

UNITED BASSA (LIBERIA) ORGANIZATIONS IN THE AMERICAS (UNIBOA)

National Election Guidelines



An Appendix to the UNIBOA Constitution

Approved by the Board of Directors

This 6th day of May, 2023

UNIBOA NATIONAL STANDARD ELECTION GUIDELINES

PREAMBLE

Article X of United Bassa (Liberia) Organizations in the Americas (UNIBOA) Constitution establishes the Election Committee. The Election Committee shall comprise of five (5) members who shall be appointed by the President. Article X further states the Election Committee shall organize and supervise all general elections. The Election Committee shall make rules and regulations approved by the Board pertaining to all elections (General and Special Elections). The Election Committee, an Ad-Hoc committee, here-to-fore referred to as the Election Commission, has the singular responsibility of conducting a free, fair, transparent, and impartial election for officers of UNIBOA. The Commission is vested with the authority to implement these guidelines to guide members of UNIBOA in choosing their leaders.

Article I: The Election Commission

Section 1: The election Commission shall be an independent AD-Hoc Committee. During and following the declaration of the election, the National Board of Directors or the Executive Committee shall be prohibited from any and all interferences in the process.

Section 2: All decisions of the Commission shall be made at official meetings of the five-member commission. The presence of any three members shall constitute a quorum; and all decision shall be made by a simple majority of the number of commissioners present. The Commission meetings shall be held in-person (face-to-face), teleconference or virtual.

Section 3: The Election Commission shall comprise of the following

- Chairman
- Co-chair
- Member
- Member
- Member

Section 4: The Commission shall appoint volunteers to serve at various polling stations and booths as needed.

Section 5: The Commission shall organize and conduct elections for elective positions in United Bassa (Liberia) Organizations in the Americas, (UNIBOA).

Section 6: The Administrative Head Office of the Commission shall be the city, province or town where the Chairman of the Commission resides. **All correspondences, documents, communications and payment receipts for the Commission's required fees shall be sent to the mailing address of the chairperson (insert address here)**

UNIBOA NATIONAL STANDARD ELECTION GUIDELINES

Section 7: The Commission shall have the power to impose fine and fines shall be imposed in an incremental level per occurrence of offense; provided that any fine imposed shall not exceed one hundred dollars (\$100.00). The Commission may deny or disqualify candidate (s) and or delegate from participating in a regular or special election for failure to meet all election requirements.

Section 8: The Commission has the prerogative to organize debate as it deems fit for contesting candidates prior to the holding of the elections.

Section 9: Any person serving on the Commission shall not be eligible to contest a position in a general or special election.

Section 10: The Commission shall cause to be published or released the election timetable three months prior to the holding of the election.

Section 11: The Commission shall prepare, print or provide ballot papers for an election, and shall receive applications and fees from members wishing to contest an election for a minimum fee.

Section 12: These guidelines and policies shall come into effect immediately upon approval by the Board of Directors of the United Bassa (Liberia) Organizations in the Americas, (UNIBOA).

Section 13: The Commission shall exercise jurisdiction over its members. It shall make the decision for removal of a member in case of breach of their code of conduct, and/ or violation of the UNIBOA Constitution or Election Guidelines.

Article II: The Election

Section 1: The election shall be held by secret ballots and the candidate with the highest number of votes shall be declared the winner for the contested position.

Section 2: The Commission shall declare the opening and closing of the voting polls and may extend the polling time beyond the specified time if deems it necessary to do so.

Section 3: Voting shall be done in alphabetical order of the chartered chapters of UNIBOA. Each voter shall be required to present an ID or proof of eligibility to vote to an election officer or a volunteer designated by the Commission prior to casting of ballot. The election officer shall verify the voter eligibility on the voters' roll before issuing a ballot to the voter. The Chairperson or designee shall initial or stamp the ballot before it can be used by the voter. The voter must place an "X" mark before the name of the candidate of choice for each office to be filled.

UNIBOA NATIONAL STANDARD ELECTION GUIDELINES

Section 4: The voters' roll shall be made available to all polls watchers represented by each contestant.

Section 5: If a voter mistakenly spoils a ballot, or accidentally marks a ballot paper in a way that does not indicate for whom the voter intends to vote and the ballot paper has not been placed in the ballot box, the voter may return the ballot to the election officer folded and the officer shall immediately stamp it "VOID" and deposit it in the discarded ballots container, The officer shall then issue a new ballot to the voter.

Section 6: No ballot shall be voided by reason of it not being marked with an "X", once there is a clear indication that the voter marking such ballot has made a definite choice of candidate.

Section 7: The Commission shall disqualify a delegate/voter during the election, if that voter willfully removes or conceals any voting material, damages, defaces or destroys any voting or election material, obstructs the voting process, incites or engages in physical violence or disorderly conduct at a polling station, makes a fraudulent entry or alteration, or permits another person to make fraudulent entry or alteration of any voting material.

Section 8: Each candidate may have one or more poll watchers designated to observe the polling and counting of votes at a polling station. The Commission shall determine the number of poll watchers per candidate. A poll watcher must be a registered member of a chapter.

Section 9: Each candidate desiring to be represented by poll watchers must submit to the Commission the name(s) of the poll watcher at least 3 hours prior to the opening of the polls.

Section 10: Any poll watcher who intimidates, influences, or interfere with the right to vote or not to vote as an elector may choose shall be immediately expelled from the polling station. An expelled poll watcher may be replaced.

Section 11: Before opening a voting station, the Commission together with all poll watchers shall inspect and/or review all empty ballot boxes to be used at the polling station.

Article III: Elected Positions and Application Fees

Section 1: Contested positions for the United Bassa (Liberia) Organizations in the Americas (UNIBOA) shall be:

UNIBOA NATIONAL STANDARD ELECTION GUIDELINES

- A. President
- B. Vice President
- C. Secretary General
- D. Treasurer
- E. Financial

Section 2: Non Refundable Application fees for elected/contested positions shall be:

A. President	\$200.00
B. Vice President	\$150.00
C. Secretary General	\$125.00
D. Treasurer	\$100.00
E. Financial Secretary	\$100.00

Article IV: Qualifications of Candidate

Section 1: In order to be certified by the Commission, prospective candidates must meet the following requirements:

- a. Be a registered member of a chartered chapter of the Union
- b. Must be at least a high school graduate or its equivalent
- c. Must demonstrate good moral standard and exhibit leadership capability
- d. Be born of a Bassa parent or born of a Bassa county
- e. Must be a permanent Resident (Green Card Holder) or citizen of the USA
- f. Must be in good financial standing and good attendance record with his/her local chapter
- g. The chapter of the candidate must be in good standing with the Union
- h. Must submit a letter of intent and a letter of clearance from his/her local President
- i. Must pay the required non-refundable application fee and submit the receipt of such payment to the Commission
- j. Must submit two passport size photos with his/her letter of intent
- k. If running as a team, all required documents must be submitted to the Election Commission by the aspiring presidential candidate; failure to do so will result in the disqualification of the team.
- l. Candidates for president and vice president must be active member of a local chapter for at least three years and must have attended at least three consecutive National Conventions of the Union.
- m. Candidates for secretary general, financial secretary, and treasurer must be active members of local chapters for at least two years and must have attended at least two consecutive National Conventions of the Union.

UNIBOA NATIONAL STANDARD ELECTION GUIDELINES

Section 2: The following shall be grounds for disqualification of candidate(s) or contesting team or nullification of an election result:

- a) If the candidate perpetrated or aided in the perpetration of any form of fraud about the votes cast that receipt of a number of illegal votes or rejection of legal votes are sufficient to change or place in doubt the result of the election
- b) That the candidate(s) or team action caused serious irregularities in the election process and consequently, materially affected the results of the election
- c) That the candidate(s) or team willfully provided false information to the Commission in support of his/her or its candidacy; or willfully took, removed, detained, carried away, concealed, damaged, defaced, destroyed or mutilated any ballot paper or voting material
- d) That the candidate or a team member obstructed, hindered or cause the election process to be obstructed
- e) That the candidate or a member of a contesting team aided, counseled, provided advice or assisted any person(s) to do any of the acts specified in this section
- f) Willfully and willingly printing, publishing, displaying in any form or manner any campaign ads before the date stipulated in these election guidelines.

Section 3: Aspiring candidate or team letter of intent must be submitted to the Commission through registered or regular mail to the Commission Headquarters.

Section 3: A candidate may withdraw his/her candidacy no less than two weeks prior to the conduct of the elections. Such withdrawal notice must be a written notice submitted to the Commission by regular or registered mail. The Commission will under no circumstances accept a withdrawal notice outside of this time frame.

Section 4: Election shall not be postponed or registration of candidate(s) resumed and or deadline for registration of candidate(s) extended because of candidate(s) withdrawal from the election even if one person remains as a running candidate.

Section 5: The Commission may recommend to the Board of Directors to postpone an election or resume registration of candidate(s) and or extend registration of candidates in the event of a major catastrophe to a candidate before an election and or after the deadline for registration.

Section 6: The Commission shall publish or cause to be published the list of all aspiring candidates in a press release, newsletter, internet or through any appropriate medium for the purpose of publicizing the candidates as much as possible.

UNIBOA NATIONAL STANDARD ELECTION GUIDELINES

Section 7: Any member or group of members of UNIBOA may file a written protest with the Commission against the qualification of a candidate or team of candidates on grounds that the candidate or team does not satisfy the qualifications required by the Constitution and the Election Guidelines. The protest must be submitted within the framework of the election timetable.

Section 8: The Commission shall review and make a decision on the protest and notify the protestor and candidate or team involved no later than the relevant date provided in the time table. The protestor or candidate or team dissatisfied with the decision of the Commission may take an appeal to the Board of Directors in writing no later than the relevant date stated in the time table. The Board of Directors decision on the matter shall be final.

Section 9: All complaints, objections, protest letters, appeals and other essential documents to the Commission must be sent by registered and certified mail and must be signed for by a representative of the Commission.

Article V: Election Timetable

Section 1: The Election Commission shall release the election timetable three months before elections day and no later than last day of the month preceding the three months (i.e. the 31st of May).

Section 2: The deadline for the submission of application and fees by individual candidate or contesting team shall be no later than 30 days following the release date of the elections timetable (i.e. 30th day of June) no later than 11:59 Post Meridian

Section 3: The deadline for certification of qualified candidates and teams shall be 21 days following the application submission date (i.e. 21st of July), no later than 11:59 Post Meridian (PM)

Section 4: Official election campaign shall begin 12:00 Ante Meridian (AM) following the date of certification of candidates or teams.

Section 5: The deadline for the submission of Chapters' roster shall be no later than that 30 days before elections day and no later than 11:59 Post Meridian (PM)

UNIBOA NATIONAL STANDARD ELECTION GUIDELINES

Section 6: Presidential Debate shall be on elections day to enable the voters to know their candidates and platforms. The Election Commission will set the time for the debate.

Section 7: General elections shall be conducted on election day. The election Commission will set the time and the host chapter for the convention will set the venue.

Section 8: The officers-elect shall be inducted into their respective offices by the Board of Directors during the Annual Banquet.

Section 9: All UNIBOA properties including documents shall be temporarily turned over to the Chairman Board of Directors or designee by the current administration no later than 24 hours prior to elections. After the administration of the oath, the Chairman of the Board or designee shall oversee the turning over the gavel of authority and other documents to the newly inducted president. All signatures changes shall be initiated and processing started by the close of the General Assembly and no later than two weeks after the General Assembly. However, the Commission shall retain all ballots and election materials.

Section 10: The Election Commission shall be officially dissolved by the incumbent President three months after the General Assembly.

Article VI:

Voters' Roll

Obtain a clearance of due payment from his/her local chapter to establish good financial standing;

- a) Be at least 18 years of age;
- b) Present a convention due payment receipt from the National Treasurer when presenting its voters' list to the Commission;
- c) Submits its voters' list to the Commission 30 days prior to the holding of the elections.
- d) Present a ID (State, Driver License, Student ID or Passport) to the Commission to establish qualifying status to vote

Section 2: The Commission shall compile a voters' roll for the general election consisting of a comprehensive list of all delegates accredited to the convention. The voters' roll shall be made available to the candidates, contesting team heads and poll watchers prior to the opening of

UNIBOA NATIONAL STANDARD ELECTION GUIDELINES

polling stations. When a chapter is called, all of its registered voting delegates shall vote prior to the call of another chapter.

Article VII: Counting of Ballots Procedures

Section 1: Ballots counting in the presence of poll watchers shall begin immediately at a close of a poll station. Each ballot shall be displayed and the name read out loud for the poll watchers to hear. Counting of the ballots shall not be delay due to the absence of any poll watcher from the poll station.

Section 2: Poll watchers are required to remain in the counting center while votes are counted. Violators of this section will be denied re-entry during the counting process.

Section 3: A designated Commissioner shall verify the number of votes received at a poll station and keep a statistics of spoil and unused ballots prior to the counting of the ballots at the poll station. The ballot box shall then be opened and its content emptied on a table for examination and counting. The ballots may be re-examined at a request of a poll watcher during the counting process.

Section 4: The Commissioner responsible for verification of ballots shall reject any ballot that:

- Was not supplied by the Commission for an election
- Is marked for more than one candidate for the same office
- Is marked in such a way that is not reasonably possible to determine the voter's choice

Section 5: A minimum of 50% of poll watchers must sign the tally sheet. At a request of poll watcher, the Commission may recount the ballots before the tally sheet is signed. However, the count shall be only for the position being contested by the poll watcher's candidate (s) or team.

Section 6: The Commission shall announce the result of the election as soon as the votes are tallied and the tally sheet is signed. Unless an election result is contested, the Commission shall issue Certificate of Election to a declared winner before the induction ceremony by the Board of Directors.

Article VIII: Procedures for Processing an Election Contest

Section 1: A grieving candidate may within forty-eight (48) hours following the announcement of the election results, file a written compliant of protest with the Commission. The complainant shall provide details of any aspect of the election that is material to the final

UNIBOA NATIONAL STANDARD ELECTION GUIDELINES

result of the election. The Commission under no circumstances accepts a complaint filed via internet communication.

Section 2: The Commission shall, within two week of the receipt of a protest, deliberate on the merit of the protest and make a decision. It shall communicate its decision to all concerned parties.

Section 3: If the Commission review of a protest indicate a serious irregularity concerning any aspect of the election that materially affected the election result, the Commission may take any or all of the following steps to remedy the situation:

- a) Declare void the election of the candidate to that office, declare the office vacant and conduct a bi-election for the office.
- b) Declare void the election result for that office, oust and exclude the candidate from office, declare the office vacant and notify the Board of directors to call a special election for that office.

Section 4: If the National Board of Directors review of an election protest appeal finds that another candidate other than the appellant received the highest number of legal votes, it shall mandate the Commission to declare the candidate with highest number of legal votes be elected to that office.

Section 5: Any irregularity or improper conduct of a member or members of the Commission shall not be ground to void an election result unless such irregularity or improper conduct significantly results in the election of a person who did not receive the highest number of legal votes.

Section 6: An election result shall not be set aside because of a mistake in the conduct of a person or in a failure to comply with an election guideline, unless the mistake or failure materially affects the result of the election.

Section 7: Any mistake in the voters' roll or the final list of candidates or the ballot paper shall not invalidate the voters' roll, list of candidates or ballot paper, except the Commission determines that the mistake could materially alter the result of the election.

Section 8: Unless otherwise provided in the Constitution or Election guidelines, newly elected officers shall plan and execute the Inaugural Program and Ball no later than 6 months following the General Assembly. However, the National Board of Directors may authorize the extension of time for the Inaugural Ball Program for justifiable reason(s).

UNIBOA NATIONAL STANDARD ELECTION GUIDELINES

Article IX: Election by Acclamation

Section 1: For any regular or special election where there is only one candidate for the vacant position, the Commission shall cast a single ballot for that candidate for the position she/he has been cleared and certified for.

These revised election guidelines are in accordance with the UNIBOA Constitution and any provision(s) thereof that contravene any provision(s) of the Constitution; the Constitution provision shall supersede.

These guidelines shall come into effect upon the approval by the Board of Directors of UNIBOA and shall be the standard Election Guidelines.

NOTE: Revision to these Election Guidelines may be done no sooner than five (5) years with the exception of the timetable and application fees.

Revised and submitted by The Election Commission



Ernest D. Giahvue, Chairman: Pennsylvania Chapter

Luther Vah Williams, Co-Chair: Colorado Chapter

Theresa Jacobs, Member: North Jersey Chapter

Sunniwaye E. Kelly, Member: Rhode Island Chapter

Rev. James Daykah, Member: Georgia Chapter

Approved Election Timetable – UNIBOA 2023 Election

January 15, 2023 – Submission of the proposed Election Guidelines to the President.

January 20, 2023 – The President forward Election Guidelines & Timetable to the BOD.

February 28, 2023 – Targeted approval date by the BOD

May 31, 2023 – Commission releases the approved Election Guidelines and Timetable.

June 1, 2023 – Submission of application begins. Mail application to **Ernest D. Giahyue @ 516**

Commerce Street, Darby, PA 19023

June 30, 2023 – Last day for submission of application no later than 11:59pm

July 2, 2023 – Submission of chapters' roster begin.

July 21, 2023 – Certification and publication of qualified candidates/teams.

July 22, 2023 – Official election campaign shall begin 12:00 AM.

August 2, 2023 – Last day for the submission of Chapters' roster by 11:59PM

September 2, 2023 – Presidential Debate at the General Assembly.

September 2, 2023 – Election Day. Time and venue to be determined.

September 3, 2023 – Induction Ceremony during the Annual Banquet.

September 3, 2023 – Turning Over Ceremony during the Annual Banquet

Published by the Election Commission



Ernest D. Giahyue, Chairman