



## Canadian Nursing Students' Association Association des étudiant(e)s infirmier(ère)s du Canada

### **ELECTIONS POLICY**

This policy will explain the procedures for holding nominations and elections for elected board of director positions and elected committee chair positions as practiced by CNSA.

#### 1. Eligibility Requirements

1.1 All potential candidates must be associates of a CNSA Chapter Member school in good standing. They must remain a student at a CNSA Chapter member school for the majority of their term of office. This means that candidates must be enrolled in classes or clinical practicum until at least six months through their term of office.

1.2 All potential candidates shall properly complete the nomination process for their desired position in order to become a candidate.

1.3 In the event that potential candidates are unable to attend National Conference and National Assembly, there will be a pre-election period where they can submit their nomination form. Candidates who run in the pre-election will need to provide the name of an Agent to represent them at the conference during the All Candidates' Meeting (ACM) and to give a speech on their behalf.

1.4 Associates of the Association who are currently in an elected office, and wish to run for another term or for a different position, shall be considered eligible given the successful completion of the nomination process. Current board members and committee chairs who run for another term may be excused from CNSA Office duties during the ACM.

1.4.1 No individual may serve more than two (2) consecutive terms in any one elected position.

1.4.2 Official and Associate Delegates are only eligible to run for CNSA voting BOD positions if their term as OD or AD is completed prior to the start of their term of office on the BOD should they be elected. In other words, no individual can hold a position as an OD/AD and voting BOD member at the same time. ODs and ADs are however eligible to also hold a Committee Chair Position.

1.4.3 Elected voting BOD positions or Committee Chair positions may only hold one elected position at a time during their term, including Regional Conference Director.

#### 2. Nomination of Candidates

2.1 All potential candidates shall submit a completed nomination form in order to become a candidate eligible for election.



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- 2.2 The nomination form shall contain the following information in order to be considered valid:
- 2.2.1 Full name, common name, signature and school of said candidate (where applicable).
  - 2.2.2 Contact information, including email and phone number
  - 2.2.3 Name, signature, and school of the nominator
  - 2.2.4 Five names, signatures, and schools of CNSA Chapter Associates who support the nomination
- 2.3 Any CNSA Chapter Associate may sign more than one nomination form, but may not nominate more than one candidate. They may nominate a candidate and sign other forms as a supporter.
- 2.4 The CNEC shall verify that any and all names that appear on all nomination forms are those of registered students and official CNSA Chapter Associates.
- 2.5 Failure to fully complete the form will result in the candidate's ineligibility to stand for election.
- 2.6 No information regarding candidates or nominations can be disclosed by the CNEC or any members of the Nominations and Elections Committee until the close of the nomination period.
- 2.6.1 The official list of nominees shall be announced before the close of the second session of National Assembly by the CNEC.
3. Candidate Representation
- 3.1 Agents
    - 3.1.1 A candidate may choose to appoint an agent to act on their behalf in their absence. Candidates who run in the pre-election and are not present at National Assembly must appoint an agent.
    - 3.1.2 The agent will carry the same level of responsibility as the candidate.
      - 3.1.2.1 Any action of the agent will be considered to be an action of the candidate and the candidate shall be held responsible for any actions of their agent.
      - 3.1.2.2 Agents will attend the ACM on behalf of their candidate.
    - 3.1.3 The agent must be designated on the nomination form included in the pre-election nomination package.
    - 3.1.4 An agent may be removed by their candidate at any time by submitting a written notice to the CNEC.



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3.1.4.1 In the event that a candidate removes their agent, they are not allowed to designate a replacement agent.

3.1.5 Agents may not be a staff member of CNSA, a committee chair, or a member of the BOD.

### 3.2 Scrutineers

3.2.1 A scrutineer is a representative for the candidate during ballot tabulations.

3.2.1.1 A candidate may represent themselves as scrutineer.

3.2.1.2 Only one scrutineer is allowed per candidate (including the candidate themselves. i.e. if a candidate appoints a scrutineer to attend tabulation, the candidate may not be present).

3.2.1.3 A scrutineer is only permitted to make an objection during tabulation if there is due cause.

3.2.1.4 A scrutineer may not participate in tabulations.

3.2.1.5 The scrutineer may appeal to the CNEC regarding a ruling about the ballot tabulation, such as, but not limited to, the acceptance or non-acceptance of a ballot.

## 4. All Candidates' Meeting (ACM)

4.1 An ACM shall be called at the close of the second session of National Assembly, after the announcement of candidates.

4.2 All candidates must be represented at the meeting either in person or by their agent. Failure to attend the ACM will result in disqualification from the election.

4.3 The ACM must include an introduction of the CNEC and the members of the Nominations and Elections Committee, a reading of the list of candidates, a review of the Elections Policy and procedures regarding elections, and a chance for candidates to ask questions.

4.4 The meeting is chaired by the CNEC. Members of the Nominations and Elections Committee are expected to be present as well.

## 5. Campaigns

5.1 Campaigning shall be defined as the solicitation for support.

5.1.1 Campaign materials may include, but are not limited to, flyers, posters, banners, classified ads, buttons, electronic media, and clothing.



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5.1.2 All campaign materials must be approved by the CNEC prior to use.

5.1.3 Verbal campaigning is allowed.

### 5.2 Campaign restrictions

5.2.1 No campaign material may be posted in CNSA space, including but not limited to: the CNSA Office, the CNSA website, CNSA social media accounts, and CNSA email list serves.

5.2.2 Email, automatic mail notices, and other forms of electronic mail notification are not allowed. Electronic media such as web sites and personal social media accounts are considered acceptable provided the web address is given to the chair of the nominations and elections committee for review.

5.2.3 Each candidate will restrict spending on their campaign as follows: for Regional Directors - \$100, for BOD - \$150, and for Committee Chairs - \$50. Any candidate that exceeds this amount of money shall be disqualified from the election. A budget shall be submitted to the CNEC by the close of the Election Speeches on the last day of the campaign period. Said budget will include: all donated, used, and/or purchased materials, and all receipts. If no expenses are incurred a budget is not required.

5.2.4 Campaign spending may not come from CNSA regional or national finances.

5.2.5 Campaigning cannot interfere with the normal functioning of CNSA including National Assembly and Regional Executive Meetings.

5.2.6 No campaign or campaign materials will be degrading towards other candidates.

5.2.7 No person may damage, alter, remove, dispose, or otherwise hinder or impede any property or campaign material belonging to another candidate.

5.2.8 Commercial solicitation is prohibited.

5.2.9 CNSA staff, BOD, Regional Directors, Committee Chairs, or members of the nominations and elections committee may not campaign for any or support any candidates. This includes signing nomination forms. If a member of the BOD is running for re-election they may campaign for themselves.

## 6. Process of Nominations and Elections

6.1 During the second session of National Assembly, after the nomination period has closed, candidates will be announced, and will have the chance to accept their nomination. Should a candidate or their agent not be present, or choose to decline the nomination, they will be eliminated as a candidate.

6.2 The third session of National Assembly shall commence with each candidate having the opportunity to

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provide a speech to the National Assembly. Candidates for all positions will be given a maximum of two minutes for their speech, with an additional 2 minutes for questions. The only exception to this is that candidates running for the position of President will have 5 minutes to provide their speech, with an additional 5 minutes for questions, and the candidate running for National Conference Director will have 10 minutes to present their speech with an additional 10 minutes for questions.

6.3 All processes shall occur in accordance with Bourinot's Rules of Order.

6.4 The CNEC will make an announcement that all campaigning and note passing is to cease. This will occur when speeches are completed. Should any candidates or their agents continue to campaign or pass notes, said candidate will be disqualified immediately. All posted campaign materials, including electronic materials must be taken down when the campaign period ends. Leaving materials posted after the campaign period ends will be considered campaigning after the period has ended.

6.5 Candidates for Regional Director Positions will give their speech in their Regional Executive Meeting.

### 7. Time line for Elections and Appointments

7.1 Notice for elections shall be done for a minimum of two weeks prior to the opening of the nomination period.

7.2 The notification will include the following (where applicable):

7.2.1 The position(s) available, contact information for the CNEC; date, time, and locations of the opening and closing of the nomination period, ACM, beginning and end of the campaign period, speeches, and the opening and closing of the polls.

7.3 Notification may be provided on the CNSA website, through email list serves, and any other means of communication as established in the CNSA Rules, Regulations, and Bylaws.

7.4 The Pre-Election nomination period shall commence two weeks prior to the start of National Assembly, and be in effect for one week. The CNEC must receive all pre-election nomination forms one week prior to National Assembly.

7.5 The nomination period for general elections shall commence at 1600 on the first day of regional meetings during the annual national conference.

7.6 Nominations will close at 1700 on the day of the second session of National Assembly.

7.7 The campaign period commences at the start of the nomination period, and closes at the end of speeches prior to the election.



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7.8 Polling for all CNSA elections shall occur for a minimum of one half hour, or until all votes are accounted for.

7.9 The election will be held annually on the final day of the national conference.

7.10 Polling stations shall open immediately after the end of the election speeches.

7.11 Official results of any elections and appointments shall be publicized through the CNSA website and email list serves.

### 8. Voting

#### 8.1 Voter eligibility

8.1.1 Eligible voters include the Official Delegates for each CNSA Chapter member.

8.1.2 In the event that the OD is unable to vote, their Associate Delegate shall vote on their behalf.

8.1.3 Each chapter member shall be permitted one vote.

8.1.4 Any and all given voter's names and school names must appear on a master list of registered OD/ADs provided to the CNEC by the Regional Directors.

#### 8.2 Voting Procedure

8.2.1 All ballot boxes must remain sealed throughout the polling period.

8.2.2 The CNEC will keep the ballot boxes, master lists of ODs/ADs, and ballots at each polling station.

8.2.3 All voters must provide the Poll Clerk with their National Assembly voting card and nametag prior to casting their ballot.

8.2.4 Poll Clerks shall ensure that the voter is the same as the individual on the master list.

8.2.5 The Poll Clerk shall make a permanent mark on each voter's name on the master list of registered students when the individual votes.

8.2.6 Poll Clerks must initial the back of each ballot that they hand out. If the initial is absent the ballot can be declared invalid.

8.2.7 All voting shall be done by secret ballot.

8.2.8 Quorum for the vote shall be in accordance with Bourinot's Rules of Order and CNSA's governing bylaws.

8.2.8.1 If quorum fails, the election will be declared invalid.

8.2.9 Members of the Nominations and Elections Committee will act as poll clerks,



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and will be familiar with this policy and all CNSA election procedures.

8.2.10 There shall always be a minimum of one Poll Clerk on duty at each polling station. Poll Clerks may not leave their station unless they are relieved by another Poll Clerk or the CNEC.

8.3 Polling Stations shall be a designated location within the room where National Assembly meetings occur.

8.4 Ballot boxes must remain in full sight of the National Assembly until they are secured by the CNEC.

8.5 Ballots

8.5.1 Ballots shall read: "You may select one (1) candidate or abstain"

8.5.2 In the event where there is only one candidate, a YES/NO checkbox shall be used.

8.5.3 The names of the candidates shall be listed in alphabetical order, last name first, as they appear on their nomination form. They may include a nickname if one was stated on the nomination form.

8.5.4 Ballots shall be destroyed by the CNEC no later than twenty-four (24) hours after final ratification of all elections and appointments.

8.5.5 Any mark on the ballot which clearly denotes a preference for one of the candidates, as determined by the CNEC, shall be valid and will be counted.

8.5.6 Ballots shall be numbered in sequence. The CNEC will keep a record of the number of ballots and which numbered ballots were distributed at each polling station.

8.5.7 Ballots are only accepted during the polling period.

8.6 Tabulation and Validation of Votes

8.6.1 Tabulation shall begin when quorum is reached, immediately following the close of the polling period, provided that there are no appeals in progress that have resulted from the nomination, campaign, or polling periods.

8.6.2 Quorum for tabulation is the CNEC and members of the nominations and elections committee. The CNEC and a simple majority of committee members must be present for tabulation to begin.

8.6.3 Only the CNEC and members of the committee are allowed to touch any ballot boxes, ballots, or the polling stations' master lists of students, following the close of the polling period.

8.6.4 No persons may enter or exit the room in which ballots are being tabulated from the time the first ballot box is opened until the final count has been completed and approved by the CNEC.

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8.6.4.1 The only exception shall be in emergencies when all boxes will be re-sealed immediately until the emergency has been resolved.

8.6.5 The CNEC shall make all rulings on ballot spoilage. Any such rulings can be appealed to the committee by a scrutineer when said spoiled ballots may alter the outcome of the election.

8.6.6 Any objections to the method of tabulation shall be voiced at the time of tabulation.

8.6.7 Ballots shall be counted a minimum of two times, unless the CNEC, the members of the committee, and all the present scrutineers determine that a second count is not necessary.

8.6.8 Any Associate of a CNSA chapter may request a recount with due cause.

8.6.9 Spoiled ballots

8.6.9.1 A ballot must not have any non-natural markings on it. For example, improper number of candidates selected, other writing on the ballot, etc.

8.6.9.2 A ballot that has been vandalized, torn, or soiled shall be excluded.

9. Results of Elections and Appointments

9.1 The results for an election shall be decided by a simple majority of eligible voters. Said decision shall be considered as binding upon the BOD, and all members of the Association.

9.2 The National Assembly shall ratify the results of the election as per the Governing Documents to make the results official.

9.3 The BOD and/or National Assembly shall not ratify the results until any and all disputes or appeals are resolved.

9.4 Ratification shall be by two-thirds majority.

9.4.1 Failed ratification shall result in an invalid election.

9.4.1.1 Ratification may only fail for policy infractions that provide an unfair process in the election, a chair of the nominations and elections committee ruling, or failed quorum during voting.

9.4.2 No appeals may be made after the ratification of the final count and results by the BOD.

10. Invalid Results



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10.1 Should the results of any election and/or appointment be ruled invalid, a re-vote shall occur no later than two weeks after said ruling is made.

10.2 Candidates shall not be permitted to campaign between the invalidated vote and the re-vote.

10.3 The re-vote shall be publicized as per the policy's requirements.

### 11. By-Elections

11.1 By-elections shall occur when there is a vacancy in a Committee Chair or BOD position in keeping with the Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of the Association.

11.2 At the discretion of the BOD, the CNEC will commence a by-election period.

11.3 Notification of By-elections will be given one week prior to the start of the By-election period, and the nomination period will remain open for two weeks.

11.4 Upon completion of the nomination period, the members of the Nominations and Elections Committee will select a suitable candidate. If the committee deems that there are no suitable candidates for the position, at the discretion of the board, the nomination period may be open for an additional two weeks.

11.5 Once a candidate has been selected by the Nominations and Elections Committee, the individual's name will be submitted to the BOD, and the BOD will appoint said individual to the position.

### 12. Dealing with Complaints

12.1 Any member of the Association may file a complaint regarding any aspect of a CNSA Election or By-election.

12.2 All complaints shall be brought before the CNEC first. Complaints need not be in writing. They shall be brought before the CNEC as soon as possible.

12.3 The CNEC may make an immediate decision if all the facts are known or may make further inquiries before making a decision.

12.3.1 Complaints that may be dealt with in this way include, but are not limited to: validity of ballots and other tabulation disputes, policy infringements not dependent upon witness testimony such as improper display of campaign materials.

12.4 Complaints which involve extensive investigation or witness testimony shall be brought before the Nominations and Elections Committee. The Nominations and Elections Committee may hold a hearing at their discretion.



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12.5 The CNEC shall be empowered to assess any penalty enforceable by CNSA. The CNEC shall ensure that the penalty is appropriate for the nature of the infraction.

12.6 The CNEC and the Nominations and Elections Committee shall be empowered to make any ruling regarding the Elections on any issues not already stated within this policy, and not covered in the governing documents of the Association.

12.7 CNEC decisions may be appealed to the Nominations and Elections Committee. Complaints regarding tabulation of ballots shall be appealed to the CNEC first, at the time of tabulation.

12.8 The CNEC and/or the Nominations and Elections Committee shall make a written report after their final decision, stating the nature of the complaint, the final ruling and reasons for the decision. All relevant facts shall be included in the report. The report shall be given to the CNSA President who shall forward it to the Board.

### 13. Misconduct

13.1 Misconduct is the improper behavior (intentional or not) or intentional wrongdoing of a candidate, their representatives, or voting members. Misconduct may include, but is not limited to, any violations of the CNSA Elections Policy, Code of Conduct, Bylaws, and Rules and Regulations.

13.1.1 All misconduct shall be reported to the CNEC for investigation. If it is found that a candidate, or their agent, has acted improperly during the nominations and election period said candidate will be disqualified.

13.1.2 Should any voting member of the CNSA act improperly during said period, they will be given one verbal warning by the CNEC. Should the misconduct continue, said voting member will lose their vote for the election.