



Transitioning from a State League Unit to a Local League

Congratulations on becoming a new local League! This memo outlines the final steps a local League should take after recognition from LWVMA and LWVUS to complete the creation of a League. LWVMA is appreciative of your work and celebrates all of your accomplishments.

Step 1: Taxes

- [Complete an application for a federal Employer Identification Number \(EIN\) from the IRS.](#) The organization type is "other." List your organization name as "The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts" DBA "The League of Women Voters of (local League name)."
- The application will ask the date business began and the closing month to establish your fiscal year. These dates will drive when your tax reporting is due annually. LWVMA suggests using July 1 through June 30.
- Your local League is a subsidiary of LWVMA's Group Exemption Number (GEN); 1988. LWVMA will take care of adding your League to the roster of subsidiaries.
- Your local League treasurer will be responsible for filing your tax returns (regardless of income) annually and should review the [LWVMA Information for Treasurers](#) document for more information.

Step 2: Finances and bank account set up

- Once your local League receives its EIN number, open a 501 (c) (4) bank account at a local bank convenient to you.
- Next contact LWVMA to obtain your League's account balances, and initiate a transfer of funds. LWVMA maintains both an advocacy and education fund for all Units. The advocacy fund includes all of the non-tax deductible donations and grants your Unit received, and seed money from LWVMA. The Education Fund includes tax deductible donations and any restricted grants you received, i.e., a Scharfman grant.
- LWVMA will send your treasurer a check to transfer all of the remaining unrestricted funds to deposit into your new 501(c)(4) bank account.
- Education funds are restricted to a 501(c)(3) account per the IRS. These funds **can't** be transferred unless you have applied for 501(c)(3) status. LWVMA can continue to maintain your Education Fund upon request and will supply a forms packet and guidelines for use of Education Fund donations.

Step 3: Designate a roster manager(s) who can maintain member records in the LWVUS database

- All local League membership records are housed in Salesforce, the LWVUS database.
- Designate one or two roster managers who can commit to the task of maintaining your roster and League records. Typically this is your president and membership chair, or another capable member (such as Treasurer). Notify LWVMA (lwvma@lwvma.org) and LWVUS (rostersupport@lwv.org) of the name(s) of your roster manager and the email address you would like to use for the database login credentials. LWVUS Roster Support will provide the login credentials.
- Review the support section of the database for more information and contact LWVMA to set up a meeting with a staff person to review the roster and tasks for handling member renewals (more information in step 5).

Step 4: Familiarize yourself with Per Member Payments (PMPs)

- You will receive PMP invoices from both LWVMA and LWVUS annually. Review the [PMP explanation document](#) for more information and pricing.
- PMPs are determined by the number of members reported in the LWVUS database on the annual membership count deadline, January 31st. Your local League roster manager(s) **must** update your roster by this date. PMP invoices from LWVMA and LWVUS are calculated per the number of individual, additional, student, and life memberships reported. LWVUS and LWVMA invoices are typically sent the following July.
- If a member joined/renewed and paid LWVMA prior to your transition AND that member is added to your LWVUS PMP invoice, LWVMA will reimburse the local League's LWVUS charge and the LWVMA charge will be waived. For example, if you start processing memberships on March 1, the PMP of the members that paid LWVMA between Feb. 1 and March 1 will be waived/reimbursed. A separate check will be sent to your treasurer if this situation occurs.

Step 5: Establish a process for membership renewals and new members

- Set a membership fee (dues) for individual, additional, and student members. Your fees should offset LWVUS and LWVMA per-member-payment charges (see step 4).
- Create a membership application, renewal letter, and a schedule for sending out renewal notices. Decide if you will accept electronic payments along with checks. Most local Leagues who accept electronic payments use PayPal.
- Your roster manager should enter new members and update existing member renewals in the LWVUS database. In addition email LWVMA with new member information and updates as soon as they occur at lwvma@lwvma.org.

Step 6: Create a website

- Create a website for an online presence. Ensure your website includes a link to donate, join and renew—either electronically or by mail.
- Notify LWVMA once your website is ready and ask your roster manager to enter your new URL in the LWVUS database.
- Your new website link will be added to the LWVMA and LWVUS sites and your Unit page on lwwma.org will be removed.
- If you need help creating a website or for a list of resources, contact LWVMA.

Step 7: Consider using an email marketing system

- An email marketer provides insightful statistics on the emails you deploy and can help streamline communications to your members and supporters.
- LWVMA recommends Constant Contact or Mail Chimp—both of these vendors offer free versions of their services and are suitable for smaller organizations.
- For a tutorial on email marketing systems, contact LWVMA.

Remember the League is a community! LWVMA will continue to support you in any way we can. If you have any questions or require additional resources, please do not hesitate to contact our office at 857-452-1715 or lwwma@lwwma.org.