

Non-Partisan Policy

Purpose. The purpose of this policy is to enable the League of Women Voters as an organization to provide service to voters, information to citizens, and lobbying and campaigning on issues. Only to the extent that the public and its elected officials are convinced of the League's genuine nonpartisanship, will the League be able to render effective voters service activities and gain a wide base of support for its positions on governmental issues. The policy distinguishes between the League as an organization and the rights and responsibilities of its individual members.

General. The League of Women Voters Framingham Unit is a nonpartisan organization that does not support or oppose any political party or candidate. The League's effectiveness lies in its ability to take strong positions on issues in the public interest without regard for partisan affiliation. The League also encourages participation in local government by informing the citizens of Framingham about their rights and responsibilities as voters.

The Policy as it applies to Members. The League prides itself on having a membership composed of a diverse and inclusive informed membership. Its individual members are encouraged to participate fully in party politics and in government at all levels. Many League members have strong affiliations with political parties or candidates, or are elected officials themselves.

Candidates for public office cannot serve on the Voters Services Committee as a member.

The Policy as it applies to Board Members:

1. Appointive Office: Board Member may accept an appointment to local commissions, boards, or committees if such service would not be in conflict with League program.
2. Political Party Office: Board Members shall not serve as an officer in a political party, at any local, state or federal level.
3. Support of Candidates for Public Office:
 - Board Members shall not publicly support any candidate for political office at any level. Activities *permitted* under this policy include: attending informational campaign functions and signing nominating petitions. Activities *prohibited* include, but are not limited to: circulating nominating petitions; hosting fundraising or campaign functions; making campaign contributions; displaying lawn signs; or adding one's name to an endorsement.
 - Board Members should use discretion to ensure that their personal political activities are not identified with the League in the public mind.
 - Candidates for elective office and their campaign managers cannot serve on the Board of Directors.

4. Other Board Positions Outside League: Board Members may not hold leadership positions (either active or honorary) in any group whose stated position is in opposition to the League program.

5. If any questions arise regarding the nonpartisan policy, the matter will come before the Board for interpretation and discussion. If a Board Member resigns from the Board because of a conflict with this policy, that member shall not return to the Board until after the next Annual Meeting or sooner with Board approval. Final decisions about implementing this nonpartisan policy rest with the Board.