

A look at the elections of convention delegates



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As a follow-up to last month's article, I want to remind branches of the constitutional language regarding the election of delegates to national and state conventions. I encourage all branches to review the *NALC Constitution*, branch bylaws (and state bylaws for state delegate-at-large elections) and the *NALC Regulations Governing Branch Election Procedures*. Below, I have selected some pertinent parts of the *NALC Constitution* for review.

Article 4: Delegates to the Convention

Section 1. Each Branch having twenty (20) or less members shall be entitled to one delegate and one vote in the National Convention. Branches having more than twenty (20) members shall be entitled to

one delegate and one vote for each twenty (20) members, or fraction thereof. Each State Association shall be entitled to two Delegates-at-Large. National Officers and Delegates-at-Large shall each be entitled to one vote, as such, provided that vote may not be cast for officers.

Note: Each state association sets a number of delegates each branch is entitled to send to the state convention in its state bylaws. Some state associations have adopted the same number of members entitled for the national convention, but others differ.

Section 3. At the regular election of Branch delegates, the Branch shall elect the same number of alternates as there are delegates elected; and, at the election of Delegates-at-Large, the State Association shall elect also two alternate Delegates-at-Large who shall be recognized as the delegate in the event of the inability of any delegate to attend the Convention, or of the death or resignation of any delegate. The Branch may elect both paid and unpaid delegates and alternates as long as every qualified member has an equal opportunity to run for both the paid and unpaid positions; provided, that the alternate who received the highest number of votes shall be assigned to act instead of any one delegate who is unable to attend such Convention; and, when more than one delegate is unable to attend such Convention, alternates shall be assigned in accordance with the number of votes cast for each one in the election, and shall be certified in such numerical order to act in their stead. A delegate and his/her alternate shall not both be admitted during any one biennial or special meeting. Any vacancy in the office of delegate, Delegate-at-Large, or their alternates may be filled by election by the Branch or by the State Association. An alternate delegate before being admitted to the National Convention shall present either his/her certificate of election or written evidence from the Secretary of his/her Branch, or from the delegate for whom he/she is elected alternate, that the elected delegate is unable to attend the meeting of the National Association.

Article 5: Elections

Section 1. The provisions of this Article shall govern the election of all delegates and alternate delegates to the National Association Convention and to the State Association Convention.

Section 2. All qualified regular members shall be eligible to be a delegate or alternate delegate to the National Association Convention or State Convention, except that any regular member who voluntarily or otherwise, holds, accepts, or applies for a supervisory position in the Postal Service for any period of time, whether one (1) day or fraction thereof, either detailed, acting, probationary or permanently, shall immediately vacate any office held, and shall be ineligible to run for any office or to be a delegate to any Convention for a period of two (2) years after termination of such supervisory status. Upon nomination, the candidate must certify that he/she has not served in a supervisory capacity for the 24 months prior to the nomination.

Section 3. All regular members in good standing of the respective Subordinate Branch shall be entitled to one vote for each delegate and alternate delegate position to be filled.

Section 4. Election of delegates and alternate delegates to the National and State Association Convention shall be made no later than December of the year preceding the convention year. No less than 45 days before each election, the secretary shall mail to every member at his/her last known address, notice of the election, stating that election for National and State Association delegate and alternate shall be held and the time, place, and manner for nomination and election. For purposes of this provision, the requirement that notices be mailed may be satisfied by publication of the notice in The Postal Record or in State or Branch publications that are mailed to the last known address of the member.

Article 5, Section 5 (b). Each candidate shall be nominated at a regular or special meeting of the Branch not less than four (4) weeks before the date of the election, but not less than 10 days after the notice of nomination and election has been sent out. A Branch may, however, provide in its by-laws that nominations may be made in writing, with the nomination to be received by the secretary not less than 30 days before the date of the election.

Article 5, Section (c). Elections shall be by secret ballot.... The Recording Secretary shall preserve for one year the ballots and all other records pertaining to the election.

Article 5, Section (d). In any election of delegates to the National Association Convention, the President and secretary of the Branch or State Association shall inform the Secretary-Treasurer of the National Association in writing the name of every delegate elected through the registration procedure established by the Executive Council. If delegates to the State Association Convention are elected, the secretary will so advise the Secretary of the State Association utilizing the same procedure.

Article 5, Section (e). Elections by State Associations of Delegate(s)-at-Large and alternate Delegate(s)-at-Large shall be as provided in the State Association By-laws.

In summary, all branches are reminded that Articles 4 and 5 of the *NALC Constitution*, in conformance with federal law, require that NALC's convention delegates be elected by the general membership of the branch.