

## **Portland General Membership Branch Bylaws**

*As approved by branch referendum  
April 26th, 2026*

### **Article 1: Name and Purpose**

1. The name of this chartered body of the IWW is the Portland General Membership Branch (GMB).
2. The GMB shall nurture workplace and industry organizing efforts within Portland, OR, and its surrounding metropolitan area in order to build worker power toward creating a free society.
3. Bylaws are made available upon request to any member in good standing.

### **Article 2: Membership**

1. Membership in the GMB is open to all IWW members. Ability to participate in meetings, including the right to vote is determined by the dues status of a member.
2. Only members in good standing of the Portland GMB are implicitly allowed entry to and voice in a GMB meeting. IWW members who are at large, from other Industrial Union Branches or General Membership Branches are allowed to be present in the meeting, but may not be allowed voice unless approved by vote of a majority of members at the meeting. Non-members of the GMB are allowed to be present at the GMB meeting only if approved by a majority of members at the meeting. Non-members may also be allowed voice at a meeting if approved by a majority of members at the meeting in a separate vote.
3. IWW members who are not members of Portland GMB can become GMB members by meeting with a branch delegate and having their dues processed through the Portland branch secretary.
4. Members pay dues and dues are shared between the branch and the North American Regional Administration in accordance with the IWW Constitution.
5. Branch members who are employed at a union shop endorsed by the branch may choose to have all of their local share of dues money deposited in their shop's designated fund instead of the branch's general fund. This option

will only be available to members who pay dues through the branch's electronic funds transfer (EFT). This option will also be the default for shop members paying dues through the branch's EFT. The secretary is responsible for tracking which members are in union shops, how much these members pay in monthly dues, and for passing this information to the treasurer each month. The treasurer will be responsible for depositing shop members dues money to their respective shop funds.

### **Article 3: Branch Business Meetings**

1. Portland GMB business meetings occur at least once every month at a well advertised time and place to be determined either at a previous branch meeting or by the branch secretary if no meeting time/place was previously set or an extreme circumstance arises.

2. A quorum of five members in good standing must be present to conduct any business meeting.

3. Decisions at GMB business meetings are made by majority vote of members present who are in good standing with dues and registered members of the branch. Anyone more than two months behind on their dues will not be able to vote, unless approved by those present at the meeting.

4. Before the conclusion of each meeting, meeting roles for the next meeting (e.g., chair, note-taker, sergeant-at-arms, parliamentarian, snacks) are to be decided.

5. Submitting items (motions, proposals, or reports) for a branch business meeting should be completed 24 hours prior to the start of the GMB meeting. Consideration for tardy submissions are determined by the Secretary.

### **Article 4: Annual Special Sessions**

1. The Portland GMB conducts at least one Annual Planning Session in the months of January or February. Members are encouraged to use these sessions as an opportunity to reflect on the challenges of the previous and upcoming years and discuss vision going forward. Officers, committees, and the general membership are encouraged to bring drafted proposals and topics for discussion to the Planning Sessions. This will be an opportunity to discuss and vote on annual goals, priorities, or vision.

2. At the December branch business meeting a motion shall be made by the chair or from the floor to empower a committee responsible for planning and ensuring the execution of the special session(s).

## **Article 5: Branch Referenda**

1. The branch holds an annual referendum for all members of the branch.
2. An election committee is to be struck at the January business meeting & the referendum ballot is created and sent by the election committee per the timeline in the next section.
3. The following timeline outlines the steps for the referendum:

### January Branch Business Meeting

- The chair declares nominations are opened for all elected officers on referendum ballot, and an elections committee is struck
- The elections committee shall collect all nominations, who present the compiled list to the Secretary by the February GMB meeting
- The chair notifies the branch that all bylaw amendments or other matters for the ballot must be submitted to the February Branch Business Meeting

### February Branch Business Meeting

- The chair declares nominations closed for all elected officers on referendum ballot
- Each person nominated shall have to accept or reject their nomination, either in physical or electronic writing sent to the Secretary or elections committee or verbally in the January or February GMB meeting; failure to respond shall be considered a rejection of the nomination. If accepted in writing, that must be received by the Secretary and passed to the elections committee by the time the ballots are compiled and sent out.
- All bylaw amendments and other referendum proposals must be submitted with the support of either 10 members or a majority vote at the February branch meeting.

Within one week of the close of the February GMB, the election committee shall compile and send the referenda to the entire branch.

### April Branch Business Meeting

- Final ballots are counted in person by the elections committee members or by designees of the Secretary if they are unable to attend the meeting. At least two people are required to count the physical ballots and their count added to the electronic results; all counts must match before counting is complete.
  - The elections committee or designees shall report the pass/fail for each measure or amendment and winner of each election on the ballot to the meeting to be recorded in the Minutes.
  - Unless found to be invalid by a two-thirds majority vote of members at the April Business Meeting, results of the annual referendum are affirmed. An invalid election shall be left to the elections committee and the Secretary to rerun the election in a reasonable timeline
4. Special referenda can be called for specific matters including:
1. Recalling branch officer in accordance with “Officers” Article below
  2. Amending these bylaws in accordance with “Amendments” Article below
  3. Other matters that merit the voice of the entire branch by referendum ballot. Matters can be brought to referendum with the support of 10 members in good standing or a vote at a regular branch business meeting. Matters decided by special referendum will have the same authority as matters decided at branch business meeting.
5. All referenda/ballot elections conducted by the branch will be in accordance with any relevant legal requirements such as the U.S. Department of Labor.

## **Article 6: Unions, Campaigns, and Projects**

1. The branch can create, authorize, or accept the affiliation of unions in workplaces, organizing campaigns, or projects by majority vote.
2. Official branch unions, campaigns and projects have autonomous control over their own affairs and public appearance provided their actions do not contradict the decisions of or harm the branch. They are expected to be responsible affiliates of the branch and understand that the branch will in most cases bear the final legal liability for their actions.
3. The branch can authorize budgeted branch funds for these bodies and hold any funds collected by them in the branch bank account. If branch funds are budgeted for unions, campaigns or projects they must be spent in accordance with the approved allocated budget, but these bodies can determine their own internal policies regarding spending authorization. Any spending authorized must be noted in written meeting notes that the branch treasurer has access to.

4. Official branch unions, campaigns and projects must report to the branch in writing or by sending a delegate to the GMB quarterly and provide an explanation to the branch secretary of their internal decision making structures upon request.

## **Article 7: Safer Space**

1. The branch strives to be a safer space than the broader society for marginalized and oppressed people and those who have experienced trauma.

### 2. Safer Spaces Policy

The IWW is a union committed to the emancipation of the working class. The working class is diverse and we realize that oppression is many layered. As such, we strive to keep our common spaces free from oppressive action, behavior, and language.

These oppressive actions and words include, but are not limited to: racism, sexism, homophobia, and expressions of disrespect and/or intolerance of size, gender identity, physical ability, age, educational level, or cultural background. We want to learn from and educate each other. We will each be responsible for addressing these issues in ourselves and others. This policy is not about censorship, but rather opening a dialog in a respectful way.

If a member feels like this policy is being violated, and is uncomfortable bringing this up personally, they are encouraged to seek an ally of their choosing to advocate for them. In a meeting, a person can ask for a point of personal privilege to take a break and discuss this with necessary parties. The chair should be conscious of this policy, and address issues as they arise. Further, space shall be defined as any meeting, event or official branch communication that is IWW sponsored.

3. Violations of the “Safer Spaces Policy” will be treated as violations of these bylaws and subject to the enforcement article of these bylaws.

## **Article 8: Finances**

1. The branch has a bank account on which the treasurer and any assistant treasurers

are authorized. Members may be authorized on the bank account in addition to the treasurer and assistant treasurer(s) by a majority vote at a branch business meeting.

2. The branch may maintain a budget of projected expenses on a fiscal year from July 1st to June 30th. The budget is approved at the June branch business meeting. Projects such as campaigns, committees, or shop unions included in the branch budget cannot spend more money than is authorized in their budget.

The budget can be amended by majority vote at a branch business meeting.

3. Any previously unapproved funds or reimbursements must be approved by a majority vote at a branch business meeting.

4. The Portland GMB may appoint an Audit Committee annually of at least three members to audit the branch's finances over the previous year in compliance with the Department of Labor's standards for an audit.

## **Article 9: Officers**

1. The branch elects and empowers certain members as officers to fulfill specific responsibilities and be authorized to take certain actions.

2. Officers in addition to those listed below may be created through the normal nomination process of the branch.

3. It is strongly recommended that no officer serve more than 2 consecutive terms

4. All Officers are subject to recall by referendum through a vote conducted by referendum ballot. To initiate the recall of a GMB Officer to be approved for referendum, a written motion for that officer's recall must be endorsed by at least 10 GMB members in good standing and submitted to the Secretary digitally or in writing, or endorsed by a regular monthly branch meeting. In order to recall a GMB Officer, a simple majority of the respondents to the referendum must vote in favor of recall.

### **5. Secretary**

A branch secretary is elected by all member referendum to serve a term from May 1st to May 31st of the next year (a thirteen month term).

The branch secretary is responsible for ensuring the following is accomplished:

- a. Complete and submit the monthly branch secretary treasurer report to

General Headquarters;

- b. Administer internal branch communication systems (e.g. branch email lists)
- c. Ensure all internal branch documents and records (including these by-laws) are accurate, up to date, and accessible to the membership
- d. Maintain all official communications between the branch and outside parties.
- e. Provides accurate information of current membership in good standing at each monthly branch business meeting.
- f. Working with the treasurer to ensure all governmental regulations and requirements are complied with.
- g. Submit monthly report to the branch business meeting regarding activities.

The branch secretary is authorized to do the following:

- a. Have access to membership information of all branch members;
- b. Release public communications on behalf of the branch;
- c. Change the time and place of branch business meetings;
- d. Know the login information for any branch services.

One or more assistant secretaries can be elected either by referendum or at a branch business meeting to support the secretary and have the same authorization and responsibilities at the secretary.

At the end of the branch secretary's term, it is required that the current secretary conduct onboarding with the incoming secretary, including ensuring new secretary has access to all accounts, has an understanding of the reports needing to be filed with GHQ and how to file them, and any and all other tasks required of the secretary.

#### 6. *Treasurer*

A branch treasurer is elected by all member referendum to serve a term from May 1st to May 31st of the next year (a thirteen month term).

The branch treasurer is responsible for ensuring the following is accomplished:

- a. Disbursal of branch funds;
- b. Accurate accounting for branch funds;
- c. Ensuring all funds disbursed are properly authorized and are in accordance with the approved budget;
- d. Making branch finances available to inspection in a reasonable amount of time upon request of any member in good standing.

- e. Working with the secretary to ensure all governmental regulations and requirements are complied with;
- f. Supporting the branch audit committee;
- g. Submission of an optional Projected Annual Budget, with the help of the budget committee if needed, at the June GMB of each year. The Budget should include details of expected income and expenses for the following fiscal year, July 1st through June 30th;
- h. Submitting monthly reports to the branch business meeting regarding activities.

The branch treasurer is authorized to do the following:

- a. Sign checks from branch bank account;
- b. Manage branch bank account(s);
- c. Disperse funds up to \$50 without prior approval from the branch, which must be reported at the next business meeting;
- d. Know the login information for any branch services and subscriptions.

One or more assistant treasurers can be elected either by referendum or at a branch business meeting to support the treasurer and have the same authorization and responsibilities as the treasurer.

At the end of the branch treasurer's term, it is required that the current treasurer conduct onboarding with the incoming secretary, including ensuring new secretary has access to all accounts, has an understanding of the reports needing to be filed with GHQ and how to file them, and any and all other tasks required of the treasurer.

### *7. Delegates*

The branch elects delegates in accordance with the IWW constitution for purposes of signing up new members and collecting dues and other funds from existing members.

Delegates are elected by vote of the members present at the March GMB and serve through March 31st the following year. Delegates may be elected by vote of the GMB at other times in the year, but their term also ends on March 31st. Delegates may be reelected.

The Secretary may delegate their reporting role in the EFT collection system to one of the Delegates, called the EFT Delegate, and give them appropriate authorization with the branch bank account to collect dues electronically from members who agree to the EFT system administered by the bank.

Delegates have the authority to:

- a. See branch member information;
- b. Collect money on behalf of the branch.

#### **8. *Replacing Officers Mid-Term***

An officer can leave voluntarily mid term by informing the branch of their resignation. In addition to the referendum ballot recall process, an officer can also be recalled by a majority vote at a branch business meeting. If an officer leaves, either by resignation or recall, a new member can be elected to complete the term by majority vote at a branch business meeting.

### **Article 10: Branch Communication Systems**

1. The branch maintains various means of communication subject to policies passed by the GMB in business meetings. These policies shall be made available upon request.
2. Branch communications platforms will be treated as branch spaces and subject to the Safer Space Policy and non-branch members may be barred from them.

### **Article 11: Legal Bargaining Units**

1. Shop steward systems may be established by unions in workplaces.
2. Grievances in collective bargaining agreements are to be handled in accordance with the processes described in the "How We Do Things" document.
3. Should a worker commit an act of gendered, racial, or other kind of dehumanizing harm (including but not limited to sexual harassment, sexual assault, racist language, and racist violence), and the worker is covered by a collective bargaining agreement between an employer and the Portland GMB intended to protect said worker from discipline, neither the Portland GMB nor any of its bodies shall pursue a grievance on behalf of the worker for discipline related to that dehumanizing harm.
4. Efforts to make the Portland GMB the legally certified exclusive bargaining representative at a workplace (through NLRB election or voluntary recognition) must be approved by a majority vote at a branch business meeting.

### **Article 12: Enforcement and accountability**

Violations of these by-laws are subject to the complaints process outlined in the IWW Constitution or the process to place restrictions to branch membership detailed in these

by-laws.

### **Article 13: Restrictions to Member Rights**

1. The GMB has the power to restrict the rights of GMB members. The process must be democratic, in line with the goals of the IWW, conducted by majority vote at a GMB meeting. This process must not violate any applicable laws regarding the rights of union members such as the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act. This process must also prioritize justice and healing for branch members and strive to minimize the harm done in its enactment.

2. Members may have their rights restricted in ways including but not limited to the following:

- a. Barring from union spaces including meetings, events, actions, and communication platforms;
- b. Barring from holding a branch office or presenting themselves as representatives of the branch;
- c. Barring from taking on certain roles such as specific actions roles, or child supervision;
- d. Expulsion from the Portland GMB

3. The decision to restrict a member's rights shall take place at a GMB meeting and will necessitate a majority vote.

4. A union member's rights can be restored through a two-thirds majority vote of a GMB or branch referendum.

### **Article 14: Amendments**

1. Any part of these bylaws may be amended through a majority vote of the branch membership through a referendum vote.

2. For a proposed amendment of these bylaws to be approved for referendum, a written motion stating the amended articles must be endorsed and signed by at least 10 GMB members in good standing, or endorsed by a regular monthly branch meeting.

3. Once the amendments are passed by referendum, the Secretary or their delegate(s) shall apply the amendments to the bylaws and send a link to the draft of the updated bylaws to the membership of the branch within one week of the April GMB meeting where the amendments passed. Members shall have until the May GMB meeting to review and identify any grammatical errors and bring them to the attention of the

Secretary or their delegate(s), who can update the draft at their discretion. Care must be taken to ensure that only grammatical or formatting mistakes are corrected; the spirit of the amendments as passed by the membership in the referendum must be honored. At the May GMB meeting, the Secretary shall publish the final version of the revised bylaws (e.g., by sharing a link or printed hand-outs), and any further revisions to the bylaws must go through the full amendment process.

#### **Article 15: Conflicting Parts**

1. All parts of the GMB bylaws conflicting with the IWW Constitution are null and void.

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