



Industrial Workers of the World Richmond General Membership Branch

Branch Bylaws

ARTICLE I: Purpose

Section 1. The Richmond, Virginia IWW constitutes a General Membership Branch with all the rights and responsibilities entitled by the IWW Constitution. Membership shall be by voluntary association of IWW members in good standing. A copy of these bylaws shall be made available to all Richmond, Virginia IWW members, and any other IWW members on request.

Section 2. It is the aim of the Richmond, Virginia GMB to build local and regional working-class solidarity as a Branch of the IWW. The Richmond, Virginia GMB therefore actively opposes discrimination on and off the job. No wage or salaried worker shall be excluded from the Richmond GMB because of race, ethnicity, sex, nationality, creed, disability, sexual orientation, age, or gender identity.

ARTICLE II: Meetings

Section 1. The Richmond, Virginia GMB shall meet on the second Tuesday of every month at 6:00pm. Special meetings may be called by notifying GMB members by face to face contact, phone call, or e-mail. "The Richmond, Virginia GMB shall hold regular business meetings once a month. The date and time for such meetings is to be determined for the year by a survey of the current membership's availability which is to be administered by the branch secretary. The branch membership may also trigger a reassessment of the meeting time by passing a regular motion at a monthly meeting. The day and time with the highest proportion of available branch members shall be used as the monthly day and time (e.g., the second Thursday of every month at 6:00pm). Special meetings may be called, but notification must be sent out to GMB members by official union channels.

Section 2. Rusty's Rules of Order shall be used to organize decision-making. A copy of Rusty's Rules of Order shall be made available to all Richmond, Virginia members.

Section 3. A chair and alternate chair for the next official business meeting shall be determined before meeting in session has been adjourned.

Section 4. All decisions by Richmond, Virginia GMB must be made by a vote of 50% + 1 of members in good standing.

Section 5. Meetings shall be open to all members of the IWW, regardless of standing, though non-members can be excluded from any meeting by a 3/4 majority vote of members in good standing. Voting privileges shall be reserved for IWW members in good standing, in accordance with the IWW constitution.

Section 6. GMB members attending branch meetings shall be eligible to take part in the business of the meeting if they are in good standing as defined by the IWW Constitution. If members wish to pay dues at the meeting, they should do so before the meeting is called to order or after adjournment.

Section 7. No less than five members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business by the GMB and its recognized committees. The transaction of business includes official motions and the disbursement of branch funds. Any paid official of the IWW shall not count as a member for the purposes of quorum, in keeping with the IWW constitution.

Section 8. Monthly Delegates' Committee meeting shall be held for the purpose of submitting reports and dues, planning local organizer trainings, sharing information & organizing any other activity as directed by the GMB. The Delegates' Committee has no power to make or overturn policy and/or decisions made by the GMB.

Section 9. Official meetings of the Richmond GMB and its committees shall maintain a sober spaces policy such that attendees who are visibly intoxicated may not participate (e.g., vote) and may be asked to leave at the discretion of the meeting Chair, Co-Chair, or members in attendance by democratic vote. Such a decision by the Chair or Co-Chair may likewise be overcome by democratic vote. This policy does not apply in cases of therapeutic use of substances (e.g., prescription medications). Any subsequent use following meetings (e.g., alcohol) must adhere to the policies of the meeting venue.

Section 10. Official meetings of the Richmond IWW and its committees shall observe the IWW's Safer Spaces policy. In addition to the current language of the Safer Spaces policy, the Richmond IWW also acknowledges coercion as an oppressive action that can occur between any of our fellow workers. Any actions believed to be coercive in relation to any aspect of union business shall also be subject to the Safer Spaces policy.

ARTICLE III: Officers

Section 1. The Richmond, Virginia GMB shall elect a Secretary, a Treasurer, and Branch Delegate(s) with all the rights and responsibilities as spelled out by the IWW constitution. The branch shall retain the right to combine the offices of Secretary, Treasurer, and Communications Officer into a single office.

Section 2. Secretary: Maintains a record of meeting minutes. Keeps a record of Delegates Reports. Maintains a current list of members – their “X” numbers, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses – and makes this contact list available to the Branch Treasurer, delegates, the editor of the newsletter, Richmond, Virginia GMB committee chairs, and any other officer of the Branch. All other GMB members who wish to obtain a GMB contact list must have the permission of the GMB at a formal business meeting. Sends a copy of branch meeting minutes to General Headquarters every month. Attends monthly business meetings of the GMB or finds an alternate. Reports to the Branch Treasurer by the 15th of every month.

Section 3. Treasurer: Keeps a regular accounting of all Richmond, Virginia GMB funds. Collects Secretary and Delegates reports with per capita and submits them to General Headquarters every month. Keeps a record of Delegates reports. Produces a monthly Treasurer’s report. Retains the ability to sign checks and allocate funds as directed by the Richmond, Virginia GMB. Attends monthly GMB business meetings whenever possible. The branch treasurer is granted a rolling discretionary fund of \$100.00 per month for union business. The branch membership may request an audit of these funds at any time.

Section 4. Delegate: Signs up new members, takes dues, maintains regular contact with members and other fellow workers, distributes union publications and literature. Reports by the 2nd Wednesday of every month to the Branch Secretary. All delegates shall be required to apply for delegate status at the April meeting each year. Delegates who wish to continue as such must be re-elected by the membership of the GMB. Delegates may be elected at any time during the year, but their term expires on April 30th.

Section 5. Communications Officer: Responsible for any official communications that must be made between branch meetings such as responses to e-mails, voice mail messages, website, discussion/mailling list maintenance and postal communication. Checks e-mail account and voice mail on a weekly basis. Ensures that mail is retrieved from the post office box at least once a month. Reports regularly at all GMB meetings. The branch communications officer is granted a rolling discretionary fund of \$50.00 per month for union business (e.g., event promotions). The branch membership may request an audit of these funds at any time.

Section 6. Literature Department: Responsible within the Richmond, Virginia GMB for the acquisition and distribution of Industrial Workers of the World and related materials for fund-raising and educational purposes. Keeping inventory. Coordinating and/or printing materials and volunteers to table events. Determining locations for and

distributing the Industrial Worker Newspaper on a monthly basis. Produces a monthly financial report to be submitted to the GMB Treasurer on a monthly basis. Reports regularly at all GMB meetings. The Literature Department shall have a rolling monthly budget of \$100.00 from the general branch fund for handling expenses.

Section 7. General Organizing Committee: Responsible for developing analyses of organizing strategies and tactics, directly facilitating the tasks and projects adopted by the General Organizing Committee, giving overall oversight to operations and finances of the GOC, and supporting local campaigns in their research needs. The General Organizing Committee shall consist of no fewer than 5 and no more than 7 committee members elected by the General Membership Branch, including the elected Organizing Department Liaison. A chair shall be elected by the General Organizing Committee. The elected Organizing Department Liaison is reserved a seat on the GOC but may not be elected committee chair. The General Organizing Committee members shall serve a term of one year as defined in Article III Section 9. Elected committee members are subject to the same nomination procedures as all Richmond GMB IWW officers.

The GOC shall meet at least once a month and be open to all members in good standing, though non-members may observe any meeting by a simple majority vote (50% + 1) of GOC members. Meetings shall be facilitated by a rotating chair, co-chair, recorder, and timekeeper to be determined before the meeting begins.

Voting privileges shall be reserved for elected General Organizing Committee members. The General Organizing Committee is subject to the Richmond GMB bylaws voting quorum of 5 members in good standing. A draft of each vote will be shared with all members in good standing to enter a 24-hour draft period, then entering a 48 hour voting period. Any vote can be called by GOC committee members with a simple majority vote (50% +1), or by the chair at any time. Voting privileges are reserved for elected members in good standing, though any member in good standing is encouraged to participate in all discussions. The decision-making power of the GOC will be limited to the decisions that need to be made to carry out the tasks of its responsibilities.

The duties of the GOC chair shall be to provide the Richmond GMB with a general report monthly. A detailed written report on the activities of all campaigns shall be submitted to the Richmond GMB Secretary / Treasurer at each branch officer meeting. All delegates and representatives from active organizing campaigns shall be strongly encouraged to participate in all GOC meetings.

For all funding requests, the GOC will contact directly either the branch secretary-treasurer or the Organizing Department Board.

Section 8. The Richmond, Virginia GMB may create and elect any other officers by proposal and vote, and each additional officer shall be subject to the provisions of this article.

Section 9. All officers shall serve one-year terms to begin on May 1st. All office terms shall end at 12:00 PM on April 30th.

Section 10. Officers may be recalled by $\frac{3}{4}$ majority vote of the membership. A recall vote may be held whenever 5 or more members of the GMB submit a petition for recall at a monthly branch meeting.

Section 11. Any elected officer may resign at any time. A verbal announcement made by the resigning official at a GMB meeting, or a written statement signed by that officer and one other IWW member in good standing shall be required to constitute an official resignation. If any officer resigns or is recalled, nominations to replace that officer shall take place at the next meeting and elections will take place at the following meeting.

ARTICLE IV: Elections

Section 1. Eligible voters shall include all local IWW members in good standing.

Section 2. Nominations for officers shall take place one business meeting prior to the actual election. All members shall be notified of nominees by the GMB Secretary or other delegate by face-to-face contact, phone call, postal or e-mail at least two weeks prior to the election of any officer.

Section 3. All elections will be by secret ballot at a GMB regular or special meeting. Each member in good standing has one vote. Members shall also vote in absentee by submitting a ballot to a delegate or officer in a sealed envelope.

ARTICLE V: Committees

Section 1. The Richmond, Virginia GMB may establish committees, and these committees may establish their own bylaws provided that these bylaws do not contradict the GMB bylaws or the IWW Constitution.

Section 2. Branch members classified in the same Industrial Union are encouraged to form Industrial Organizing Committees (IOCs) for the purpose of developing strategy for organizing their specific industry and laying structural groundwork for new Industrial Union Branches (IUBs) as defined in the IWW Constitution. To that end, IOCs are encouraged to elect a Secretary and Treasurer, to establish separate funds from the GMB and to write their own bylaws.

Section 3. All official statements issued by a subordinate committee of the Richmond, Virginia GMB bearing the name Industrial Workers of the World shall be subject to the formal approval of the Richmond, Virginia GMB.

Section 4. Any committee which fails to report for three consecutive branch meetings shall be subject to a motion to dissolve the committee.

ARTICLE VI: Handling of Funds

Section 1. Any and all voluntary assessments collected by the Richmond, Virginia GMB shall be promptly allocated to the projects for which they are intended, unless the committees responsible for such projects are found to be acting in a manner contradictory to the IWW Constitution or these bylaws, or unless those committees request that the funds be held by the Richmond, Virginia GMB.

Section 2. All branch members who retain the ability to sign checks shall only do so in the event that the Treasurer is unavailable for signing, or if a check requires two signers.

ARTICLE VII: Job Branches

Section 1. Job Branches may be formed when five or more members are working in one workplace. Job Branches exist as the workplace organization of the IWW. Job branches shall report to the GMB about developments in their workplace at monthly GMB meetings. The GMB shall support the efforts of job branches to the best of its ability.

Section 2. Job Branches may elect Job Delegates and other officers as needed. Terms for all officers will be for a set time and subject to recall.

Section 3. Job Branches may keep up to 50% of the dues paid by the Job Branch members. No less than 10% shall be retained by the Richmond GMB and 40% shall be remitted to IWW General Headquarters as according to the NARA constitution. The Job Branch may choose to keep its funds in the Richmond GMB bank account and receive reimbursements for expenses approved via a formal motion by the Job Branch upon delivery of receipts to the Richmond GMB Treasurer and meeting minutes showing the passage of the motion, or it may open its own bank account so long as the Job Branch elects a treasurer and submits regular financial reports to the Job Branch membership and the Richmond GMB Treasurer. The Job Branch dues share will begin following approval of the Job Branch bylaws by the GMB Secretary (see Section 5).

Section 4. Only those who are currently employed at the respective workplace may vote on Job Branch business. Former employees that are members of the IWW or other members in good standing may attend Job Branch meetings as permitted by the respective Job Branch. Job Branches may include provisions in their bylaws allowing for non-employees, temporary employees, and independent contractors to participate in votes.

Section 5. Job Branch bylaws must be submitted to the Secretary of the General Membership Branch for approval. The GMB Secretary will examine the Job Branch bylaws for any conflicts with the constitution of the IWW as well as the IWW NARA and Richmond GMB bylaws. The GMB Secretary may make suggestions for revisions, but may only reject Job Branch bylaws if there is a clear conflict with one of the aforementioned documents. If the GMB Secretary rejects any Job Branch bylaw draft that members of the Job Branch feel is unwarranted, the Secretary's decision may be challenged by a motion at a normal business meeting.

ARTICLE VIII: Amendments

Section 1. These bylaws may be amended by a vote of 50% + 1 of eligible voters as defined in Article IV Section 1

Section 2. Members must be given at least one month notice prior to a meeting at which a vote to amend these bylaws will be held. Members shall also vote in absentia by submitting a ballot to a delegate or officer in a sealed envelope.

Published. December 8, 2010

Revision 1. December 14, 2011

Revision 2. March 14, 2018

Revision 3. June, 13, 2019

Revision 4. September, 12, 2019

Revision 5. December, 12, 2019

Revision 6. August 13, 2020

- Amended Article II Section 5 (requirements to attend meetings) according to February 2018 vote to restrict meeting attendance to members of the Richmond GMB.
- Amended Article II Section 1 (meeting date/time) according to March 2018 vote.
- to move from second Wednesday to second Tuesday,
- Replaced gendered pronouns in Article III Section 3 with singular "they."
- Renumbered Sections VI through IX to Sections V through VIII to account for previously
- skipped Section V.
- Added language to Article III Section 6 (Literature Department) stipulating a \$100 rolling monthly budget for expenses.
- Added language to Article III Sections 3 (Treasurer) and 5 (Communications) stipulating \$100 and \$50 rolling monthly budgets for expenses, respectively.
- Created Article II Section 9 - stipulating all IWW meetings as sober spaces.
- Created Article II Section 10 - ratified the IWW Safer Spaces policy.
- Added clarifying language to Article VII Section 1 and 2.
- Created Article VII (Job Branches) Sections 3 (Dues Retention), 4 (Voting members), and 5 (Bylaws).

Clarification of terms:

1) "Rolling Budget/Funds" - Refers to a fund that is replenished to its set amount at each determined interval (e.g., monthly). In example, the Treasurer is granted a rolling monthly budget of \$100. If \$30.00 of this budget is spent, only \$30.00 of funds are replenished the following month.