

Board approved on 12/14/2021 By Karen Sheek  
Board approved on 2/21/2023 by Irene Tynes  
Board approved on 1/23/2024 by Irene Tynes

## **POLICY 202.00 – DEVELOPING POSITIONS FOR ACTION AND ADVOCACY**

### **POLICY**

1. Program planning is the grassroots process of recommending and selecting governmental issues for study and agreement in reaching a position.
2. League program is the education and advocacy platform that we adopt to move our mission forward.
3. LWVUS Principles are concepts of government supported by the League and are the authorization for adoption of national, state and local program. All positions must be consistent with LWVUS Principles.
4. Positions are adopted by consensus of the Local League (LL), state League (LWVCO), or national League (LWVUS). At the local level, positions that affect only the local area may be approved by the LL Board after study and input from LL members. At the State level, studies that affect the State as a whole may be initiated by the statewide program planning process, the LWVCO Board, or by any member or LL with notice to the Board. If a position is likely to affect the country, it may be brought to LWVUS according to their policies and procedures.
5. Issues for study and position development or concurrence with another League's position may be suggested by any member of the League.
6. A position must be approved by League membership. A Special Meeting may be called to secure member consensus, following the rules for an annual meeting. Alternatively, the position study group may ask Local Leagues to hold consensus meetings. The position is then approved if a majority of Local Leagues, representing a majority of state membership, approves.
7. Action and advocacy are always the goals of the League's study process. Member understanding and strong support are essential for successful action.
8. The LWVCO Board coordinates the work necessary to carry out action on statewide public policy issues.

### **PROCEDURE**

Ask these questions before beginning:

1. Does the League already have a position?
2. Is the position sufficiently general? If not, could it be a position for just one county or one state?
3. Are there significant developments in the issues area that are not reflected in the position?
4. Is it a government issue?
5. Are there pressing advocacy needs on the issue?

6. Is there substantial knowledge and research about the issue? Is this information accessible?

Study the issue.

1. Organize a small group of interested and knowledgeable League members (the Study Committee).
2. Notify the local Board and the State League of your efforts so they can ensure that your work isn't redundant.
3. Do a literature search, both to educate yourselves and for pertinent documentation.
4. Contact recognized experts and stakeholders on all sides of the issue and record input.
5. Write a report on the results of the study and include documentation, proposed questions for discussion, and a proposed position statement. Make sure the position is general and not so specific that it limits advocacy.
6. Complete the study. The timeframe may depend on the complexity and/or urgency of the issue, availability of information, and the expertise of the report group.
7. When deciding concurrence on another League's position, their study and materials may be used instead.

For a statewide position, provide the report, proposed position, and educational materials to LWVCO membership.

Obtain input and approval.

1. The Study Committee may provide one or more statewide educational meeting(s) on the study and proposed position to membership and to Local Leagues that request it.
2. Choose whether to ask for consensus through a statewide consensus meeting or by asking Local Leagues to each come to consensus and report back.

Local League Boards (for local positions):

1. Assess the report with the proposed position.
2. Bring it to the LL membership for education and input before completing the LL Board approval process.

LWVCO Board (for statewide positions):

1. Assess the report with the proposed position.
2. Send it to all LLs. Include an explanation of why the position is needed and the set of questions for discussion about pertinent points.
3. If the study group requests, call a statewide consensus meeting.
4. Include a reasonable deadline for return of consensus feedback.
5. Call a meeting of delegates from each Local League to approve the position; the Annual Meeting or a special meeting (virtual or in person) are appropriate.

Note: For LWVUS positions, use their policies for nationwide positions.