



SAN FRANCISCO WOMEN'S POLITICAL COMMITTEE

SAN FRANCISCO WOMEN'S POLITICAL COMMITTEE ENDORSEMENT GUIDELINES

ADOPTED April 2019

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. The San Francisco Women's Political Committee ("SFWPC") is a non-partisan general purpose political action committee that seeks to engage female-identifying individuals in all dimensions of the political process, including but not limited to: identifying, recruiting, training, and supporting female-identifying candidates for election and appointment to public office and leadership positions, and to increase awareness of issues that impact female-identifying individuals generally. SFWPC endorses candidates of any gender identity for local and statewide, and federal office; advocates for expanding roles for female-identifying individuals in the public and political sphere through policy issues; and educates members through programs and communications.
- B. Additionally, the goals of SFWPC are to organize female-identifying individuals to unite in their efforts to eradicate sexism, racism, ageism, violence against women, homophobia, transphobia, and poverty. SFWPC also works for the advancement and election of female-identifying individuals in San Francisco. SFWPC will only endorse candidates who express agreement and have demonstrated support for SFWPC's goals, purposes, and core issues:
 - 1. Appointing and electing women to public office and positions of political leadership;
 - 2. A political process that is transparent, accessible, and responsive to better serve the needs and interests of women;
 - 3. Safe, livable, and sustainable communities centered around women and families;
 - 4. Economic justice including livable wages and pay equity;
 - 5. Accessible and affordable quality public services, including education, health care, senior services, and child care;
 - 6. Reproductive freedom and justice for all;
 - 7. Elimination of violence, discrimination, and harassment against women;
 - 8. Intersectional feminism and racial justice.
- C. In general, the Political Action Committee (PAC) shall make endorsement recommendations to the full membership, and endorsement decisions shall be voted on by the full membership according to these guidelines.
- D. The SFWPC Board of Directors has adopted the following guidelines to further direct the organization's endorsement process.
- E. In the event that the Bylaws and Endorsement Guidelines may be in conflict, the document with the most recent approval date prevails. If both documents have the same approval date, the Bylaws prevail.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Board
 - 1. Shall mean the SFWPC Board of Directors as defined and determined by the SFWPC bylaws.

- B. Campaigning
 - 1. SFWPC may, per these endorsement guidelines, campaign on behalf of endorsed candidates or measures. The definition of campaigning shall be determined by the Board of Directors on a case by case basis as needed.
 - 2. Only candidates who identify as female may be eligible for sponsored “days of action”, and/or SFWPC-led field events.
- C. Committee
 - 1. Unless otherwise specified, “Committee” shall refer to the Political Action Committee.
- D. Slate Mailer
 - 1. California Secretary of State Slate Mailer Organization.
- E. Determined by the Board
 - 1. Shall mean by majority vote of the full Board unless otherwise specified.
- F. Endorsement
 - 1. Shall mean an action taken by a majority of the general membership.
- G. Negative campaigning
 - 1. Determined by the Board as needed and on a case by case basis, but may include the following:
 - a) A statement, piece of collateral, or other campaign communication distributed to the public that contains negative language or negative images about an opponent or opposing campaign.

III. OFFICES ENDORSED

- A. SFWPC may endorse in the following races:
 - 1. Candidates for office that represent at least some part of San Francisco.
 - 2. Candidates for statewide office in California.
 - 3. Local ballot measures in San Francisco.
 - 4. Statewide ballot measures in California.
 - 5. Federal offices overlapping San Francisco.

IV. ELIGIBILITY

- A. For endorsement
 - 1. Candidates
 - a) To be eligible for SFWPC’s endorsement, a candidate must:
 - (1) Have officially announced their candidacy for a particular office and have filed with the proper office.
 - (2) Be running in a local or statewide race, that involves all or part of San Francisco.
 - (3) Be selected for Committee interview consideration by the Political Action Committee Chair(s).
 - (4) Publicly support SFWPC’s identified core issues, as defined in Sec. I.B.
 - (a) For the purposes of this subsection, “public support” may include but not be limited to candidate questionnaire answers, interview responses, or other public statements.
 - (b) If a candidate does not meet the bottom-line issues, then the candidate will be removed from the endorsement process for that particular election. The individual can re-apply for SFWPC endorsement in future elections.
 - (c) If during or after the candidate interview process it is determined that a candidate does not meet SFWPC’s

core issues, then the Committee may decide to remove that candidate from consideration.

- (5) To appear on the general membership ballot, a candidate and/or their campaign must have completed SFWPC's endorsement questionnaire and interviewed with the Political Action Committee Chair(s).

2. Ballot Measures

- a) To be eligible for SFWPC's endorsement, a ballot measure must:
 - (1) Have officially qualified to be on the upcoming election in a local or statewide race that involves all or part of San Francisco.
 - (2) Be selected for Committee interview consideration by the Political Action Committee Chair(s).
 - (3) Align with SFWPC's identified core issues, as defined in Sec. I.B.
 - (a) If a ballot measure does not align with SFWPC's issues, then the measure will be removed from the endorsement process.
 - (b) If during or after the interview process it is determined that a ballot measure does not align with SFWPC's core issues, then the Political Action Committee may decide to recommend a "no" or "no recommendation" position on the ballot measure.
 - (4) All qualifying ballot measures, state and local, will appear on the general membership ballot.

B. For early endorsement

1. Eligibility

- a) Only candidates who identify as female and were previous or current SFWPC Board members are eligible for an early endorsement.
 - (1) Any candidate who wishes to be considered for an early endorsement must complete SFWPC's questionnaire or have a completed questionnaire on file with SFWPC.
- b) The Board may determine, on a case-by-case basis, others who are potentially eligible for early endorsement by an affirmative two-thirds vote of the full Board. Such candidates may include:
 - (1) Candidates who are running for re-election
 - (2) Candidates who were founding members of SFWPC
 - (3) Candidates who have had a strong organizational relationship with SFWPC

2. Process

- a) The candidate or official candidate's representative must submit a written request to the Board, in full or in part, for consideration of an early endorsement.
- b) A board member must notify the full Board in writing of the request for endorsement at least 24 hours before the Board may vote to early endorse.
 - (1) Writing of the request may include placement on the Board meeting agenda, or an email to the board, but Board members must additionally be notified by text.
- c) Where possible, the Board should consider early endorsement at a monthly Board of Directors meeting.

d) If an in person meeting is not possible or prudent, an electronic vote may be taken at the direction of the President(s).

(1) An electronic vote should be open for no more than 24 hours.

e) An affirmative vote of two-thirds majority of the Board members are required for an early endorsement.

f) The Board shall consider all requests for early endorsement by eligible candidates with questionnaires on file within 30 days of written request.

(1) If no questionnaire is on file at the time of the written request, the 30-day window begins upon receipt of the questionnaire.

V. ENDORSEMENTS: DEFINITIONS, PARAMETERS AND PRIVILEGES

A. Endorsements and Positions Taken

The Committee and the General Membership may vote to take the following types of positions on a candidate or ballot measure, which carry with them the parameters and privileges as defined below.

1. Endorsement

a) Of Candidates

(1) Signifies that the candidate(s) meets the requirements for endorsement established by these guidelines.

(2) Represents a statement that SFWPC deems the candidate(s) superior to all others in a particular race both in terms of supporting women's issues and fulfilling SFWPC's core issues.

(3) Permits SFWPC to campaign, as defined in Section II or as otherwise determined by the Board, on behalf of the candidate(s).

(4) Authorizes candidate's use and publication of SFWPC's name in media, campaign, and advertising materials. SFWPC's name may not be used in negative campaigning, as defined in Section II.

(a) Should an endorsed candidate or entity supporting an endorsed candidate engage in negative campaigning and utilize SFWPC's endorsement, logo, statements, or feature Board Members; the Board may vote to revoke the organization's endorsement of the candidate as outlined in Section X.

b) Endorsement of Issues or Ballot Measures

(1) Signifies that SFWPC encourages passage of a measure on a local or statewide ballot.

(2) Permits SFWPC to campaign on behalf of the issue.

(3) Authorizes the use and publication of SFWPC's name in the media and all campaign and advertising materials. SFWPC's name may not be used in negative campaigning, as defined in Section II.

c) Early Endorsement

(1) The Committee may determine to endorse a measure early under parameters as defined in Sec. VII.

2. No Recommendation

a) The Committee may make a "no recommendation" in its endorsement recommendations, which signifies the candidate or ballot measure did not

receive a majority of votes necessary for endorsement or opposition or the PAC chooses not to take a stance on a given race.

3. No Position
 - a) Signifies that in a membership vote on an elected office or issue, the membership chose not to take a position on the candidate or ballot measure.
4. Not Considered
 - a) Signifies that SFWPC has not considered whether to endorse or oppose the candidate or measure.

VI. POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

A. Makeup and Role

1. Eligibility to Join

- a) In order for a person to serve on the Committee, they must:
 - (1) Be a member
 - (2) Not be a candidate
 - (3) Identify as female

2. Selection of Members and Size

- a) The Committee is limited to
 - (1) no more than ten percent of the total membership at the time of the Committee formation, or 15 members, whichever is greater.
 - (2) no fewer than five members.
- b) The Political Action Committee Chair(s) shall make the final decision as to the size and members of the Committee.

3. Role

- a) Based on research and discussions, the Committee will recommend to the full membership which candidates and positions, if any, SFWPC should endorse or oppose.
- b) If the Board decides to distribute a slate card, it is the responsibility of the entire Board to produce the card, with support from the PAC.
- c) At the discretion of the Political Action Committee Chair(s), the Committee may decide to create a separate Political Organization as defined under Internal Revenue Code ("IRC") section 527 for the sole purpose of electioneering communications, that otherwise are not permitted under the guidelines of SFWPC's general purpose committee ("GPC") or slate mailer organization ("SMO"). A separate organization may also be formed if the Committee determines it shall endorse federal candidates.

B. Committee Procedures

1. On Candidates

a) Outreach Procedures

- (1) At a minimum, the Political Action Committee must:
 - (a) Determine the filing deadline the dates of the primary and general elections, as well as the names of all candidates for office.
 - (b) Send the questionnaire to all filed candidates for each race to be considered in order to obtain documentation on the candidates' position on SFWPC's core issues.
 - (c) Evaluate the returned questionnaires to determine completeness and eligibility for endorsement.

- (d) For those candidates who have been previously endorsed by the Committee, who are seeking re-election, the Board may choose to waive the candidate's interview and/or questionnaire, as long as the candidate has confirmed that their position on SFWPC's core issues has not changed and a completed questionnaire is on file.
 - (2) The Committee shall research all candidates to the best of its ability in addition to reviewing the information submitted with the questionnaire or communicated during the interview.
- b) Timely Distribution of Information and Notice of Endorsement Interviews
 - (1) The Chair(s) of the Committee must make available a copy of each candidate's completed questionnaire to each member of the Committee prior to the endorsement interview in which the candidate will be discussed.
- c) Candidate Application, Questionnaire, and Interview
 - (1) If a candidate successfully supports SFWPC's core issues, completes and returns the questionnaire in the designated time, and is deemed to be a viable candidate for consideration by the SFWPC Political Action Committee Chair(s), then the Committee will interview them, at which time the candidate will be eligible for endorsement.
 - (2) The Committee may grant extensions to candidates to complete their questionnaire, upon request.
 - (3) The candidate may interview by proxy, upon request.
- d) Discussion of Candidates
 - (1) Barring any conflict of interests outlined in Section VI. B. 3., all members of the Committee can participate in discussions about candidates or issues. In addition, the Committee may invite other members to contribute to a discussion, but only eligible Committee members may vote on recommendations for endorsement. Committee discussions and the votes cast by Committee members must be kept confidential.
 - (2) Recommending More Than One Eligible Candidate
 - (a) Normally, the Committee should recommend only one candidate for endorsement for a given position in a given race.
 - (i) Process and Exceptions
 - (a) Ranked Choice: or races where a ranked-choice ballot is utilized, the Committee can recommend up to three (3) candidates for endorsement in ranked choice order. The process should be first choice, second choice, third choice. The threshold is a simple majority of those present and voting.
 - (i) Should the committee wish to confer a dual first place, second place or third place endorsement recommendation, a two-thirds

affirmative vote of the Committee is required. Additionally, a written opinion to affirm this recommendation must be placed for consideration on the general membership ballot.

- (b) Multi-Seat:
 - (i) The Committee can recommend up to the full number of seats available. The threshold is a simple majority of those present and voting.
- (c) Non-Ranked Choice, Single Seat
 - (i) The Committee may recommend one candidate for the seat. The threshold is simple majority of present and voting.
 - (ii) Should the committee wish to confer a dual endorsement recommendation, a two-thirds affirmative vote of the Committee is required. Additionally, a written option to affirm this recommendation must be placed for consideration on the general membership ballot.

2. Ballot Measures

a) At a minimum, the Political Action Committee must:

- (1) Determine the filing deadline, the dates of the primary and general elections, as well as the ballot measures that qualify for local and state elections.
- (2) Research all local and state ballot measures to the best of its ability.

3. Potential Conflicts of Interest

a) Disclosure

- (1) Each Committee member must disclose relationships with candidates or ballot measure proponents or opponents to the Chair(s). This includes any personal or professional involvement in the campaign or with any staff of a candidate or issue under consideration or with that candidate or issue's opponents. In addition, each member should reveal to the Chair(s) if she has already personally endorsed a particular candidate or has received any political appointments from that candidate. This disclosure should be made before the first committee meeting each cycle or as soon as the potential conflict occurs.

4. Eligibility to Vote

a) Working for a candidate or issue on a professional basis bars participation in the Committee's discussions for that specific race.

- (1) This includes anyone who directly or indirectly receives any financial benefit or compensation from the candidate or election, or whose firm is hired by them.

- (2) If a member's firm has been hired for the benefit of a candidate or issue and the member is not directly involved in the firm's efforts or if conflict-of interest is unclear, discretion will be left to the Committee Chair(s).
 - b) At the (Co) Chair's sole discretion, a committee member volunteering on a campaign may be required to recuse themselves from participating in that specific race's interviews or vote.
- 5. Voting on Endorsements/Recommendations
 - a) At least two-thirds of the Committee must be present for a vote to take place.
 - b) A simple majority of those present and eligible to participate in the particular vote suffices to recommend endorsement or opposition.
- 6. Determining When Early Endorsement is Appropriate
 - (1) Refer to Sec. VII. Recommending Revocation of Endorsement
 - (2) The Committee may recommend to the Board to revoke the endorsement of a candidate or an issue. Such a recommendation requires a two-thirds vote of the Committee.
 - b) Reviewing the Questionnaire
 - (1) Commencing in 2002, the Committee should review and revise the questionnaire given to candidates as necessary but no less than every five years.
- 7. Determining When to Endorse in Federal Office
 - a) The Board may determine when it is necessary to endorse in a Federal office. The Board is responsible for following proper legal procedure in reporting federal contributions and slate mailers.

VII. EARLY ENDORSEMENT

- A. Criteria for Early Endorsement
 - 1. The Political Action Committee Chairs may recommend the endorsement of a female-identifying candidate "early," that is, before the filing period for a particular race has ended, to the Board of Directors for consideration. However, an eligible candidate, even if previously endorsed, may not seek early endorsement more than twelve months prior to the election. This early endorsement consideration must be confirmed by a two-thirds vote of the Board.
 - a) Any candidate considered shall be a current or former member, and/or have demonstrated a significant contribution to SFWPC and/or its core issues.
 - 2. The Committee may act to endorse a ballot measure "early," that is, before the normal consideration of other measures on the same ballot only on measures that directly affect SFWPC's core issues. This early endorsement consideration must be confirmed by two-thirds of the Board.
 - 3. An early endorsement consideration may be initiated at the request of a candidate or official candidate's representative and by a motion from a Board member.

VIII. MEMBERSHIP VOTING RULES AND PROCESS ON ENDORSEMENTS

- A. Eligibility to Vote
 - 1. Refer to San Francisco Women's Political Committee's bylaws in Article II for eligibility.
 - a) For PAC Committee Members

- (1) Committee members who participate in the endorsement interviews may count their participation towards a qualifying event.
 - b) For Candidates
 - (1) Interviewing before the PAC Committee to seek an endorsement does not count towards a qualifying event.
- B. Ballots
 - 1. The names of all eligible candidates, as defined in these guidelines, should appear on the ballot. The recommendations of the Committee should be clearly indicated, including whether early endorsement is recommended or if more than one candidate for a given race have received the Committee's recommendation.
 - 2. "No endorsement" should always be included as an option for every candidate and ballot measure race.
- C. Endorsement Vote Threshold
 - 1. In races in which ranked choice voting is not utilized and only one candidate can win the race, the candidate who receives the highest number of votes in that race shall receive the endorsement. A "no endorsement" option shall be provided on each ballot and, if selected, will count towards the total threshold for endorsement. A blank ballot for this race shall not count towards the threshold for endorsement.
 - 2. In races in which multiple positions are available, the candidates who receive the most votes in that race shall receive the endorsement up to the number of positions available.
 - a) If there are clear winners for the number of seats open, those candidates will receive the endorsement. For races that have two or more open seats, candidates tied in first or second place will each take a slot. For tied last place slots, dual recommendations of the tied candidates will be given.
 - 3. In races in which ranked choice voting is utilized, the candidate who receives the highest number of votes in each rank shall be determined to have won that rank. A "no endorsement" option shall be provided on each ballot for each rank and, if selected, will count toward the total threshold for endorsement. A blank ballot for this race for each rank shall not count toward the threshold for endorsement. Votes in one rank shall not count for or against votes on another rank.
 - a) The number of ranked choice slots available shall not exceed the number provided by the SF Department of Elections.
 - 4. If the Committee has recommended a dual endorsement for any single or multi-candidate race, that option shall be placed as an option for individual consideration by the general membership.
- D. Issues
 - 1. Support and opposition to ballot measures that the Committee has recommended must appear on the ballot. A "no endorsement" option must also appear on the ballot and shall be counted toward the threshold for endorsement. A blank ballot for this race shall not be counted toward the threshold for endorsement.
- E. Endorsement or Opposition
 - 1. Endorsement or opposition of a candidate or issue requires a majority vote by the membership.
- F. Voting Procedures
 - 1. Political Action Committee and Board members do all the counting of endorsement votes at General Membership meetings.

2. Under no circumstances is the vote count publicized.

IX. MONETARY AND OTHER SUPPORT OF ENDORSED CAMPAIGNS

A. Slate Cards

1. The Executive Committee is responsible for: (1) securing slate card funding from endorsed candidates and measures; and (2) producing and mailing slate cards in a timely manner. Only pictures of candidates who identify as female or gender non-conforming will be included in the slate card. Candidates who identify as male may have their campaign logo or name on the slate card.
2. Only endorsed candidates and measures will be eligible for placement on SFWPC slate materials.

B. Non Slate Cards

1. The Chair(s) may, after the endorsement vote but before disbursement of funds, create a separate committee to monetarily support endorsed candidates or measures. This committee, while bound to the bylaws and endorsement procedures of SFWPC, shall be legally separate and may not coordinate in any way with the committee after formation.

C. Distribution of Funds

1. The Board will also, under the advice of the Committee, recommend expenditures for the production of slate cards or any other forms of promoting endorsed campaigns. The Board must approve the maximum expenditures by a simple majority vote.
2. Under no circumstances shall the expenditures exceed the amount of funds received.

D. Day of Action

1. Per Section II. B. 2., "Candidates who identify as female may be eligible for sponsored "days of action", and/or SFWPC-led field events."

X. REVOCATION OF ENDORSEMENT BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

A. Recommendation by the Committee

1. The Committee may recommend to the Board that SFWPC revoke the endorsement of a candidate or an issue. Such a recommendation requires a majority vote of the Committee.
2. Should an endorsed candidate or entity supporting an endorsed candidate engage in negative campaigning utilizing SFWPC's name or logo or inferring SFWPC support, the endorsed candidate will be subject to a revocation of endorsement by a two-thirds vote of the Board.

B. Opportunity to be Heard

1. After receiving the Committee's recommendation to revoke its endorsement, the Board must give the candidate or a designated representative of the candidate or issue an opportunity to state their case to the Board before revocation.

C. Vote by the Board

1. If a quorum of the Board is present and proper notice has been sent, the Board may, by a two-thirds vote, revoke the endorsement of a candidate or an issue. The Board may opt to submit the matter to a membership-wide vote.

XI. ENDORSEMENTS BY SFWPC BOARD MEMBERS

A. Before SFWPC Endorsement

1. Before SFWPC has endorsed a candidate or measure, a Board member may not publicize her personal endorsement of that candidate or position using the SFWPC's name or her SFWPC title, even for identification purposes only.
 2. Exceptions to this policy can only be made at the recommendation of the Political Action Chair(s) and with the agreement of the Board based upon special circumstances. The Board must approve of each exception by a two-thirds vote. Once approved to endorse a candidate or position, the Board member may not use her SFWPC title in her endorsement.
 - a) Please note that a Board member is not considered to have endorsed a candidate or measure solely by casting their vote for a candidate in another organization, even if that vote is public.
- B. After SFWPC Endorsement
1. After SFWPC has endorsed a candidate or measure, the President(s), the Political Action Committee Chair(s) and Board members may publicize their personal endorsement of the endorsed candidate or position using the SFWPC name or her title.
 2. Board members may not use their SFWPC title, even for identification purposes, in a personal endorsement if their personal endorsement is for a candidate that has not been endorsed by SFWPC.

XII. CONTROL AND REVISION OF THESE GUIDELINES

- A. The Board should review and revise these guidelines at least every five years.
- B. Board Action
 1. The Board may, by majority vote, revise these guidelines at any time.
 2. The Board may serve as de-facto Committee members and may act on any provision in these guidelines by majority vote.