

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF POSTMASTERS - RULES

I - TITLE

This organisation shall be called the "National Federation of Postmasters" (NFP). Its Head Office shall be at Evelyn House, Windlesham Gardens, Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex, BN43 5AZ, or at such other place as may from time to time be determined by the National Executive Council, hereinafter defined.

Registered Office: Evelyn House, 22 Windlesham Gardens, Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex, BN43 5AZ.

II - DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of these Rules the term Postmaster is defined as any individual, partnership, corporate entity or company, offering services and products as an agent of and under contract to Post Office Limited or any associated subsidiary or parent company (POL).

III - OBJECTS

The Objects of the NFP shall be:-

- (a) To regulate the relations between Postmasters (which expression throughout the Rules will be gender neutral) and POL: and to this end
 - (i) to negotiate on behalf of Postmasters rates of pay, and general conditions of service to include any variations to contracts.
 - (ii) to participate in any negotiating machinery set up to regulate conditions of service.
 - (iii) to settle disputes (whether collective or individual) between its members and POL and to promote the peaceful settlement of such disputes by advocating joint participation in conciliation or arbitration where such mechanisms are available.
- (b) Generally to promote and defend the interests of Postmasters and to co-operate with other organisations having similar objects and interests.
- (c) To promote methods of improving the service to customers at post office outlets and to assist and advise POL on ways of promoting new business.
- (d) To generally inform and advise members in matters in relation to their post office business

IV - FUNDS AND PROPERTY OF THE NFP

The Funds shall be used to further the Objects of the NFP, to include (but not limited to) the following together with any associated costs and expenses, and for no other purpose unless specifically authorised by a National Conference.

- (a) For the publication of an NFP journal, the title and distribution frequency of which will be determined by the Executive Council.
- (b) In exceptional circumstances and at the final and absolute discretion of the Executive Council to provide legal aid and advice for members of the NFP in relation to their role as a Postmaster. This may be to instigate, support or defend any legal action. The Executive Council may impose any such conditions as it may think fit, including (without limitation) conditions relating to the engagement of specified solicitors or counsel in connection with any actual or potential legal proceedings.
- (c) In the administration and organisation of any scheme or campaign intended to benefit Postmasters and approved by the Executive Council.
- (d) To provide centralised schemes of administration and organisation of any agency or trading business carried on by Postmasters, intended to benefit them and approved by the Executive Council.
- (e) To provide and pay for an Insurance Company scheme for payments by that company to members of the NFP and their employees in the event of bodily injury by assault resulting in death or disablement provided that such scheme shall have been approved by the Executive Council.
- (f) If the Executive Council shall at any time consider it necessary or desirable (whether for commercial reasons, good industrial relations or for any other reason whatsoever) to apply the Funds in any manner not otherwise expressly authorised by the Rules then such a proposal must be put to a National Conference of the NFP by way of a Resolution, containing full details of all material terms of such proposals, including details of:
 - (i) the Funds concerned;
 - (ii) the proposed application of Funds and
 - (iii) the reasons for such proposals
- (g) A two-thirds majority vote shall be required to carry the aforesaid proposals at a National Conference.

V - MEMBERSHIP

- (a) All Postmasters in Great Britain and Northern Ireland as defined in Rule II shall be eligible for full membership, with the exception that any appointee of a temporary nature during a period of suspension of an existing postmaster whose case has not yet been determined, shall not be eligible while that suspension continues.
- (b) Throughout these Rules the term member, members or membership shall be deemed to relate to full membership except if expressly stated otherwise.
- (c) Applications for membership shall be submitted to NFP headquarters for approval and entry on the membership database. Thereafter the appropriate Region/Branch will be notified of membership allocation.
- (d) Full Members shall pay an annual subscription for each office except where the office is a Satellite/Outreach office where the Host/Core office will be the subscribing office. Annual subscription rates will be determined at a National Conference.
- (e) The appropriate subscription bandings will be determined by the Executive Council.
- (f) The Executive Council shall be authorised to agree a corporate rate of membership subscription where appropriate for firms, companies or individuals holding multiple post office appointments.
- (g) The Annual Subscription shall be paid normally by monthly instalments under the recognised procedures agreed with POL for the deduction of subscriptions from salary.
- (h) The Annual Subscription for members not having their subscription deducted from salary shall be due for renewal on the anniversary of their membership and shall be payable to NFP Headquarters.
- (i) Any member paying their subscription by annual payment or direct debit taking up a new appointment as Subpostmaster in a different Region and having resigned all appointments in his former Region shall be deemed to have joined the relevant new Region but no additional subscription in respect of the current year shall be required.
- (j) A further category of membership, known as Associate Membership, shall be offered to those eligible under the following criteria:
 - (i) A partner (business or life) who is employed as a registered post office clerk within a full member Postmaster's office.

Such category of associate membership runs in tandem with the partner postmaster's membership, and will cease upon the membership termination or resignation of the full member. A working partner Associate Member shall have access to the NFP Helpline but will not receive an independent copy of the NFP journal. They may hold office solely at Branch level of the NFP with the exception of Branch Secretary. Voting rights will be limited to one vote per office with the full member's view always taking priority. A National Conference delegate, subject to their Region's approval, may be substituted by their partner Associate Member, who is duly authorised to deliver the full member's proxy vote at a National Conference. They shall pay a subscription fee of 25% of the rate applicable to the full member's office.

- (ii) Former members who have retired from their position as Postmaster (whether they continue to work within the Post Office Network or not).

Such category of Associate Member would not have access to the NFP Helpline, but would be entitled to receive a copy of the NFP journal. A retired Postmaster Associate Member may hold office solely at Branch level, with the exception of Branch Secretary, but will have no voting rights whatsoever nor can they be a National Conference delegate. They shall pay a subscription rate of 15% of the higher full subscription rate.

- (k) Any member (full or associate) may be expelled from the NFP who, in the opinion of the Executive Council, is not a fit and proper person for membership. Provided that:-
 - (i) A recommendation is carried at a properly constituted Regional/Branch meeting called to consider the matter.
 - (ii) Thereafter written notice of the recommendation to expel the member (full or associate) shall be given to him at least 7 days before the meeting of the Executive Council at which it will be finally determined, and he shall be given an opportunity to be heard before a decision is made.
- (l) National Honorary Members, who need not have been Postmasters, may be elected by the Executive Council, subject to confirmation by Annual Conference. Such members may attend the Annual Conference but shall have no voting rights. They shall be entitled to a copy of the NFP journal.

VI - REGIONAL COUNCILS

The NFP shall be divided into Regions which will be the principal administrative units, each region to organise and administer their area as they deem appropriate subject to Executive Council approval.

(a) Regional Councils shall be established for the following areas:

- (i) North East Region
- (ii) North West Region
- (iii) Midland Region
- (iv) North Thames & East Anglia Region
- (v) South West Region
- (vi) South East Region
- (vii) Scotland Region
- (viii) Northern Ireland Region
- (ix) London Region
- (x) Wales/Cymru Region

Members shall be attached to the Region appropriate to the location of each post office. Any corporate member may nominate a member of its staff who may attend and vote at Regional Council meetings

- (b) A Regional Council shall be elected by Members within the Region. Each region to be entitled to one Regional Council delegate per 50 members or part thereof.
- (c) Each Region should establish its own internal structure. Regions should submit their proposed structure and any amendments to that structure to the Executive Council for approval.
- (d) Each Region shall adopt Region Rules and may amend them as provided by those Rules provided that such Rules and amendments shall be submitted to the next EC meeting for their approval and provided that the EC shall have the power to set aside any such Rules and amendments as may be in conflict with National Rules.
- (e) Meetings of the Regional Council shall be held as frequently as required but at least 2 times a year (5 to form a quorum). At each meeting the Secretary shall give a report on the work done and the Executive Council representative members shall report on the Executive Council's work and policy.
- (f) Honorary members of a Regional Council may be elected by the Regional Council and may attend and speak at any meeting of the Regional Council, but shall not be entitled to vote.
- (g) In consultation with their Executive Officers, Regional Councils should establish the most effective contacts and channels of communication with POL for dealing with day to day issues within the area. This must be subject to any national arrangements taking precedence.

- (h) Each Region shall appoint a Membership Secretary who will monitor membership throughout the Region, providing support and advice in maintaining and increasing their membership. At each Regional Council meeting, the Membership Secretary will be required to give a full report of all activities undertaken to encourage new membership throughout the Region.
- (i) Regional Councils shall be subject to the control of the Executive Council, whose decision on all matters of policy (including disputes as to interpretation of policy) shall be final.
- (j) A Regional Council shall have power to obtain all NFP records and accumulated Branch funds from the Branch officials and to dismiss any or all of the Branch officials and make new appointments.
- (k) A Region may send resolutions to Conference. All resolutions approved shall be forwarded to the General Secretary in accordance with Standing Orders for Conference.
- (l) Each Region shall be entitled to send delegates to Conference on the basis of 1 per 40 members or part thereof
- (m) A Regional Council shall elect a Standing Orders Committee representative, at its Annual General Meeting to hold office for one year. The expenses of attending meetings of Standing Orders Committee and Conferences will be met from central funds. At Conference, members of the Standing Orders Committee will be entitled to speak and vote.
- (n) Members of the Executive Council shall be ex officio members of their Regional Council with no voting power. Their expenses in attending Regional Council will be met from central funds.
- (o) Each year at its Annual Meeting a Regional Council shall appoint one Executive Officer to the Board of Benevolence and notify NFP.
- (p) Regions shall be funded annually by the General Secretary with an amount equal to the total of Region Full Members multiplied by 20% of the average per capita subscription for Full Members collected throughout the NFP. Membership figures and annual capitation rate to be calculated as at 30 September of the year of account. For the purposes of this rule corporate, satellite/outreach and associate members are excluded.
- (q) Regions will be funded with a payment on account from the General Secretary upon receipt of the certified return of regional associate and honorary members. The balancing payment will be made based on the September audited membership.

- (r) All Regional funds shall be paid into a deposit or current bank account in the name of the Region, and cheques and orders or applications for payment drawn thereon shall be signed by 2 persons. All Regional funds shall be applied to the objects and purposes of the Region so long as such objects and purposes are not extraneous from or inconsistent with the objects and purposes of the NFP.

VII - BRANCHES

Regions may sub divide into Branches.

Expenditure incurred by Branches in meeting the Objects of the NFP and in compliance with Region and Branch rules will be settled from funds held and managed by the Region

- (a) Should Branches be established by Regions members shall be attached to the Branch appropriate to the location of each post office. Any corporate member may nominate to its Branch Secretary a member of its staff who may attend and vote at Branch meetings.
- (b) Each Branch shall adopt Branch Rules and may amend the same in manner provided by such Rules provided that such Rules and amendments shall within 14 days of such adoption or amendment be submitted to the Regional Council for their approval and provided that the Regional Council shall have full power thereafter to set aside any such Rules or amendments which are in conflict with either Regional or National Rules.
- (c) Each Branch shall hold at least 2 meetings per annum and will be part of the appropriate Regional Council.
- (d) Any records, fees and/or funds required to be transferred to the Regional Council shall be transferred as requested.
- (e) All resolutions from Branches must, in the first instance, be submitted to the appropriate Regional Council Secretary in time for inclusion in the Agenda for the Regional Council meeting.
- (f) A Branch may be dissolved either by a two-thirds majority vote of Branch members present and voting passed at any Annual or Special General Meeting of the Branch or by the Regional Council where the Branch has ceased to function.

VIII - EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

- (a) The management of the Federation shall be vested in an Executive Council which shall have full power to conduct the affairs of the NFP.
- (b) The Executive Council shall be elected triennially. Elections will be held in accordance with the procedure set out in Rule VIII (d) below. Executive Officers elected between triennials to fill vacancies falling in

between a triennial period will be required to seek re-election when the next triennial election occurs.

- (c) The number of representatives to which each Region is entitled shall be determined by the total number of full members in the Region on the basis of one representative for each 800 full members or part thereof. The number of members for this purpose shall be the audited full membership as at the 30 September preceding the election. If the entitlement of a region increases or decreases the alteration in representation shall not come into effect at the Annual Conference following the change but in the year next following unless the membership shall have reverted during the intervening year.
- (d) Nominations to serve on the Executive Council may be made by full members within the Region, providing that all nominations are in writing and proposed and seconded by full members of the Federation. A full member shall only be nominated for a vacancy in one Region, which shall be the Region in which that member holds a post office appointment. All nominations must be received in writing by the General Secretary not later than 5pm on the 10th January. In the event of there being more members nominated than are required to fill the allotted seats on the Executive Council an election must take place. Ballot papers bearing the names of each member nominated will be prepared and distributed by post by the nominated scrutineers to all members within the Region not later than 10th February of the same year. Completed ballot papers must be returned by post to the nominated scrutineers allowing sufficient time to ensure that these will be received not later than the last day in February of the same year. The cost of postage will be borne by the Federation. A list of nominees will be sent to the Regional Council Secretary within 1 week of the closing date for nominations. If a ballot is held the result certified by the nominated scrutineers will be notified to the General Secretary who in turn will notify the Regional Council Secretary. Nominees will be afforded equal opportunity of providing personal information which will be distributed with the ballot papers.
- (e) If there shall be at any time a vacancy among the members of the Executive Council, the vacancy shall be filled in accordance with the procedure set out in Rule VIII (d) amended as follows:

Notification of the vacancy will be published in the NFP journal. Nominations of full members supported by a proposer and seconder who are full members of the Federation will be invited. All nominations in writing must be received by the General Secretary not later than 5pm on the last day of the month in which the edition of the NFP journal was published. Should a ballot be necessary the ballot papers will be prepared and distributed by post from the nominated scrutineers to all members within the Regional Council area not later than the last day of the following month. Completed ballot papers must be returned by post to the

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nominated scrutineers allowing sufficient time for these to be received no later than the 15th day of the month following that in which the distribution of papers took place.

- (f) The Executive Council shall meet not less than 4 times each year and an abridged report of the proceedings shall be published in the NFP journal.
- (g) The out-of-pocket expenses of Executive Council members on official Federation business shall be paid by the National Treasurer.
- (h) Expenses may be paid for any member carrying out official Federation business at the request of the Executive Council.
- (i) The Executive Council shall have power to grant payment for clerical or other special work properly undertaken on behalf of the Federation by the officers, or any member, outside the ordinary duties.
- (j) If any matter arises calling for urgent attention the President, Vice-President and General Secretary may deal with it and report to the next meeting of the Executive Council, or a statement and resolution may be sent round by post to every member of the Executive Council and a postal vote obtained on any specific resolution, such vote being reported at the next meeting.
- (k) No Executive Officer shall be allowed to serve as a Regional or Branch Secretary.
- (l) The Executive Council shall have the right to send Resolutions to Annual Conference.
- (m) The Executive Council may be removed at any time during their term of office at a Special Conference called for that purpose. On such removal a new Executive Council shall be elected in accordance with the provisions of this Rule and the current regulations governing the election of the Executive Council.
- (n) Trade Disputes. If in any such dispute as is referred to in Rule II (a) (iii) the Executive Council considers that a stage has been reached when notice of termination of the contracts of members should be given to POL, the Executive Council is empowered to take the following action:
 - (i) Take a ballot of all members in accordance with procedures required by the Trade Union Act 1984, or succeeding legislation.

IX - OFFICERS

(a) National President and National Vice-President

- (i) The National President and National Vice-President shall be appointed by delegates at Annual Conference from the Executive Council.
- (ii) The National President and National Vice-President may be removed from their respective offices at any time during their term of office at a Special Conference called for the purpose. Any vacancy so created shall be filled by the members assembled at the Special Conference from the members of the Executive Council unless the Executive Council shall themselves have been removed.

(b) National Treasurer

- (i) The National Treasurer shall be appointed by the Executive Council.
- (ii) The National Treasurer may be removed from office at a meeting of the Executive Council called for that purpose and such meeting may fill the vacancy.
- (iii) He shall pay all expenses authorised by the Executive Council.
- (iv) He shall prepare a quarterly account showing the balance in hand for presentation to the Executive Council and prepare the annual Balance Sheet and Accounts of the Federation for the Auditors as soon as possible after the 31st December each year.
- (v) The salary shall be fixed by the Executive Council. The NFP shall arrange fidelity insurance to cover the office of National Treasurer.

(c) Auditors

- (i) The members at each Annual Conference shall appoint qualified Accountants to conduct an audit of the books of the NFP for the current year.
- (ii) Such Accountants shall examine and certify the Balance Sheet and Accounts of the NFP made up to 31st December in that year for presentation to the following Annual Conference.
- (iii) At any Annual Conference the retiring Auditors, however appointed, shall be re-appointed without any resolution being passed, unless:
 - (a) they are not qualified for re-appointment; or
 - (b) a resolution has been passed at that Conference appointing other Auditors instead of them or providing expressly that they shall not be re-appointed; or

- (c) they have given the NFP notice in writing of their unwillingness to be re-appointed

(d) General Secretary

- (i) The General Secretary shall be elected in accordance with the requirements of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 and succeeding legislation. The Executive Council shall have the power to enter into an agreement with him as to the terms of his appointment.
- (ii) The Executive Council shall have the power to remove the General Secretary in accordance with their Terms of Employment.
- (iii) He shall deal with all general matters on behalf of the NFP including the appointment and management of all the staff.
- (iv) He shall make arrangements for any National Conference of members, Executive Council meetings and shall arrange minutes of the matters dealt with.
- (v) He shall advise the Executive Council on pertinent matters, correspond as necessary on their behalf and act generally under the direction of the Executive Council.
- (vi) He shall be responsible for the issue and layout of the NFP journal and he shall report the outcome and progress of motions and other Conference matters as appropriate.
- (vii) Be empowered to act in all negotiations and contracts for property goods and services on behalf of the Federation save where the Trustees are required by law to execute any agreement, deed or document on behalf of the NFP.

(e) Assistant General Secretary

- (i) The Executive Council shall have the power to appoint an Assistant General Secretary and to enter into an agreement on the terms of appointment. The duties of the Assistant General Secretary shall be determined by the General Secretary.
- (ii) The Executive Council shall have the power to remove the Assistant General Secretary in accordance with their Terms of Employment.

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X - TRUSTEES

- (a) There shall be 3 Trustees, who shall be members of the Executive Council and appointed by them. A Trustee shall hold office until they

resign, cease to be a member of the Executive Council or are removed from office after a Resolution by the Executive Council.

- (b) All property belonging to the NFP shall be vested in the Trustees. The Trustees shall be responsible for all deeds and documents, and securities for money and shall produce the same for inspection by the Auditors as and when required by them.
- (c) The Trustees shall as required and upon the authority of the Executive Council.
 - (i) Invest, re-invest and vary the investments of the funds of the NFP as may be resolved upon by the Executive Council in such securities (including the purchase of real or leasehold properties) as may be deemed desirable, and may raise money by loan or otherwise on the security of any such securities or properties in such terms as the Executive Council may consider suitable.
 - (ii) Pay to the Executive Council or to such persons as they may appoint such sums of money as may be required for the claims and expenses of the NFP from the funds applicable thereto.
- (d) The Trustees shall be completely discharged and indemnified from all liability on compliance with authority under Rule X(c)

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XI - MEMBERS' EDITOR

- (a) The Members' Editor shall be elected annually by members assembled at Annual Conference. Nominations for Members' Editor may be made by full members within providing that all nominations are in writing and proposed and seconded by full members of the NFP. All nominations must be received in writing by the General Secretary not less than 8 weeks before the Annual Conference. In the event of there being more than one nomination an election must take place at Annual Conference. The voting shall be by card vote in accordance with the Standing Orders for Conference.
- (b) The Members' Editor and the General Secretary shall be jointly responsible for the layout and content of the letters page of the NFP journal.
- (c) The expenses shall be fixed by the Executive Council.

XII - ANNUAL CONFERENCE

- (a) An Annual Conference of delegates shall be held each year the timing and location of which will be decided by the Executive Council. Delegates from each Region will be on the basis of 1 delegate per 40 members or part thereof, and additionally one Standing Orders representative. Only Postmasters who are members within Regions of

the Federation shall be appointed as delegates (subject to the provisions of Rule V(k)(i)). The members of the Executive Council and the General Secretary and Assistant General Secretary shall be ex officio delegates to Conference and may speak on behalf of the Executive Council, but they shall have no voting rights.

- (b) Any proposals and notices of motion (including rule changes) must be sent to the General Secretary not less than 8 weeks before the Annual Conference. After due consideration an Agenda will be produced which must be sent to all members with a copy of the balance sheet and accounts 3 weeks before Annual Conference.
- (c) At Annual Conference:-
 - (i) The Executive Council shall present a report with recommendations as to future policy.
 - (ii) The National Treasurer shall submit a fully audited balance sheet and accounts showing the financial position of the NFP.
 - (iii) The General Secretary shall report on matters as appropriate.
- (d) General arrangements for representation and Conference business, including Reports and Resolutions, shall be subject to the Standing Orders for Conference as approved by the Executive Council and published in the delegates' Conference Agenda booklet.
- (e) The Executive Council will be mindful of Conference decisions but will retain full discretion on how best to pursue matters.

XIII - SPECIAL CONFERENCES

- (a) A Special Conference of delegates shall be convened by signature on a simple petition and/or signed letter of not less than 1000 members of the NFP, or by a resolution of the Executive Council, not less than 14 days clear notice being given, with a statement of the business to be considered. Such Conference shall be held as soon as may be reasonably practicable.
- (b) Delegates shall be on the same basis as that for the Annual Conference. The Standing Orders for Conference other than those relating to Annual Reports and Balance Sheets shall apply to a Special Conference in like manner as to Annual Conference except where and so far as the same would conflict with the provisions of this Rule.

XIV - ALTERATION TO RULES

The Rules of the NFP may be only added to, rescinded, or amended by a two-thirds majority vote passed at any National Conference in accordance with the foregoing Rules and the Standing Orders for Conference.

XV - DISSOLUTION

- (a) The Federation may be dissolved at any time by a two-thirds majority vote passed at any National Conference provided that at least 3 months' notice of the proposal be given in the NFP journal.
- (b) On such dissolution the assets of the NFP shall be realised by the Trustees, who shall distribute any net balance available after payment of all claims, liabilities and settlements, equally amongst all those who were members of the NFP immediately prior to the passing of such resolution.

XVI - MISCELLANEOUS

- (a) The books of account of the NFP shall be made available by the National Treasurer and the General Secretary in accordance with Section 30 Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 and any subsequent legislation.
- (b) These Rules shall be binding upon every member of the NFP, and shall be made available to members after each Annual Conference.