

UNITED CAMPUS WORKERS - TENNESSEE
Communications Workers of America Local 3821
United Campus Workers Southeast - Tennessee Members and
State Steering Committee Policies

[To view UCWSE bylaws, click here.](#)

Article I. NAME.

The Tennessee members of United Campus Workers Southeast – Communications Workers of America, Local 3821 (“UCWSE”) shall be known as United Campus Workers – Tennessee (UCW-TN). The elected leadership of UCW-TN shall be known as the Tennessee State Steering Committee (TSSC).

Article II. OBJECT.

It shall be the object of UCW-TN to advance and defend the interests of the workers and promote solidarity, democracy, and social and economic justice in the workplace and the community.

Article III. AFFILIATION.

UCW-TN, as a constituent part of United Campus Workers Southeast, Communications Workers of America, Local 3821 (UCWSE), is affiliated with the Communications Workers of America, AFL-CIO, CLC.

Article IV. JURISDICTION.

UCWSE Local 3821 has jurisdiction over workers employed on any higher education campus or facility in the nine states of Communications Workers of America District 3. The authority of the TSSC is derived from the UCWSE Bylaws, Article VIII, Section 5.

Article V. STRUCTURE.

The structure of the union shall consist of the following:

- 1) The Membership.
- 2) The Tennessee State Steering Committee (TSSC)
- 3) The TSSC Officers.
- 4) Chapters.
- 5) Area Committees and Stewards.
- 6) Caucuses
- 7) Work Committees.
- 8) Policy & Campaign Committee.

Article VI. GOVERNING AUTHORITY.

The affairs of UCW-TN shall be governed by its membership in accordance with these Policies, the bylaws of UCWSE, CWA Local 3821 and the Constitution and policies of CWA in the following manner:

- (a) Through action taken in membership meetings or by referendum of the membership.
- (b) Through actions and decisions of the TSSC between membership meetings.
- (c) Through actions of the TSSC Officers between meetings of the TSSC.

Article VII. MEMBERSHIP.

Section 1. Eligibility.

- a) All workers within the union's jurisdiction in the state of Tennessee are eligible for membership, regardless of employer, craft, skill, age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs or affiliation, disability, or immigration status. Employees who have the direct power to hire, fire, or discipline another worker shall not be elected as a steward of workers they supervise; however, employees who have this power shall be able to elect a steward to represent them in the union among other employees who share these same powers. Disputes between union members that are supervisors/managers and regular employees shall be mediated by a union member from another section of campus.
- b) Partners and spouses of members and workers who have retired from higher education or public service employment may join as regular members with minimum dues set at the part-time rate.

Section 2. Admission to Membership. Membership in the union shall be governed by the bylaws of UCWSE Local 3821. Members in the state of Tennessee shall be members of UCW-TN.

Section 3. Retirement and Resignation.

A member may resign in writing to the UCW Southeast President or Secretary or to a member of Union staff. Said resignation will be processed as soon as practicable after receipt by the Union.

Section 4. Membership Meetings.

- (a) Membership meetings shall be held at least once per year. The membership shall have the power to determine the actual frequency and/or number of membership meetings to be held each year.
- (b) All decisions made in membership meetings shall be by majority vote of the members present.
- (c) The time and place of membership meetings shall be set by the TSSC.
- (d) Special membership meetings may be called by the TSSC, or by petition of ten percent (10%) of the members. Upon receipt of such a petition, the TSSC shall call a special meeting for the purpose set forth in the petition to be held within thirty (30) days.

Section 5. Membership data.

- (a) Membership data shall include but is not limited to information collected on membership forms, through grievance processes, and interest lists.
- (b) Collected membership data shall become property of the local.
- (c) Membership data will not be disclosed to any outside organization for any reason except as required by administrative processes.

- (d) The TSSC and staff shall take reasonable care to maintain the confidentiality of membership data.

Section 6. Rights of Membership.

- (a) The membership shall have full power over all matters pertaining to UCW-TN, including the election of TSSC Officers and otherwise amending these Policies. The membership may at any time require from any union member or body a full and detailed statement of account of any action or business done in the name of the union.
- (b) No member(s), TSSC Officer(s), or staff may enter into any agreement in the name of the union without approval of the UCWSE Executive Board and/or the membership of UCWSE.

Article VIII. TENNESSEE STATE STEERING COMMITTEE (TSSC).

Section 1. Definition.

- (a) The TSSC shall be a body of members that coordinates work, ensures that all decisions of the membership are carried out in a timely and effective manner, and otherwise carries out the administration of the union between membership meetings.
- (b) The TSSC shall act as the decision-making body of UCW-TN between membership meetings as long as its decisions follow the policies set by the membership and do not contradict these Policies or the Bylaws of UCWSE.

Section 2. Composition and Responsibilities.

- (a) The TSSC shall be composed of the TSSC Officers, Regional TSSC Representatives, and elected TSSC members. Elected TSSC members shall number in such an amount as to ensure that the total number of TSSC members be no less than seven (7) persons.
- (b) One State Executive Board Member of UCWSE shall be elected by the UCW-TN members and shall be an *ex officio* member of the TSSC.
- (c) The Chair of the Policy & Campaign Committee, elected pursuant to Article X, Section 4, *infra.*, shall be an *ex officio* member of the TSSC.
- (d) The procedures for nominating and electing members to the TSSC shall be the same as apply to TSSC Officers. The term of office shall be the same as the term of office for TSSC Officers.
- (e) In the event of a vacancy for any reason, the membership shall have the power to elect a new TSSC member by majority vote at any membership meeting to serve the remainder of the term.
- (f) The membership shall strive to elect members to the TSSC that reflect the diversity of the membership in all respects. Towards this end, the membership shall have the power to specify the number of TSSC members and from which work areas, geographic locations, and/or job classifications individual TSSC members may be elected. At no time may any two (2) TSSC members be employed in the same department or shop.

Section 3. TSSC Meetings.

- (a) The time and location of TSSC meetings shall be set by the Chair.
- (b) Special TSSC meetings may be called by a majority of its members.
- (c) TSSC meetings shall be open to all members of the union.
- (d) All decisions of the TSSC shall be by majority vote of its members.

- (e) TSSC members may make motions and vote by electronic mail or telephone, provided all TSSC members have equivalent access to whatever means is employed and reasonable opportunity to vote on all motions.
- (f) The State Secretary shall ensure that all actions and decisions of the TSSC and the votes of each member are reported to the membership in a timely manner.

Article IX. TSSC OFFICERS.

Section 1. Definition.

The Officers of the TSSC shall be Chair, Vice Chair, State Treasurer, and State Secretary.

Section 2. Responsibilities.

- (a) The Chair shall serve as the primary contact person for the union, shall enforce these Policies, shall report all actions of the TSSC and TSSC Officers to the membership, and shall preside at all meetings of UCW-TN or arrange otherwise.
- (b) The Vice Chair shall assist the Chair, help coordinate activities throughout the state, and perform the duties of the Chair in the Chair's absence.
- (c) The State Treasurer shall be responsible for the maintenance of all bank accounts and for the account of all receipts and expenditures to the membership and TSSC in the form of monthly and annual financial reports and shall cause the proper filing of all reports or filings required by federal, state or local law.
- (d) The State Secretary shall be responsible for the recording and distribution of the minutes of membership and TSSC meetings, for the maintenance of member and mailing lists and files, for furnishing the UCWSE President with copies of any changes to these Policies within ten (10) days after such changes are adopted.

Section 3. Eligibility.

Any member in good standing shall be eligible for election as a TSSC Officer, however no member may serve in more than one (1) office. Chapter Vice-Chairs must be members of the Chapter they represent.

Article X. NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF TSSC OFFICERS.

Section 1. Nomination.

- (a) Nominations shall be made from the floor at any meeting of UCW-TN held during the month of September of an election year. It is the responsibility of the nominating member(s) to ensure beforehand that each nominee has agreed to stand for the position for which she/he is being nominated.
- (b) All members must be notified of the offices to be filled and the proper method of submitting nominations at least fifteen (15) days prior to the first union meeting scheduled during September of an election year.

Section 2. Election.

- (a) The election of TSSC Officers shall be held pursuant to the Article IX of the Bylaws of UCWSE and supervised by the Local Election Committee.
- (b) The election of TSSC non-Officer members shall be held during the month of October of an election year by either secret ballot vote of the membership or by mail referendum as decided by the State Election Committee and upon approval of the TSSC.

- (c) Notice of elections (and referendum ballots when applicable) shall be mailed to each member's last known home address not less than fifteen (15) days prior to the date and time set for the return of the ballots.

Section 3. State Election Committee.

- (a) The nomination and election of TSSC Non-Officer members shall be conducted under the supervision of the State Election Committee appointed by the TSSC. This committee shall have the authority and responsibility to see that nominations and elections are conducted in accordance with federal law, the CWA Constitution and these Policies, with reasonable opportunity for each member to nominate and vote for the candidate of their choice.
- (b) The State Election Committee shall also conduct any referenda pertaining to UCW-TN submitted to the membership.
- (c) A member shall not be permitted to serve on the State Election Committee if she/he is a candidate for any office of UCW-TN, UCWSE, or delegate to the CWA Convention.
- (d) All questions concerning the conduct and challenges of elections shall be determined by the State Election Committee, subject to the right of appeal to the governing body and membership of the union in accordance with Article XV of the CWA Constitution.

Section 4. General Provisions.

- (a) Only members of UCW-TN in good standing shall be eligible to vote for TSSC Officers.
- (b) The term of office shall be for three (3) years.
- (c) The term of office of outgoing TSSC Officers shall expire thirty (30) days after certification of the election results, by which time they shall have delivered all books, records, monies and property to the newly elected TSSC Officers.
- (d) The membership and/or TSSC shall have the power to define additional responsibilities for TSSC Officers as needed.
- (e) Officers shall serve in an administrative capacity only, with all the rights and responsibilities of membership, but no special authority over non-administrative matters.
- (f) The Policy & Campaign Committee Chair shall be elected by the duly elected members of the Policy & Campaign Committee.
- (g) Regional TSSC Representatives shall be elected by those members of their regions.

Section 5. Resignation and Vacancies.

- (a) A TSSC Officer may resign in writing to the Chair or by verbal announcement at a TSSC meeting or membership meeting.
- (b) In the event of a vacancy in the office of the Chair, the Vice Chair will assume the role of Chair. A special election to elect a new Chair should be held no later than 60 days after the vacancy occurs.
- (c) In the event of a vacancy in other offices, the TSSC shall elect interim TSSC Officers by secret ballot vote and a special election shall be held within sixty (60) days.

Article XI. CHAPTERS.

Chapters of the union shall be based upon locale or State Department. Chapters shall be chartered by the TSSC or by a majority vote at a membership meeting. A Caucus will be recognized as a Chapter once they have reached a minimum of 100 members. They can then decide whether their Caucus Chair will become their Chapter Vice Chair, or whether they will

elect a new representative. Chapters will maintain an Organizing Committee in order to continue to grow their membership.

Article XII. AREA COMMITTEES.

Any five (5) or more members who work in the same department, shop, building, or geographic area shall have the right to form an area committee consisting of all the members in that department, shop, or locality. Area committees may be formed, disbanded, or otherwise reorganized by majority vote of the affected members, subject to approval by the membership and provided that no member belongs to more than one (1) area committee. An area committee shall have autonomy over strictly local matters provided that its actions do not contradict these Policies, the Bylaws of UCWSE, or any policy set by the membership.

Article XIII. SHOP STEWARDS.

Section 1. Definition and Responsibilities.

- (a) Stewards shall serve as the primary contact persons and organizers for their areas.
- (b) Stewards shall hold area meetings to inform workers of union activities and ensure that the opinions, ideas, and concerns of the workers are brought before membership and TSSC meetings.
- (c) Stewards shall assist with fighting grievances, collecting dues, building unity on the job, and recruiting and welcoming new members in their areas.

Section 2. Eligibility.

Any non-supervisory member in good standing shall be eligible to be a Steward.

Section 3. Election.

- (a) An area committee shall have the right to elect a Steward or Stewards from its number by majority secret ballot vote.
- (b) In the absence of area committees or of Stewards in areas where there are members, the TSSC shall have the power to define areas and appoint stewards. Areas shall be defined and Stewards appointed such that each member of the union falls within the jurisdiction of at least one (1) Steward.

Section 4. Resignation and Vacancies.

- (a) A Steward may resign in writing to the State Secretary or by verbal announcement at any meeting of the union.
- (b) In the event of a vacancy for any reason, it shall be the responsibility of the affected area committee to elect a new Steward and notify the Local Secretary of such an election and its result.
- (c) In the absence of an area committee, the TSSC shall have the power to appoint a new Steward.

Article XIV. CAUCUSES.

An Area Committee (see Article XII, *supra*), shall be recognized as a Caucus once they have reached a minimum of thirty members. At this point they shall elect a Caucus Chair. Caucuses shall maintain an Organizing Committee in order to continue to grow their membership.

Article XV. WORK COMMITTEES.

Section 1. Definition.

The union shall have the following regular work committees:

- 1) Education Committee
- 2) State Election Committee
- 3) State Finance Committee
- 4) Organizing Committee
- 5) Legislative-Political Committee
- 6) Community Services Committee
- 7) Human Rights & Equity Committee
- 8) Women's Committee
- 9) Other work committees as determined by the TSSC or the membership.

Section 2. Membership.

Membership in work committees shall be voluntary. However, any member of any union work committee may be removed by majority vote of the TSSC, subject to the right of the membership to overrule the action of the TSSC.

Section 3. Duties.

- (a) The Education Committee shall assist in developing the union's education program and, with the Local Officers, be responsible for effectuating the CWA, UCW-TN and UCWSE education programs.
- (b) The State Election Committee shall conduct all nominations and elections and referenda of the TSSC.
- (c) The State Finance Committee shall be responsible for overseeing the development of the budgets and financial policies for UCW-TN, as well as being generally responsible for financial oversight of the UCW-TN through audits and recordkeeping in collaboration with the UCWSE Finance Committee. The State Treasurer shall serve as committee chair.
- (d) The Organizing Committee shall assist the TSSC Officers, Stewards and members in organizing all non-union workers within the union's jurisdiction, as well as unorganized workers in external units.
- (e) The Legislative-Political Committee shall work to advance the interests of UCW-TN, the Local, CWA, and its members in the legislative- political field, to promote members being registered voters, and to involve the members in campaigns of candidates who care about working people and their families.
- (f) The Community Services Committee shall assist in developing all community service programs and maintain and develop communications with the union's community allies.
- (g) The Human Rights & Equity Committee shall develop and promote the CWA Human Rights program by building a union where members of all cultures, religions, sexual orientations, gender, disabilities, ages, and nationalities feel welcomed, respected, and heard. The Committee will study and report to the union on the ways and means of eliminating discrimination on the basis of gender, race, sexual orientation, or any other basis.
- (h) The Women's Committee shall educate on health, economic, and social issues that affect women and encourage the involvement of women in the labor movement.

Section 4. General Provisions.

All work committees shall be responsible to the membership at all times and shall elect one of its members as a chairperson to report committee activities and recommendations to the membership and the TSSC.

Article XVI. POLICY & CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE.

The Policy & Campaign Committee (PCC) shall make decisions about the overall statewide program and campaigns of UCW-TN. A majority of the members of the Policy & Campaign Committee shall be the quorum in virtual or in-person meetings held at the discretion of the PCC. The PCC shall elect its chair from its members. The term length of PCC members is three years.

The Committee shall be composed of the following elected representatives:

- Chapter Vice Chairs.
- Area Committee Chairs.
- Caucus Chairs.
- Two Regional Delegates from each Grand Division of the State of Tennessee, as defined by Tenn. Code Ann. § 4–1–201 *et seq.*, The Regional Delegates shall be elected by the member campuses in that region.
- Each Chapter receives an additional delegate for every 150 members in good standing. (e.g.: If the Memphis chapter has 200 members they would have two delegates: their Chapter VP and one additional delegate.) The terms of these delegates would be the same length as other elected offices.
- Members of the TSSC.
- Members in good standing who want to participate (i.e., all meetings are open).

Votes by the PCC pass by majority and only elected representatives vote. Anyone may be recognized by the PCC Chair to speak.

Article XVII. DUES AND GOOD STANDING.

Section 1. Monthly Dues.

- (a) Pending the adoption of a dues rate for UCWSE, members shall pay monthly dues in an amount recommended by the TSSC and ratified by the membership.
- (b) Members who are employed part time (less than 75% time) or who are retired shall pay a lower rate than members who are employed full time.
- (c) Members who are temporarily unemployed due to injury, illness, downsizing, privatization, or a suspension or termination that is being appealed shall pay monthly dues equivalent to the per-capita amount paid by UCWSE to CWA International.

Section 2. Good Standing.

- (a) A member in good standing is one whose dues are not more than sixty (60) days in arrears.
- (b) Members in default without good cause for ninety (90) days, after notice in writing by the Local Secretary, shall be automatically dropped from membership. Good cause shall be defined by the TSSC pending the adoption of a policy by UCWSE.
- (c) During organizing drives, the membership and/or TSSC shall have the power to waive the requirement of good standing for a period of up to one (1) year.

Article XVIII. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS AND LOCAL BUSINESS.

Section 1. Conduct of Business.

Membership meetings and any other business of this union shall be conducted under these Policies, the Bylaws of UCWSE, and rules of the union and in conformity with the CWA Constitution. On questions where the union rules or the CWA Constitution do not apply, Robert's Rules of Order shall govern.

Section 2. Due Notice.

Due notice of at least seven (7) days must be given prior to any meeting of UCW-TN.

Section 3. Quorums.

- (a) The number constituting a quorum for all membership meetings shall be those present.
- (b) A majority of the members of an area or work committee shall be the quorum for those bodies.

Article XIX. CHARGES, TRIALS AND APPEALS.

Section 1. Charges.

Members may be fined, suspended and/or expelled, in the manner provided in these Policies, for any of the acts enumerated in Article XIX of the CWA Constitution.

Section 2. Trials.

Any accused member, including TSSC Officers, shall be tried under the provisions of Article XX of the CWA Constitution.

Section 3. Appeals.

A member or TSSC Officer, upon being found guilty by a Local Trial Court, may appeal as provided in Article XX of the CWA Constitution.

Section 4. Local Trial Court.

A Trial Court of the union shall be composed of five (5) persons, who are members of the union and not parties to the proceedings, and who shall be selected by the Local Executive Board.

Article XX. RECALL OF TSSC OFFICERS, STEWARDS, AND TSSC MEMBERS.

Section 1. Recall of Steering Committee Officers.

Any elected TSSC Officer may be recalled according to the same provisions governing the recall of Local Officers under Articles XXI, Section 2, and XXII, Section 8, of the CWA Constitution. A recall petition may be preferred by twenty percent (20%) of the membership.

Section 2. Recall of Stewards.

A Steward shall be immediately relieved of duties upon majority vote of the members of that Steward's area committee or, in the absence of an area committee, upon majority vote of the TSSC.

Section 3. Recall of TSSC Members.

TSSCmembers may be recalled by the same process described in Section 1 of this Article.

Article XXI. REFERENDUM.

A state-wide referendum on any organizational question, pertaining to UCW-TN, may be initiated by the State Election Committee when directed to do so by the TSSC or membership, or by petition of ten percent (10%) of the members. Questions submitted to referendum shall be decided by majority vote of those voting on the question.

Article XXIII. FINANCES.

Section 1. Fiscal Year.

The fiscal year of UCW-TN shall be from October 1st of each year to and including September 30th of the succeeding year.

Section 2. Bank Accounts.

All bank accounts shall be in the name of the union and shall bear the signatures of the Chair, State Treasurer, and up to two others designated by the TSSC.

Section 3. Allocation of Funds.

The TSSC and TSSC Officers shall be responsible for allocating funds according to budgets ratified by the membership of UCWSE. The membership, TSSC, or any area committee may request a full account of all receipts and expenditures from any member or body of members.

Article XXIII. AMENDMENTS.

After adoption, these Policies may be amended by either referendum of the membership or by majority vote of the members present in a membership meeting, provided the proposed amendment has been introduced at a previous membership meeting or has been advertised by use of a union newsletter or by U.S. mail, postage prepaid, at least seven (7) days in advance of the date voting takes place.

These Bylaws Adopted December 17, 2002.

Executive Board addition amended November 18, 2003.

Article VII, Section 1.(a) amended May 25, 2004.

Article V, X, and article XII, Section 2(a) amended January 18, 2006.

Article XXII added January 18, 2006.

Article XX, Section 2, amended March 9, 2007

Article XX, Section 4, added March 9, 2007

Article XVI, amended February 20, 2008

Article XIV, Section 1, amended February 20, 2008

Article VII, Section 3b, Section 4a, Section 5d, and 6c;

Article X, Sections 1 and 2; Article XI, Sections 4 and 5; Article XII, Section 2; Article XVI; Article XVIII, Section 3; and Article XXII amended October 2, 2010. Article V, Section 7; Article X, Sections 1 and 2; Article XI, Section 4; new Article XIV added and subsequent Articles renumbered; Article XXIII; Article XIV added; amended September 27, 2014

Article X, Sections 1 and 2 amended August 24, 2016. Article V; Article X, Section 5; Article XV, Sections 1 and 3, and Article XVI amended September 16, 2017.

Articles I – XXIII amended September 28, 2024