

Constitution of the Libertarian Party of Washington State

As Last Amended in Convention 25 March 2023

Statement of Principles

We, the members of the Libertarian Party, challenge the cult of the omnipotent state and defend the rights of the individual.

We hold that all individuals have the right to exercise sole dominion over their own lives, and have the right to live in whatever manner they choose, so long as they do not forcibly interfere with the equal right of others to live in whatever manner they choose.

Governments throughout history have regularly operated on the opposite principle, that the State has the right to dispose of the lives of individuals and the fruits of their labor. Even within the United States, all political parties other than our own grant to government the right to regulate the lives of individuals and seize the fruits of their labor without their consent.

We, on the contrary, deny the right of any government to do these things, and hold that where governments exist, they must not violate the rights of any individual: namely, (1) the right to life — accordingly we support the prohibition of the initiation of physical force against others; (2) the right to liberty of speech and action — accordingly we oppose all attempts by government to abridge the freedom of speech and press, as well as government censorship in any form; and (3) the right to property — accordingly we oppose all government interference with private property, such as confiscation, nationalization, and eminent domain, and support the prohibition of robbery, trespass, fraud, and misrepresentation.

Since governments, when instituted, must not violate individual rights, we oppose all interference by government in the areas of voluntary and contractual relations among individuals. People should not be forced to sacrifice their lives and property for the benefit of others. They should be left free by government to deal with one another as free traders; and the resultant economic system, the only one compatible with the protection of individual rights, is the free market.

Article I: Name and Affiliation

1. The name of this organization will be the Libertarian Party of Washington State Incorporated, hereinafter referred to as “the Party” or “LPWA”.
2. We, the sustaining members of the Party, desire to clearly state that we want the Libertarian Party of Washington to remain affiliated with and supportive of the national Libertarian Party by default. Any move to disaffiliate the state party from national – or to disband the state party entirely – must have support of a seven-eighths (7/8) majority vote of all delegates at an annual convention in which notice has been included that this topic will be voted on.

Article II: Purpose and Duration

The duration of this Party will be perpetual. The purpose of the Party is to proclaim and implement its Statement of Principles by:

1. Nominating and running candidates for office in the State of Washington;
2. Entering into political information and educational activities;
3. Promoting, chartering, and coordinating regional organizations throughout the State of Washington;
4. Calling conventions of Libertarian Party Members within the State of Washington;
5. Providing delegates for national Libertarian Party conventions;
- and
6. Filling vacancies on the Libertarian Party ticket.

Article III: Controlling Documents

1. The controlling documents of the Party are this Constitution and the Party Bylaws. Authority for procedures not otherwise addressed in the Controlling Documents is the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order, newly revised.
2. Some specific procedures that will be done differently than that specified in Robert's Rules include the following:
 - a. Digital Meetings. All meetings of the Party, except the annual convention itself, may be done, in whole or in part, via digital or electronic means.
 - b. Reading in Debate. Reading shall be allowed in debate. Additionally, video presentation or any other method of sharing information germane to the debate shall be allowed, even though it may not come fresh in the moment from the participant's mind or voice box.
 - c. Voting members at a meeting may allow non-voting members (or even person who are not members of the Party) to speak in meetings, but the voting members in the meeting retain their right to withdraw that privilege if they desire.
 - d. Voting within the corporation will be done in accordance with Article XVII of this Constitution, even when those actions contradict the normal voting processes of the established parliamentary rules.
 - e. Absentee voting will be allowed within the corporation for all meetings except the annual convention. See Article XVII, section H. Absentee voting, when used, does not affect quorum requirements; quorum requirements must still be met without counting any absentee votes that members hold.

Article IV: Membership

1. Any person residing within the State of Washington who endorses in writing the following statement is a member of the Party:

“I do not believe in nor advocate the initiation of force as a means of achieving political or social goals.”

2. The requirement and standards for membership will be set forth in the Party Bylaws.

Article V: BCRA Compliance

1. The Party shall not make any purchase, payment, distribution, loan, advance, deposit, or gift of money or anything of value for the purpose of influencing any election for federal office.
2. Nothing in these documents is meant to directly influence federal election activity.

Article VI: Officers

A. General

1. The Party shall have four (4) Party Officers, as follows: State Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary.
2. Party Officers will be elected individually, on separate ballots, in the order set forth above, at the annual Party Convention. No offices shall be combined.
3. Terms of office for Party Officers will commence after adjournment of the annual convention in odd numbered years, and terminate after adjournment of the annual convention in the succeeding odd numbered year.
4. Only Party sustaining members eligible to vote at the annual Party convention may serve as Party Officers.
5. Party Officers have the executive powers and duties of the Party. Additional powers and duties of the Party Officers are set forth herein and in the Bylaws.
6. In the event that the office of State Chair becomes vacant, the Vice-Chair shall become the State Chair for the remainder of the term.
7. The State Executive Committee may appoint or reinstate Party Officers other than the State Chair if vacancies or suspensions occur, such officers to serve the remainder of the vacated term.
8. Any Party Officer may be suspended for cause by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the State Executive Committee. The Vice-Chair is recused from voting to suspend the State Chair.

9. A Party Officer may challenge their suspension by written appeal to the Judicial Committee within thirty (30) days of receipt of notice of such suspension. Failure to appeal within thirty (30) days shall confirm the suspension and bar any later challenge or appeal.
10. Members of the State Executive Committee shall not be members of any political party in the State of Washington other than the LPWA or its affiliates

B. Disciplinary Action: In the event disciplinary action must be considered for an Officer of the Party and/or a member of the State Executive Committee, the following process shall be taken:

1. If the person has access to sensitive accounts or items, those accounts or items shall be temporarily disabled during the investigation. If any item shall not be able to be locked or disabled, the person under consideration shall be notified to cease use of any such items or accounts until further notice. This shall be done in writing and must be certified by the Secretary, or the highest-ranking member of the State Executive Committee not being considered for discipline.
2. The person under consideration for disciplinary action shall be notified no less than seven (7) days before the next meeting of the State Executive Committee. The notice shall include a list of charges so that the person may prepare their defense.
3. A notice to the State Executive Committee must be submitted for an executive session to hold a hearing. Once proper notice has been given and the meeting is in progress, the hearing will commence in the following manner:

Note: For the purpose of clarity, the following is defined:

- The person(s) presenting the complaint shall be referred to as the plaintiff.
- The person(s) address by the complaint shall be referred to as the defendant.

- a. The complaint shall be heard.
- b. The plaintiff shall provide evidence to support the complaint.
- c. The defendant shall reply in contest or no contest. If there is no contest, the proceedings may close.
- d. The defendant may provide evidence in their defense.
- e. Each member of the State Executive Committee may take up to ten (10) minutes to ask questions of the plaintiff and defendant. (Members may not yield their remaining time to another member.)
- f. After each member has had an opportunity to ask questions, the State Executive Committee may take one of the following actions:
 - i) Pursue another round of questioning
 - ii) Convene another session at a determined time
 - iii) Close the hearing and return to general session

- g. At the closure of the hearing, members of the State Executive Committee, the plaintiff, and defendant may make any closing remarks or statements.
- h. At the end of the hearing, the State Executive Committee must make a consensus for one of the following actions:
 - i) Go to general session with no action.
 - ii) Go to general session with a motion.

Article VII: State Executive Committee

A. Membership:

1. There shall be eight (8) Representatives allocated to the State Executive Committee, elected from the Party sustaining membership at the annual State Convention in the manner determined in the Party Bylaws.
2. The Party Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary are members of the State Executive Committee.
3. The State Chair shall preside at State Executive Committee meetings, and may vote only if the Chair's vote would change the outcome.

B. Powers:

1. The State Executive Committee will have all policy making, investigatory, and review authority over all the affairs, properties, and funds of the Party not prohibited by the Controlling Documents of the Party.
2. The State Executive Committee will meet in the manner, and conduct itself according to rules, as provided in the Party Bylaws.
3. The State Executive Committee shall have the power to confirm committee chairs and directors as provided in the Party Bylaws.
4. The State Executive Committee may never expel a member from the Party, but may petition the Judicial Committee to suspend a sustaining member of the Party upon a two-thirds (2/3) vote.

Article VIII: Statutory State Committee

A. Applicability:

Article VIII applies during only such times as when the Party has major party status per state statute.

B. Membership:

The Statutory State Committee shall be composed of Party sustaining members who have been selected by Statutory County Committees to serve on the Statutory State Committee.

C. Powers:

The Statutory State Committee has the following powers:

1. To call conventions of Libertarian Party sustaining members within the State of Washington;
2. To provide delegates for National Libertarian Party conventions;
3. To nominate Presidential electors; and
4. To fill vacancies on the Libertarian Party ticket.
5. The Statutory State Committee will meet in the manner, and conduct itself according to rules, as provided in the Party Bylaws.
6. The Statutory State Committee may delegate its powers to the State Executive Committee, or to an appropriate standing committee created by the controlling documents, or to the Party Convention.

Article IX: Judicial Committee

A. Membership:

1. The Judicial Committee will consist of not more than nine (9) Party sustaining members.
2. A candidate for election to the Judicial Committee must be a Party sustaining member for at least three (3) years.
3. Party Officers and members of the State Executive Committee and the Statutory State Committee are not eligible to serve on the Judicial Committee.
4. Members of the Judicial Committee shall be elected at each annual convention and serve for a period specified in the Bylaws, unless they are recalled by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote at a Party convention.
5. Within sixty (60) days of each annual convention the Judicial Committee shall elect from its members a Chief Justice.
6. Vacancies on the Judicial Committee will be filled at the next annual Party Convention.

B. Powers:

1. The Judicial Committee shall hear appeals or petitions from Party sustaining members concerning:
 - a. Interpretation of the controlling documents;
 - b. Disputes involving access to Party records;
 - c. Suspension of Party Officers; and
 - d. Disputes involving representation on the State Executive Committee, or the Statutory State Committee or its committees

2. The Judicial Committee shall review any petition by the State Executive Committee to suspend a member from the Party.
3. Decisions of the Judicial Committee shall be limited to summary affirmation or reversal of any official act of a Party Officer, or the State Executive Committee or the Statutory State Committee. The State Executive Committee, or the Statutory State Committee, or the appellant/petitioner may request a written opinion from the Judicial Committee.
4. Judicial Committee decisions are subject to repeal by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of delegates at the next Party convention.
5. Members of the Judicial Committee may participate in votes at the meetings even if not able to attend, by way of absentee voting described in Article XVII, section H.
6. The Judicial Committee will meet in the manner and conduct themselves according to the Party Bylaws.

Article X: Regional Organizations

1. The State Executive Committee may charter as regional organizations those organizations requesting such status, to represent counties or other political or geographical entities, if requested by affected members and approved by the State Executive Committee. Regional Organizations may be, in the sole and exclusive discretion of the State Executive Committee, Statutory County Committees. Regional organizations will be chartered for the following purposes:
 - a. Endorsing candidates, initiatives, and city/county bills and ordinances in their name.
 - b. Working to elect Libertarian candidates.
 - c. Promoting Libertarian principles through political information and educational activities.
 - d. Selecting representatives to appropriate Party activities.
2. Every organization so chartered will ratify the Statement of Principles of the LPWA and provide the names and titles of its regional officers to the State Executive Committee annually.

Article XI: Statutory County Committees

A. Applicability:

Article XI applies during only such times as when the Party has major party status per state statute.

B. Membership:

Statutory County Committees are composed of current Party sustaining members in the County who are appointed by the committee chair and confirmed by the County Executive Committee. The committee chair shall be elected by ballot at a convention of Party sustaining members residing in the County. Persons elected as Libertarian Precinct Committee Officers in the county shall have the right to address each meeting of the Statutory County Committee for up to one minute, but shall not have any voting

rights.

C. Powers:

1. Statutory County Committees shall select from their numbers up to two (2) representatives to the Statutory State Committee. Any representative to the Statutory State Committee must have been a sustaining member of the Party for at least one (1) year.
2. Statutory County Committees shall have such other powers as may be delegated by these controlling documents or by the State Executive Committee.
3. The Statutory County Committee will meet in the manner, and conduct itself according to rules, as provided in the Party Bylaws.

Article XII: Annual Party Conventions

1. The Party will meet in convention as provided in the convention rules and the Party Bylaws.
2. Any Party sustaining member is eligible to be a Delegate and when in attendance may vote at convention; provided that they have been a sustaining member of either the Party or the national Libertarian Party on or before the date thirty (30) days before the convention and their membership didn't lapse during the fifteen (15) calendar days prior to the convention as determined by the State Executive Committee or Credentials Chair; provided further, that the eligible Delegates under this section who are at any particular convention may, upon a two-thirds (2/3) vote, waive the requirements of this paragraph for other Party sustaining members who are present but not otherwise eligible to vote at that convention.
3. A quorum shall consist of no less than ten percent of the total current Party sustaining membership qualified to be voting convention delegates, and shall be reported by a Teller Committee Chair prior to commencement of any voting segment of the annual convention.
4. The rules for each convention will be adopted by the convention as its first order of business.
5. At annual conventions Party Officers, State Executive Committee members, and Judicial Committee members shall be elected as provided in the Bylaws, a Party Platform may be adopted or revised, the Constitution and Bylaws may be amended, resolutions may be adopted, and initiatives, bills, ordinances, and candidates for public office may be endorsed or have their endorsement removed.
6. The convention date(s) and location city shall be announced on the homepage of the Party's website and other official publication methods designated by the State Executive Committee at least sixty (60) calendar days prior to the annual convention.
7. In years when a National Libertarian Party Convention is to be held, the annual convention will elect delegates and alternates to the national convention in accordance with procedures set forth in the Party Bylaws. In the event of conflict, selections made by the annual Party convention shall have priority over the selections of the Statutory State Committee.
8. In years when a United States Presidential Election is to be held, the annual convention will elect representatives to the United States Electoral College. In the event of conflict, the selections

made by the annual Party convention shall have priority over the selections of the Statutory State Committee.

A. Special Conventions

1. The State Executive Committee may call a special convention by a four-fifths (4/5) majority vote of those present at a regular State Executive Committee meeting. In the event of conflict, the convention date selected by the State Executive Committee shall have priority.
2. Sustaining members of the Party may call a special convention by submitting a petition to the State Chair, signed by at least twenty-five (25) percent of the Party sustaining members eligible to be voting delegates at convention. Those petitioning will bear all costs including required notification.

Article XIII: Platform

1. The Party may adopt a Platform or plank at the annual Party convention by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of delegates in attendance.
2. Any Platform plank, or the entire Platform, may be repealed by a simple majority vote of delegates at the convention.
3. All platform planks shall be consistent with the Statement of Principles of the Party.

Article XIV: Nomination of Candidates

1. All Libertarian candidates for partisan office shall be sustaining members of the Party, and shall be nominated by sustaining members of the Party.
2. In the event of conflict, the person(s) selected to fill vacancies on the Libertarian Party ticket by the Campaigns Committee or other committee delegated with such power by the annual Party convention shall have priority over the selections of the Statutory State Committee.
3. Nomination of candidates for public office will be according to this Constitution and the Party Bylaws.

Article XV: President and Vice President

The officers of the Party shall notify the Secretary of State of Washington that the candidates for President and Vice President of the United States selected by the national Libertarian Party are the nominees of the Party.

Article XVI: Election Code Superseded

In accordance with the rights of political parties recognized by the Supreme Court of the United States in *Eu v. San Francisco County Democratic Central Comm.*, 489 U.S. 214 (1989), any provision of the Washington State Election Code regarding internal party governance that

conflicts with the provisions of this Constitution or with the Bylaws of the Party is hereby superseded.

Article XVII: Voting

These voting rules apply at all levels of the Party, whether in full membership at conventions, or the State Executive Committee, or even in committees and sub-committees. These rules apply to all types of races or voting, whether for people to fill positions or options to choose between. These rules define the normal default plan for voting, but other systems may be used in certain situations if agreed upon by a three-fourths (3/4) majority of the voting group.

A. Races and votes

1. that don't necessarily require a winner
or
2. in which the number of candidates is the same as
or less than the number of possible winners
or
3. are single-winner races with only two (2) candidates
... shall be performed in accordance with established parliamentary rules.

B. Any time the assembly in any meeting expresses a desire to use more than one (1) level of the parliamentary action to "Amend" – which fundamentally implies that there are more than two (2) candidate options for a single-winner race – shall be considered a race that needs to be decided by the methods below and not be established parliamentary rules.

C. Any call for Division on a vote by any voting member shall result in immediate counted vote.

D. Multi-Winner Races with a required set of winners [in which the number of possible candidates exceeds the number of possible winners] shall be performed using a proportional voting system, usually either a single transferable vote with a finish line (also called Single Transferable Vote or STV) or apportioned score voting.

E. Single-Winner Races with a required winner:

1. If the candidates in the race fall on a clear spectrum (such as selecting a dollar amount to spend on a project), then the race shall be performed in accordance with parliamentary rules for filling a blank.
2. If the candidates in the race are randomly distributed (such as election of officers or selection of a complex budget with more than one variable difference between candidate alternatives), then:
 - a. Unanimous consent is allowed if achieved.

b. If there is time, voting may be performed in accordance with normal parliamentary rules (meaning that each voter only gets to vote for only one candidate and a majority is required to win, but no candidate is required to be dropped from the election, and the election is just repeated until there is a majority winner).

c. If time or resources doesn't allow for enough rounds of voting to get a clear winner by normal parliamentary rules, then the vote shall be performed using either a Condorcet voting system or a score voting system, as the participants shall decide.

F. Ties shall generally be resolved in a manner consistent with parliamentary rules. (For elections and other races that must be decided, this means that all candidates are given the option of dropping out of the race—but none are required to—and then the vote is retaken as many times as necessary until the votes have changed enough to determine a clear winner.) But, if time or resources doesn't allow for more rounds of voting, a tie between candidates shall be resolved by looking at which candidate had the greatest (plurality) support in the closest previous round (if any) – or, failing that, random chance may be employed to determine the winner between any tied candidates.

G. Score voting is a voting method wherein all voters may cast votes for any candidates they choose, with each candidate being scored independently. Generally, when score voting is used by this Party to determine a single winner it shall be done as follows:

1. Valid votes shall be integers in the range of 0-9, inclusive.
2. The winner of the score election shall be the candidate with the highest score.
3. The scores for each candidate shall be calculated by summing the valid votes for that candidate and then be dividing by the greater of:
 - a. the number of valid votes cast for that candidate in that race
 - b. the number of the ballots that contain a valid score for that race

H. In all elections and votes, the write-in candidate of None Of The Above (NOTA) is allowed – even in cases in which nominations are closed and no other write-ins are allowed.

1. In single-winner races. Voters who choose NOTA may not express a vote for anyone else. Ballots that list NOTA and anyone else will be considered invalid. If NOTA wins a race or election, then the position or choice shall be left vacant or blank for the immediate moment. However, Other methods could be used to vote again, such as nominations may be reopened and a new election held. None of the candidates that lost to NOTA may run for or be appointed to the position or choice at least until the next Special or Annual Convention.

2. In multi-winner races, NOTA can win a position, but not necessarily all of them. In this sense, in multi-winner races, NOTA stands not so much for “None Of The Above” and more like “None Of The Additional Options” or “None Of Those Below”.

a. In Approval Voting, Ballots that list NOTA and anyone else will be considered invalid.

b. In Ranked Voting, voters may select NOTA as one of their options and not just the one-and-only option they place on their ballot. In ranked ballots, if a voter lists NOTA in a

numbered position, then none of their votes past that number will be counted, but the ballot themselves will not be automatically considered invalid.

c. If NOTA wins a spot in a multi-winner race or election, then the position or choice shall only be filled with those candidates, if any, that came out ahead of NOTA in the race (and met other criteria such as majority votes). No further candidates coming in behind NOTA in the counting will be allowed to fill that position or choice until at least the next Annual Convention (even in further rounds of voting done at the present convention).

I. Absentee Voting. When allowed in specific situations mentioned in these controlling documents, members with voting power shall be allowed to have their voice heard in votes even if they cannot be physically or electronically present for the vote itself. In any situation in which a member would have voting power if they were present, then that member will be allowed to submit their vote in any number of ways. All absentee votes will need to be verifiable in some way, whether by voice mail or email or signed note or letter or other.

1. Denoted Vote. If the item up for vote is known in detail by the voter—in that the voter has the full word-for-word motion to consider ahead of time—then the voter may just send in their vote on that motion. This would apply to elections as well, as long as the voter knew what position was being voted on and could send in ahead of time their vote for candidate(s) for that position.
2. Proxy Vote. Members with voting power in a situation may send in their vote by transferring their voting power to another member that is present. The decision on how the vote is cast then lies with the present member. (Usually, the present member will cast their vote in the same way as the proxy vote(s) they carry, but that is not required unless specified by the original voter in their transfer of proxy to the proxy voter.) No more than a single proxy vote is allowed to be held by the present member.
3. Members with voting power in a situation may use any combination of absentee voting as long as the intentions are clearly communicated ahead of time in a method verifiable by the authority verifying the vote. This means that a single absent voter may send in a denoted vote for some specific issue(s) and a general proxy vote for any other issues that may come up for vote. Proxy votes may also be set up by the original voter such that the proxy is transferable in cases where the first (or any successor) proxy voter also ends up being absent for some reason. Depending on the intent communicated by the original voter, proxy votes may expire if the proxy holder is absent, or they may transfer to another voter designated by the original voter—or by the proxy voter if that was allowed by the original voter.

Article XVIII: Amendments

1. The Statement of Principles, preamble to this Constitution, affirms the philosophy upon which the Libertarian Party is founded, upon which it shall be sustained, and through which liberty shall prevail. The enduring importance of the Statement of Principles requires that it (and Article I and this paragraph) may be amended only by a seven-eighths (7/8) majority vote of all

delegates at an annual convention in which notice has been included that this topic will be voted on.

2. This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of delegates in attendance at any party convention.
3. The Party Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of delegates in attendance at any Party convention.