



**GREEN**  
**PARTY NJ**  
[gpnj.org](http://gpnj.org)



## The Green Party of New Jersey Bylaws

### Outline

Section 1 -- Name and Purpose

Section 2 -- Definitions

Section 3 -- Members

3.1 -- Criteria

3.2 -- Rights

3.3 -- Responsibilities

Section 4 -- Committees

4.1 -- Standing Committees

4.2 -- Authority

4.3 -- Governance

4.4 -- Subcommittees and Special Committees

Section 5 -- Executive Committee

5.1 -- Composition

5.2 -- Chair

5.3 -- Vice Chair

5.4 -- Second Vice Chair

5.5 -- Secretary

5.6 -- Treasurer

5.7 -- Executive Committee Staff

5.8 -- Authority

5.9 -- Governance

Section 6 -- New Jersey Green Council

6.1 -- Composition

6.2 -- County Coordinators

6.3 -- Authority

6.4 -- Governance

Section 7 -- Conventions  
7.1 -- Annual Conventions  
7.2 -- Special Conventions  
7.3 -- Voting procedures at Conventions  
7.4 -- Planning and Implementation  
Section 8 -- Voting Procedures  
Section 9 -- Candidates for Public Office  
Section 10 -- Responsiveness  
10.1 -- Open Meetings  
10.2 -- Open Records  
10.3 -- Petitions  
Section 11 -- Local Affiliates  
Section 12 -- Parliamentary Authority  
Section 13 -- Amendments

Section 1 -- Organization Name and Purpose This organization shall be known as the "Green Party of New Jersey."

The Green Party of New Jersey is a progressive political party dedicated to achieving economic, environmental, and social justice through both elections and activism.

We stand for greater participation by individuals in the decision making that affects our lives and our communities.

We uphold a vision based on the four pillars of the global Green movement: ecological wisdom, social justice, grassroots democracy, and nonviolence.

We affirm the Ten Key Values of the Green Party of the United States as affirmed by the Denver Convention in 2000:

1. Grassroots Democracy
2. Social Justice and Equal Opportunity
3. Ecological Wisdom
4. Non-violence
5. Decentralization
6. Community Based Economics and Economic Justice
7. Feminism and Gender Equity
8. Respect for Diversity
9. Personal and Global Responsibility
10. Future Focus and Sustainability

The Green Party of New Jersey will seek and maintain statewide ballot access as allowed by state law. This will include, but is not limited to, running candidates for local, regional, state, and federal offices in order to gain and retain ballot access. GPNJ will also reserve the right to exercise legal action (i.e. lawsuits, amica curiae, etc.) as necessary where ballot access and status or electoral laws are determined to be unduly restrictive or not in accordance with democratic principles.

Section 2 -- Definitions

"Amendment" means a permanent change to these Bylaws, as described in Section 13.

"Annual Convention" means a statewide meeting of Members, as described in Section 7.1.

"Complaint" means a formal written objection, concern, or protest filed by a Member, described in Section 3.2.

"Committee" means any Standing Committee, Special Committee, or subcommittee thereof.

"Convention" means an Annual Convention or a Special Convention, as described in Section 7.

"Local Affiliate Coordinator" means a Member elected to represent, on the New Jersey Green Council, the interests of Members residing in a region that has chosen to affiliate as a "Local Affiliate," as described in Section 6.2.

"Executive Committee" means the decision-making body described in Section 5.

"Local Affiliate" means a group of Members who meet regularly for participatory action and education, which is officially affiliated with the Party under the provisions of one or more duly adopted Rules, as described in Section 11.

"Member" means an individual who has joined the Party, as described in Section 3.

"Membership List" means the official list of Members and contact information, maintained by the Secretary.

"New Jersey Resident" means a person who spends more than one-half of any given year in New Jersey.

"New Jersey Green Council" means the decision-making and advisory body described in Section 6.

"Officer" means one of the following elected officials of the Party: the Chair, the Vice Chair, the Second Vice Chair, the Secretary, or the Treasurer.

"Party" means the Green Party of New Jersey.

"Petition" means the democratic tool enabling a Member to request consideration of a matter, as described in Section 10.3.

"Ratio" means the Representatives-to-Members ratio established for voting at Conventions, as described in Section 7.3(a).

"Records" means all financial and non-financial documents required to be kept by the Treasurer or the Secretary.

"Representative" means a person delegated by a Local Affiliate to represent its Members and vote on their behalf at a Convention, as described in Section 7.

"Rule" means a formal issuance on substantive or procedural matters that is consistent with and subordinate to these Bylaws.

"Special Committee" means a committee of limited duration established by the Executive Committee as described in Section 4.4.

"Special Convention" means a statewide meeting of Members, as described in Section 7.2.

"Standing Committee" means any of the permanent committees described in Section 4.1.

### Section 3 -- Members

#### Section 3.1 -- Criteria

Membership in the Party is open to all persons who

(a) pay annual dues to GPNJ, and/or

(b) are listed as "Green Party" registrants with the State of New Jersey.

Additionally, the Executive Committee may extend membership to New Jersey residents who are not otherwise eligible to register to vote, but who affirm in writing their support for the principles and purposes of the Party as set forth in Section 1.

### Section 3.2 -- Rights

Members in good standing may

- (a) vote, in their Local Affiliate, for Representatives to the Annual Convention or a Special Convention;
- (b) join one or more Standing Committees and vote therein, subject to duly-adopted Rules;
- (c) object formally to any decision, action or policy of the Party or of a Member by filing a Complaint with the Executive Committee; and
- (d) initiate and circulate a Petition as provided in Section 9.3.

### Section 3.3 -- Responsibilities

Members shall

- (a) participate respectfully in all proceedings;
- (b) fulfill obligations undertaken, unless excused; and
- (c) abide by the letter and spirit of these Bylaws and any duly adopted Rules.

## Section 4 -- Committees

### Section 4.1 -- Standing Committees

(a) Each Standing Committee is open to participation by any Member in good standing. The following Standing Committees are established:

(1) Membership Committee, which shall have the following general responsibilities: recruitment of Members; coordinating volunteers; liaison to Local Affiliates and ally organizations; planning and implementation of Annual Conventions and Special Conventions; surveys and informal polls of Members' concerns and views; and issuance of Rules on ethics and disciplinary proceedings.

(2) Finance Committee, which shall have the following general responsibilities: fundraising; dues collection; budgeting; and internal audit.

(3) Policy Committee, which shall have the following general responsibilities: strategic direction; issue research; platform development; drafting position papers.

(4) Communications Committee, which shall have the following general responsibilities: keeping Members informed about Party decisions, policies, and activities; production of Party publications; outreach to the media.

(5) Elections Committee, which shall have the following general responsibilities: review of candidates for public office; and coordination of support for candidates running for public office.

(b) If at any time the Executive Committee determines that a new committee is necessary, it shall have the authority to establish a provisional committee. The Executive Committee shall set forth a statement of purpose and responsibilities for that committee to be published on the GPNJ website under that committee's subpage. That provisional committee shall have full committee rights and responsibilities until the next Annual Convention, where the establishment of the committee is to be voted on by the General Membership by form of an amendment that will be reflected in the bylaws.

### Section 4.2 -- Authority

(a) For a Standing Committee to have representation on the Executive Committee, it must contain at least two members

(b) Each Committee may

(1) act on matters within its areas of responsibility, after consent of the Executive Committee;

(2) act on matters involving its own procedures and housekeeping;

(3) issue Rules on substantive or procedural matters, with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee;

(4) recommend actions or alternatives to the Executive Committee; and

(5) implement decisions of the Executive Committee.

#### Section 4.3 -- Governance

(a) One-Third (1/3) of members of a Standing Committee shall constitute a quorum, except that in no case will one member constitute a quorum.

(b) Voting on any motion shall be determined by a simple majority of Committee members who voted.

(c) A Chair and a Vice Chair shall be elected by the members of each Standing Committee. A vacancy in either position shall be filled by vote of the committee members or, if the committee fails to act, by the appointment of the Executive Committee. Neither a Chair nor a Vice Chair may serve longer than four

(4) consecutive years in either position on a particular Standing Committee.

(d) The Chair shall preside over meetings of a Standing Committee and shall represent that Standing Committee on the Executive Committee.

(e) In the absence of or at the request of the Chair of a Standing Committee, the Vice Chair shall substitute for the Chair, with the full authority and voting rights ordinarily exercised by the Chair. In the event of a vacancy in the position of Chair, the Vice Chair shall be the acting Chair until the vacancy is filled.

#### Section 4.4 -- Subcommittees and Special Committees

(a) Permanent or temporary subcommittees may be established by each Standing Committee, as deemed necessary.

(b) Special Committees of limited duration may be established by the Executive Committee to address specific issues or to undertake specific projects that fall outside the purview of the Standing Committees or that require special coordination of activities among Standing Committees.

#### Section 5 -- Executive Committee

##### Section 5.1 -- Composition

(a) The following persons shall constitute the Executive Committee: the Chair, Vice Chair, Second Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer (the "Officers" of the Party), and the Chair of each Standing Committee, or the Vice Chair, in accordance with Section 4.3(e).

(b) Officers are elected at the Annual Convention, and serve for terms of one (1) year beginning on June 1 and ending on May 31 the following year.

(c) An Officer may serve on the Executive Committee for two (2) full terms in the same office, after which a period of two years must intervene before the person may again hold that office. An exception is made for the office of Treasurer.

(d) After four consecutive full terms of service on the Executive Committee in any capacity, a person may not be re-elected or appointed to the Executive Committee until an interval of two years has elapsed. An exception is made for the office of Treasurer.

(e) Succession shall proceed in the following manner for Officers in the case of vacancy with the next lower position filling the vacancy above, or in the case of an officer or standing committee chair choosing not to move up in the rank determined by this clause, moving to the next position and so on. Officers succeeding positions shall perform all the duties of and act in the full capacity of the position for the duration of that vacancy. After the ranking list is exhausted, remaining vacancies shall be filled by the Executive Committee by appointing a replacement to serve for the unexpired remainder of that Officer's term. Order of ranking list: (1) Chair, (2) Vice Chair, (3) Second Vice Chair, (4) Secretary.

(1) In the case of a vacancy of the office of the Treasurer, the Executive Committee must appoint a replacement Treasurer who meets the state requirements.

#### 5.2 -- Chair

The Chair of the Party shall preside at meetings of the Party and of the Executive Committee; issue a call for a Special Convention or a special meeting of the Executive Committee or the New Jersey Green Council when deemed necessary; and perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Party or the Executive Committee.

The Chair of the Party shall be an ex-officio member of all Committees.

#### Section 5.3 -- Vice Chair

The Vice Chair of the Party shall preside at meetings in the absence of or at the request of the Chair; perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Party or the Executive Committee.

#### Section 5.4 -- Second Vice Chair

(a) Role - The Second Vice Chair of the Party shall be responsible for promoting those issues primarily concerning traditionally disenfranchised groups, and for recruiting for positions of leadership in the Party from among those sectors; shall preside at meetings in the absence of the Chair and Vice chair; shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Party or the Executive Committee.

(b) Requirements – The Second Vice Chair must identify as a member of a traditionally disenfranchised group.

#### Section 5.5 -- Secretary

The Secretary shall maintain all non-financial Records of the Party, including but not limited to

- (a) these Bylaws and any Amendments hereto;
- (b) legally binding documents;
- (c) all meeting records, including the minutes of the Executive Committee, and the reports of other Committees;
- (d) a copy of the Membership List as provided on a regular basis by the Membership Committee and Treasurer;
- (e) lists of the Local Affiliate Coordinators and their contact information;
- (f) Petitions; and
- (g) Complaints.

The Secretary shall also certify any Petition and give notice of Annual Conventions and Special Conventions.

#### Section 5.6 -- Treasurer

The Treasurer shall maintain the financial Records of the Party. The Treasurer is also an ex officio member of the Finance Committee. The Treasurer will also keep records of all dues paying members

and provide such records to the Secretary and Membership Committee. The Treasurer is required to meet all requirements of the State for Treasurers of Political Organizations.

#### Section 5.7 -- Executive Committee Staff

The Executive Committee may appoint other Members to assist the Executive Committee. Such Members shall serve at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

#### Section 5.8 -- Authority

Within the limitations established by these Bylaws, the Executive Committee shall have the authority to decide all substantive and procedural matters that significantly involve the Party as a whole. This shall include but not be limited to the authority to

- (a) delegate decision-making authority or specific tasks to a Standing Committee or to a Special Committee;
- (b) make recommendations to or issue guidance to a Standing Committee or to a Special Committee;
- (c) request specific actions by a Standing Committee or a Special Committee;
- (d) delineate the responsibilities of each Standing Committee and decide any jurisdictional issue that is not resolved by the affected Standing Committees;
- (e) appoint Executive Committee Staff; and
- (f) expel or discipline any Member for good cause, pursuant to Rules and subject to the review of the Membership Committee.

#### Section 5.9 -- Governance

- (a) Voting on any motion shall be determined by a simple majority of Executive Committee members present, unless otherwise provided for in these Bylaws.
- (b) One Half (1/2) of the non-vacant Executive Committee positions shall constitute a quorum.
- (c) Rules may be issued on substantive or procedural matters.

### Section 6 -- New Jersey Green Council

#### Section 6.1 -- Composition

The Executive Committee members along with the Coordinators of the Local Affiliates shall constitute the New Jersey Green Council.

#### Section 6.2 -- Local Affiliate Coordinators

A Local Affiliate Coordinator shall be elected by the Members who reside in a particular county or group of contiguous counties, as authorized by the Members residing in those counties. Each Local Affiliate Coordinator shall serve at the pleasure of their Local Affiliate on the New Jersey Green Council and act as a liaison to the Membership Committee.

#### Section 6.3 -- Authority

- (a) The New Jersey Green Council shall advise the Executive Committee and shall have the responsibility of deciding matters related to the procedural conduct or ethical behavior of Executive Committee members.

#### Section 6.4 -- Governance

- (a) Voting on any motion shall be determined by a simple majority of New Jersey Green Council members present, unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws.
- (b) The New Jersey Green Council is required to meet at least three (3) times per calendar year. One-third of the New Jersey Green Council members shall constitute a quorum.

## Section 7 -- Conventions

### Section 7.1 -- Annual Conventions

A statewide Annual Convention of Members shall be held for the election of Officers, and for deciding other significant matters, as determined by the Executive Committee or by a Petition. Local Affiliates may submit to the Executive Committee proposals for consideration; such proposals must be received for review by the Executive Committee at least thirty (30) days prior to the starting date of the Annual Convention.

### Section 7.2 -- Special Conventions

A statewide Special Convention may be held at any time, upon at least thirty (30) days notice to Members, if the Chair, the Executive Committee, or a Petition determines that the matter to be acted upon should not be postponed until the next Annual Convention.

### Section 7.3 -- Voting procedures at Conventions

(a) Votes at Annual Conventions or Special Conventions will be cast by Representatives from Local Affiliates. For each Convention, the Executive Committee shall determine the Representatives-to-Members Ratio and inform all Local Affiliates of said ratio at least 30 days prior to the starting date of the Convention. On the basis of this information, the Local Affiliates shall choose their apportioned number of Representatives and notify the Membership Committee of the names of the Representatives (unless the Ratio is 1:1, in which case each Member in good standing is a Representative). If the Ratio is not 1:1, the method for selecting delegates from counties without a Local Affiliate shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

(b) Voting for Officers and other elected officials shall be by ballot, and no motion to the contrary shall be in order, except that in the event the number of candidates nominated for a given office does not exceed the number to be elected to that office, a ballot for that office may be dispensed with by unanimous consent.

(c) At an Annual Convention or Special Convention, one-fifth of the number of apportioned Representatives eligible to vote at that convention shall constitute a quorum.

### Section 7.4 -- Planning and Implementation

The Membership Committee with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee, shall be responsible for the planning and implementation of Annual Conventions and Special Conventions, including the development of Rules to establish an open process for the nomination of Officers which informs and involves the membership.

## Section 8 -- Voting Procedures

(a) Any reference to voting in this document shall be construed to refer both to voting in person at a meeting or electronically during the gaps between meetings of the Green Council.

(b) In the case of any Standing Committee, any committee member may make a proposal on any area within the Standing Committee's authority. Once a proposal is made, discussion is to occur on that proposal, and any amendments may be offered. At any time during this discussion a member may move that the proposal be adopted.

(c) Once a motion to adopt a proposal is made, voting shall begin, except in the case that the Committee Chair decides, on feedback from the Committee, that the motion to vote was premature. In this case, the process will revert to Robert's rules and a call to question must be affirmed by a (2/3) majority.

- (d) Once a proposal is made pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, each committee member has 72 hours to cast a ballot either yes, no, or in abstention. Failure to vote will be recorded in keeping with the requirements of Section 4.3(f).
- (e) In the case of the Executive Committee or New Jersey Green Council, any member may make a proposal on any matter within its authority. Once a proposal is made, discussion is to occur on that proposal, and any amendments may be offered. At any time during this discussion a member may move that the proposal be adopted.
- (f) Once a motion to adopt a proposal is made, voting shall begin, except in the case that the Party Chair decides, on feedback from the body, that the motion to vote was premature. In this case, the process will revert to Robert's rules and a call to question must be affirmed by a (2/3) majority.
- (g) Once a proposal is made pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, each committee member has 72 hours to cast a ballot either yes, no, or in abstention. Failure to vote will be recorded in keeping with the requirements of Section 6.3(b).

#### Section 9 -- Candidates for Public Office

The New Jersey Green Council may decide whether a prospective candidate will have the support of the Party.

#### Section 10 -- Responsiveness

##### Section 10.1 -- Open Meetings

Meetings of all bodies of the Party are open to the attendance of any Member, with the following exception: If a body determines that valid reasons exist that require it to conduct some of its business in closed session, it must adopt a resolution to that effect by a majority vote in open session, clearly stating those reasons. While in closed session, the only items which may be discussed or acted upon are those to which that resolution applies, and no motion to suspend this provision shall be in order. The minutes and other records of such closed sessions will be made available to the Executive Committee without delay, and will become available for inspection under the provisions of Section 10.2 as soon as the reasons for its secrecy no longer exist.

##### Section 10.2 -- Open Records

Records of the Party shall be made available to any Member for inspection or photocopying. The requesting Member shall pay the costs of reproduction and mailing.

##### Section 10.3 -- Petitions

- (a) Any Member in good standing may initiate a Petition and circulate it among the general membership at the Member's own expense. A Petition may concern any matter and request any action not inconsistent with these Bylaws.
- (b) If one-fourth of the Members sign a Petition, the Executive Committee shall deal with the matter at hand in a timely fashion and to the satisfaction of the petitioners or shall submit the matter to a vote at an Annual Convention or a Special Convention.
- (c) The Secretary shall certify a Petition to the Executive Committee.

#### Section 11 -- Local Affiliates

The Executive Committee, with the advice and consent of the New Jersey Green Council, may establish Rules providing for the affiliation of the Party with other organizations ("Local Affiliates"), smaller in

scope than the whole Party, and providing for the equitable and proportional involvement of these Local Affiliates in the decision-making processes of the Party. Any Rule so established shall contain provisions to ensure that Local Affiliates continue to operate in a manner consistent with these Bylaws and with other duly adopted Rules.

#### Section 12 -- Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in *Robert's Rules of Order Revised* shall govern the Party in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws or with any special Rules of order duly adopted by the Party.

#### Section 13 -- Amendments

An Amendment to these Bylaws may be adopted upon a two-thirds vote at an Annual Convention or a Special Convention, provided that the bylaw proposals were posted on the official GPNJ website and not later than thirty (30) days in advance, indicating the language to be amended, and describing the nature and intent of the proposed change. Email sent to the GPNJ listservs and Local Coordinators for distribution shall constitute written notice.

These Bylaws reflect the latest version of this document and incorporate the most recent amendments, made in 2014.