

# Electronic bylaws submission method



**Paul  
Barner**

**A**rticle 15 of the *NALC Constitution* sets forth rules that branches and state associations must follow to approve a change in their bylaws. Branch or state associations bylaws may contain additional provisions. After the proposed bylaws have been approved by the branch or state association, the proposed changes must be submitted to the Committee of Laws for approval.

Over a year ago, NALC developed an electronic bylaw submission method accessed through the Members Only portal on the NALC website. This database will also begin the process of creating

an electronic library of branch and state association bylaw submissions and the resulting rulings by the Committee of Laws that will be accessible to branches and state associations.

To access the bylaws database, branch and state association presidents, secretaries and treasurers can go to the NALC website at [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) and log on to the Members Only portal. Once logged in to the Members Only portal, click the “By-Laws” button, which will access the “Maintain By-Laws” page of the database. From there, bylaws can be created or amended and submitted to the Committee of Laws for action. Bylaw proposal language can be typed directly into the program or copied and pasted. A PDF copy of current bylaws can be submitted by using drag and drop into the database. After the file has been successfully uploaded, a “File Uploaded Complete” verification will appear. Files can be reviewed by clicking the “View Your Uploaded File” tab. Before submitting requests, please ensure that the correct branch information is provided, article and section identifiers are entered for the corresponding bylaw provision or proposed change, and a complete copy of the latest version of bylaws is uploaded into the portal. A detailed PDF tutorial is available for download at every step of the “Maintain By-Laws” application.

Once the Committee of Laws renders its decision, the portal will be updated allowing for viewing of the decision(s) of the committee. A hard copy of the committee’s decision also will be mailed to the address of record of the submitting branch or state association.

The new electronic bylaws submission database is intended to offer an alternative for submitting bylaw proposals for review by the Committee of Laws. Branches and state associations may continue to submit bylaw proposals by mail. Regardless of the submission method, the historical library of bylaw submissions and corresponding decisions from the Committee of Laws will be available for view. Branches and state associations will not be able to view other branch or state association bylaw proposals or those corresponding decisions from the Committee of Laws.

In addition to the electronic format, the NALC will continue to make available a form to make submissions convenient for branches and state associations. The forms and instructions can be found on the NALC website at [nalc.org](http://nalc.org).

---

**“Over a year ago, NALC developed an electronic bylaw submission method accessed through the Members Only portal on the NALC website. This database will also begin the process of creating an electronic library of branch and state association bylaw submissions and the resulting rulings by the Committee of Laws that will be accessible to branches and state associations.”**

---

Once on the homepage, click “Union Administration,” then click on the assistant secretary-treasurer page. There will be a link for “Branch By-Law Changes.” Click this link to find links for the bylaw form that the NALC has made available. The PDF form is executable, allowing it to be completed online and printed out. A non-fillable version of the form also can be accessed by clicking the second form link. This version of the form can be printed and completed manually. Both forms can be used on any operating system (PC, Mac, Linux, etc.). To assist you, there also is an instruction page.

*(continued on next page)*

## Bylaws (continued)

The text space on the form used for entering current and proposed bylaws is not very big. Sometimes a very small font is required to accommodate the required verbiage. When this occurs, please attach a separate sheet in a larger font to the form so it can be more easily read or use multiple forms for the same section.

All parts of the form must be completed, including the date of the first reading/notification, the date of the vote and the signature of a branch officer or state association. Please make sure to include a contact phone number in case the Committee of Laws needs more information.

The exact wording of the prior language must be included along with exact wording of the new language. A general description of the intended change is not adequate. If the prior language has been deleted, write “deleted” in the new language box. If the proposed language is new, write “new” in the current language box. Submit the form along with two copies of your current bylaws to: Assistant Secretary-Treasurer, NALC, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

Once received, the bylaws are uploaded into the bylaws database, and previous correspondence from the Committee of Laws to the branch/state association is attached for review by the assistant secretary-treasurer, who then makes a recommendation to the Committee of Laws. The current members of the Committee of Laws are: Manuel L. Peralta Jr., James “Jim” Yates and Paul Barner, chairperson.

---

**“The exact wording of the prior language must be included along with exact wording of the new language. A general description of the intended change is not adequate. If the prior language has been deleted, write ‘deleted’ in the new language box. If the proposed language is new, write ‘new’ in the current language box.”**

---

The Committee of Laws has three possible decisions that can be rendered when reviewing proposed changes. They are: approved, approved with exception(s) or in conflict with the *National Constitution*.

“Approved with exception(s)” means the item(s) listed as exception(s) are in conflict and not approved. To remedy the exception(s) and amend the bylaws, the entire

---

**“A common problem with the process involves forms not being filled out correctly. The committee needs exact language for both the old and new language. Each section where there is a word change needs to be listed. If, for example, you are changing every reference of vice president to executive vice president, it is not proper to write your intention to change every reference. You must list each reference with the old and new language.”**

---

process addressed in Article 15 of the *NALC Constitution* must be completed again (submitting, notifying, voting and mailing to the Committee of Laws).

A common problem with the process involves forms not being filled out correctly. The committee needs exact language for both the old and new language. Each section where there is a word change needs to be listed. If, for example, you are changing every reference of vice president to executive vice president, it is not proper to write your intention to change every reference. You must list each reference with the old and new language. (It is helpful if you **bold** only the new language changes.)

Provisions in bylaws may not be implemented without the approval of the Committee of Laws, pursuant to Article 15. Exceptions are bylaws fixing the amount of initiation fees, dues, and reinstatement fees, or the time and place of meetings. They become effective at the time determined by the branch or state association. However, it is recommended that you send a copy to the committee so that we have a record of the change or can notify you of any problems that may exist with the language. Hopefully, this can assist branches and state associations when altering or rescinding bylaws.