



UNAA ELECTION PROCESSES, RULES, AND GUIDELINES



UNAA ELECTORAL COMMISSION

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CRC 2022

UNAA ELECTORAL COMMISSION PROCESSES, RULES AND GUIDELINES

1: Ugandan North American Association (UNAA)

Ugandan North American Association (UNAA), a nonprofit Organization which shall hereinafter be referred to as ‘the Association’ and/or ‘UNAA’ and both shall represent and have the same meaning. The Association is an equal opportunity organization. It shall not discriminate for membership purposes, on the basis of race, color, religion, political affiliation, gender, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, nationality, or ethnicity.

The Association is nondenominational, non-sectarian, non-political, secular, and nonprofit. In these Guidelines and henceforth, in any official writing of the Association or public address, wherever reference is made to a masculine gender, reference shall also be made to a feminine gender; thus he/she; his/hers.

UNAA has become the credible and effective organization that it is today because the founders and past board members of UNAA were committed to the ideals of UNAA laid out in its Charter as outlined below:

2: Objectives of UNAA

The objectives of this organization shall be:

- (a) To enable, stimulate and promote relationships, friendships, and unity among Ugandans in North America by promoting social and cultural activities and interaction within and among our local communities (See Schedule A) and across the continent.
- (b) To address the needs and challenges unique to the members by promoting co-operative efforts and developing strategic partnerships with philanthropic, cultural, and other organizations.
- (c) To increase awareness and facilitate access to the gainful exploitation of educational, entrepreneurial and employment opportunities in North America through networking, training, and other innovative programs.
- (d) To build partnerships with key stakeholders who will facilitate the advancement of cultural, technological, philanthropic, economic empowerment and educational interests between the peoples of Uganda and North America.
- (e) To promote and protect the unique Ugandan cultural identity through regular social and cultural activities.
- (f) To encourage Uganda and North America business relationships and interactions through the UNAA Annual Convention, networking, business forums, think tanks, and other innovative programs.
- (g) To counsel and advise relevant governments on policies and regulations affecting UNAA membership and advocate for social and economic well-being of members.
- (h) To develop through research, discussion, and exchange of information a better understanding of problems facing members.

3: Purpose of The Electoral Commission

Article 10 of the UNAA Constitution specifies that there shall be a standing and independent Electoral Commission (EC) appointed by the UNAA Board of Trustees and approved by the UNAA Council. The members of the Electoral Commission shall be full Members of the Association in good standing and of high ethical standards.

4: Duties of the Electoral Commission

In carrying out its duties:

- (a) The Electoral Commission shall abide by the UNAA Constitution and Bylaws.
- (b) The EC shall operate as an independent committee with its own budget approved by the council to avoid last minute disbursement of funds to procure election materials that often cause and result in disorganization before elections. The EC Treasurer shall submit a budget request within one month of the financial year as part of UNAA budget clearly itemizing what resources it takes to conduct successful elections.
- (c) The EC shall create its voters' register independent of the executive secretary and the treasurer.
- (d) The EC shall consult the other organs of the Association (Board of Trustees, Executive Committee, and UNAA Council), and then develop and periodically update the Election Processes, Rules and Guidelines to be approved by the UNAA Council as part of the Association's Bylaws.
- (e) The new Guidelines shall be presented to the UNAA Council for approval not later than December 31st of the year proceeding the election.

In accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws, the following guidelines will help streamline the process of nomination and certification of candidates for election to the Executive and UNAA Council. No one is considered to be an official candidate until he/she has, within the prescribed timeline, submitted the nomination documents, paid the required fees, and has been cleared and certified by the Electoral Commission. To strengthen the electoral process, the commission reserves the right to review and modify these guidelines.

5: Candidate Information

UNAA, a nonprofit tax-exempt organization, requires executive members who are qualified, able and willing to serve in a voluntary, unpaid capacity and to discharge their duties in full compliance with the Constitution of UNAA and with all the applicable federal and state/provincial laws of the United States of America and Canada.

6: Background Check

In addition to being a person of good moral character, individuals seeking to become members of the executive, serve in positions of high authority and manage the finances of UNAA, must understand and be willing to accept the potential for a closer federal scrutiny of their business associations, legal status, and personal dealings. Therefore, the Electoral Commission has deemed

it necessary to conduct a formal background check process going back seven (7) years for all candidates who are seeking to run for the following positions:

1. Members of the Executive Committee
 2. UNAA Board of Trustees (BoT)
 3. Members of the UNAA Council
-
- (a) The EC Guidelines shall clearly state the specific positions/candidates whose criminal backgrounds shall be checked (BOT, Executive, Council members and Appointees).
 - (b) In addition, the EC conducts a background check of candidates seeking to be elected by the Council members to the BoT.
 - (c) The EC provides a form indicating the specific items on which a background check should be conducted. The form should provide guidelines defining the exact information the EC is seeking from the data provided by the company conducting the criminal background check. A criminal record if found should result in the disqualification of the candidate from the election depending on:
 - i. Nature and gravity of offence or conduct.
 - ii. How much time has passed since the criminal record.
 - iii. The type of UNAA position the candidate is running for.

7: Vetting of Candidates

On a case-by-case basis:

- (a) The EC shall set the criteria for the criminal background check and not simply enforce verbatim what the company (background check company) finds and sends to the EC. It is the EC and not the company providing the information on the criminal background check that clears the candidates to stand in the election or to be disqualified.
- (b) The EC shall disqualify a candidate who provides information contrary to what is found in the background check; That candidate shall be disqualified since the false information he/she provides violates the leadership code of conduct.
- (c) Credit check: The EC shall conduct a credit check on any candidate seeking to become the association's Treasurer, Director of Finance and Fundraising and the EC together with the UNAA organs determine the minimum or the average credit score from the figures provided by either all the 3 credit score companies or from 2 of the companies (a Good Credit rating per the 3 agencies is required).
- (d) Disqualification of candidates: Ongoing disciplinary processes shall not be used as basis for the EC to disqualify an individual from being certified as a candidate for a UNAA Office. Such disqualification shall be after the completion of the disciplinary process as per Article 11.

8: Selected Vendor to Conduct UNAA-EC Background Checks

Accurate Background, Inc.
Lake Forest, CA
800.216.8024
ISO 9001:2008 Certified

- (a) Upon receipt of the candidate's intent to run for any of the 4 official positions stated above, the EC Treasurer will notify the candidate of the background check process. In order to maintain confidentiality, all communication will be between the candidate and Accurate Background Inc.
- (b) The candidate will authorize the EC to share ONLY the candidate's e-mail address with Accurate Background, Inc. A signed release form to share the e-mail address will be provided. Accurate Background Inc. will request the necessary information directly from the candidate. Accurate Background Inc. will conduct background checks for candidates residing in North America including Canada. Accurate Background Inc., will verify records namely:
 - i. Candidate's criminal records for the last 7 years.
 - ii. Education - only as listed on the candidate's manifesto.

9: Background Check Clearance

Accurate Background Inc. will notify the EC Treasurer that the candidate has been cleared through the background check process. The EC Treasurer will then certify the candidate as meeting the eligibility to run for the office of intent with UNAA and the appropriate certification process will be initiated.

10: Adjudication Process

If the candidate has not been cleared by Accurate Background Inc., the candidate will go through the Adjudication process. At this point ONLY, will the EC Treasurer get involved and notify the candidate of any discrepancy. The candidate will have 7 business days to clear the discrepancy with Accurate Background Inc. directly. If the candidate is not cleared, he/she will be withdrawn from the candidacy and will be notified accordingly, and the case will be closed. There will be NO exceptions after the adjudication process is completed and case closed.

11: Candidate Qualification

Candidates seeking to be elected for any position in UNAA must be members in good standing as stated in Article 3.

12: Required Documents from Candidates

ALL candidates seeking to run for positions in UNAA are required to provide the following original documents:

- i. A signed candidate agreement.

- ii. A one-page document of no more than 500 words providing the following information.
- iii. Position sought.
- iv. Name and contact information.
- v. Current city and state of residence.
- vi. Statement of past or current activities within UNAA or other local organization(s).
- vii. Manifesto for the candidate (Issues & Solutions).
- viii. Names of 3 seconders with the required information including: name and contact information; Current city and state of residence
- ix. Photo - An electronic passport color photo of the candidate, of high resolution (at least 600 x 600 pixels), in JPEG format, and not less than 1 MB in size. The photo must be taken within the last 90 days. The EC intends to use these pictures on the website and in other electoral media.
- x. Background check authorization as may be requested.

13: Candidate Secondment

Candidates for all positions will require at least 3 (three) signatures of eligible members in good standing as secondment to their candidacy. The Electoral Commission will accept statements with original signatures or email statements stating the following:

*I _____ (Seconder) hereby second the candidacy of
Dr/Mr/Ms/Mrs _____ for the post of _____
and to the best of my knowledge, Dr/Mr/Ms/Mrs _____ a person in good
standing within the community.*

Dated this day _____ Signed _____

The seconders attesting to the “good standing” of the candidate must also meet the eligibility requirement for members in good standing according to the UNAA Constitution.

14: Verification of Candidates and Seconders

To determine that the candidate and the seconders are eligible members of UNAA, the Electoral Commission will verify that a candidate and the seconders are members in good standing as outlined in the Constitution.

15: Candidate’s Agreement

All candidates must sign the following candidate agreement acknowledging their willingness to abide by these guidelines.

*I, _____ a candidate for the office of _____ for
the _____ (election period) UNAA Executive/Council, agree to
abide by the rules and conditions set forth by UNAA’s Electoral Commission for the*

_____ elections. I further agree and understand that if I or members of my campaign staff or committee are found to have engaged in activities in violation of the 2019 election rules and guidelines, I may be subject to reprimand and/or disciplinary action or decertification of my candidacy.

I certify that this Agreement is made voluntarily as a free act and deed. I further understand and agree that it shall be the responsibility of the Electoral Commission to enforce, uphold and apply the UNAA Constitution in relation to the 2019 elections. I further understand that the decisions and sanctions made by the Electoral Commission shall be binding and final.

16: Terms of the Candidacy

Hold Harmless. I _____ hereby declare that I am running for the office of _____ In the Ugandan North American Association (UNAA). I agree to hold harmless ANY liability, loss, damage and/or injury to property or persons, including without limitation wrongful death, the UNAA Electoral Commission and its commissioners/members/volunteers or any agents serving on behalf of the Electoral Commission, whether brought by an individual or other entity, or imposed by a court of law, or by administrative action of any federal, state, or local government body, agency or individual, arising out of or incident to any acts, omissions, negligence, or willful misconduct of an individual.

This agreement also applies to and includes, without limitation, the payment of all penalties, fines, judgment, attorney's fees, and related costs and any reimbursements to me for all legal expenses and costs incurred by it. I will NOT seek injunction or remuneration against the Electoral Commission or its representatives.

Signed:

Candidate

Date:

Electoral Commission Representative:

Date:

17: Deadline Compliance

The Electoral Commission will ONLY accept original documents that are submitted electronically to: ecsecretary@unaaonline.org by the stated deadline. There will be NO exceptions. Original documents must be accompanied by a proof of payment receipt for the candidate fee.

18: Candidate Nomination Fees

The EC, together with other organs of UNAA shall set, change, and enforce as needed from time to time the candidates' fees with approval of the council.

To meet the costs associated with the electoral process, there will be a non-refundable nomination and certification fee. All fees should be paid directly to the UNAA treasurer using the UNAA website at <http://www.unaaonline.org>.

19: 2019 Candidate Fees

Candidates for the office of President	\$300.00 USD
Candidates for the office of Vice President	\$250.00 USD
Candidates for the Secretary	\$200.00 USD
Candidates for Treasurer	\$200.00 USD
Candidates for Youth Representative	\$25.00 USD
Regional Representatives	\$75.00 USD

The Electoral Commission encourages all candidates to meet their eligibility requirements, including submission of proper documents and fees early to be declared official candidates. Candidates should make sure all documents are written/typed legibly to avoid any errors or delays. The Commission will adhere strictly to the date received electronically or by postal or any courier services and there will be **NO** exceptions.

20: Open Positions for UNAA Elections

Executive committee (4 positions)

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer

Council

Youth and Children representatives

1. USA (2 positions)

- Female
- Male

2. CANADA (2 positions)

- Female
- Male

Regional Representatives

1. USA (12 positions)

- New England
- Mid Atlantic 1
- Mid Atlantic 2
- Southeast
- Southwest 1
- Southwest 2
- Great Lakes

- Central Plains
- Rocky Mountains
- North Pacific
- South Pacific 1
- South Pacific 2

CANADA (6 positions)

- Atlantic
- Central 1
- Central 2
- Prairies
- Mountain
- Pacific

Note: *The composition of each region is detailed in Schedule A of the Appendix. **Proportional Representation has been introduced for regions as articulated in the Constitution (Article 7.2.2) and Bylaws.***

21: Candidate Nomination and Qualification Period

The election roadmap, the election schedule with its respective deadlines provided in Article 10.5 of the Constitution should be referenced or completely reproduced in the *Election Guidelines*.

Enforce the cutoff date (deadline) for registration to vote; no later than 42 days (Six weeks) prior to the election.

Publish the election schedule and any deadlines including the provisional voters' register four (4) weeks before the elections for members to verify their information on the register and to enable the EC to update the register before publishing the final voters register.

This is the period established by the EC as from "Inception to Certification" whereby the candidates will submit the required documents to express their intent of running for an office, to the final stage where the EC declares and certifies the candidates as meeting the requirements to qualify as candidates in good standing.

To enable the Electoral Commission to carry out its mandated obligations, and to provide candidates with an opportunity to rectify and correct any errors/defects that may be discovered within the nomination and certification process, the commission will adopt a flexible schedule as follows:

Nominations will open on March 01, and close on April 30, during the election year. Certification of candidates will then follow for a period of one month. A list of eligible candidates will be published on the UNAA website and/or the email list no later than June 01 of the election year.

22: Official Announcement of Eligible Candidates

To certify a candidate, the Electoral Commission (EC) will abide by the following process:

- i. Candidates submit all their documents to the EC Treasurer via the address provided above.
- ii. The EC Secretary will send an acknowledgement e-mail confirming receipt of documents. The candidate will receive the communication within 2 business days after the EC Secretary has received the official documents from the candidate.
- iii. The EC Secretary will verify that the candidate is a member in good standing.
- iv. If the candidate's position requires background check verification, the EC Secretary will notify the candidate that he/she will need to go through a background check process. The Secretary will provide the information to the candidate required to initiate the background check process.
- v. The EC Secretary will certify the candidate by obtaining proof of eligibility, i.e., membership number, and background clearance.
- vi. Once the EC determines that a candidate has met the eligibility requirements for an office, the Electoral Commission Secretary will post on the UNAA website : unaaonline.org a one-page document, with an announcement that the candidate is now officially cleared and certified to run and campaign for the position as stated in his/her manifesto.
- vii. The names of the candidates will then be included in the balloting materials, to be provided by the Electoral Commission.
- viii. The EC Secretary will communicate with the potential candidates in case there is a discrepancy in the paperwork submitted.

23: Election Day Processes and Procedures

- (a) The EC shall conduct elections for the Executive Committee on the weekend of the AGM convention pursuant to **Article 6.14** (Elections), Bylaws and Election Guidelines.
- (b) The EC shall procure, manage, and maintain voting logistics including appropriate technology for conducting electronic voting as described in the Constitution and Bylaws.

24: Vote Audit

The voting process (electronic) shall be fully auditable, verifiable, and observable, ensuring that vote results are valid, true and transparent. The audit shall verify the following:

- i. Only voters on the voter list voted.
- ii. Each voter only voted once based on their unique access code.
- iii. Any ballots which were not completed are not included in the results.
- iv. The company whose system is used to conduct elections shall provide a Certification letter of the results (certified by company CPA at a cost).
- v. Refer to the constitution for the Certification period at the end of elections

25: Voter Eligibility

Any UNAA member who is in good standing in accordance with the Constitution and will have paid or renewed membership no later than 30 days before the elections, will be eligible to vote for any candidate of choice. Elections will be conducted electronically, onsite (at a designated voting/polling center) or offsite, remote voting.

26: Voting Times/Ballots

At the on-site voting center, computers will be provided for voters and technical assistance will be available, if needed.

On-site and offsite electronic voting will start on the Labor Day weekend and end on Sunday of that weekend and close on the same day.

27: Technical Support During Elections

The EC shall contract an IT expert to provide technical support during the elections. This individual shall assist the EC in addressing all IT-related concerns that may arise during the electronic voting exercise.

28: Campaigning on Election Day

Campaigning within 100 feet [33 meters] of the election center shall be strictly prohibited. Any candidate or candidate's campaigners who violates this regulation will risk being disqualified from the election process.

29: Electoral Observers and Candidate Agents

Each candidate can appoint his/her own election candidate agent(s) in accordance with the article 10.5(j) of the Constitution and 10.5 of the Bylaws. The agents shall be present at the on-site voting center to ensure that the elections are conducted in a free and fair manner. In accordance with the bylaws, candidates for positions on the Executive committee are allowed 2 agents and those for the UNAA council 1 agent. All candidates are encouraged to submit the names of their agents by September 1st to the EC Secretary via e-mail at: ecsecretary@unaaonline.org. Candidate agents are required to be members in good standing.

Election monitors shall be present on-site at the voting center to ensure that elections are conducted in a free and fair manner. They shall

- i. Note the actual time the election starts and stops to ensure that no votes were cast before and after the specified voting period. The election start and stop times shall be specified by the EC.
- ii. Assess the transparency of casting and counting ballots
- iii. Monitor the tabulation of votes, where and when applicable.
- iv. Take note and report to a designated EC official, any deviations from the process set in the Election guidelines and UNAA's governing policies.
- v. Take note and report to the EC Chairperson or designated EC official, any voter or EC official whose conduct is undermining the legitimacy of the electoral process.

- vi. Election Monitors shall, at all times and while in the voting center:
 - a. Not obstruct the election process. Monitors may bring irregularities, fraud or significant problems to the attention of election officials on the spot but must do so in a non-obstructive manner.
 - b. Provide appropriate identification. Monitors must display ID, if provided by the EC, and should present it to EC officials when requested.
 - c. Maintain proper personal behavior. Monitors must respect EC officials, Voters and other agents and observers. They must exercise sound judgement in personal interactions and always observe the highest level of professional conduct.

30: Electoral Volunteers

The EC reserves the right to solicit and use volunteers to assist during the election process as needed. If you are interested in volunteering during the Electoral Process, please send an e-mail to the Secretary at: ecsecretary@unaaonline.org. Volunteers must be members in good standing. Volunteers are expected to be impartial and should not interfere with the election process. The chairman or Secretary shall brief the volunteers before they start on no go areas.

31: Communication with the EC

The Secretary of the EC or his/her designee will make every effort to pass on information to the public as well as to the UNAA officials, ALL at the same time without preference. Communication concerning the Electoral Commission to the general public will be via email (unaaalist@unaa.memberclicks.net), website (www.unaaonline.org) and/or any other known Ugandan linked email lists. All inquiries to the Electoral Commission should be directed to: ecsecretary@unaaonline.org. Your inquiries will be reviewed and responded to promptly.

Signed: UNAA- Electoral Commission

Date & Year

SCHEDULE A

UNAA COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP BY REGION

(I) CANADA

ATLANTIC REGION - Newfoundland & Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Greenland, Saint Pierre et Miquelon

CENTRAL REGION 1 - Quebec, Eastern Ontario

CENTRAL REGION 2 - Southern Ontario, Southwestern Ontario, Northern Ontario

PRAIRIES REGION - Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Nunavut, Northwest Territories, Yukon

MOUNTAIN REGION – Alberta

PACIFIC REGION - British Columbia

Female Representative for Young Adults and Children in Canada

Male Representative for Young Adults and Children in Canada

(II) UNITED STATES

NEW ENGLAND REGION - Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, and Rhode Island

MID-ATLANTIC REGION 1 - New York, New Jersey, Connecticut

MID-ATLANTIC REGION 2 - Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Washington DC, Virginia, West Virginia

SOUTHEAST REGION - North Carolina, South Carolina, Kentucky, Mississippi, Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Florida, Puerto Rico & all Caribbean Islands.

SOUTH-WEST REGION 1 - Southern Texas, Louisiana, Belize, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama.

SOUTH-WEST REGION 2 - Northern Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas

GREAT LAKES REGION - Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, Minnesota

CENTRAL PLAINS REGION - Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa, Missouri

ROCKY MOUNTAINS REGION - New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana

NORTH PACIFIC REGION - Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Alaska

SOUTH PACIFIC REGION 1 - Northern California, Northern Nevada

SOUTH PACIFIC REGION 2 - Southern California, Southern Nevada, Arizona, Hawaii

Female Representative for Young Adults and Children in USA

Male Representative for Young Adults and Children in USA