Green Council meetings, participate in discussions, submit monthly reports, and vote on all proposals unless excused by a member of the Executive Committee in writing.

Section 6.3.1 Identity Caucuses

(a) Each Caucus is open to participation by any Member in good standing who identifies accordingly. The following Caucuses are established and are empowered to create their own bylaws and rules for undertaking and fulfilling the below listed responsibilities within the limits of GPNJ rules and bylaws, and subject to approval by the Green Council by vote:

(1) Black Caucus, which shall have the following general responsibilities: recruitment of Members; coordinating volunteers; acting as liaison to Local Affiliates and ally organizations; educating and providing feedback, writing relevant proposals and voting on all proposals, participating in all standing committees, and providing monthly reports from a Black perspective.

(2) Latinx Caucus, which shall have the following general responsibilities: recruitment of Members; coordinating volunteers; acting as liaison to Local Affiliates and ally organizations; educating and providing feedback, writing relevant proposals and voting on all proposals, participating in all standing committees, and providing monthly reports from a Latinx perspective.

(3) Lavender Caucus, which shall have the following general responsibilities: recruitment of Members; coordinating volunteers; acting as liaison to Local Affiliates and ally organizations; educating and providing feedback, writing relevant proposals and voting on all proposals, participating in all standing committees, and providing monthly reports from an LGBTQIA perspective.

(b) If at any time the Executive Committee determines that a new caucus is necessary, it shall have the authority to establish a provisional caucus. The Executive Committee shall set forth a statement of purpose and responsibilities for that caucus to be published on the GPNJ website under that caucus's subpage. That provisional caucus shall have full caucus rights and

responsibilities until the next Annual Convention, where the establishment of the caucus is to be voted on by the General Membership by form of an amendment that will be reflected in the bylaws.

Section 6.3.2 -- Authority

(a) For a Caucus to have representation on the New Jersey Green Council, it must contain at least three members.

(b) Each Caucus may (1) act on matters within its areas of responsibility, after consent of the Executive Committee; (2) act on matters involving its own procedures and housekeeping; (3) issue Rules on substantive or procedural matters, with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee; (4) recommend actions or alternatives to the Executive Committee; and (5) implement decisions of the Executive Committee.

Section 6.4 -- Authority

(a) The New Jersey Green Council shall advise the Executive Committee and shall have the responsibility of deciding matters related to the procedural conduct or ethical behavior of Executive Committee members.

Section 6.5 -- Governance

(a) Voting on any motion shall be determined by a simple majority of New Jersey Green Council members present, unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws.

(b) The New Jersey Green Council is required to meet at least twelve (12) times per calendar year. The established pattern is biweekly online meetings. A simple majority of the New Jersey Green Council members shall constitute a quorum.

(c) To ensure the widest range of voices contribute to discussions and proposals, and to ensure that the Green Council is able to meet its goals and responsibilities, all members must participate equally. If a member misses three (3) consecutive meetings and/or votes without being excused in advance, that member will be suspended from quorum and a notice will be sent out to the caucus, committee, or local affiliate for which that member is an elected representative. To restore voting privileges, a meeting must be held between the Membership Committee, the member, and their caucus, chapter, or committee to resolve the barriers to participation and determine a way to re-establish participation. This meeting can occur online or in-person according to accommodate the greatest number of stakeholders and the Membership Committee will create the rules and guidelines around each individual case as it occurs.

Section 7 -- National Committee Delegates and Alternates

(a) The role of the National Committee Delegates (2) and Alternate Delegates (2) is to participate in the National Committee discussions, monitor these discussions on behalf of GPNJ, and report monthly to the GPNJ Green Council and membership. The NC Delegates are responsible for voting on the NC votes list on behalf of GPNJ, and the NC Alternate Delegates are to observe the votes of the NC.

(b) In the event that a GPNJ NC Delegate cannot vote or needs to step down, an Alternate Delegate will be given the opportunity to fill the role of voting.

(c) National Committee Delegates and Alternates are elected at the annual convention for one year terms. Neither an NC Delegate nor an Alt. Delegate may serve longer than 2 consecutive years.

(d) If a delegate or alternate slot becomes vacant due to resignation or more than 3 months of non-participation or missing 3 consecutive votes, the party may elect a new delegate/alternate using the procedure outlined in Section 7.1 for national committee members.

Section 7.1 -- Members of National (GPUS) Committees from New Jersey

(a) The role of GPUS committee members is defined by the committee but generally includes participation in online conversations, attending meetings, and voting on proposals.

(b) Members of the Green Party of New Jersey who wish to be considered for appointment as delegates to standing committees of GPUS may contact a member of the Green Council to put their names forward. The Green Council member will submit a voting proposal with a brief bio of each person that describes their past work with the Green Party and why they want to serve on this national committee. The Green Council will vote by email or voice roll call on each candidate proposed. Each candidate who receives a majority of Yes votes will be considered elected to the desired committee. The co-chairs will together contact GPUS to let them know of the appointment.

(c) Members of national committees from GPNJ may serve up to two years before going through the election process again.

Section 8 -- Conventions

Section 8.1 -- Annual Conventions

A statewide Annual Convention of Members shall be held for the election of Officers, and for deciding other significant matters, as determined by the Executive Committee or by a Petition. Local Affiliates may submit to the Executive Committee proposals for consideration; such proposals must be received for review by the Executive Committee at least thirty (30) days prior to the starting date of the Annual Convention.

Section 8.2 -- Special Conventions

A statewide Special Convention may be held at any time, upon at least thirty (30) days notice to Members, if the Chair, the Executive Committee, or a Petition determines that the matter to be acted upon should not be postponed until the next Annual Convention.

Section 8.3 -- Voting procedures at Conventions

- (a) Votes at Annual Conventions or Special Conventions will be cast by Representatives from Local Affiliates. For each Convention, the Executive Committee shall determine the Representatives-to-Members Ratio and inform all Local Affiliates of said ratio at least 30 days prior to the starting date of the Convention. On the basis of this information, the Local Affiliates shall choose their apportioned number of Representatives and notify the Membership Committee of the names of the Representatives (unless the Ratio is 1:1, in which case each Member in good standing is a Representative). If the Ratio is not 1:1, the method for selecting delegates from counties without a Local Affiliate shall be determined by the Executive Committee.
- (b) Voting for Officers and other elected officials shall be by ballot, and no motion to the contrary shall be in order, except that in the event the number of candidates nominated for a given office does not exceed the number to be elected to that office, a ballot for that office may be dispensed with by unanimous consent.
- (c) At an Annual Convention or Special Convention, one-fifth of the number of apportioned Representatives eligible to vote at that convention shall constitute a quorum.

Section 8.4 -- Planning and Implementation

The Membership Committee with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee, shall be responsible for the planning and implementation of Annual Conventions and Special Conventions, including the development of Rules to establish an open process for the nomination of Officers which informs and involves the membership.

Section 9 -- Voting Procedures

(a) Any reference to voting in this document shall be construed to refer both to voting in person at a meeting or electronically during the gaps between meetings of the Green Council.

(b) In the case of any Standing Committee, any committee member may make a proposal on any area within the Standing Committee's authority. Once a proposal is made, discussion is to occur on that proposal, and any amendments may be offered. At any time during this discussion a member may move that the proposal be adopted.

(c) Once a motion to adopt a proposal is made, voting shall begin, except in the case that the Committee Chair decides, on feedback from the Committee, that the motion to vote was premature. In this case, the process will revert to Robert's rules and a call to question must be affirmed by a (2/3) majority.

(d) Once a proposal is made pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, each committee member has 72 hours to cast a ballot either yes, no, or in abstention. Failure to vote will be recorded in keeping with the requirements of Section 4.3(f).

(e) In the case of the Executive Committee or New Jersey Green Council, any member may make a proposal on any matter within its authority. Once a proposal is made, discussion is to occur on that proposal, and any amendments may be offered. At any time during this discussion a member may move that the proposal be adopted.

(f) Once a motion to adopt a proposal is made, voting shall begin, except in the case that the Party Chair decides, on feedback from the body, that the motion to vote was premature. In this case, the process will revert to Robert's rules and a call to question must be affirmed by a (2/3) majority.

(g) Once a proposal is made pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, each committee member has 72 hours to cast a ballot either yes, no, or in abstention. Failure to vote will be recorded in keeping with the requirements of Section 6.3(b).

Section 10 -- Candidates for Public Office

The New Jersey Green Council may decide whether a prospective candidate will have the support of the Party.

Section 11 -- Responsiveness

Section 11.1 -- Open Meetings

Meetings of all bodies of the Party are open to the attendance of any Member, with the following exception: If a body determines that valid reasons exist that require it to conduct some of its business in closed session, it must adopt a resolution to that effect by a majority vote in open session, clearly stating those reasons. While in closed session, the only items which may be discussed or acted upon are those to which that resolution applies, and no motion to suspend this provision shall be in order. The minutes and other records of such closed sessions will be made available to the Executive Committee without delay, and will become available for inspection under the provisions of Section 11.2 as soon as the reasons for its secrecy no longer exist.

Section 11.2 -- Open Records

Records of the Party shall be made available to any Member for inspection or photocopying. The requesting Member shall pay the costs of reproduction and mailing.

Section 11.3 -- Petitions

- (a) Any Member in good standing may initiate a Petition and circulate it among the general membership at the Member's own expense. A Petition may concern any matter and request any action not inconsistent with these Bylaws.
- (b) If one-fourth of the Members sign a Petition, the Executive Committee shall deal with the matter at hand in a timely fashion and to the satisfaction of the petitioners or shall submit the matter to a vote at an Annual Convention or a Special Convention.
- (c) The Secretary shall certify a Petition to the Executive Committee.

Section 12 -- Local Affiliates and Liaisons

The Executive Committee, with the advice and consent of the New Jersey Green Council, may establish Rules providing for the affiliation of the Party with other organizations ("Local Affiliates" or "Identity Caucuses"), smaller in scope than the whole Party, and providing for the equitable and proportional involvement of these Local Affiliates and Liaisons in the decision-making processes of the Party. Any Rule so established shall contain provisions to ensure that Local Affiliates and Liaisons continue to operate in a manner consistent with these Bylaws and with other duly adopted Rules.

Section 13 -- Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in *Robert's Rules of Order Revised* shall govern the Party in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws or with any special Rules of order duly adopted by the Party.

Section 14 -- Amendments

An Amendment to these Bylaws may be adopted upon a two-thirds vote at an Annual Convention or a Special Convention, provided that the bylaw proposals were posted on the official GPNJ website and not later than thirty (30) days in advance, indicating the language to be amended, and describing the nature and intent of the proposed change. Email sent to the GPNJ listservs and Local Coordinators for distribution shall constitute written notice.

These Bylaws reflect the latest version of this document and incorporate the most recent amendments, made in 2019.

