



SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER Procedure to Conduct Local Fraternity Elections



1. Elections for Local Fraternity Council shall be conducted every three (3) years. The Fraternity Council together with the Regional Minister shall determine the schedule for the elections.
2. The Fraternity Minister, with the concurrence of the Fraternity Council shall appoint an Election Committee, or in small fraternities an Election Chair, to solicit candidates for the offices of Minister, Vice Minister, Secretary, Treasurer and Formation Director. The Fraternity may also solicit candidates for Councilor position(s).
3. All professed members of the Fraternity who are in good standing with the fraternity, are knowledgeable about duties of office, have provided a nomination form or are nominated from the floor are eligible to hold Council office.
4. Incumbent Council Officers are eligible for reelection provided:
 - a. They have not served 2 (two) consecutive terms in Council office.
 - b. Regulations in Title IV, Article 79 of the *Constitution of the Secular Franciscan Order* are applied.
5. Nominations shall be submitted on the **Fraternity Nomination form**. Completed forms shall be collected by the Election Chairperson. All professed Fraternity members are encouraged to nominate those they consider best qualified to fill Council offices.
6. The Election Chairperson shall notify members nominated for Council office in writing using the nomination notification cover letter and the **Notice of Nomination form**.
7. Nominees shall accept or decline nomination(s) by checking appropriate box on the **Notice of Nomination form**, and returning the completed form to the Election Chairperson within the time allowed.
8. Members accepting nomination(s) to Council office(s) must complete the **Nominee Resume form** which must be returned with the completed **Notice of Nomination form**.
9. Each eligible voting member of the Fraternity shall be given copies of the resumes of all the accepting nominees in a timely manner. This is a particularly important step in the election process. These resumes are intended to help the voting members make careful discernment as to the qualifications of each nominee.
10. The Election Chairperson shall prepare the list of nominations on the **Nominations Worksheet** form provided when nominations close. Copies of the list of nominations shall be provided to each eligible voting member of the Fraternity.
 11. *Note: Members must be present to vote. Absentee ballots are not allowed.*
12. A call for nominations from the floor shall be announced three (3) times before balloting for an office starts. Those nominated from the floor must provide proof of profession and fraternity membership to be accepted as candidates for the office (**Fraternity Register must be available to**

- the Visitors**). Names of persons so nominated shall be displayed so as to be visible to all voters
13. Election chairperson will arrange to have available a chalk or marking board to record names of nominees and votes, and should be visible to all voting members.
 14. A Secretary and Two Tellers shall be appointed by the Regional Presider prior to balloting. Persons selected as Secretary or Tellers shall be active, professed members.
 15. Tellers shall:
 - a. Count ballots out loud
 - b. Distribute ballots
 - c. Collect ballots
 - d. Count collected ballots out loud
 - e. Read out loud the names written on each ballot
 - f. Tabulate and inscribe votes on board
 - g. Announce name of person with most votes
 - h. Set aside ballots after each balloting and destroy ballots after election
 16. Order of balloting: 1. Minister, 2. Vice-Minister, 3. Secretary, 4. Treasurer, 5. Formation Director, 6. Councilor(s) (if applicable).
 17. Voters shall write in the name of the person they wish to vote for each particular office. *Selection of more than one person on a ballot form shall invalidate that ballot.*
 18. Votes required to elect:
 - a. Minister and Vice-Minister
 - i. **Absolute majority on First Ballot (more than 50%);** or
 - ii. **Absolute majority on Second Ballot (more than 50%);** or
 - iii. If no absolute majority first and second ballots, eligible candidates shall be reduced to 2 (two), either by the two candidates with the highest number of votes, or if there are more than two tied with highest number of votes, the two oldest by profession shall remain. Candidate shall be elected by Simple majority on Third Ballot; or
 - iv. If tied on the third ballot, the oldest professed candidate shall be deemed elected.
 - b. All other offices including Councilor (if any)
 - i. **Absolute majority on First Ballot (more than 50%);** or
 - ii. **Relative majority on Second Ballot (highest number of votes).**
 19. If a nominee is unable to attend the Chapter of Elections, he/she must provide a written statement that they accept the election should they be elected to office. This written statement is to be given to the Election Presider and maintained in file with the Election Report.
 20. The newly elected Fraternity council shall be installed by the Pastoral Visitor (Friar Witness) in accordance with the Ritual for Installation of Council Members.
 21. At the end of the elections, the **Secretary** completes the official election results on the **Report of Election Form and makes 4 more copies. All copies need to be signed by the Secretary of Election, the Presider and the Friar witness as well as the 2 Tellers.**
 22. Secretary distributes one copy each for the Presider, Friar witness, Regional Secretary, new local Minister and one for the new local Secretary. The Presider and Friar Witness will retain their copy of the Tally Form (with the Report of Election) and the Election Secretary will give her copy to the Local Fraternity Newly Elected Secretary to be kept on file.