

Election Information Packet  
August 2019  
Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op



## SNFC General Election Timeline for 2019

March 29	Deadline for members to be active to run for the Board of Directors
May 18	Quarterly Meeting Candidate Statement of Interest due for members seeking recommendation for nomination by the Nominating Committee and members intending to run by petition.
June 10	Board Meeting Board Nominating Committee (BCDNC) will declare recommended candidates for nomination by the Board.
July 20	Petitions to run with signatures of 3% of active members are due for candidates seeking nomination by petition. Declaration of Candidacy and Code of Conduct forms are due for <b>all</b> candidates.
July 25	Campaigning may begin for Board of Director candidates.
Aug. 12	Board Meeting Board certifies measures and bylaws amendments for the ballot. Candidate Background checks to be completed by this date.
August 14	Ballot Measures and bylaws amendments are posted. Candidate Statements and Photos are due.
August 20	Pro & Con Arguments due
August 22	Pro & Con Arguments posted
Aug. 24	Quarterly Meeting. Members must be current in their fair share investment on this date to vote.
Aug. 29	Rebuttals to Arguments due
Sept. 2	Rebuttals to Arguments posted. Ballots uploaded to printer.
Sept. 9	Board Meeting
Sept. 12	Meet the Candidates Night & Election Forum – Candidate meet & greet and discussion of ballot measures and/or bylaws amendments.
Sept. 13	Deadline for ballot packets mailed (First Class) to members who were current in fair share investment on August 24. Electronic Voting Opens.
Sept. 25	Mailed ballots must be postmarked by this date.
Sept. 29	Last day to vote electronically, or drop off ballots at the Co-op.
October 2	Last day for ballots to be received by Simply Voting, postmarked by Sept. 25.
Oct. 3	Ballots counted and results verified by Simply Voting. Results reported to the Board President and Election Committee.
Oct. 4	Election Results posted in-store and online. Last day to file a challenge to the election.
Oct. 14	Board Meeting Full Election Results submitted to the Board. New directors are seated.

## Candidate Eligibility & Nomination Information

The Board of Directors shall be composed of seven (7) persons. Each director shall be an active member of the Cooperative for at least 6 months prior to the date of their election and shall continue to be an active Member for the entire term of office. An “active member” is a member who is current on his or her payments toward the \$300 “fair share” membership. Household shoppers are not eligible to serve on the Board. Only one SNFC staff member may serve on the Board at any given time. Family or household members of a sitting SNFC Board member are not eligible to run for the Board.

Reference: SNFC Bylaws Section 8.01.

A prospective candidate for a seat on the Board of Directors shall secure the nomination by one of the following methods:

- a) Review and recommendation by the nominating committee and nomination by the board.
- b) Petition signed by three percent (3%) of the membership. This petition must be received by the nominating committee pursuant to the timeline established in the Election Code.

To be recommended by the Nominating Committee for nomination by the Board of Directors, submit a [Statement of Interest](#) to the Nominating Committee by close of business on the date of the May Member Meeting (see [Election Timeline](#)). The Nominating Committee will contact candidates to schedule a time to discuss interest and qualifications, as well as answer questions about Board service. Following that discussion submit the Declaration of Candidacy Form and signed Directors Code of Conduct form. Recommended candidates will be informed, and presented to the Board of Directors for confirmation vote at the June Board meeting.

To petition for candidacy, candidates must still submit a [Statement of Interest](#) by the due date listed in the Election Timeline. A member that is not selected by the Nominating Committee may then petition to run by gathering signatures of 3% of active members. Contact the Board Administrator to obtain a copy of the approved petition form.

Declarations of Candidacy Form and signed Code of Conduct Form are due for all candidates on July 20.

## Guidelines for Candidate Statements

Each candidate must prepare a statement of their position to be included in the ballot and posted on the website. Candidate statements must be no more than 275 words, not including the title (“Candidate Statement of (name)”), and must be submitted by e-mail to the Board Administrator at [board-admin@sac.coop](mailto:board-admin@sac.coop). Candidate photos and videos must be scheduled, and will be done through Co-op staff, for consistency and fairness. Contact the board administrator for details on this procedure.

All candidates must participate in the “Meet the Candidate’s Night” Election Forum. Every candidate will be given an equal opportunity to make a brief statement and respond to a set of questions made available in advance, as well as those asked by members, if time allows.

## Procedures for Withdrawing Candidacy

A candidate may withdraw by submitting a request to the Election Committee.

- The request is appended to the candidate’s Declaration of Candidacy and a notice of withdrawal posted in the store and online.
- If practical, the candidate’s name and statement are removed from the ballot and ballot pamphlet or a notice of the withdrawal is included in every ballot packet.
- If ballots have already been prepared and mailed, votes will not be counted for a withdrawn candidate.

## Guidelines for Proposing a Measure and Bylaws Amendments

This is general information for SNFC members interested in putting a measure on the ballot for a vote of the membership. Any member attempting this process should consult the SNFC Bylaws and Election Code for more detail, as well as the General Election Timeline.

### What is a Measure?

A measure is a question or statement put on the ballot of an SNFC election to be voted upon by the members of the Co-op. It may be something new (an initiative) or a response to something that has already occurred (a referendum). In addition, a measure may be an “advisory survey” (e.g., not binding, but intended to take the pulse of the membership for Board consideration). Measures require a simple majority to pass.

In general, measures are included on the ballot in the annual General Election, which takes place in the fall.

All measures must be reviewed by the Board of Directors, or designee(s), to make sure that they do not conflict with California or Federal law, the existing Bylaws or the Cooperative Principles.

There are two ways that a measure can be submitted to the membership for a vote:

1. The Board of Directors approves a measure for the ballot (by simple majority vote).
2. A petition stating the action requested signed by ten percent (10%) of the membership is received by the Board Secretary.

Due dates for measures sponsored by the board or by the membership are outlined in the [Election Timeline](#). The last day for members to submit a measure is the date of the Quarterly Member Meeting in May.

An advocate for a measure will have to fulfill the responsibilities of “sponsor.” Sponsors are responsible for the following:

1. Following all authorized campaign practices as described in this packet and detailed in the Election Code.
2. At the request of the Board, agreeing to change the wording of any measure to meet legal or other guidelines. Proposed measures that do not meet legal standards may be rejected by the Board.

Per Bylaws section 10.05(b) and other Board policies, proposed ballot measures are reviewed by the Board’s Policy Committee prior to the Board certifying any measure for inclusion on the ballot.

All measures must be certified by the Board by its August meeting and posted in the store and online within two days following certification. Instructions for submitting arguments for and against a measure will be included in the posting.

### Bylaws Amendments

Amendments to the Bylaws may be proposed by:

1. A 2/3 vote of the Board of Directors
2. A petition signed by fifty (50) Members or 5% of the Membership, whichever is greater.

Proposed Bylaws changes shall be submitted to a committee assigned by the Board. This committee shall:

1. Check the proposed amendment for legality, for conflict with other Sections of the Bylaws, and for proper language.
2. Notify the Membership, in writing, of the proposed amendment.
3. Hold a publicized meeting to discuss the proposed amendment.
4. Amendments to these Bylaws shall be adopted by a two thirds (2/3) majority of those voting as prescribed in the Election Code.

## **Guidelines for Submitting Pro and Con Arguments and Rebuttals to Arguments for a Proposed Measure and Bylaw Amendments**

Due dates for arguments for and against ballot measures and bylaw amendments (maximum 275 words) are outlined in the General Election Timeline. Arguments are posted within two days after the deadline for their receipt or when finalized if revision is needed. Due dates for rebuttals (maximum 150 words) to arguments (if any) are outlined in the General Election Timeline and are posted within 2 days after the deadline or when finalized if revision is needed. Arguments and rebuttals that exceed the maximum number of words will not be accepted. Arguments and rebuttals will be reviewed by the Board Administrator, the Board President and the Election Committee Chair (collectively, the "Review Committee") for accuracy. Contents of the arguments and rebuttals must be accurate. If challenged, the authors must provide evidence that supports their arguments and/or rebuttal. Authors will be contacted by the Election Committee Chair on behalf of the Review Committee if changes are made or proposed.

Arguments and rebuttals must be submitted by the Board or not less than five (5) active members. No person may submit both an argument in support of and an argument in opposition to the same measure or bylaw amendment. A member who has signed a petition for a measure or bylaw amendment may not submit an argument against that measure or bylaw amendment. A Board member or Board committee member may not submit an argument against a measure or bylaw amendment submitted by the Board.

### **Campaign Guidelines and Rules**

Candidates may begin campaigning after the due date for Declaration of Candidacy Forms and Code of Conduct forms are due, in accordance with the Election Timeline.

Sponsors of a measure and/or bylaws amendment may begin campaigning after the Board has certified the measure and/or bylaws amendments in accordance with the Election Timeline. Opponents of a measure and/or bylaws amendment may begin campaigning after the argument or rebuttal is posted in accordance with the Election Timeline.

Campaigns shall be run according to the following guidelines:

1. Campaigning is defined as support for, or opposition to, any candidate, measure, bylaws amendments, or recall petition. This includes distribution of any material regarding a candidate, measure, or bylaws amendment; or collection of signatures on a petition for a candidate, measure, bylaws amendment, or recall and other activities generally considered "electioneering" by the Secretary of State of California. (<https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/ccrov/pdf/2018/may/18106jl.pdf>). In the event of a dispute, the election committee shall determine whether a particular activity is proscribed campaigning. The Board will then determine the appropriate sanction.
2. Each candidate or measure/bylaws amendment sponsor or opponent is responsible for the conduct of their campaign.
3. No campaigning of any kind shall begin before the dates set on the General Election Timeline, unless otherwise prescribed by the Election Code or the Board.
4. All election-related materials posted in the store shall be posted only by the Nominating Committee, Election Committee members or authorized staff.
5. Campaigning may not be conducted within the store or during any function of the cooperative, unless the function, or a portion of the function, is designed specifically to allow member discussion of candidates, measures, bylaws amendments, or petitions.
6. Campaigning outside the store must take place within designated areas only, and according to the Tabling Rules (see below).
7. No listing of names, telephone numbers, emails or addresses shall be supplied by the SNFC to any

individual for the purposes of campaigning.

8. The Election Committee is responsible for determining if violation of authorized campaign practices has occurred. The Committee will recommend to the Board whether a candidate should be disqualified from the ballot for violating these practices. The Board makes the final decision on disqualification.
9. The Board may disqualify from further campaigning on store premises or at authorized SNFC election functions a supporter or opponent of a ballot measure who has violated these practices.
10. No money belonging to SNFC may be used for campaigning, except for the distribution of candidate's written or recorded statements and pro and con analyses. (Bylaws, 10.02(d).)

## TABLING RULES

### Candidates and Measure/Bylaw amendment Supporters/Sponsors and Opponents

- No representatives of candidates can table.
- Proponents/ opponents of ballot measures or bylaws amendments who wish to table must provide their names to the Board Administrator before the first day of campaigning begins. No more than 3 proponents/ opponents can table at any one time.
- Campaigners will be required to sign up in advance to table, as discussed below. Please contact the Board Administrator for details at board-admin@sac.coop
- Time periods for tabling can be scheduled for a maximum of 3 hours.

**The designated campaign space for all candidates and proponents/opponents will be between the entrance and exit doors.** The area will be taped off prior to campaigning being open. The Co-op will not provide a table or other items for candidate or other campaigning.

Tabling spots will be scheduled through the Board Administrator. To make this process as fair as possible, the following process will be used:

- Candidates and proponents/opponents will send their preferences for tabling spots (3 hours max) by close of business (11pm) on Wednesday for the next week.
- Candidates and proponents/opponents may send an email, leave a phone message, or drop off a written request for tabling days/times with the Board Administrator. Phone messages and written requests should specify how the candidate would like return communication.
- On Friday, tabling spaces for the next week will be confirmed by the Board Administrator.
- If multiple people have requested the same days/times, the Board Administrator will assign an equal number to each candidate and/or proponents/opponents requesting the same times.
- Candidate and/or proponent/opponent names will be entered onto a shared calendar within the Co-op, on the day and time scheduled for tabling. This calendar is viewable by Co-op Customer Service Desk staff, and Store Support Staff, should questions arise.

As stated in the rules above, campaigning outside the Co-op shall be in designated areas only. The Board has interpreted "outside the Co-op" to mean anywhere in view of the Co-op, or able to interact with Co-op shoppers arriving or leaving the store. The only designated area for campaigning will be the space directly in front of the store. Also, only candidates can campaign. Anyone who is not a candidate who is campaigning "outside the Co-op," even if they are not directly on Co-op property, will be in violation of the campaign rules. Any candidate or ballot measure that is the subject of improper campaign activities by the candidate, a proponent, or a supporter is subject to disqualification and/or removal from the ballot. Any improper activities by any candidate, proponent or opponent make the member subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including termination of membership.