



CONSTITUTION

Northwest Medicine United, Local 6552, AFT, AFL-CIO

ARTICLE I NAME

This organization shall be known as Northwest Medicine United, Local 6552, AFT, AFL-CIO.

ARTICLE II OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this organization shall be:

- Section 1.** to promote the interests of patients who are served by the membership;
- Section 2.** to advance the economic, social, and political well-being of the membership;
- Section 3.** to promote the highest professional and ethical standards of the medical profession;
- Section 4.** to encourage mutual understanding and cooperation among the membership;
- Section 5.** to promote the effectiveness and quality of the institutions in which our members work;
- Section 6.** to promote democracy, equality, and trade unionism in the society at large; and
- Section 7.** to organize unorganized physicians and medical providers throughout the Northwest.

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1.** Physicians, dentists, physician-assistants, and advanced practice registered nurses employed in the Northwest are eligible for membership in this organization.
- Section 2.** No person shall be denied membership, nor shall this organization ever discriminate against individual members or applicants for membership on the basis of: race; creed; color; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; disability; social, political, or economic status; national origin; age; or immigration status.
- Section 3.** Discipline of members.
 - a. A member may be disciplined by the organization for actions contrary to this Constitution or to the interests of the union or its membership. Such action may only be initiated by the bringing of written and signed charges to the Executive Board by two or more members of the local; these charges must include a specific and detailed accounting, including any documentation, of the allegations against the member.

- b. Upon the receipt of such charges, the Executive Board shall cause a preliminary investigation to be conducted in order to determine whether the charges against the member have merit. In addition, at this time, the Executive Board shall give a copy of the charges to the accused member.
- c. Following the preliminary investigation, the Executive Board shall vote on the question of whether a disciplinary hearing should be held. If a majority of the Executive Board votes to hold a hearing, the member shall be given at least ten (10) days written notice of the hearing.
- d. At a disciplinary hearing, the accused member shall have the right to be represented by a person of his or her choice and shall have the right to question the charges and present evidence and witnesses to support their defense. At the conclusion of the hearing, a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Board shall be required for discipline. If a member of the Executive Board has brought the charges against the member, that Board member shall recuse him/herself from the vote.
- e. The decision of the Executive Board is final. However, should new facts, exculpatory evidence, or mitigating factors come to light, a disciplined member may, via written submission, present them to the President of the organization or their designee. The Executive Board may, upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, vote by simple majority to reconsider the discipline previously meted out to the member. After reconsideration, the Executive Board may vote to reverse or amend the discipline. Two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Board shall be required to reverse or amend discipline.

Section 4. A member in good standing is defined as a member who is current in payment of dues to the organization. A member who is more than thirty (30) days delinquent in dues payment shall be considered to be a member in bad standing and shall be promptly notified of such status. A member shall be removed from membership in this organization, with notice, following three (3) months of dues nonpayment, unless a plan to pay back dues is made and approved by both the Executive Board and the member.

Section 5. The Executive Board shall establish guidelines for retiree membership, dues, and participation in the local in the form of a retiree chapter, in accordance with AFT guidelines.

ARTICLE IV ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Section 1. Elections shall be conducted in accordance with the AFT Constitution and the standards established by the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959 (LMRDA).

Section 2. Officers shall be elected in March of even years. Terms of office shall be two (2) years. The organization will elect the following officers:

- a. General Officers
 - 1. President
 - 2. Vice President
 - 3. Secretary

4. Treasurer

- b. Five (5) Members At-Large of the Executive Board.

Section 3. To be eligible for office a person must be a member in good standing of the organization for a period of six (6) months prior to the date of the election.

Section 4. The Elections Committee shall conduct all general and special elections and referenda of the organization.

- a. The Elections Committee shall consist of five (5) members in good standing appointed by the President with the approval of the Executive Board. The Elections Committee shall elect its chair.
- b. Any member of the Elections Committee nominated for or seeking office must vacate their position and be replaced by a member nominated by the president and approved by the Executive Board.
- c. Elections Committee members shall be appointed at the November meeting of the Executive Board and shall serve for one (1) year. Vacant seats may be filled on an acting basis by the Executive Board at any meeting. The Elections Committee shall conduct all elections and referenda that may be required during their term.

Section 5. Sixty (60) days prior to the date that balloting commences, the Elections Committee shall notify all members of the opening of nominations for officers, the offices to be filled and of the date of the election by first class U.S. Mail to the members' last known home address.

Section 6. The nomination of candidates for office shall be conducted as follows:

- a. To be nominated a candidate must submit to the Elections Committee a petition containing the signatures of five (5) percent of the membership, or five (5) members, whichever is less. Said petitions must be submitted no later than ten (10) days following the notice of the opening of nominations.
- b. Members nominated to run for office must affirmatively accept their nomination.
- c. The Elections Committee shall determine whether the nominations were timely and if the nominees are eligible for office.

Section 7. At least fifteen (15) days prior to the election, the Elections Committee shall notify all members of the date the commencement of the election, the date and time by which ballots must be returned, and the candidates for offices.

Section 8. The rules for balloting and tallying of ballots shall be as follows:

- a. The Elections Committee shall conduct the election. The vote shall be by secret ballot. Write in votes shall not be allowed. In the event there is only one nominee for an office, an election for that office shall not be held and the nominee shall be declared elected by acclamation.
- b. The Elections Committee shall establish rules to govern the election which will include rules for replacement of lost or spoiled ballots.

- c. The Elections Committee shall ensure the secrecy of the ballot. The committee shall allow no less than two (2) weeks and no more than three (3) weeks for members to return their ballots.
- d. The Elections Committee shall cause the ballots to be tallied as soon as possible following the date and time that balloting concludes but no later than twenty-four (24) hours following that date and time.

Section 9. Determination of Election Outcome

a. General Officers

- 1. The majority of the ballots cast shall determine the outcome of the election.
- 2. In the absence of a majority, the Elections Committee shall conduct a run-off election between the two (2) candidates who have received the most votes for the office in question.

b. Members At-Large

- 1. The five (5) candidates for Member At-Large of the Executive Board who receive the highest number of votes shall be elected.
- 2. In the event that there are less than five (5) candidates nominated for the office of Member At-Large of the Executive Board, the nominated candidates shall be declared elected by acclamation and no balloting shall be conducted for the office. Any remaining Member At-Large seats shall be declared vacant and may be filled on an interim basis in accordance with the provisions of section 13 of this Article.

Section 10. Challenges and objections to the election must be submitted in writing, with a statement of supporting reasons that includes specific facts as well as any documentation, to the Elections Committee within five (5) days of the count. The Elections Committee shall issue its written opinion regarding the objections no later than ten (10) days after receipt of such objections.

Section 11. The election results will be published and distributed to the membership within thirty (30) days of the count. All elections materials, including the ballots, will be kept in a secure location for one (1) year.

Section 12. Elected candidates shall assume office upon election.

Section 13. With the exception of the President, or in case of a recall, the Executive Board will have the power to fill vacancies in its membership until the next general election of officers.

Section 14. A petition signed by forty-five percent (45%) of the membership, and alleging constitutional violations, fiduciary breaches or acts clearly detrimental to the union, shall be sufficient to require the Executive Board to vote on whether to conduct a recall election of the officer identified in the petition. The officer subject to recall and any Executive Board member signing the petition shall not vote on the question of a recall election. If a majority of the Executive Board approves a recall election, the Elections Committee shall supervise the recall election.

ARTICLE V
DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. The President shall:

- a. be the presiding officer at all meetings of Executive Board and the Executive Committee;
- b. be an ex-officio member of all committees unless otherwise specified in this Constitution;
- c. appoint, with the approval of the Executive Board, the chairs of all committees unless otherwise specified in this Constitution;
- d. be the principal executive officer of the organization;
- e. receive, report and respond to correspondence of the organization;
- f. supervise all employees of the organization;
- g. be one of the responsible financial officers of the organization and shall be authorized to co-sign financial instruments and make regular and usual disbursements of funds;
- h. represent the organization before bodies of employers, executive, and legislative officials;
- i. represent the organization before the public, community organizations, and the news media;
- j. be, by office, a delegate to the Oregon AFL-CIO and the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO;
- k. be, by office, a delegate to the convention of the American Federation of Teachers and meetings or conventions of its affiliated bodies;
- l. make an annual report to the organization's membership; and
- m. be able to delegate the responsibilities of the office except where otherwise specified by the Constitution.

Section 2. The Vice President shall:

- a. assume the duties of the President in the event of the absence, illness, or death of the President;
- b. oversee the work of and receive regular reports from the Organizing and Mentorship Committee and other committees as determined by the Executive Board;
- c. perform other duties as delegated by the President or assigned by the Executive Board; and
- d. co-sign financial instruments in the absence of the President or Treasurer.

Section 3. The Secretary shall:

- a. maintain the non-financial files and records of the organization;
- b. be the custodian of the seal and charter of the organization;
- c. record and keep accurate minutes of meetings of the Executive Board;
- d. assist the President in handling the correspondence of the organization;
- e. oversee the work of, and receive and certify the reports of, the Elections Committee;
- f. perform other duties as delegated by the President, or assigned by the Executive Board;
- g. perform duties of the office as required by the LMRDA;

- h. receive and circulate all proposed amendments to this Constitution, as provided in Article XIII, § 2 of this Constitution; and
- i. compile and maintain this organization's Policies & Procedures Book in accordance with the terms of Article XII, § 2 of this Constitution.

Section 4. The Treasurer shall:

- a. receive, record and deposit all dues monies and other income in the name of the organization;
- b. maintain accurate membership records;
- c. issue membership cards and notices of delinquency;
- d. be one of the responsible financial officers of the organization and be authorized to co-sign financial instruments and make regular and usual disbursements of funds;
- e. maintain all financial records of the organization;
- f. arrange for an independent audit of the finances of the organization annually and make same available to the Executive Board and membership;
- g. transmit per-capita payments on a regular basis to the Secretary-Treasurer of the American Federation of Teachers and similar officers of all other bodies with which the organization is affiliated;
- h. oversee the accounting, maintenance, and disbursement of Chapter funds pursuant to the terms of Article VII, § 6 of this Constitution;
- i. perform other duties as delegated by the President or assigned by the Executive Board; and
- j. perform duties of the office as required by the LMRDA, and the guidelines developed by the AFT.

Section 5. Members At-Large shall:

- a. represent the interests and concerns of the membership in all meetings of the bodies of this organization;
- b. assist the general officers with their duties, as requested;
- c. attend all meetings of the Executive Board; and
- d. perform other duties as delegated by the President or assigned by the Executive Board.

Section 6. All officers listed in this Article shall serve as members of the Executive Board.

Section 7. The four general officers shall constitute the Executive Committee, which shall have the powers provided in Article VIII, § 9 of this Constitution. A quorum for the conduct of the business of the Executive Committee shall consist of the President and two other general officers.

ARTICLE VI

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. The Executive Board shall serve as the governing body of the organization. It shall consist of: the four (4) general officers listed in Article IV, § 2(a); the five (5) Members At-Large specified in Article IV, § 2(b); and the Chairperson of each Chapter represented by this organization.

Section 2. The Executive Board shall meet at least six (6) times per year. Additional meetings may be called by the President, the Executive Committee, or three (3) or more Executive Board members.

Section 3. The President, in consultation with the Executive Committee, shall set the date, time, and location of each Executive Board meeting and provide reasonable notice to the Members At-Large and the Chapter Chairpersons.

Section 4. A quorum for the conduct of business at the Executive Board shall consist of forty (40) percent of its members inclusive of a majority of the general officers.

Section 5. The Executive Board shall be empowered to:

- a. initiate, oversee or revise the program of the organization, conduct all business of the organization that is within its authority, and establish policies and procedures for doing the same;
- b. establish financial policies and procedures, adopt the budget, submit all books annually to a certified public accountant for audit, and present a financial report annually to the membership;
- c. employ all professional, technical, clerical and support staff of the organization;
- d. establish the salary, benefits and expense guidelines of any general officer who is employed by the organization;
- e. make contracts and incur liabilities including the purchase of services, equipment and real property, borrow money, secure such obligations by mortgage or other instrument, and otherwise engage in financial transactions to the extent permitted by applicable law or statute;
- f. sue, complain and defend on behalf of the membership;
- g. approve the chairperson and membership of all standing and special committees of the organization, unless otherwise provided in this Constitution, and receive regular reports from such committees;
- h. be responsible for adherence to and enforcement of the Constitution of this organization;
- i. issue regular reports, including an annual report, to the membership; and
- j. assume other duties as may be provided for by law or this Constitution.

Section 6. Three unexcused absences from an Executive Board meeting within a year, counted from the date of assumption of office, shall be grounds for an Executive Board member's suspension and/or replacement.

ARTICLE VII CHAPTERS

Section 1. This organization shall be organized as a federated union local composed of constituent units to be known as Chapters. Chapters are subordinate entities

within this organization that shall enjoy the rights and privileges devolved to them pursuant to the terms of this Article.

Section 2. The Executive Board shall admit new Chapters as they are organized or affiliated. New Chapters shall be entitled to representation on the Executive Board in accordance with the provisions of Article VI of this Constitution. The name of this organization, as provided in Article I of this Constitution, shall be listed as the certified bargaining agent for all Chapters.

Section 3. Independent unions of workers who fall within the jurisdiction of this organization may apply to the Executive Board to become an affiliated Chapter. Admission shall be approved by majority vote of the Executive Board at a duly called meeting.

Section 4. Each Chapter of this organization shall adopt its own Chapter bylaws, consistent with model Chapter bylaws that may be adopted by the Executive Board, which do not conflict with the provisions of this Constitution or the constitutions of the affiliates of this organization. Proposed amendments to Chapter bylaws shall be submitted to this organization's Executive Board for approval prior to adoption in order to ensure compliance with this section.

Section 5. Chapters shall not take any action or adopt any policy that are contrary to the policies, philosophy, and welfare of this organization.

Section 6. In the interest of the financial well-being of the entire organization, Chapters shall not be permitted to open or maintain bank accounts; nor may they assess or appropriate monies for any purpose.

- a. A small share of each member's dues (by percentage or fixed amount) shall be set aside every month and dedicated for use by their Chapter. The exact amount of this share shall be set by this organization's Executive Board and may be revised from time-to-time. The Treasurer shall oversee the accounting for each Chapter's fund and report the balance to Chapter leadership on a regular basis. Chapter funds shall remain under the control of the Executive Board and shall be used to pay reasonable expenditures for the Chapters that were incurred for proper purposes. Such funds may be utilized to directly pay Chapter expenditures or to reimburse Chapter leadership for expenses incurred. The Executive Board shall approve expenditures from Chapter funds in accordance with the standard set forth in subsection b of this section and it may enact policies governing the use of Chapter funds consistent with that standard.
- b. If funds are required to transact business on behalf of a Chapter, Chapter Chairpersons may request that the Executive Board appropriate funds and that this organization's Treasurer make the expenditure. Such requests, when made for a proper purpose and for reasonable sums, shall not be unreasonably denied.
- c. Notwithstanding the foregoing, all funds that were in the general treasury of the organization prior to the date of admission of a second chapter shall be segregated into a separate fund exclusively dedicated for the benefit of the founding chapter of this organization, the Pacific Northwest Hospital Medicine Association, a Chapter of Northwest Medicine United, AFT Local 6552 (PNWHMA). Such funds shall be held by this organization under the control of the Executive Board; no legal authority over such funds shall be imputed to the

PNWHMA Chapter Board or its members. Bona fide requests by the Chapter Board of PNWHMA for appropriation of such funds by this organization's Executive Board for the benefit of PNWHMA shall be granted absent extraordinary circumstances.

Section 7. All Chapters shall provide for democratic election from among their membership on a regular basis of a Chapter Chairperson and other appropriate officers in accordance with Chapter bylaws.

Section 8. Chapters shall establish their priorities for collective bargaining, enforce their collective bargaining agreements through contractual grievance procedures, and make recommendations to the Executive Board concerning grievances to be advanced to arbitration. Ratification of collective bargaining agreements shall be determined by Chapter membership.

Section 9. All Chapters shall conduct regular membership meetings.

Section 10. Each Chapter shall transmit to the Secretary of this organization the following documents and materials on a regular basis as appropriate:

- a. a copy of the Chapter's bylaws and any amendments ratified following compliance with section 4 of this Article;
- b. a list of Chapter officers, forwarding changes to the Secretary as soon as possible after the changes occur; and
- c. the results of each regularly held democratic election conducted by the Chapter.

Section 11. All officers of this organization shall have the right to meet with the members of any Chapter upon request.

ARTICLE VIII COMMITTEES

Section 1. The standing committees of the organization shall be:

- a. Elections Committee;
- b. Executive Committee; and
- c. Organizing & Mentorship Committee.

Section 2. The Executive Board may establish special committees.

Section 3. Unless specified elsewhere in this Constitution, the President, with the approval of the Executive Board, shall appoint all committee chairs and committee members.

Section 4. The Executive Board shall receive regular reports from committees and may direct committees to make reports to the membership.

- Section 5.** Unless otherwise specified in this Constitution, the charge, role, and responsibilities of standing and special committees shall be established via policies adopted by the Executive Board, which may be amended or revised from time-to-time.
- Section 6.** Unless otherwise specified in this Constitution, a quorum for the transaction of business by a committee shall be fifty-percent (50%) of its members.
- Section 7.** Each committee shall present its annual program of action to the Executive Board.
- Section 8.** The Elections Committee shall conduct and supervise all elections and referenda of the organization.
- Section 9.** The Executive Committee shall be empowered to transact business of an urgent or time-sensitive nature between meetings of the Executive Board. All transactions of the Executive Committee shall be reported in full at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Executive Board.
- Section 10.** The Organizing & Mentorship Committee shall develop programs and activities that shall cause all eligible persons to join and participate in the organization. It shall also identify the professional and work-related educational and training needs of the membership and develop programs and activities that meet said needs, taking into consideration the resources of the organization's affiliates.

ARTICLE IX REVENUES

- Section 1.** The dues of this organization shall be 0.50 % of the base salary for members, plus the prevailing per capita amounts for AFT, the Oregon AFL-CIO, and the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO. Beginning on January 1, 2027, dues shall be calculated on the basis of gross salary. Whenever the dues of a required affiliate increases, the dues of the local shall automatically and simultaneously increase by the same amount.
- Section 2.** Special assessments for specific purposes may be levied by the Executive Board provided that the actions required for a referendum have not been initiated within thirty (30) days of the decision of the Executive Board.
- Section 3.** This organization will be responsible for collecting agency fees and shall adopt procedures consistent with local, state and federal law and Article VIII, Sections 1 (a) – (d) of the AFT By-Laws.

ARTICLE X AFFILIATIONS

This organization shall maintain affiliation with the following organizations and, whenever possible, send delegates to their convention or similar governing body:

- a. the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO. Delegates will be elected by procedures consistent with Article IV of this Constitution;
- b. the Oregon AFL-CIO; and
- c. the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO.

ARTICLE XI

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Section 1. The Executive Board shall be empowered to establish the position of Executive Director and employ an individual in that position consistent with the power set forth in Article VI, § 5(c) of this Constitution.

Section 2. The Executive Director shall have the responsibility to run the day-to-day operations and functions of the organization. They shall have the authority to recommend the hiring of individuals for approval by the Executive Board. The Executive Director shall be responsible for the daily oversight and supervision of staff and financial operations of the organization. They shall be an ex-officio member of the Executive Board without voting privileges.

Section 3. The Executive Board shall have the authority to fill the position of Executive Director at its discretion and may refrain from doing so.

ARTICLE XII

RULES OF ORDER

Section 1. *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* shall govern this organization and all of its subordinate bodies in all matters not expressly covered by this Constitution.

Section 2. This organization shall compile and maintain a Policies & Procedures Book which contains all policies adopted by the Executive Board. The Secretary shall keep the book current, and it may be maintained in electronic format.

ARTICLE XIII

AMENDMENT

Section 1. The process of amendment of this Constitution may be initiated in any of the following three (3) ways.

a. The Executive Board may vote to present amendments for consideration and adoption via referendum of the total membership of the organization.

b. A majority of the elected leadership of any Chapter of this organization may vote to present amendments for consideration and advancement by the Executive Board. Amendments proposed in this manner shall be considered by the Executive Board at its next scheduled meeting.

c. Forty (40) percent or more of the total membership of the organization may submit, via petition, amendments for consideration and adoption via referendum of the membership.

Section 2. The Secretary shall circulate all amendments duly proposed in accordance with section 1 of this Article to the membership within fourteen (14) days of receipt. The membership shall be provided no less than thirty (30) days to review proposed amendments prior to the commencement of a referendum. An explanation of proposed amendments may be provided along with the text of the amendment.

Section 3. Proposed amendments shall be considered for adoption by the membership via referendum.

- a. No later than forty-five (45) days following receipt of duly proposed amendments by the Secretary, the Elections Committee shall oversee the transmission of ballots to the membership.
- b. The membership shall be provided no less than fifteen (15) days to vote via means designated by the Elections Committee.
- c. The Elections Committee will tally the results. Two-thirds (2/3) of the membership voting in the referendum shall be required for passage of the amendment.

ARTICLE XIV AVAILABILITY OF CONSTITUTION

- Section 1.** A copy of this Constitution shall be submitted to the office of the Secretary-Treasurer of the American Federation of Teachers. Whenever this constitution is amended, the amended copy shall be submitted to the same. The constitution may be submitted via electronic means.
- Section 2.** One copy shall be sent to the similar officer of each organization with which this organization is affiliated.
- Section 3.** The Secretary shall make available upon request a copy to any member of the organization.

ARTICLE XV IMPLEMENTATION OF FEDERATED LOCAL CONSTITUTION

- Section 1.** Immediately upon adoption by the membership of this organization, the amendments to this Constitution introduced in the fall/winter of 2024 shall take effect in their entirety except as provided in this Article.
- Section 2.** The election of officers scheduled to take place in January 2025 pursuant to the language in Article IV prior to its amendment shall occur on that date.
- Section 3.** The term of office for officers elected in January 2025 shall expire in March of 2026.
- Section 4.** In the event that this organization has two (2) or more chapters as of the commencement of the nominations and elections process for the 2025 election, the amended version of Article IV shall govern. If, as of that date, this organization consists only of its founding chapter, the pre-amendment language shall govern.
- Section 5.** Until such time as this organization has two (2) or more chapters, it shall continue to hold the membership meetings required by Article VIII, prior to its amendment.
- Section 6.** Any bylaws that may be adopted by the Pacific Northwest Hospital Medicine Association, a Chapter of Northwest Medicine United, AFT Local 6552 shall not take effect until this organization has two (2) or more chapters.

Section 7. All questions concerning the transition to the amended version of this Constitution during the period between the adoption of amendments in the fall/winter of 2024 and the date of admission of a second chapter of this organization shall be referred to the Executive Board for resolution. The Executive Board's determination on such matters shall be binding and shall not be appealable to any other body.

Section 8. At the conclusion of the election of officers in January 2025 or the admission of a second chapter of this organization, whichever occurs later, this Article shall cease to serve a useful purpose and shall be deleted in its entirety from the Constitution.

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This Constitution was adopted by the membership of the Pacific Northwest Hospital Medicine Association, Local 6552, AFT, AFL-CIO (PNWHMA) in the year 2016 at Springfield, Oregon under the leadership of David Schwartz MD, President.

The following Northwest Medicine United leaders and activists served on the constitutional amendment committee that engaged in a significant update of the structure of the organization in 2024.

Charlotte Yeomans MD, President
Amy Keech MD, Vice President
Sarah Barry CNS, Secretary
Joshua Salter MD, Treasurer
David Schwartz MD, President Emeritus

Amendments to this Constitution were adopted on the following dates: January 13, 2025
