

# Notes on Proposed Revision of Constitution

## Major Changes

The proposed revision of the Washington State Labor Council constitution contains numerous changes. The most important are:

1. New language committing to racial justice added to the preamble, purposes (2.1(l)), and the officers' oath (6.11).
2. Clarification of organizations eligible to affiliate, to conform to AFL-CIO rules and current WSLC practice. (3.1)
3. Addition of provisions allowing electronic conventions (4.4) and executive board meetings (8.5) in an emergency and electronic committee meetings (13.8).
4. Addition of provision that an election is not necessary for an uncontested race for president or secretary-treasurer or for region vice president if there are the same number of candidates as positions to fill. (7.14)
5. Change the process for amending the constitution or bylaws and create a new standing constitution and bylaws committee. These changes will allow the committee to spend the time necessary to thoughtfully review proposed amendments to the governing documents, research any other amendments that may be necessary to avoid inconsistencies, and to work with the submitters to create well-crafted amendments that will use consistent terminology and logical organization. The changes also will establish hard deadlines a few months prior to convention to allow this work and will ensure that all delegates will receive notice of all amendments at least 14 days before the constitutional convention. (13.2, 17.2–17.4)
6. Ensure gender-neutral language.
7. Ensure conformity with AFL-CIO rules.
8. Eliminate ambiguity, conflicts, and inconsistencies.
9. Add missing details and remove unnecessary details.
10. Use simpler, more straight-forward language and sentence structure.
11. Eliminate confusing article and section designations ("article VIII, section 3") in favor of decimal-numbered sections ("8.3").
12. Eliminate duplication.
13. Reorganize to create a logical flow and organization.

## Cross-Reference

Where is it? When looking at the existing constitution, this is where you will find the same provisions in the proposed revision, including notes on things that were added or removed. Also, explanations are given for many of the substantive changes.

In the notes:

- "COPE" refers to the Washington State committee on political education, which is a committee of the WSLC. The COPE bylaws referenced here are published in the same document as the constitution that was amended in July 2018.

- “RGSCB” refers to the AFL-CIO Rules Governing State Central Bodies, last amended on March 14, 2017. The reference is in the format of “part.rule”.
- “RONR” refers to *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised*, 12th edition, published September 2020. The reference format is described on page vii of that book.

Existing		Proposed	Notes
Article	Section	Section	
Preamble		Preamble	New paragraph on racial justice
I		1	
II		2.1	New 2.1(l)
II	Declaration of principle	2.2	
III	1	3.1	
III	1(a)	3.1(a)	
III	1(b)	3.1(b), 3.1(c)	
III	1(c)	3.1(d)	
III	1(d)	3.1(e)	
III	1(e)	3.1(f)	
III	1(f)	3.1(g), 3.1(h)	Removed “affiliate retiree organizations of the State Retiree Council”
III	1(g)	3.1(l), 3.1(m)	
III	1(h)	3.1(i), 3.1(j), 3.1(k)	
III	1(i)	3.2, 4.17	Added young labor org., young leader group, and worker center to organizations restricted from political participation. Reference RGSCB.
		3.1(n)	New
		3.1(o)	New
III	2	3.3	
IV	1	4.1, 4.3	Removed reference to COPE conventions, since these are simply special conventions (see 4.2)
IV	2	4.5, 4.6	
IV	3	4.2, 4.5	
IV	4	4.1, 17.1	
		4.4	New
IV	5	4.8	Removed reference to protests. 4.6 requires the protest to be resolved before convention begins. If there is still a contest, RONR has procedure to handle it.
IV	6(a)	4.7	Removed sentence about alternate presenting credential. RONR already has this rule. (RONR 58:17)
IV	6(b)	4.9	
IV	7	4.10	Changed to use language similar to RGSCB I.6(d)
IV	8	4.18	
IV	9	4.19	
IV	10(a)	4.22, 4.23	Removed rule about majority vote. Already in RONR.
IV	10(b)	4.23	

Existing		Proposed	Notes
Article	Section	Section	
IV	10(c)	4.15, 4.24	
IV	10(d)	4.14	
IV	10(e)	4.16, 4.17	Delegates and votes reduced to one for affiliates that are not local unions or councils, to conform to RGSCB I.3(c). Delegates for all affiliates that are not local unions may vote their one vote, not the entire 3 votes of their affiliate, to conform to RGSCB I.9(d).
IV	11	4.21	
IV	12	4.11	Added reference to current and past officers.
IV	13	4.13	Simplified and corrected inconsistency for number of members required for 15 delegates.
IV	14	4.14(a)	
IV	15	4.14(b)	Changed formula to conform to RGSCB I.9(b).
IV	16	4.12	
IV	17	4.14(c)	
IV	18	4.16	
IV	19	4.20	
IV	20	4.25	
IV	21(a)	4.26	
IV	21(b)	4.26, 4.27, 4.28	Removed constitution committee. See 13.2.
IV	21(c)	4.29	
IV	22	4.30, 4.31, 4.32	
IV	23	4.33	
V	1	6.1, 6.2, 8.1, 3.2	
V	2	6.4, 6.5	
V	3	6.8	
V	4	5	Districts renamed to regions to eliminate any confusion with historical practice of equivalence with congressional districts.
V	4(a)	6.3	Removed requirement for election since a single candidate with no write-ins is essentially an appointment.
V	5	6.9	
V	6		Removed. To change the number of VPs in a region or the number or boundaries of regions, amend 5 or 6.1.
		7.1	New, though strongly implied by other provisions.
V	7	7.2, 7.6	Details added.
V	8	7.3, 7.5	Added a definite start date for the term.
V	9	7.4	
V	10	7.7	
V	11	7.15	
V	12	7.16	

Existing		Proposed	Notes
Article	Section	Section	
V	13(a)	7.17	
V	13(b)	7.18(a)	
V	13(c)	7.18(b)	Changed to locals who have affiliated after the beginning of the two-fiscal-year period.
V	13(d)	7.19	Changed deadline to June 30.
V	13(e)	7.17	
V	14	7.11	Clarified deadline if form isn't returned by USPS.
V	15	7.9, 7.10	
V	16	7.7	
V	17	7.12, 7.13, 7.14	Clarified deadline if acceptance isn't returned by USPS.
		7.14	New
V	18	7.21	
V	19(a)	7.22	
V	19(b)	7.23	Added details for voting for regional VP.
		7.24	New. Conforms to current practice.
V	19(c)	7.25	
V	19(d)	7.26	
V	19(e)	7.27	
V	20(a)	7.28	
V	20(b)	7.29	Clarified that casting too many votes does not invalidate the entire ballot, only the office that has too many votes.
V	20(c)	7.30	
V	20(d)	7.30	
V	21(a)	7.31	
V	21(b)	7.32	
V	21(c)	7.32	
V	22(a)	7.33	Clarified various possibilities with candidates who are tied. Clarified that no write-ins allowed.
		7.34	New
V	22(b)	7.35	Clarified deadline for receipt if ballot is returned by USPS.
V	22(c)	7.36	
V	22(d)	7.1	
V	23(a)	7.37	
V	23(b)	7.38	
V	24	6.6	
		6.7	New
V	25	6.10	
V	26	7.39	
V	27	6.11	Added pledge to fight racism, sexism, homophobia, and oppression.
V	28	6.12	Added AFL-CIO Code of Conduct.
VI	1	6.13	Moved the voting records of public officials from secretary-treasurer to president.

Existing		Proposed	Notes
Article	Section	Section	
		6.13(a)	New
VI	1(a)		Removed. Included in 6.13(a). (RONR 47:5, 49:11)
VI	1(f)	6.13(f)	Removed requirement for confirmation of staff appointments.
VI	1(g)		Removed. See 8.4.
VI	1(h)	13.5, 13.6	
VII	1	6.14	Moved the voting records of public officials from secretary-treasurer to president. Added duties assigned by the board.
		6.14(a)	New
		6.14(b)	New
VII	1(c)		Removed. Included in 4.5, 6.14(b). (RONR 47:32, 49:11)
VII	1(i)	6.13(i)	Moved to president. (14.1 gives president responsibility for directing legislative activities.)
		6.13(m)	New
VIII	1	8.1	
VIII	2	8.2	
VIII	3	8.3, 8.4	
		8.5	New
		8.6	New
VIII	4	8.7	
VIII	5	8.8	
VIII	6	8.9	
VIII	7	8.10	
VIII	8	8.11	
IX	1	9.1, 9.2, 9.3	
IX	2	9.4, 9.5	
IX	3	9.7, 9.8	
IX	4	9.9, 9.10, 9.11, 9.12	
IX	5	9.12	
IX	6	9.6	
IX	7	9.2	
X	1	10.1	
X	2	10.2	
X	3	10.3	
X	4	10.4	
X	5	10.5	
XI	1	11.1	
XI	1(a)	11.2	
XI	1(b)	11.3	
XI	2	11.4	
XI	3	11.5	Added clarification about exoneration.
XI	4	11.6	

Existing		Proposed	Notes
Article	Section	Section	
XI	5	11.7	
XI	5(a)	11.8	
XI	5(b)	11.9	
XI	6	11.10	
		12.1	New
XII	1	12.2	
XII	2	12.3	
XII	3	12.4	Added election board.
XII	4	12.5	
XII	5	12.6	
XII	6	12.7, 12.8	
XII	7	12.9	Added credit and debit cards.
XII	8	12.10	
		13.1	New. COPE is a standing committee and should be listed in the constitution.
		13.2	New. The constitution and bylaws committee should be a standing committee so that it has the time to thoughtfully review proposed amendments and research any other changes that may be necessary to maintain consistency if the amendment is adopted.
XIII	1	13.3, 13.4, 13.5	
XIII	2	13.7	Added exceptions for standing committees of the council, since these committees are subordinate to the convention not the executive board.
XIV	1	14.1	
XIV	2	14.2	
XIV	3		Removed. These provisions are contained in COPE bylaws, article III.
		14.3	New. The COPE bylaws are of less authority than the constitution and only apply to COPE. If the convention (a superior body to COPE) is bound by some of the rules in the COPE bylaws, those rules must appear in the constitution. This reference accomplishes this.
XV	1	15.1	
XV	2	15.3	
XV	3	15.2	
XV	4	15.4	
XV	5	15.5	
XV	6	15.6	
XV	7	15.7	
XVI	1	16.1	16.1(b) clarifies that the executive board may not amend or rescind an action taken by a convention but may propose amendments to a future convention.

Existing		Proposed	Notes
Article	Section	Section	
XVI	2	16.2	16.2 is recommended wording from RONR, adapted for WSLC.
XVII	1, 2	17.2, 17.3, 17.4	(See major changes, above.)
XVII	3	17.5	
XVII	4	17.6	Removed statement about 90-day notice to AFL-CIO for changes in per capita tax. The rule properly belongs in AFL-CIO rules.