

**BYLAWS FOR
MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY-GREAT FALLS
MONTANA PUBLIC EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION**

NAME

1. The name of this organization shall be the Montana State University-Great Falls chapter of the Montana Public Employees' Association, Inc. (hereinafter referred to as "*Local Chapter*").
2. *MPEA* shall be used hereinafter to mean the Montana Public Employees' Association, Inc.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. *Bargaining Unit*: All persons employed in classified positions who are covered under the contract between the MPEA and the Montana University System.
2. *Local Chapter*: All employees of MSU-Great Falls who pay membership dues to MPEA.
3. *Membership Application*: An "Application" card provided by the MPEA, completed by the employees, authorizing the MPEA and/or its Local Chapter to represent the employees in matters relating to his/her employment and to protect his/her economic welfare, and submitted to the MPEA Headquarters Office.
4. *Member in Good Standing*: Upon acceptance by MPEA of a Membership Application, and contingent upon continued payment of dues, an employee becomes a member of the Local Chapter (Hereinafter referred to as a "*member in good standing*"). A member in good standing is current in his/her dues obligation and is not currently subject to discipline by suspension, fine, expulsion, or other discipline.
5. *Membership Status vs Agency Fee Status*: On the application card, the employee elects either membership status or agency fee status. (Please note that \$.50 of the voting dues are set aside in a strike fund to help the campus/university system should a strike be decided.) An employee who has elected membership status (hereinafter referred to as a "*member in good standing*") is eligible to:
 - A. attend and vote at general meetings of the membership and on all mail-ballot matters pursuant to these Bylaws, including all pay plan issues (contract negotiations and ratification)
 - B. participate on the negotiating team,
 - C. run for officer positions,
 - D. be a chapter representative,
 - E. vote on dues increases and all other MPEA Constitution changes,
 - F. vote on whether the campus/university should go on strike or not.

An employee who has elected agency fee status (hereinafter referred to as an "*agency fee payer*") may not vote on State issues such as the pay plan and State officer elections. An employee may change to a "*member in good standing*" on the employee's anniversary date of designation or six (6) months after filing written notice with the association which ever is longer.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE LOCAL CHAPTER

Disciplinary Action: Any member in good standing may petition the Local Chapter's Executive and Policy Committee to recommend to the MPEA Board of Directors that a member be disciplined in accordance with the MPEA Constitution and Bylaws.

1. Causes for disciplinary action are those considered detrimental to the Local Chapter, MPEA, or the welfare of fellow MPEA members, which may include working as a strikebreaker or crossing a picket line as established by any MPEA chapter.
2. The member in question shall be notified in writing by the Executive and Policy Committee at least ten (10) working days in advance about the Executive and Policy Committee meeting where the disciplinary action will be considered. The notification shall include the date, time, and location of the meeting.
3. The member in question has the right to be heard at the Executive and Policy Committee meeting where disciplinary action is considered. Failure of the member in question to respond shall have no bearing on the action of the committee regarding a disciplinary recommendation.
4. The Executive and Policy Committee shall, upon approval of two-thirds (2/3) of the committee members present and vote at a scheduled committee meeting, make a written recommendation to the MPEA Board of Directors for disciplinary action of the member in question. The MPEA Board of Directors will determine the appropriate disciplinary action, if any, and may include termination of membership.

OFFICERS

1. The officers of the Local Chapter shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, and the immediate Past President.
2. Officers, except the immediate Past President, shall be elected for a two-year term. Officers shall assume the duties of their respective offices on May 1 of the elected year and their terms shall expire on April 30 two years later.
3. An officer shall not be limited to the number of terms held in office.
4. *Duties of the Officers:*
 - A. All officers shall serve on the Local Chapter's Executive and Policy Committee.
 - B. The **President** shall:
 1. preside and preserve order at all meetings of the Local Chapter,
 2. chair the Executive and Policy Committee,
 3. appoint all committee members pursuant to these Bylaws,
 4. appoint any special committees as needed,
 5. serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member of all committees except the Nominations and Elections Committee,
 6. represent the Local Chapter at all state MPEA meetings (or appoint another member of the Local Chapter's Executive and Policy Committee to serve in that capacity),
 7. make appointments to fill vacancies that occur prior to the end of the term of office,
 8. appoint campus building representatives.

- C. The **Vice-President** shall, in the absence of the President, perform the duties of the President in the event of a vacancy in that office. The Vice-President shall perform other duties as requested by the President.
- D. The **Secretary/Treasurer** shall assist the President and Vice-President in conducting the business of the Local Chapter. Specific duties include:
1. maintain the files of the Local Chapter, including all correspondence, making copies, meeting notices,
 2. maintain accurate and up-to-date records,
 3. notify officers and committee members of their appointments and conducting the correspondence of the Local Chapter,
 4. provide assistance as needed for all Local Chapter committees, and additional duties as assigned by the President,
 5. provide current information to building representatives.
 6. maintain campus/university membership charges,
 7. identify the members in good standing and keep a current up-to-date membership and bargaining unit list.
 8. keep records of all campus finance charges,
 9. maintain accurate and up-to-date records of monies expended by the Local Chapter from MPEA allocations, including but not limited to tracking bargaining pool hours.
- G. The **Past President**, after serving his/her last term as President, shall serve a one-year term in an advisory capacity to the new President and the Executive and Policy Committee .
- H. All officers shall attend all regularly scheduled Chapter meetings.

ELECTIONS

1. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall nominate one or more candidates for each office and present the nominees at the scheduled Local Chapter meeting.
2. In addition, any member in good standing of the Local Chapter may be nominated for an office.
3. The names of all candidates nominated by the Nominations and Elections Committee shall appear on the official ballot.
4. Elections of the officers shall be held in April, with the initial ballot count to be conducted no earlier than April 15th and no later than April 30th.
5. Notice of the election and names of candidates for the offices shall be mailed to all members in good standing of the Local Chapter pursuant to the mail ballot procedures set forth in these Bylaws.
6. Qualifications of Candidates:
 - A. Candidates for all offices shall be members in good standing.

- B. *Candidates for President:* Any candidate for President shall have been a member in good standing for a minimum of two (2) years prior to holding office.
- C. Candidates for all other offices shall have been members in good standing for a minimum of one (1) year prior to holding office.

VOTING

1. The Local Chapter's Executive and Policy Committee shall determine which matters not specifically designated in these Bylaws shall be decided by mail ballot.
2. Only members covered by the Collective Bargaining Agreement shall be eligible to vote on contract matters
3. All members in good standing shall be eligible to vote on non-contract matters.
4. Members in good standing as of March 15th shall be mailed ballots no later than April 1st. The mailing shall include:
 - A. an explanation of the matter to be voted upon,
 - B. an explanation of the voting procedures as hereinafter set forth; the last date on which ballots may be received to be counted; and the date, time, and place where ballots are to be counted,
 - C. a ballot,
 - D. a campus addressed envelope with the name of the eligible voter on the flap. The return envelope shall be postpaid,
 - E. a smaller plain envelope marked "BALLOT."
5. Once the member in good standing has voted, he/she places the ballot in the smaller "BALLOT" envelope, seals it, and places it in the larger return-addressed enveloped and seals that envelope. S/he then signs her/his name adjacent to her/his imprinted name on the flap of the outer envelope. Ballots not so signed shall not be counted.
6. Receipt, Check, and Count of Ballots
 - A. On the date and at the time and place so designated, the ballots shall be counted.
 - B. The counting and tabulation of the ballots shall be conducted under the supervision of the chair of the Local Chapter's Nominations and Elections Committee.
 - C. The following individuals shall be present during the counting and tabulation of the ballots, unless excused for valid cause: All members of the Local Chapter's Nominations and Elections Committee, all chair persons of the Local Chapter's standing committees, and all members of the Local Chapters Executive and Policy Committee.
 - D. If the matter being voted on is a non-contract matter, any member in good standing may also attend during the counting and tabulation of the ballots. If the matter being voted on is a contract matter, ONLY voting members may attend the counting and tabulation of the ballots.
 - E. The unopened outer envelope shall be treated as "voters" approaching the table. They shall be checked off the voter list according to name. If there is no challenge, the outer envelope shall be opened and the ballot, still

sealed in the “BALLOT” envelope, shall be placed in a separate receptacle.

- F. A member in good standing present may challenge a ballot; and, if the challenge is not resolved to the challenger’s satisfaction, the ballot shall remain unopened and the outer envelope shall be marked with a small “c” and set aside in a separate receptacle. Challenges must be made at the time the ballots are to be opened and counted; otherwise, they are waived.
7. Disposition of Challenges - Whoever challenges a ballot shall submit written objections to the Nominations and Elections Committee within three (3) working days of the date the ballots were counted. Failure to do so constitutes a waiver to the challenge, and the ballot is then to be counted.
 8. Objections to the Voting – If a contract matter was voted on, a voting member may file objections to the conduct of the vote or conduct affecting the results of the voting. The objections must be in writing stating the reasons for the objections and must be received by the Nominations and Elections Committee within three (3) working days of the time the ballots were originally counted.
 9. Disposition – When challenges and/or objections are filed pursuant to 7 and 8 above, the Nominations and Elections Committee shall, on at least two (2) working days notice to all interested parties, and within (10) working days of the date the ballots were counted, hear and act on the challenges and/or objections.
 10. If no challenges and/or objections pursuant to 7 and 8 above are filed within the times set forth therein or if the challenged ballots are insufficient to affect the result of the vote, the Nominations and Elections Committee shall certify the results of the vote three (3) working days after the balloting. If the Nominations and Elections Committee overrules objections to ballots, it shall leave challenged ballots unopened.
 11. If the Nominations and Elections Committee sustains objections to the voting filed pursuant to 8 above, it shall order a new balloting be conducted pursuant to the Voting Procedures of these Bylaws, or a recount to be conducted pursuant to 6 above.
 12. If challenges and/or objections are filed pursuant to 7 and 8 above, the results shall be certified three (3) working days following the disposition of such challenges and or objections.
 13. The results of the voting shall be made public immediately upon the final counting and tabulation of the ballots.
 14. All ballots shall be retained for thirty (30) calendar days after certification of the results of the voting, then destroyed.

MEETINGS

1. Only members in good standing shall attend and vote at meetings of the Local Chapter. If the meeting is specifically to consider contract matters, those in attendance shall be members of the bargaining unit.
2. Members in good standing shall be notified of the dates and agendas of the meetings.
3. Proxy voting at meetings of the Local Chapter is prohibited.
4. Absentee voting at meetings of the Local Chapter is prohibited.

5. The Local Chapter President shall preside at all meetings.
6. A general meeting of the membership of the local chapter shall be held when the president of the local chapter deems it necessary during the non-negotiations years.

STANDING COMMITTEES

1. Standing committees shall function in an advisory capacity to the Local Chapter's Executive and Policy Committee.
2. The Local Chapter President with the approval of the Executive and Policy Committee shall appoint committee members. All members in good standing are eligible to serve on committees.
3. Committee members shall be appointed for two-year terms. The terms of committee members shall begin May 1st and expire April 30th.
4. In addition to requirements outlined in the Bylaws, each committee shall determine its own organization relative to members, officers, and duties.
5. The Local Chapter's standing committees shall be: Executive and Policy Committee, Bylaws Committee, Nominations and Elections Committee, and Benefits Committee.

A. Executive and Policy Committee:

1. Shall act on policy matters for the Local Chapter and make recommendations to the Local Chapter membership.
2. Suggested matters for consideration may come from within the Executive and Policy Committee, from other committees, or from any member in good standing.
3. Shall meet on a regular basis. Shall establish and/or approve agenda items for Local Chapter meetings.
4. Shall call special meetings of Local Chapter, when necessary. Shall serve as a contact point for members having questions, problems, or who believe they have a grievance.
5. Shall receive and record any suggestions by members in good standing (who are also members of the bargaining unit) for changes in the contract.
6. Shall inform the Local Chapter membership of the negotiations schedule.
7. Shall prepare a list of priorities for negotiations well in advance of actual contract negotiation sessions, and shall present these priorities to the Local Chapter membership at the regular meeting prior to the beginning of negotiations.
8. Shall represent the Local Chapter during negotiations sessions when appointed to do so by the President.
9. Shall report to the Local Chapter on the progress of negotiations when appropriate.
10. Shall be responsible for distribution of contracts to members of the Local Chapter.

B. Bylaws Committee:

1. Review and make recommendations to the Executive and Policy Committee for proposed changes of our bylaws that will keep the MSU-Great Falls local chapter up-to-date.

C. Nominations and Elections Committee:

1. Shall identify nominees and obtain their willingness to be included on the election ballot.
2. Shall certify signatures on nominating petitions as being those of members in good standing.
3. Shall prepare ballots and carry out voting procedures for election of officers and other matters as described in the Local Chapter Bylaws.

D. Benefits Committee:

1. Shall receive and record any suggestions by members in good standing for changes to the benefits package, to be brought up at the next interunits benefits meeting.
 2. Shall seek information and feedback for the representative to the interunits benefits committee to enhance working conditions and environment.
6. The chairs of the standing committees shall serve on the Executive and Policy Committee.

GRIEVANCES

For recommendations on procedures for handling local grievance issues, contact a member of the Executive and Policy Committee or an MPEA representative, in accordance with the current contract.

CONCERTED ACTION

No concerted action shall be taken without the guidance and approval of the Executive Director of MPEA or its representative.

AMENDMENTS

1. Proposed amendments to these Bylaws shall be submitted to the members in good standing and be voted on by mail ballot pursuant to the voting procedures of these Bylaws.
2. Amendments shall be ratified with a simple majority of the returned ballots from the members in good standing of the local chapter.

ADDITIONAL OFFICER INFORMATION

1. All officers need reliable transportation and must be able to travel.
2. Gas is paid for using your vehicle, nothing else.
3. All your expenses shall be reimbursed but you have to come up with the money at the time of your travel.
4. The President needs to be able to travel alone at times.
5. Be available to serve on a variety of committees.
6. Must have the support of your Department Head, Director or Supervisor.

Approved by MPEA Board of Directors _____