

ARKANSAS FEDERATION OF DEMOCRATIC WOMEN
Founded 1933

The Arkansas Federation of Democratic Women is the oldest of the Auxiliaries of the Democratic Party of Arkansas. The organization formed in 1933 as a result of women's involvement with the election of Hattie Caraway to the United States Senate. Women's Democratic Club was the original name, and the Local Clubs were known as Units. Records documenting the organization from 1934 to the early 1970's were discovered in 1997. The name changed in 1972 when the National Federation of Democratic Women formed, and Arkansas' Democratic women became affiliated. There was a national organization in existence prior to 1972; however, few records are available to enlighten in detail. The formal organization of Arkansas's Democratic women has existed continuously as a viable force in the history of the Democratic Party and political activity in Arkansas from its inception to the present.

Arkansas Federation of Democratic Women Bylaws

last revised and approved November 16, 2022

ARTICLE I. NAME

Sec. 1 – NAME

The organization shall be known as Arkansas Federation of Democratic Women (AFDW). It shall be affiliated with the National Federation of Democratic Women (NFDW).

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

Sec. 1 – MISSION

AFDW promotes the increased political activity and influence of Democratic women in Arkansas politics and government.

Sec. 2 – PURPOSE

AFDW will provide training and other support for Democratic Women working in party organizations, campaigns, and/or seeking the party or public office. The group will work to promote increased representation of women in the party (county and state) and government institutions. AFDW will promote legislative, executive, and judicial policies which enhance the equitable representation of women in the party and government affairs. Members are encouraged to support Democratic candidates of their choice. The organization as a body will endorse and support only the nominees of the Democratic Party of Arkansas.

ARTICLE III. AFFILIATION AND MEMBERSHIP

Sec. 1 DEFINITION OF CHAPTER

A chapter is a county/regional/district-based group of people who

- a) uphold the values of AFDW
- b) present a group of officers that represents the membership
- c) present chapter bylaws that align with AFDW bylaws
- d) is approved through the affiliation process of AFDW

Where a county is not able to sustain a chapter, they may form a regional chapter with bordering counties. Where a county is not able to sustain a chapter alone nor with bordering counties, a district chapter may be initiated to support the work of AFDW across the state. Going forward, the use of the term chapter in this document is to include any formation - county, regional or district group of Democratic Women supporting the values of AFDW.

Sec. 2 – ELIGIBILITY

Any person who identifies as a woman, and who supports the mission, purpose of AFDW and the Democratic Party shall be eligible for membership in the organization. Any person who affiliates with a Party other than the Democratic Party or publicly endorses or advocates for voters to support the nominee of another Party for any office shall be ineligible for AFDW membership.

AFDW will not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, economic status, or disability as defined by the American Disabilities Act.

Sec. 3 – MEMBERSHIP

A member shall be defined as a registered voter in the chapter geography.

Membership may be credited to only one chapter per person.

Where there is NOT a chapter, any eligible member is considered a member of AFDW at large, statewide.

Sec 4 – GOOD STANDING

Defined as being current with membership dues or having received a hardship waiver, and compliant with requirements of membership as outlined in these Bylaws.

Sec. 5 – HONORARY MEMBERSHIP

Any person not eligible for full membership may be designated an honorary non-voting member of any Local Chapter upon recommendation of that body.

- a.) The Democratic President of the United States of America and their partner, Democratic National Committee members from Arkansas, Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Democratic State Committee, Democratic United States Senators and spouses, Democratic United States Representatives and spouses, and the Democratic Governor and spouse shall be honorary members of AFDW.
- b.) Honorary membership is bestowed at the State Level for State and Federal offices and guests. Honorary membership may be bestowed at the County level by County Clubs/Groups as each group deems appropriate.
- c.) Title is held during terms in office, it is not lifelong

Sec. 6 – LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Life membership may be bestowed upon an individual who has made significant contributions to AFDW by a majority vote of the Executive Board. Life membership shall carry all duties and privileges of full membership.

Sec. 7 – ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

Associate membership is defined as non-residents as defined by voter registration location; those who do not identify as women; and any person who is not eligible for full membership or does not meet the eligibility requirements and supports AFDW and the Democratic Party. Associate members shall be entitled to all privileges of full membership EXCEPT those of making motions, voting, and holding office.

ARTICLE IV. FINANCES, PLANNING, AND REPORTING

Sec. 1. - PERSONAL BENEFIT

No part of any AFDW income shall benefit any officer or member of the Caucus.

- a) members are not compensated for their elected service
- b) members will be reimbursed for purchases made on behalf of the organization as approved by the Treasurer and Finance committee

Sec. 2 – STATE DUES

Date of Payment of State Dues - State dues shall be \$6.00 per member annually.

Before a member may vote at an annual meeting of AFDW, their dues must be current. State Dues from chapters or individuals should be paid in accordance with quarterly reporting to remain in good standing.

Additionally, in order to vote any AFDW Convention, dues must be paid to the State Federation fourteen (14) days prior to the Convention.

Sec. 3 – CHAPTER DUES

Shall be established by each chapter.

Sec. 4 – FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year for AFDW shall be from January 1 through December 31.

Sec 5 - PLANNING

A strategic plan with goals, objectives, and timelines will be developed by the Executive Committee and presented to the membership. The plan will be made available to guide the work of committees and will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

Sec. 6 - INTERNAL REPORTING

It is the responsibility of the Executive committee to report on the progress of the strategic plan to the membership on a regular basis.

Additionally, AFDW shall regularly inform DPA officials of Caucus activities via reports to the Executive and State Committee meetings.

Chapters shall regularly inform AFDW of activities via reports to the AFDW Executive team. The following up to date chapter documents must remain on file with the AFDW Executive Committee: bylaws, membership list, treasurers report, member and executive meeting minutes.

Sec. 7 - EXTERNAL REPORTING

AFDW will report quarterly in accordance with the Arkansas Secretary of State. This activity is the responsibility of the Treasurer, she may appoint a committee to support this work as she needs.

Sec 8 - CHAPTER DEPT

No chapter, at any level, shall incur debt.

ARTICLE VI. OFFICERS

Sec. 1 – OFFICERS. The AFDW officers shall be President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, and Counselor. The officers make up the Executive Board of the organization.

Sec. 2 – DUTIES.

It shall be the duties of the President to preside at all regular and called meetings; perform all duties incident to the office; serve as ex-officio on all committees; set meeting dates and prepare the agenda and appoint Recommended and Special Committees.

It shall be the duty of the Vice-President to perform all duties of the President in the President's absence, and as delegated from the President.

It shall be the duties of the Recording Secretary to record or be responsible for the minutes of the Board/Executive Meetings and Annual Meeting; distribute the minutes to the Board, and to report attendance of the Board Members at Board Meetings in the minutes.

It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to act as custodian of funds in bank accounts and sign checks upon written authority of the President; to keep an accurate record of all members, report the financial condition at each Board meeting; and to serve as an ex-officio member of Budget and Credentials Committee. Her books must be audited annually by a committee appointed by the President.

The Counselor shall be the immediate Past President. It shall, also, be the duty of the Counselor to serve as Chairperson of the Nominating Committee. In the event the immediate past president is unable to serve, the whole of the outgoing and incoming Officers will work together to appoint a Counselor.

Sec. 3 – TERMS

Officers shall serve two-year terms.

Terms of office for officers begin at the time of election and installment at the AFDW Convention.

There are not term limits for officers

Sec. 4 – CHANGE OF OFFICERS.

When transitioning, officers should begin transition and training process at the time the nomination process begins to prepare to train incoming officers. Outgoing officers are responsible to return assets and records to the appropriate people at the time of transition.

If vacating office, officers shall turn over assets and records to the remaining AFDW Officers immediately.

ARTICLE VI – NOMINATIONS/ELECTIONS/APPOINTMENTS

Sec.1 – NOMINATING COMMITTEE

a) DUTY: The Nominating Committee seeks out, nominates, and supports the slate of women for AFDW Officers

b) MAKEUP; The Nominating Committee is to be composed of a representative from each Congressional district (appointed by the AFDW officers) and led by the AFDW Counselor. In the event of a vacancy on the Nominating Committee, AFDW Officers shall appoint a member to fill that vacancy.

c) PROCESS

- 1) Call for Nominations: AFDW shall publish to the members a call for nominations and a list of those nominees who have given consent at a minimum of 45 days prior to the vote.
- 2) Recommendations for nominations may be made to the Chair of the Nominating Committee and be received at least 30 days prior to the State Convention.
- 3) The Nominating Committee should exercise its judgment to complete the slate.
- 4) The Nominating Committee shall report its nominations at the Executive Board meeting 5 days (minimum) before the vote.
- 5) Nominations (self and of others) may be made from the floor at the time of the vote. Those nominated may accept the nomination or decline at the time of the vote. Upon acceptance of a nomination from the floor, the nominee is added to the slate for the vote.

Sec 2. ADDITIONAL APPOINTMENTS

It is the duty of the officers to work to appoint Executive Board members, including committee chairs

ARTICLE VII. Leadership Council

Sec. 1 – MAKEUP

The Leadership Council shall consist of the President, all Officers (as described in section 6), President or appointed representative of each County/Regional/District Club, Parliamentarian, Associate Treasurer, and the State Committee Representatives.

Sec. 2 – DUTIES

The Leadership Council shall have the general power to manage the affairs of the AFDW and to determine its programming as well as solicit/appoint/approve delegates to the National Convention.

It is the duty of each Committee Chair to lead the work of their appointed committee and to report to the Leadership Council in a timely manner as agreed upon.

It is the duty of each County/Regional/District President to lead their chapter in the way that is best suited for the organization and is in line with their County/Regional/District chapter bylaws.

It is the duty of the Parliamentarian to assist the presiding officer in parliamentary questions.

It is the duty of the Associate Treasurer to actively support the role of Treasurer

It is the duty of the State Committee Representatives to attend and support the State Committee of the Democratic Party of Arkansas as a representative of AFDW, to share information of the State Party for AFDW communications and overall awareness of the DPA.

Sec. 3 – MEETINGS

The Leadership Council shall meet at a minimum each quarter. Additional meetings may be called by the AFDW President; or by any member of the Council, upon a vote of a simple majority of the members of the Council as needed with written notice of a minimum of 5 days.

Meetings shall take place in person or via telephonic or virtual platform as determined at the time of the call to meet.

It is the expectation of members of the Council that they keep track of meeting dates and make every effort to attend.

While meetings shall be open to AFDW members, the Executive Board may go into executive session upon proper motion for purposes of discussing personnel issues and other sensitive matters.

Sec. 4 – QUORUM

A quorum shall consist of a majority of the members of the Executive Board.

Sec. 5 – REMOVAL.

Officers of AFDW and appointed Executive Board Members are subject to the AFDW member code of conduct just as any member is and if issues are to be addressed, they must first start with the Grievance Committee.

Sec. 6 – VACANCIES

Vacancies of elected officers and State Committee Representatives are filled by the Officers at the next meeting or special meeting. Vacancies of appointed members are filled by the President, with officer support.

ARTICLE VIII COMMITTEES

Sec. 1 – AFDW COMMITTEES

There may be committees as the President or Leadership Council deem necessary and as recommended by AFDW Bylaws. They will be ultimately appointed by the President with guidance as needed from the Leadership Council.

Sec. 2 – EXPECTATIONS

Committee Chairs shall submit a plan of action for the term in which they are appointed. Reports shall be submitted to the Leadership Council on a regular basis, and as requested by the President.

Sec. 3- COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS

The functions of the AFDW Committees shall be to plan and to recommend to the Leadership Council, policies, programs, etc. within their area of responsibility.

Sec. 4 - RECOMMENDED COMMITTEES AND APPOINTMENTS

a.) Bylaws Committee shall review the AFDW Bylaws and make recommendations to the Executive Board when necessary.

b.) Program Committee shall work to plan AFDW programs throughout the year.

c.) Communications Committee shall be responsible for the public image and visibility of AFDW. The President is the chief spokesperson for AFDW, and along with the President, the Chair may contact the media regarding appropriate AFDW activities and accomplishments to be publicized; responsible for promoting AFDW on multiple, various communications platforms.

d.) Fundraising Committee shall be responsible for the planning and implementing fundraising events for the benefit of AFDW.

- e). Membership Committee shall support statewide recruitment of members and work to form new chapters when needed.

- e.) Grievance Committee shall consist of the Parliamentarian, Counselor, and the President. This committee shall be responsible for hearing and investigating complaints and grievances of members.

- f). Chaplain - It is the duty of the chaplain to conduct devotionals at meetings and lend spiritual support as needed by AFDW members and others. Special provision may be made for someone other than the chaplain to serve in the capacity in her absence on occasion. It is important that the Chaplain be inclusive in their message of all belief systems.

- g). Historian - It is the duty of the Historian to maintain a record of publicity and maintain the organization's historical documents.

- h). Additional/Special committees/appointments will be assigned as needed by the President with guidance as needed from the Leadership Council.

Sec. 5 – STATE COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

AFDW is allotted four seats on the DPA State Committee.

One seat is held by the AFDW President, and the additional three state committee members shall be elected at the time of Officer Elections. It is suggested that members of the state committee are balanced by geography across the state as much as is available within AFDW membership.

ARTICLE IX MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS

Sec. 1 – AFDW CONVENTION

The AFDW Convention is held in the first fiscal quarter (J/F/M) preceding a November Presidential or Mid-Term election.

Notice of the time and place of the AFDW Convention shall be communicated to the membership at least 30 days in advance.

At this meeting it is expected that members will have an update from current officers, club leaders, committees, and chapters; additionally, it is expected that members will have a slate of Officers to consider and vote on at the AFDW Convention.

Sec. 2 – VOTING

Voting members of AFDW and affiliated chapters are adequately defined within MEMBERSHIP. Business is conducted by a majority vote. Each AFDW member receives one vote.

Sec 3 - MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

A meeting may be called by the President or Vice President. Notice shall be communicated to the membership at least 15 days in advance.

AFDW BYLAWS – REVISED NOVEMBER 2022

Sec 4. - QUORUM

A quorum shall be thirty percent (30%) of the AFDW existing membership.

Sec 5 - PROGRAMS

Throughout the year, AFDW may host forums, programs, events, etc. There will be no voting during educational programming or the like.

Sec. 6 - VIRTUAL, HYBRID, AND ELECTRONIC HOSTING

Any AFDW meeting or program may be held electronically, and it is encouraged to provide hybrid options for all meetings as available. Voting will be available via electronic or hybrid methods as well, methods are to remain secure and upstanding to protect the integrity of the vote. Means by which meeting will be included in initial meeting announcement.

Sec. 7 - MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Meetings must be announced in time guidance above and shall be made in writing to members via email. Meeting announcements shall only be shared on social media after email announcements have been sent.

ARTICLE X PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Where the Bylaws are silent, AFDW shall be governed by the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised.

AFDW bylaws will be the model for individual chapters and where chapter bylaws are silent, AFDW bylaws should be consulted, and where AFDW bylaws are silent, DPA bylaws should be consulted

ARTICLE XI DISSOLUTION

Should AFDW be dissolved by appropriate action of its membership, the funds and other assets shall be given to the Democratic Party of Arkansas. Should a Local Club be dissolved by appropriate action of its membership, the funds and other assets shall be given to AFDW.

ARTICLE XII AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

Bylaws may be amended at any regular or called meeting of AFDW by a two-thirds vote of those present, provided written notice of all proposed changes shall have been given to the Executive Board fourteen days before the meeting at which any amendment will be submitted for approval.

At the time amendments to AFDW Bylaws are approved by the membership, individual chapters have thirty (30) days to bring their own bylaws up to date in accordance with any changes or new guidance. After chapter bylaws are update, they should be sent to the AFDW Secretary on or before 30 days after AFDW bylaws are approved.