



National Black Law Students Association | www.nblsa.org

# 2022 Virtual National Convention: Election Rules and Procedures

March 16-21, 2022

Virtual Location - Memphis, Tennessee

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**PLEASE READ THIS PACKET IN ITS ENTIRETY**

Any violations of the rules and procedures outlined in the packet may result in disqualification from candidacy. Please email [elections@nblsa.org](mailto:elections@nblsa.org) with any questions.

# Important Deadlines to Meet

Pre-Certified Candidates	Floor Nominated Candidates
<b>3/14/22—11:59 P.M. (EST)</b>   Application Deadline	<b>3/18/22—9:00 A.M. (EST)</b>   Nomination Acceptance
<b>3/16/22—11:59 P.M. (EST)</b>   Cured Deficiencies Deadline	<b>3/19/22—8:30 A.M. (EST)</b>   Pre-election Meeting
<b>3/19/22—8:30 A.M. (EST)</b>   Pre-election Meeting	<b>3/20/2022—12:00 P.M. (EST)</b>   Transition Meeting (Mandatory)
<b>3/20/2022—12:00 P.M. (EST)</b>   Transition Meeting (Mandatory)	<b>3/20/22—11:59 P.M. (EST)</b>   Deadline to Request Ballot Review
<b>3/20/22—11:59 P.M. (EST)</b>   Deadline to Request Ballot Review	<b>3/25/22—12:00 P.M. (EST)</b>   Letter of Good Standing Submission Deadline

## Application Checklist

- **Statement of Intent with declarative statements**
- **Signed Leadership Application**
- **Chapter Endorsement and Certification**
- **Resume** (1 page limit)
- **Letter of Good Standing** (Law School Registrar’s Office)

# Rules and Procedures

## I. POSITIONS AVAILABLE FOR ELECTION

Any dues-paying member of an **active** NBLSA chapter<sup>1</sup> may run for office. The following NBLSA positions are eligible for election, pursuant to Article VI, Section B of the NBLSA Constitution and Article X of the NBLSA Bylaws:

National Chair  
National Vice Chair  
National Secretary  
National Treasurer  
National Attorney General  
National Board Members-at-Large (five positions)

No candidate may run for more than one office. No individual elected to a regional position for the 2022–2023 academic year may run for a position on the NBLSA Board of Directors unless they **IMMEDIATELY** resign from their regional position before submitting their application for a national position.

To learn more about the duties of each elected position, please refer to the NBLSA Constitution and Bylaws or reach out to the person currently occupying the positions.

## II. CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS

There are (2) ways to certify yourself as a candidate for a position on the NBLSA Board of Directors:

- A. Pre-Certification
- B. Nomination from the floor during the National Convention

This section will cover rules and procedures for **both**.

### A. PRE-CERTIFICATION PROCESS

- i. In General:** Any active member who completes the documentation and requirements of the pre-certification phase and the final certification phase may qualify as a candidate for the NBLSA Board of Directors elections.

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<sup>1</sup> An active chapter is defined under Article II, Section B(3)(i) of the NBLSA Constitution. To be considered a member of an active chapter, your name must be included on the chapter's national dues paying membership roster.

**ii. Purpose of Pre-Certification Process:** Pre-Certification allows candidates to begin campaigning early through social media outlets, as well as at the National Convention. *See* Section III, Part B of the Election Rules and Procedures.

1. **Pre-Certification Deadline:** All materials must be submitted as one PDF document no later than **11:59 P.M. EST on Monday, March 14, 2022**, via e-mail to [elections@nblsa.org](mailto:elections@nblsa.org). Each Candidate will have until **11:59 P.M. EST on Wednesday, March 16, 2022**, to cure any deficiencies.

**Absolutely no pre-certification applications will be accepted beyond this deadline.**

**iii. Pre-Certified Candidate Meeting:** All Pre-Certified Candidates must attend the pre-certified candidates' meeting at the National Convention at a time TBA by the Chair of the Elections Committee.

**iv. Submission Requirements:** There are five (5) submission requirements. Each member must declare their intent to run for a national position by submitting the documents below (Items 2 and 3 will be included in this packet).

1. **Statement of Intent:** The statement of intent should be a maximum of one-page in length, include a headshot in the top left-hand corner, a disclosure of other obligations/employment/extracurricular activities, and a signature at the end of the statement. The statement of intent must be addressed to the National Elections Committee and include an iteration of the following declarative statements:
  - a. The applicant has read and understood the NBLSA Constitution and Bylaws;
  - b. The applicant is committed to NBLSA's mission and values;
  - c. The applicant is aware of the full responsibilities and qualifications that the sought position requires;
  - d. The applicant meets the qualifications set forth by the NBLSA Constitution;
  - e. The applicant understands the Financial Obligations of serving on the National Board of Directors; and
  - f. The applicant will maintain their constitutional eligibility requirements throughout their term of office.

2. **Completed and Signed National Leadership Application Form**
3. **Signed Local Chapter Endorsement and Certification Form:** The form should be signed by a NBLSA dues paying chapter officer (i.e., anyone that is (1) an active dues paying NBLSA member **and** (2) in chapter leadership) in which you are a member of and certify your good standing with the chapter. If you are the President of your local chapter, your form must be signed by a NBLSA dues paying chapter officer. You may **not** sign the form for your candidacy.
4. **Resume:** 1-page limit, including any NBLSA positions held at the local, regional, or national level.
5. **Letter of Good Standing:** A letter from your law school registrar or dean certifying your enrollment and good academic standing in an accredited J.D. or L.L.M. program.

## **B. NOMINATIONS FROM THE FLOOR**

**In General.** Members who do not submit the required materials for pre-certification may still become a candidate via a nomination from the floor. The rules and procedures regarding floor nominations are as follows:

- i. Who May be Nominated from the Floor:** Members who do not submit the required materials by the pre-certification deadline may still run for an elected position. Nominations from the floor are subject to the following rule:
  1. Any registered delegate or proxy with the proper authority may nominate an **active** NBLSA member present at the National Convention for a National Officer position unless said position has **two (2) or more** pre-certified candidates already on the ballot.
- ii. Time of Floor Nominations:** Floor nominations will only occur during the First Plenary Session at the National Convention unless a proper motion to reconsider floor nominations is brought before the General Assembly.
- iii. How to Make Floor Nomination:** To make the nomination, a chapter's delegate need only rise, be recognized, and state "I nominate [insert name]"

for the position of [insert position].” **No second is required.** The nominator is only permitted to nominate one person for each officer position.

**iv. Floor Nominated Candidate Meeting:** All Floor Nominated Candidates must attend a mandatory candidates’ meeting on a date TBA by the Chair of the Elections Committee.

**v. Deadline to Accept Floor Nomination:** Each floor nominee will have until **9:00 A.M. EST on Friday, March 18, 2022**, to accept or decline the nomination should they not be present during the time of the floor nomination.

**vi. Submission Requirements Upon Accepting a Nomination From The Floor:** If a candidate is nominated from the floor, the nominee must meet requirements set forth above in Section II(A)(iv) (Submission Requirements) of this packet. Floor Nominees must submit items 1–4 via e-mail to [elections@nblsa.org](mailto:elections@nblsa.org) **within 12 hours of accepting their nomination.** Item 5 may be provided via email to [elections@nblsa.org](mailto:elections@nblsa.org) no later than **12:00 P.M. EST on Friday, March 25, 2022.**

### C. FINAL CERTIFICATION PROCESS

**iii. Submission Requirement Upon Election:** All candidates who are elected must submit any outstanding documents requested under the precertification requirements to the National Elections Committee, [elections@nblsa.org](mailto:elections@nblsa.org) by **12:00 P.M. EST on Friday, March 25, 2022**, to maintain your elected officer position.

**iv. Mandatory Transition Meeting:** Any candidate elected to the NBLSA National Office is required to attend the Transitional Meeting on **Sunday, March 20, 2022 at 12 P.M. EST.** This meeting is mandatory, so please make arrangements accordingly.

### Important Considerations

1. Serving on the NBLSA Board of Directors is a significant commitment that requires a substantial amount of time, travel, and extracurricular work. Please factor this into your considerations when deciding to run for office.
2. For most positions, NBLSA does not fund required travel; thus, it is

important that you consider all other available financial resources, such as funding from your local law school, before deciding to run.

3. As a member of the NBLSA Board of Directors, you **must attend four in person meetings**,<sup>2</sup> including the NBLSA Joint Board Retreat in June for which travel may be required.

### III. CAMPAIGNING

#### A. CAMPAIGN FUND LIMITATIONS

- i. **National Chair Limit:** No candidate for the office of National Chair shall expend more than \$500, excluding travel expenses.
- ii. **Limit for All Other Elected Positions:** Candidates for all other positions shall not expend more than \$300, excluding travel expenses.
- iii. **In-Kind Donations:** In-kind donations will be counted toward the budget limit at the fair market value.
- iv. **Accounting of Expenditures:** All candidates must submit a detailed list of all expenditures associated with their candidacy (excluding travel expenses) for a NBLSA National Office at the mandatory candidate meeting.

#### B. CAMPAIGN MATERIAL APPROVAL & FURTHER LIMITATIONS

**Approval of All Campaign Materials:** ALL candidates for National Office must submit their campaign materials and correspondence (social media, etc.) related to their candidacy for approval by the National Elections Committee via email at [elections@nblsa.org](mailto:elections@nblsa.org) **BEFORE** disseminating it to the electorate.

- i. **Candidates must account for social media expenses:** If any candidate incurs costs related to the use of any electronic medium, these expenses must be included in their reporting of campaign expenses.

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<sup>2</sup> The in-person meeting requirement is aligned with 2021-2022 NBLSA Bylaws. In light of the on-going pandemic, an election to abate any or all of the in-person meeting requirements, may be determined by the governing Board.

- ii. **NBLSA Regional or National Listserv:** Candidates **MAY NOT** use any official NBLSA Regional or National listserv or NBLSA-branded social networking site (e.g., regional or national Facebook pages/groups, GroupMes, YouTube Channels, Instagram pages, or Twitter pages) to disseminate campaign materials.

## **C. CANDIDATE ENDORSEMENT RULES AND PROCEDURES**

### **i. Local Chapter Endorsement Rules:**

1. Local chapters may not publicly endorse a candidate **prior** to the commencement of the National Convention.
2. Any campaign-related expenditures made by a local chapter shall be counted toward the relevant candidate's campaign fund limit and should be reported accordingly.
3. Upon the commencement of the National Convention, candidates are permitted to use their local chapter's social media page(s), as well as their own personal social media page(s).

### **ii. Current National and Regional Board Member Endorsement Rules:**

1. National and Regional Board members, including Regional-Elect Board members, are **PROHIBITED** from endorsing any candidate for National office at any time prior to or during convention.
2. This rule does not include past national or regional board members.

## **D. DEMEANOR PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF OFFICIAL CAMPAIGNING**

- i. **Verbal Announcements are allowed:** Candidates **ARE** permitted to verbally announce their candidacy prior to the candidate's meeting to any NBLSA member in any region.
  1. Only candidates may endorse themselves prior to the mandatory candidate meeting.
  2. Local chapters and Regions are **prohibited** from making endorsements **prior** to the National Convention.

- ii. **No Dissemination of Campaign Material prior to the Mandatory Candidate Meeting:** No candidate may disseminate printed campaign material prior to attending the appropriate mandatory candidate meeting.
- iii. **Social Media for Campaigning:** Once a candidate's application has been accepted by the National Elections Committee, they may use social media to advertise their candidacy.

#### **E. DEMEANOR AFTER COMMENCEMENT OF OFFICIAL CAMPAIGNING**

- i. **Campaign Materials:** Candidates are permitted to wear and distribute approved campaign materials (flyers, buttons, etc.) to attendees at the National Convention. Such materials that are intended to be distributed must be submitted for approval by the National Elections Committee.
- ii. **No Campaigning inside a Plenary Session:** No campaigning may occur during a plenary session. As such, no delegate is allowed to wear or prominently display any campaign materials within 30 feet of or inside of the room where plenary sessions will be held.
- iii. **Unfair Campaign Practice:** No candidate shall engage in any unfair campaign practice including, but not limited to, violation or contempt of any campaign rule; libeling or slandering another candidate, and/or maliciously disrupting another candidate's campaign.
- iv. **Responsibility for Others Campaigning on Candidate's Behalf:** Each candidate is responsible for the activity that another undertakes directly on their behalf unless the candidate sincerely and affirmatively discourages such activity.

#### **F. CONCLUSION OF CAMPAIGNING**

All campaign materials and solicitation of votes must be taken down and cease at the conclusion of candidate speeches.

### **IV. ENFORCEMENT OF ELECTION RULES AND PROCEDURES**

#### **A. COMPLAINTS**

- i. Any dues paying NBLSA member may file a complaint with the National Elections Committee member for violations of the election rules and procedures via email at [elections@nblsa.org](mailto:elections@nblsa.org).

## **B. ENFORCEABILITY**

- i. These rules will be enforced by the National Elections Committee. An investigation into any violation is the sole responsibility of the National Elections Committee. If a violation is found to have merit, then the offending candidate will be sanctioned, including but not limited to **immediate disqualification (Example of an offense that constitutes immediate disqualification: Publicly disparaging another candidate or forging application documents)**.
- ii. Reported violations will be processed under a 3-strike policy. This policy is applicable to infractions that are not deemed so egregious as to warrant immediate disqualification (**Example: A candidate has illegally posted the same campaign flyer in two (2) separate but prohibited groups; each post will be counted as an individual infraction against the 3-strike policy**).

## **C. APPEALS**

- i. Any decision made by the National Elections Committee that results in the disqualification of a candidate may be appealed as a grievance to the National Board of Directors via the National Committee on Standards and Discipline via email to [grievance@nblsa.org](mailto:grievance@nblsa.org).

## **D. AMENDMENTS OF ELECTION RULES AND PROCEDURES**

The National Elections Committee reserves the right to amend or add to the election procedures at any time prior to the commencement of the National Convention, except such procedures outlined in the National Constitution and Bylaws.

## **V. DEBATES AND SPEECHES**

### **A. CANDIDATE SPEECHES**

- i. All candidates for office are required to give a speech of no more than five (5) minutes and stand for questions during the Plenary Elections session.
- ii. The order of Candidate Speeches and Questions and Answer periods (Q&A) will be announced at the pre-election meeting.

## VI. DELEGATE VOTING PROCEDURES

### A. PLENARY ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR ELECTION VOTING

- i. Any active chapter with a registered delegate or proxy at the National Convention who attends at least **TWO** plenary sessions during the 54th Annual National Convention is entitled to participate in the election of the 2022-2023 National Board of Directors.
- ii. All delegates will receive their chapter ballots and any proxy ballots prior to the commencement of candidate speeches.

### B. VOTING BY PROXY

- i. In order to utilize the proxy vote procedure, please refer to the 2022 Chapter Proxy Form. Please contact [parliamentarian@nblsa.org](mailto:parliamentarian@nblsa.org) if you have any questions.

### C. BALLOTS & VOTING

- i. **Secret Ballot:** The election of officers is determined by secret ballot.
- ii. **Winner:** The candidate that receives the largest percentage of votes for each position will be declared the winner. In the event of a tie, a run-off will be conducted.
- iii. **Rules for unopposed candidates:** If a candidate is unopposed, they must receive a majority of the votes in order to be declared the winner of the position.
- iv. The names of elected officers will be announced during the virtual A. J. Cooper Legacy Awards Gala held on **Saturday, March 19, 2022.**
- v. Every candidate may request to inspect the ballots submitted for the position to which they were a candidate. This request must be submitted to the National Elections Committee at [elections@nblsa.org](mailto:elections@nblsa.org) by **11:59 P.M. EST on Sunday, March 20, 2022.**



**NATIONAL BLACK LAW STUDENTS ASSOCIATION  
NATIONAL LEADERSHIP FORM**

<b>Full Name:</b>	
<b>Law School:</b>	
<b>Graduation Year:</b>	
<b>Email:</b>	
<b>Phone</b>	
<b>National Position Sought:</b>	

**You may only select/apply for ONE position!**

**Chair  
Vice Chair  
Treasurer  
Secretary  
Attorney General  
Member-At-Large (5 Positions Available)**

**I affirm that:**

- 1. I am an active member of a local NBLSA chapter;**
- 2. I am a national dues paying member of NBLSA;**
- 3. I have read and understood the Elections Packet; and**
- 4. I understand that serving as on the National Board of Directors may be a significant commitment of my time and finances.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



**NATIONAL BLACK LAW STUDENTS ASSOCIATION  
CHAPTER ENDORSEMENT AND CERTIFICATION OF CANDIDATE FORM**

<b>Candidate Name:</b>	
<b>Law School:</b>	
<b>National Position Sought:</b>	
<b>Chapter Officer Name:</b>	
<b>Chapter Officer Email:</b>	
<b>Chapter Officer Phone:</b>	

**Please certify the following statements by selecting the appropriate response.**

Is the candidate, named above, a member of NBLSA in good standing?  **Yes**  **No**

Is the candidate in good academic and conduct standing with your law school?  **Yes**  **No**

Is the candidate fit for the office they to which they seek to be elected?  **Yes**  **No**

Statement of Completeness

*The undersigned chapter officer certifies that the information given in this document are true, accurate, and complete to the best of his/her knowledge. This statement is governed by the NBLSA Code of Conduct and the school honor code of the applicant.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name & Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date