Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op

2026 Election Information Packet

Please note that Ballot Packets will not be mailed to Co-op Members for the 2026 Election. To receive the online Ballot Packet, Co-op Members must have an email address on file with the Co-op. Check your online account here: (https://accounts.sac.coop/login/). Paper ballots will be available at the Customer Service Desk when voting starts for those members who want to vote on paper.

Candidate Eligibility & Nominations and Other Information (Bylaws Section 6.02)

- The Board of Directors is composed of nine (9) persons.
- Each candidate must be an active member of the Cooperative for at least 6 months prior to board service and shall continue to be an active member for the entire term of office. An "active member" is a member who is current on their payment toward the $300 membership investment and patronizes the SNFC (Bylaws Section 2.04).

- Household shoppers are not eligible to serve on the Board.
- Only one employee of the Co-op may serve as a director at any one time.
- Any director who is also a paid employee shall resign from the Board if and when their employment ends.
- Family or household members of a sitting SNFC Board member are not eligible to run for the Board.

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

1.1. Review and recommendation by the Nominations Committee and nomination by the Board.
1.2. Petition signed by five percent (5%) of the membership.

To be **recommended by the Nominations Committee** for nomination by the Board of Directors, each prospective candidate must submit a Statement of Interest to the Nominations Committee by the date in the Election Timeline.

1.3. The Nominations Committee will contact prospective candidates to schedule a time to discuss interest and qualifications, as well as answer questions about Board service. Following that discussion, prospective candidates shall submit the Declaration of Candidacy Form and signed Directors Code of Conduct form in accordance with the Election Timeline.

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1.4. The Nominations Committee evaluates prospective candidate's qualifications, including their experience on governing boards or committees and with policy, governance and finance. The Committee may also ask about skills in negotiation, collaboration, and written and oral communication. The Committee may also consider candidates' general cordiality and enthusiasm for serving the Co-op.

1.5. Prospective candidates recommended by the Nominations Committee will be informed of the Committee's recommendation and presented to the Board of Directors for a vote confirming their nomination at or prior to the June Board meeting.

If you are **petitioning for candidacy**, your petition is due to the Co-op Secretary in accordance with the Election Timeline.

1.6. To petition for candidacy, candidates must submit a petition to run by gathering signatures of five percent (5%) of active members along with their member number.

1.7. Contact the Board Administrator at board-admin@sac.coop to obtain a copy of the approved petition form and to learn how many signatures are required.

1.8. Candidacy petitions shall be submitted to the Co-op Secretary pursuant to the 2026 Election Timeline.

2. Guidelines for Candidate Statements & Other Communication to Members

Each candidate must prepare a statement of their position to be included on the ballot and posted on the website.

2.1. 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. Candidate Statements must be received by the deadline stated in the Election Timeline to be included on the ballot. Late Candidate Statement submissions will not be included in the Ballot but may be posted with online election materials. Candidate photos and videos must be scheduled, and will be done through Co-op staff, for consistency and fairness. Other materials for publication and social media may also be requested. Contact the Board Administrator for details on this procedure.

2.2. All candidates should participate in the "Meet the Candidate's Night" Election Forums that will be scheduled shortly before or soon after voting begins. See the Election Timeline for dates. Every candidate will be given equal opportunity to make a brief statement and respond to a set of questions, as well as those asked by members. There will also be at least one informal live and/or virtual session scheduled.

2.3. Candidates may campaign outside the store in an area designated by the General Manager. Campaigning may begin pursuant to the date in the Election Timeline. Candidates must contact the Board Administrator at board-admin@sac.coop to sign up.

2.4. Candidate information presented online and in printed information will be rotated periodically to change the order of presentation. The list of candidates in the ballot will be random.

2.5. The Board may approve ranked choice voting. If approved, the ballot will include appropriate instructions and information.

3. Procedures for Withdrawing Candidacy

A candidate may withdraw by submitting a request to the Election Committee through the Board Administrator at board-admin@sac.coop.

3.1. The request is appended to the candidate's Declaration of Candidacy and a notice of withdrawal is posted in the store and online.

3.2. If practical, the candidate's name and Candidate Statement are removed from the ballot and ballot pamphlet. If the election has begun, votes for a withdrawn candidate will not be counted.

4. Recall of a Director

SNFC Bylaws §6.04(a) describes the process by which an active member may initiate a recall of a member of the Board.

4.1. A recall petition for a board member can be initiated by any active member with a petition signed by twenty percent (20%) of the active members.

4.1.1. A petition for recall of a director must include the name, member number, and phone number of the sponsor(s), the name of the director to be recalled, and the reasons for the recall. No more than one director may be named on a single petition for recall.

4.1.2. The signers on a petition for recall must be active members (Bylaws §2.04(a))

and must sign and print their full name and member number on the petition.

4.2. The petition for recall shall be submitted to the Board Administrator at board-admin@sac.coop.

4.2.1. Within 24 hours of receiving the petition, the Board Administrator shall verify that all signers are active members and submit it to the Election Committee to verify that the petition meets the requirements of this section.

4.2.2. The Committee shall have 48 hours to complete its verification and submit a recommendation to the Board that states whether the petition is valid or invalid.

4.3. Within 48 hours of receiving a valid and verified petition for recall, the Board Chair (or designee, if the Chair is the subject of the petition) shall notify the subject Director by certified mail and inform them of the deadline for submitting a written statement of defense.

4.4. A recall election shall be scheduled by the Board to be completed within 40 days of the receipt of the petition in the store. The disinterested members of the Board shall determine the method and schedule of the election, in conformity with any requirements of the Bylaws or California law.

5. Election to Fill Vacancy Due to Recall of a Director

5.1. If a Board vacancy occurs due to a recall by SNFC Membership, the succeeding Director must be elected by the Membership (Bylaws §6.03(b)) in accordance with this Election Policy.

5.2. The Board may decide to hold the election either as part of, or separate from, the general election, based on the best interests of SNFC.

6. Guidelines for Proposing Measures

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 Policy for more detail, as well as the 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.

6.1. 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, existing Bylaws or the Cooperative Principles.

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

6.2.1. The Board of Directors approves a measure for the ballot by majority vote.

6.2.2. A petition stating the action requested signed by five percent (5%) of the membership is received by the Co-op Secretary (Bylaws Section 5.01(b). Contact the Board Administrator at board-admin@sac.coop for petition format, date due, number of signatures required and submission email.

6.3. Measure petitions shall be submitted to the Co-op Secretary.

6.4. All measures must be certified by the Board at or prior to the June Board 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 or can be provided by the Board Administrator at board-admin@sac.coop.

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

6.5.1. Following all authorized campaign practices as described in this packet and in the Election Policy.

6.5.2. 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.

7. Guidelines for Bylaws Amendments

7.1. Amendments to the Bylaws may be proposed by:

7.1.1. A majority vote of the Board of Directors
7.1.2. A petition signed by 5 percent (5%) of the membership.

7.2. Bylaws amendment petitions must be submitted to the Co-op Secretary. Contact the Board Administrator at board-admin@sac.coop for submission e-mail, petition format and number of signatures required.

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

7.3.1. Check the proposed amendment for legality, for conflict with other sections of the Bylaws, and for proper language.

7.3.2. Notify the membership, in writing, of the proposed amendment.

7.3.3. Hold a publicized meeting to discuss the proposed amendment.

7.4. Amendments to the Bylaws shall be adopted by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of those voting.

8. Arguments & Rebuttals for Proposed Measures or Bylaws Amendments

Members should contact the Board Administrator at board-admin@sac.coop for more detailed information about requirements for submitting an argument including how many member sponsors will be needed to meet the requirement.

8.1. Arguments and rebuttals must be submitted by the Board or by one percent (1%) of

active members.

8.2. No person may submit both an argument in support of and an argument in opposition to the same measure or bylaws amendment. A member who has signed a petition for a measure or bylaws amendment may not submit an argument against that measure or bylaw amendment.

8.3. A Board member or Board committee member may not submit an argument against a measure or bylaws amendment submitted by the Board.

8.4. Due dates for arguments and rebuttals for and against ballot measures and bylaws amendments are outlined in the Election Timeline. Arguments and rebuttals must be received by the deadline stated in the Election Timeline to be included on the ballot.

8.5. Arguments (maximum 275 words) and rebuttals (maximum 150 words) that exceed the maximum number of words will not be accepted.

8.6. Arguments and rebuttals will be reviewed by the Board Administrator, the Board Chair 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. The Review Committee has final approval over language included on the ballot.

8.7. Arguments are posted within two days after the Election Timeline deadline for their receipt or when finalized, if revision is needed.

8.8. Due dates for rebuttals to arguments (if any) are outlined in the Election Timeline and are posted within 2 days after the deadline or when finalized if revision is needed.

9. Campaign Guidelines and Rules

Campaigning is defined as support for, or opposition to, any candidate, measure, bylaws amendment, 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.[1]

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.

Campaigns shall be run according to the following guidelines:

9.1. Candidates may begin campaigning after the date Declaration of Candidacy and Code of Conduct forms are due and when background checks, Candidate Statements and photos are completed in accordance with the Election Timeline.

9.2. Sponsors and opponents of a measure and/or bylaws amendment may begin campaigning after the Board has posted the measure and/or bylaws amendment in accordance with the Election Timeline.

[1] See for general information. Reference to penal codes does not apply to Co-op campaignii

9.3. Each candidate or measure/bylaws amendment sponsor or opponent is responsible for the conduct of their campaign.

9.4. No campaigning of any kind shall begin before the date set on the Election Timeline, unless otherwise allowed by the Election Policy or the Board.

9.5. All election-related materials posted in the store shall be posted only by the Nominations Committee, Election Committee or authorized staff.

9.6. Campaigning may not be conducted within the store or during any function of the Co-op, unless the function, or a portion of the function, is designed specifically to allow member discussion of candidates, measures, bylaws amendments, or petitions.

9.7. No listing of names, telephone numbers, emails or addresses shall be supplied by the SNFC to any individual for the purposes of campaigning.

9.8. 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.

1. See for general information. Reference to penal codes does not apply to Co-op campaigns

9.9. 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.

9.10. 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.

9.11. The General Manager shall designate a safe, accessible location or locations on Co-op property for in-person campaigning to take place. The Board Administrator board-admin@sac.coop shall create a schedule and sign-up process for reserving time to campaign in the designated space. Candidates, measure supporters and measure opponents must contact the Board Administrator at board-admin@sac.coop to schedule time to campaign.

10. Election Promotion

10.1 The store marketing team is an excellent resource for member outreach. They should be involved in developing and implementing strategies and campaigns to promote member voting.

10.2 Candidates are encouraged to campaign outside the store in designated areas pursuant to the Election Schedule. Candidate interaction with members helps personalize the election process and gives candidates an opportunity to share their vision and learn about the concerns of members.

10.3 To improve election turnout and ensure all Co-op members interested in voting are informed, the Election Committee may organize informational tabling outside the store. Tabling goals are:

10.3.1 To encourage members to update their email and to confirm eligibility before the August membership eligibility deadline.

10.3.2 To remind members to vote once ballots are sent and help those who did not receive an email ballot to obtain a paper ballot.