

# MN YMCA YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT 2024 ELECTION RULES

**I. QUALIFICATIONS FOR VOTING DELEGATES**

- A. Voters must be in the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, or 12<sup>th</sup> grade. They must also participate in a recognized Minnesota YMCA Center for Youth Voice YIG delegation.
- B. Guests from other state programs are not eligible to vote.
- C. All voters must display their current, valid program name tag and sign the roster to receive a ballot and to vote.

**II. STATE STEERING COMMITTEE COMPOSITION AND CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS**

- A. All elections will be overseen by the State Steering Committee, which will determine all election rules and set qualifications for candidacy.
- B. The Secretary of State will serve as the chief election official for YIG. They will each be responsible for the conduct of elections in their respective sessions.
- C. The officers of the State Steering Committee will consist of the Chair and Vice Chair. Each year, the Vice Chair will be elected by the members present at the State Steering Committee Retreat by a plurality vote. In the case of a leading tie, the tied candidates will be voted upon in a special election. Should the tie persist after the special election, the Steering Committee Chair will determine the winner by lot. The Vice Chair must serve a two-year, consecutive term and be a delegate for the entire period. The Vice Chair will become the Chair in the second year of the term.
- D. The Chair and Vice Chair will, by virtue of their offices, be full members of the Center for Youth Voice State Board and classified as Elected Officers at YIG and MUN as leaders of the Steering Committee Executive Office.
- E. The Chair and Vice Chair must participate in YIG and MUN.
- F. Should the Chair be unable or unwilling to serve their full term, the Vice Chair will become the Chair for the remainder of the Chair’s term, separate from their own regular term. If the Vice Chair becomes unable or unwilling to serve their full term (including ascendance to the Chair), the State Steering Committee will elect a replacement at its next scheduled meeting or at a special meeting.

**III. QUALIFICATIONS FOR CANDIDATES AND CANDIDATE FILING**

- A. All candidates for nomination to elected office must fulfill the qualifications as ruled by the State Steering Committee. The Chair and Secretary of State must give final approval to all filings in accordance with the election rules.
- B. Candidates for the Statewide Officer positions need not meet any age or grade requirements but must be qualified for future program participation as a delegate.
- C. Candidate Filing Forms must be RECEIVED by the State Office/Secretary of State’s Hotel Office by the deadline as listed on the official schedule of program deadlines as posted on the program website.
- D. Candidates are solely responsible for management and completion of their forms, signatures, and for adherence to all deadlines. Neither the State Steering Committee nor the State Office will be responsible for errors of timing, failure of electronic transmission, mechanical failure or advisor error.
- E. All filing forms and Candidate Expenditure Forms for YIG may only be submitted online via

the official filing portal.

- F. Delegates may only hold one elected officer position, per conference, with the exception of the State Steering Committee Chair and Vice Chair.
- G. All the information that candidates provide may be used in the official Voter's Guide and/or publicity release and each candidate must affirm that the information contained in the forms is true to the best of the candidate's knowledge.
- H. If a candidate for any office should wish to withdraw, notice must be submitted, in writing, to the Secretary of State. Withdrawal may or may not allow for removal from the ballot, depending on when written notice is received.
- I. Should a candidate withdraw their candidacy, any recorded voted for that candidate will be considered an abstention and not count.
- J. Should a candidate or officer-elect be dismissed from the program by the State Office, their candidacy or incoming officer position is immediately terminated
- K. To be considered for election, all program area candidates must submit their Candidate Filing Form to the online portal by **12:00 Noon on Friday** of the YIG Session.
- L. Candidates for Legislative, Judicial, National Issues Forum, Lobbyist and Media offices must, upon assuming office, meet the grade requirements of the program area they wish to lead.

<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>GRADE AT FILING</u>
- Capitol House or Senate	10 <sup>th</sup> or 11 <sup>th</sup> Grades
- Hotel House or Senate	8 <sup>th</sup> or 9 <sup>th</sup> Grades
- Supreme Court Chief Justice	10 <sup>th</sup> or 11 <sup>th</sup> Grades
- Court of Appeals Chief Judge	8 <sup>th</sup> or 9 <sup>th</sup> Grades
- Trial Court Chief Judge	8 <sup>th</sup> or 9 <sup>th</sup> Grades
- District Court Chief Judge	10 <sup>th</sup> or 11 <sup>th</sup> Grades
- National Issues Forum Presiding Officer	9 <sup>th</sup> , 10 <sup>th</sup> or 11 <sup>th</sup> Grades
- Lobbyist Executive Director	9 <sup>th</sup> , 10 <sup>th</sup> or 11 <sup>th</sup> Grades
- Media Director	9 <sup>th</sup> , 10 <sup>th</sup> or 11 <sup>th</sup> Grades

- M. Candidates for the offices of Secretary of State and Governor/Lt. Governor ticket need not meet any age or grade requirements but must be qualified for future program participation as a delegate.
- N. Nomination of Program Area Offices: Program leaders will be elected by the members of the respective program areas:
  - Capitol Houses and Senates and Hotel Houses and Senates will each elect a House Speaker and Senate President;
  - The Supreme Court will elect a Chief Justice; all other courts will each elect a Chief Judge;
  - The National Issues Forum will elect a Presiding Officer;
  - The Lobbyists will elect a Lobbyist Executive Director (All Lobbyists will meet together at the Hotel on Saturday morning to hear candidate presentations by Director Candidates.); and
  - The Media will jointly elect a Media Director.

#### **IV. CANDIDATE PRESENTATIONS**

- A. Statewide Officer Candidates will make presentations to the electorate at the Town Hall Debate session for YIG.
- B. Each debate session will be moderated by a Resource Advisor.

C. **Statewide Candidate Presentation Overview**

1. Debate Sessions will generally consist of:
  - Introductions and process overview
  - Candidate opening statements: 2 minute each
  - Questions by moderator & audience: as long as time allows
  - Candidate Closing Statements: 1 minute each
  - Wrap-up by moderator
2. Delegates will be able to submit questions for Statewide Candidate Presentations. The moderator will review questions and determine which will be used.
3. Statewide Officer candidates will speak in random, rotating order by a method to be determined by the moderator.

D. **Program Area Candidate Presentation Overview**

1. Each candidate will address their prospective program areas as the first order of business on Saturday morning. One hour will be set aside for these purposes; at the discretion of the Secretary of State, in conjunction with the State Office, more time can be allotted.
2. Program area candidate presentations will be facilitated by a moderator chosen by the Secretary of State/Chair.
3. The duties of moderator will include (but are not limited to): presiding over the session, keeping and adjusting time of speeches, filtering the written questions submitted during Question & Answer time, maintaining decorum and enforcing all election rules.
4. All Program Area Candidates will be allowed an equal amount of time (a suggested maximum of 3-5 minutes) to make a presentation to their prospective program area meeting.
5. At the end of all candidate speeches and if time allows, there will be a question and answer session where all eligible voters in the program area may ask candidates questions. Any questions must be submitted, in writing, to the moderator.
6. All candidates will speak in the order in which profiles are printed in the Voter's Guide.

V. **CAMPAIGN PROCEDURE**

- A. The Secretary of State's Office will make every effort to publish a picture of equal size for each candidate along with a synopsis of their qualifications and include it as part of the official Voter's Guide.
- B. Electronic campaigning is subject to these election rules at all times (including before and during YIG events). Neither the Secretary of State nor the State Office will be responsible for monitoring electronic campaigning outside of official program channels.
- C. If candidates have any campaign social media accounts/handles, they must submit that information on their officer filing.
- D. All candidates who utilize media points or spend money **must** submit a Candidate Expenditure Report to the Hotel Office of the Secretary of State by **12:00 Noon on Friday** of the YIG Session. Candidates who do not utilize media points or spend money are **not** required to submit a report.
- E. **Media Points**
  1. Each Program Area candidate may use up to 100 media points.
  2. Each Statewide Officer candidate/ticket may use up to 150 media points.
  3. All advertisements at YIG must be coordinated through the Secretary of State's Hotel Office.

4. All media materials must be submitted to the online system by **12:00 Noon on Friday**. The Secretary of State's Office will transmit campaign materials to the media. The media is required to publish all approved advertisements prior to opening of the polls.
5. Media points may be expended on the following schedule. All media materials must be produced and supplied by the candidate or ticket and submitted according to standards of each media program area. (Note – TV and Radio ads must be completed by the candidate before arrival at YIG. Rebroadcasts, reprints, or forwards in media outlets do not count against media points.)
  - 100 points            full-page Newspaper ad – approximately (8"x 10")
  - 50 points            up to 60 second TV ad
  - 50 points            ½ page Newspaper ad – approximately (8" x 5" or 3 ¾" x 10")
  - 25 points            30 second Radio ad
  - 25 points            1 post or story mention on MNYIG Media social channels (limit two per day)
  - 10 points            15 second Radio ad

Submission standards for media ads are as follows:

.jpg or .pdf	Newspaper ads
.mp3 or .wav	Radio ads
.mp4	TV ads
no specifics	Digital ads

Candidates may provide files via physical media – USB drive, etc. (drives may not be returned. Files may also be submitted via email to the officially identified email account.

6. Reasonable adjustments to the above point values, due to any changes to the media program area structure, can be made by the YIG Elections Subcommittee.
- F. Spending limits for Statewide Officer races/tickets will be \$200. No spending will be allowed for any Program Area race.
- G. Any candidate/ticket for Statewide races that spends money or uses in-kind contributions must submit a fully completed Candidate Expenditure with all receipts attached.
- H. Each Statewide Officer candidate/ticket must raise their own funds for campaigns and activities, including electronic campaigning. YMCA, school or delegation funds may be used toward the campaign of a candidate or ticket but must be figured into the overall spending limits total. Non-monetary, in-kind contributions may not be accepted by any candidate. Non-monetary, in-kind contributions are supplies or services rendered to the candidate/ticket at no cost or at a discount not available to the general public. This includes items already owned by the candidate or their family.
- I. The following sections apply to Statewide races only:
  1. No food or beverages may be used for a campaign.
  2. No stickers or materials of any variety that have either a gummed back or a self-adhesive back may be used.
  3. Badges and buttons should be attached with pins.
  4. No powder, glitter or confetti may be used.
  5. No liquid of any kind (including, but not limited to bubbles and glow sticks) may be used for a campaign at any time.
  6. No balloons may be used for any purpose.
  7. No Ink stamps of any kind are allowed.
  8. No posters may be posted in any area used by YIG, including the hotel public spaces, restrooms, elevators, sleeping room floors, State Capitol Complex, Skyways

or buses. Any unattended campaign materials may be discarded at any time.

9. No materials may be used by any delegate, candidate or advisor which may damage any facility, with particular emphasis on protecting the floors and walls.
- I. The Secretary of State reserves the right to take disciplinary action against a candidate distributing any item(s) which violate the Election Rules or Code of Conduct or which could scuff, cut, burn, soil, stain or otherwise damage any facility.
- J. Any material or messaging used in campaigns that promotes violation of the Code of Conduct is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to promotion of sex, alcohol, tobacco, and/or controlled substances.
- K. Any violation of Local, State or Federal law is prohibited. This includes and is not limited to copyright and trademark infringements.
- L. Any violation, by a candidate, of the Code of Conduct and/or approved election rules will result in disciplinary action as decided by the Secretary of State, which may include, but is not limited to, the following:
  - required public and/or published apology
  - loss of speaking privileges at Town Hall Session or program area presentation
  - restriction of campaign activities
  - recommendation to YIG Elections Subcommittee for termination of candidacy
- M. All campaign activities, including those by third parties, are subject to the Code of Conduct and to all election rules.

## VI. CAMPAIGN AND ELECTION CONCERNS

- A. Candidates or delegates should bring concerns or complaints regarding campaign Activities or filing status to the Secretary of State, in writing, for evaluation and possible action.
  1. Any delegate who has concerns related to candidate activities or adherence to election rules must notify the Secretary of State's Office of a specific concern, in writing, by **8:00 AM on Saturday**.
  2. Any delegate who has concerns about election activities or utilizing election systems, occurring after candidate speeches have begun or until the results are officially released must bring that concern, in writing, to the Secretary of State's Office immediately for review.
  3. The Secretary of State will review the specific concern and take actions they deem necessary and will notify the delegate of the decision in writing.
- B. Any delegate wishing to question a decision by the Secretary of State must notify the State Steering Committee Chair of a specific concern, in writing, no later than two hours after receiving a decision from the Secretary of State. The Chair will review the specific activities and take any actions they deem necessary, including possible review by a Special Session of the YIG Elections Subcommittee. In the event that a Special Session is convened, its decision will be final.
- C. Any delegate wishing to question the outcome of a race must notify the Secretary of State of a specific concern, in writing, by curfew on Saturday. The Secretary of State will review the results of the specific race and take any actions they deem necessary.
- E. In the case of a recommended sanction for loss of candidacy, the YIG Elections Subcommittee will convene in Special Session to deliberate and determine the matter. Only the Special Session of the YIG Elections Subcommittee can impose this particular sanction. In the event that a Special Session is convened, its decision will be final.

## VII. VOTING

- A. A plurality will rule except when otherwise stated.
- B. The polls for the YIG Election will be open for a minimum of 4 hours up to a maximum of 6 hours on Saturday of YIG as determined by the Secretary of State in consultation with the State Office. Election hours and location (s will be posted in the Session Book and/or conference media. Voters in line at the closing time will be allowed to vote.
- D. The Secretary of State in consultation of the Steering Committee Chair/Vice Chair may extend voting may extend the voting period due to unforeseen circumstances. The extension of hours will be communicated at minimum by YIG Media or State Office official communications.
- D. The Secretary of State will establish a 'no campaign activity' zone outside the polling place, to be clearly marked and set at their discretion.
- E. No campaign materials may be displayed in the polling place. The voter will not receive a ballot until they remove and/or conceal any displayed campaign materials.
- F. Election officials will be drawn from the Executive Branch staff, with the exception of any participant who is a candidate for elected office. No candidate for elected office may be involved with the administration or tabulation of any election. Should additional assistance be required to administer elections, the Secretary of State will appoint members of the State Steering Committee or Executive Branch (who are not candidates for elected office) to assist.
- E. Should the Secretary of State be a candidate for elected office, the Deputy Secretary of State for Elections at YIG will make all determinations related to the respective race. The Secretary of State will additionally not be involved in the tabulation of any election and the Deputy Secretary of State for Elections will be responsible for tabulation and certification of all results.
- F. All voting for offices will be accomplished by a secret ballot. All ballots will contain all names of candidates for offices and will be separated by office.
  - 1. The election official will have each voter present their current, valid nametag and sign the roster. As each delegate presents their current, valid name tag, an election ballot will be given to the voter, containing all Statewide Officer candidate names and offices sought as well as the appropriate program area ballot, with candidate names and offices sought.
  - 2. Each delegate will have one vote per Statewide Office/Ticket as well as one vote per applicable Program Area Election.
  - 3. After presenting the current, valid nametag and receiving a ballot the delegate will be directed to a place in the election area to fill out the ballot and when completed, deposit it in the ballot container.
  - 4. The election results will be reviewed by the election officials and the total votes reported to the Secretary of State.
- G. If a candidate or ticket prevails by less than 1% of the votes or if the margin of victory is 5 votes or fewer, a recount by hand will automatically be conducted.
- H. In the case of a leading tie, the tied candidates will be voted upon in a special election. Should the tie persist after the special election, the Secretary of State will determine the winner by lot.
- I. Election results, including vote totals, will be officially announced by the Secretary of State upon certification. They will be available at the Hotel Secretary of State's Office for public review.
- J. Election officials are not to reveal the results of any election until it is officially announced.

Any person in the above capacity violating this requirement will be expelled from their leadership position and will be barred from holding a position as an election official.

## VII. OTHER

- A. The Secretary of State will make determinations on election activities as they apply to these rules.
- B. The group of officers announced at the closing session will be the official officers of the respective programs for the following session.
- C. In the event that an officer or officer-elect (with the exception of the Chair, Vice Chair, Governor and Lt. Governor) is unable or unwilling to fulfill their leadership role at the respective program, the candidate receiving the next-highest number of votes will fill the role.
- E. Should the Governor be unable or unwilling to serve their full term, the Lt. Governor from that ticket will assume the office of Governor. Should the Lt. Governor be unable or unwilling to serve their full term or should the office become otherwise vacant, the Governor will appoint a replacement. In the event that the Governor/Lt. Governor ticket is unable or unwilling to fulfill their leadership roles, the ticket receiving the next-highest number of votes will fill the roles.
- E. An officer or officer-elect will be deemed unwilling to serve if they have two or more unexcused absences from program training events or otherwise fail to meet the basic duties of the position in a timely manner. The Chair, Vice Chair and State Office will jointly determine what constitutes an unexcused absence or failure to complete basic duties.
- F. Should there be no remaining candidates or should no candidates stand for election in a particular race, the rising Governor (YIG) will discuss potential candidates, with the advice of the current, outgoing Officer in the particular program area and will appoint a replacement Officer. In the event of no rising Governor, the State Steering Committee will meet in special session to fill the vacant office.

## XI. DEFINITIONS

- A. Abstentions: Ballots or votes cast neither for nor against a candidate, which will not be recorded as part of the vote total.
- B. By Lot: A method of making a decision at random (example – flipping a coin, drawing straws, etc.)
- C. Campaign Activities: Any public effort by a candidate, candidates or ticket to support or defeat a candidate, candidates or ticket.
- D. Campaign Materials: Any campaign activity or material that is coordinated, prepared and/or distributed by a candidate/ticket, for a candidate/ticket or against a candidate/ticket, including but not limited to electronic media.
- E. Delegate: A student member of a recognized Minnesota YMCA Youth in Government delegation.
- F. Delegation: A group of delegates from a YMCA, school or community authorized by the State Office. Groups participating in Youth in Government will only count as one delegation. Guests from other state programs do not count as delegations.
- G. YIG Election Rules Subcommittee: A subcommittee of the State Steering Committee appointed by the State Office to oversee the YIG Election Rules and convene in Special Session at a YIG conference (if needed) to handle elections-related business. The Secretary of State serves as Chair of this group. Any Special Sessions of the YIG Elections Subcommittee will be chaired by the State Steering Committee Chair or

Vice Chair.

- H. Electronic Campaigning: The use of e-mail, websites, social media systems or other mass media to promote or defeat a candidate or ticket.
- I. Form: An online or paper submission of materials.
- J. In-Person Campaign: On-site campaign activities that extend beyond casual conversations.
- K. In Writing: Communication submitted via written/printed words on paper during an in-person setting or through the official email account.
- L. Plurality: Receiving the most votes in a respective race, election or question.
- M. Program Area Elections: Elections for leadership of program areas of Youth in Government that are voted exclusively by the members of the specific areas, as published by the State Office.
- N. Secret Ballot: Anonymous written or digital vote by an individual delegate on a paper ballot or via an authorized electronic voting system.
- O. State Steering Committee: The State Steering Committee is made up of all current elected Officers, Officers-Elect and student representatives selected by delegations and charged with oversight of election rules and candidacy process. Each delegation may send any number of representatives to sit on the State Steering Committee, though each delegation has one (1) vote. Officers and Officers-Elect vote as members of their respective delegations.
- P. YIG Election Rules Subcommittee Special Session: A meeting of the YIG Election Rules Subcommittee at a Candidates for elected office under review may not be a member of any Executive Session.
- Q. Statewide Officers: Candidates who are elected by the entire Youth in Government session, specifically – Governor/Lt. Governor ticket and Secretary of State.
- R. Statewide Officer Elections: Elections for leadership of the overall Youth in Government session that are voted by the conference at-large. These elections are for Governor/Lt. Governor ticket and Secretary of State.
- S. Ticket: A combination of one Governor candidate and one Lt. Governor candidate running for office together.

**Approved by the State Steering Committee – 9/23/2023**