

**United Working Families – Constitution**  
Revised at UWF Convention 9.24.22

**Article I. Name**

The name of the organization is United Working Families.

**Article II. Purpose**

The purpose of United Working Families (UWF) is to build the political organization and power that working people need to win a robust, redistributive public sphere and challenge corporate control of politics. UWF believes that working people and people of color need our own independent political organization in order to achieve self-evident, progressive political change. Control of public policy and political power requires the expansion of democracy into our communities and workplaces. UWF strives to give support and political expression to the social movements and struggles attempting to achieve those aims.

United Working Families recruits, develops, and runs our own candidates out of progressive social movements. UWF is a serious party-building effort that uses a broad array of year-round political organizing and electoral strategies to fight for working people's political power, including: issue campaigns, legislative efforts, endorsing candidates from the major parties and in third parties, and running our own candidates and slates.

**Article III. Interpretation**

The interpretation of these bylaws shall be by a majority vote of the Party Committee. Any such interpretation may be overruled by vote of the Membership Convention.

**Article IV. Membership**

- A. Membership types: Organizational membership for organizations that affiliate to UWF and the members of those affiliates. Individual membership for individuals who directly join as members of UWF.
- B. Organizational membership: Organizational membership is open to organizations which, by official act, undertake to accept and abide by the by-laws and principles of United Working Families and can legally participate in UWF and its activities.
- C. Individual membership: Individual membership is open to individuals that accept and abide by the bylaws and principles of United Working Families, complete the membership application, and pay dues.
- D. Affiliated organizations will be granted proportional voting rights (see below) based on annual dues payment of \$2 per member for labor unions and \$1 per member for other organizations.
- E. The minimum annual dues for affiliated organizations are \$400. Affiliate dues rates may be changed by the Party Committee.

- F. The minimum annual dues for Individual Members are \$20. Individuals who are Organizational Members of UWF via their membership in an affiliated organization may also join UWF as an Individual Member with a minimum annual dues of \$10. Higher income individuals are encouraged to become sustaining members, contributing dues of at least \$5 per month. Individual Member dues rates may be changed by the Party Committee.

#### **Article V. Acceptance of Membership**

- A. A two-thirds vote of the Party Committee shall be sufficient to grant membership status to organizations wishing to affiliate.
- B. The Party Committee has the right to terminate the membership of any affiliated organization or individual that it deems to be incompatible with the goals and mission of United Working Families or whose conduct it deems to harm the cause of the UWF or bring UWF into disrepute by a two-thirds vote.
- C. The core principles of United Working Families are reflected in the organization's platform adopted by the Membership Convention and in other documents that may be adopted by the Party Committee or Membership Convention. Additional criteria for affiliation may be established over time by the Party Committee or Membership Convention.
- D. Each affiliated organization or individual member shall pay membership dues to the organization as outlined in Article IV. Membership. Dues shall be paid on a calendar year basis in a manner to be determined by the Party Committee or its designee.

#### **Article VI. Membership Chapters**

##### Individual Members

- A. Individual Members of UWF may organize themselves into groupings based on common neighborhoods, political boundaries, workplaces, industries, labor union membership or other shared factors around which they work to build the party.
- B. Such a group of UWF members may petition the Party Committee to be chartered as a Chapter of United Working Families.
- C. A two-thirds vote of the Party Committee shall be sufficient to grant a charter to members wishing to form a Chapter.
- D. The Party Committee has the right to terminate the charter of any Chapter that it deems to be incompatible with the goals and mission of United Working Families or whose conduct it deems to harm the cause of the UWF or bring UWF into disrepute by a two-thirds vote.

- E. Chapters recognized by the Party Committee and with a minimum of 25 members shall have a right to representation on the Party Committee as established in Article VIII and eligible to participate in other leadership bodies.

#### Legislative Chapter & Elected Official Members

- F. A Legislative Chapter of United Working Families comprised of elected officials who are Individual Members and who have been supported by UWF shall be chartered by the Party Committee.
- G. The Legislative Chapter shall maintain a roll of its membership and submit changes and new members to the Party Committee for confirmation.
- H. The Legislative Chapter of UWF shall have a right to representation on the Party Committee as established in Article VIII and are eligible to participate in other leadership bodies. All members of the UWF Legislative Chapter may attend Party Committee meetings as non-voting delegates.
- I. The Legislative Chapter of UWF shall regularly meet and work to coordinate activities of UWF's elected representatives with the aim of advancing the organization's strategic priorities, program, and campaign efforts. The Legislative Chapter shall regularly meet with Executive Committee and, as appropriate, other UWF leaders to coordinate, plan and evaluate this work

#### **Article VII. Membership Convention**

- A. The Membership Convention is the highest decision making body of the party, supporting democratic, grassroots governance of UWF's party-building efforts.
- B. The Membership Convention shall meet biannually. All Organizational and Individual Members will be invited to attend. Affiliated organizations will be encouraged to invite their membership. Notice of the annual meeting will be sent out to all members at least 14 days in advance of the meeting.
- C. Convention Voting. Organizational and individual members of United Working Families have voting rights at the convention. Affiliated organizations may have their membership attend as voting Organizational Members up to the number of members for which they have paid dues. Each attending member of UWF carries one vote.
- D. The Membership Convention will review reports on the work of UWF since the previous convention, adopt a platform or other strategic priorities, and elect at-large members of the Party Committee.

The platform of issues, demands and positions established and endorsed for the organization by the Membership Convention will be promoted through UWF's campaign work. The platform or strategies established by the membership at the Membership Convention will guide the work of the Party Committee between conventions.

- E. The Party Committee shall develop a process for membership submission of platform proposals and other organizational motions and business in advance of the Membership Convention. The Party Committee shall also be responsible for developing procedures for debate, voting and setting agenda for adoption by the convention.

## **Article VIII. Party Committee**

- A. The Party Committee is empowered to govern the party between Membership Conventions. It is made up of representatives appointed by affiliated organizations and Individual Members elected by the UWF membership.
- B. The Party Committee has full authority to make political endorsements, allocate financial resources, issue policy and election statements, and establish standing or ad-hoc committees of the organization.
- C. Organizational Members of the Party Committee: Affiliated Organizations shall designate individuals to represent their organization on the Party Committee. The number of Party Committee members they designate shall be based on the number of votes held by their organization as determined under Article X. These Party Committee members will carry between them the full number of votes of the Organizational Member they represent.

Affiliated organizations will approach the designation of Party Committee members from a commitment to organizational equity and inclusion. Changes to an affiliated organization's chosen representatives on the Party Committee shall be communicated to the Executive Director or Party Committee in advance of a Party Committee meeting where they are to be recognized.

- D. Individual Members of the Party Committee: There shall be ten (10) Individual Members of the Party Committee, open to Individual Members and elected by UWF membership. At least two (2) of these shall be at-large members of the Party Committee elected by the general UWF membership and up to eight (8) may be elected as delegates to the Party Committee representing geographic regions in which UWF is active by Individual Members residing within the region.

At-large members of the Party Committee shall be elected via electronic vote, Membership Convention, or another forum open to all UWF members as determined by the Party Committee. The Party Committee shall establish geographic regions for the election of delegates with the aims of supporting the party's organizing efforts, growth and strengthening diversity, racial equity and representation of communities of color among party leadership. Regions shall be announced to the membership in advance of each election cycle. Only Individual Members residing in the established region shall be eligible for election to such Party Committee seats.

Individual Members of the Party Committee as established in this Article shall serve

two-year terms as voting delegates. The Party Committee, with a two thirds-vote, may appoint Individual Members to fill vacancies among these seats to complete the current term of office.

E. Alumni Members of the Party Committee: The Party Committee shall confirm up to two (2) individual members and graduates of the Movement Leader Fellowship program to serve two-year terms as voting delegates. A 2/3 vote is required for confirmation. If confirmation cannot be reached, the seat shall remain unfilled.

F. Chapter Members of the Party Committee: Individual Members organized into recognized UWF Chapters as established in Article VI are entitled to representation on the Party Committee. Members of the Chapter may elect members to the Party Committee for a 2 year term, up to the number of votes allotted under Article X.

Additionally, the Legislative Chapter of UWF may select two representatives to the Party Committee from among its members for a term of 2 years. The Legislative Chapter may petition the Party Committee or the Convention to add additional Party Committee representatives for their Chapter should they believe that the number of UWF elected officials and growth of their Chapter warrants such a change.

G. UWF members, Affiliated Organizations and the Party Committee will strive for the following: Members of the Party Committee that are women at least equal to the number of men; Members of the Party Committee that are people of color at least equal to the number that are white.

H. The Party Committee shall meet at least four times a year, with notice sent to every affiliated organization via e-mail, at an e-mail address or addresses provided by the organization, at least one week prior to the meeting.

I. Additional meetings of the Party Committee may be convened by the Executive Committee. At the written or e-mailed request of one third of Party Committee members, the Executive Committee shall schedule and convene a meeting of the Party Committee.

J. The Party Committee shall have the authority to incur credit and loan obligations as required for proper conduct of the organization's affairs.

K. An Executive Director will be hired by the Party Committee. The Executive Director shall be responsible for the day to day functioning of the organization including interviewing and hiring for all jobs. Senior level hires require Party Committee approval.

L. On an annual basis, the Party Committee shall publish a report that compares the demographic composition of the Party Committee to the demographic composition of UWF's membership. This report shall be made available at a meeting of the Party Committee.

## **Article IX. Standing Committees**

- A. The Party Committee shall, as needed, charter and organize standing committees of UWF, to involve Party Committee members and other UWF members in carrying out the work of the organization.
- B. The Party Committee, by resolution adopted by a majority, may designate and charter such standing committees.
- C. A chairperson and the members of each standing committee shall be appointed by the Party Chair with the advice and consent of the Party Committee. The chairperson and members of the standing committees shall be appointed for a term of two (2) years or until a standing committee is disbanded by action of the Party Committee. The Party Chair may, with the consent of the Party Committee, fill any standing committee chairperson for the duration of the current term.
- D. Standing Committee Chairperson(s), if confirmed by the Party Committee, shall serve as members of the Party Committee for the duration of their term serving in that role.
- E. The chairpersons of all standing committees, after informing the Party Chair and Executive Director, shall report all formal actions and decisions of the committees to the Party Committee. Each committee will maintain a short summary of the committee's recent work. The Party Committee may, at its discretion, consider the committee action for final approval or rejection.
- F. After due consideration by the Party Committee, items may be assigned to the proper committee by the Party Chair.
- G. Manner of Acting. Any standing committee may, on its own initiative, make recommendations to the Party Committee on any matter in its field. Each committee, to the extent provided in the resolution creating such committee, may have authority delegated to it by the Party Committee and exercise the authority of the Party Committee on such matters. Committees may be asked to make reports, recommendations or proposals by the Party Committee, Executive Committee or Officers. Unless otherwise provided in the resolution creating a committee, fix the time and place of its meetings, specify what notice of meetings, if any, shall be given, and fix its rules of procedure which shall not be inconsistent with these By-laws or with rules adopted by the Party Committee, Executive Committee, or Membership Convention.

## **Article X. Party Committee Voting**

- A. The number of members that an affiliated organization chooses to affiliate through the payment of dues shall be voluntary. It need not match, but cannot exceed, their actual membership. However, proportional voting rights are based on members an organization chooses to pay on. Resolution of any disputes pertaining to an organization's

membership size and how to measure membership in organizations with differing membership structures shall be referred to the Party Committee.

- B. The following scale shall be used to determine an affiliated labor union's votes on the Party Committee through the affiliation of its members to UWF:

1 – 1,999 affiliated members 1 vote  
2,000 – 4,999 affiliated members 2 votes  
5,000 – 9,999 affiliated members 3 votes  
10,000 – 19,999 affiliated members 4 votes  
20,000 – 39,999 affiliated members 5 votes  
40,000 or more affiliated members 6 votes

- C. The following scale shall be used to determine the votes of an affiliated organization that is not a labor union on the Party Committee through the affiliation of its members to UWF:

1 – 499 affiliated members 1 vote  
500 – 999 affiliated members 2 votes  
1,000 – 1,999 affiliated members 3 votes  
2,000 – 2,999 affiliated members 4 votes  
3,000 – 4,999 affiliated members 5 votes  
5,000 or more affiliated members 6 votes

- D. Individual UWF members in a UWF Chapter that has been chartered by the Party Committee may elect members to the Party Committee based on the following scale:

1 – 24 individual members 0 votes  
25 – 99 individual members 1 vote  
100 – 199 individual members 2 votes  
200 individual members 3 votes  
1 additional vote for every 100 members thereafter.

- E. A statewide or regional parent organization and local affiliate organizations may each affiliate to UWF, but may not count the membership of the local affiliate more than once. The most local affiliated organization shall have preference for purposes of membership affiliation unless other approved by the Party Committee.

- F. Members of the Party Committee representing recognized UWF Chapters shall be elected by the members of their Chapter to serve a 2 year term. The members of the Legislative Chapter shall choose their representatives to the Party Committee. All Chapters shall notify the Party Committee and Executive Director of their chosen representatives. The Party Committee may adopt rules governing the process for elections to the Party Committee within these Chapters to ensure democratic functioning.

- G. Chapters will strive to elect Party Committee representatives from a commitment to organizational equity and inclusion. Chapters with more than one representative to the Party Committee (as established in Articles VII and X) must elect women at least equal to the number of men elected to the Party Committee by that same Chapter; and elect people of color at least equal to the number of Party Committee members representing their Chapter that are white.

**Article XI. Executive Committee**

- A. The Party Committee shall elect from among its members an Executive Committee of up to 13 members to carry out the work of the party between meetings of the Party Committee, including serving as the party's public and political face. The Executive Committee is to work with the Executive Director to implement the decisions of the Party Committee.
- B. The Party Committee may remove an Executive Committee member before the end of their term by a two-thirds vote should the Party Committee deem their actions incompatible with the goals and mission of United Working Families or their conduct to harm the cause of the UWF or bring UWF into disrepute.
- C. The Party Committee will strive to elect an Executive Committee from a commitment to organizational equity and inclusion. The number Executive Committee members that are women must be at least equal to the number of men; the number of Executive Committee members that are people of color must be at least equal to the number that are white.
- D. The Executive Committee shall have the right to establish its own rules of functioning. Executive Committee members shall serve for a period of two years provided their Party Committee and UWF membership is maintained. Members of the Executive Committee shall be elected by vote of the Party Committee. Should a member of the Executive Committee be unable to complete their term, the Party Committee may choose to fill the vacancy for the duration of its term.

**Article XII. Officers**

- A. The Executive Committee elects Officers of the party from among its members to serve as internal leadership and publicly represent the party and its program. These Officers shall be a Chair, a Vice-Chair, a Recording Officer, and a Financial Officer of the party.
- B. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the party provide internal leadership to the Executive and Party Committees, including convening regular meetings and working with the Executive Director on a regular basis to oversee and evaluate the work of the party. The Party Chair and Vice-Chair shall preside over all Party Committee and Executive Committee meetings.

- C. The Recording Officer shall have charge of keeping adequate records of meetings of the Party Committee, Executive Committee, and Membership Convention including attendance at such meetings and decisions made by these bodies of the party. In collaboration with the Executive Director and other Officers, the Recording Officer shall assist in the scheduling of meetings of these bodies of the party.
- D. The Financial Officer shall have responsibility for assisting the Executive Director with review of the party budget and the preparation and presentation of budget and financial reports to the Party and Executive Committees. Subject to the direction of the party, the Financial Officer shall serve as a signatory for party finances in addition to any qualified employee of the party assigned to such duties by the Executive Director and Executive Committee. In the case of the inability of both the Financial Officer and the Executive Director, another Officer may sign checks, subject to the direction of the party.

### **Article XIII. Endorsements**

- A. United Working Families will seek opportunities to advance its mission; the development of independent political action by working people and communities of color; the interests of its affiliates; and to promote a progressive, working class agenda through candidate endorsements and electoral efforts.
- B. UWF shall use a number of criteria when evaluating races and candidates, including interest of members and affiliates, responses to questionnaires, voting records, records of opponents, implications of a win or loss for our legislative and policy goals, viability of the campaign, and the campaign's potential to advance the building of independent political organization, United Working Families, and UWF's mission.
- C. Endorsements by the Party Committee - In the event that consensus cannot be reached around a particular endorsement, candidate endorsements shall require a two-thirds majority of those voting.
- D. All Party Committee members must be current on annual dues in order to vote on endorsements.
- E. Notice of an endorsement meeting shall be sent to all representatives of the Party Committee via e-mail, at an e-mail address or addresses provided by the organization, at least two weeks prior to the meeting.
- F. Endorsement decisions that come up for consideration after the endorsement meeting has been held may be decided by a telephone or online vote, with a minimum of one week's notice.
- G. Candidate endorsements by the Executive Committee shall require a two thirds vote in support. Notice must be given to the Party Committee at least one week prior to any endorsement decided by the Executive Committee. At the request of one third of the Party Committee, the Executive Committee shall defer the endorsement decision to the

Party Committee and arrange a meeting, telephone or online vote.

H. Endorsements made by United Working Families are the endorsements of UWF only and may not reflect the endorsements of affiliated Organizational Members.

I. Any affiliated Organization Member who wishes not to participate in a given endorsement may have its name withheld from campaign materials and communications.

J. Endorsements by Membership Vote – In certain circumstances, the Party Committee may wish to put an endorsement before a vote of the general membership. A decision to do so can be made by a two-thirds majority of those voting. At least one week's notice will be given to members via email and all of UWF's social media platforms. Members of affiliated organizations who are current on their dues as of the quarter previous to the vote, as well as individual members who are current on their dues as of the first of the month prior to the vote, will be eligible to vote. An endorsement will require a 2/3 majority of those voting. The Party Committee shall be responsible for developing procedures for debate, voting, and setting agenda.

#### **Article XIV. Amendments**

These rules may be amended by a vote of the Membership Convention. Between Conventions, these rules may be provisionally amended by a two thirds vote of the Party Committee. Provisional amendments made by the Party Committee shall be presented to the next Membership Convention and a Convention vote held to maintain the amendments or restore the previous rules.

#### **Article XV. Quorum**

Unless specifically indicated elsewhere in the rules a Quorum shall be construed as 50% plus 1 of the total votes of the Party Committee. Additionally, a quorum shall require the presence of at least two- thirds of the Organizational Members of UWF.

#### **Article XVI. Indemnification**

UWF shall indemnify each Officer, member of the Party Committee and employee, including former Officers, Party Committee members and employees, to the full extent permitted by law.

#### **Article XVII. Parliamentary order**

The most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall apply in all situations not covered by these By-laws.