

2024 Convention and Elections Letter

March 29, 2024

Dear NWSEO Member,

This is your official annual notice of two of NWSEO's most important annual events: our National Convention and officer elections. Below, you'll find convention details and nomination and election instructions for Branch Steward, Branch Vice-Steward, Regional Chairperson, Regional Vice Chairperson, Convention Delegate, and Convention Alternate Delegate.

Join us for the 49th Annual NWSEO National Convention!

November 18-19, 2024 • The Westin Alexandria Old Town • 400 Courthouse Square • Alexandria, VA

All NWSEO dues-paying members are invited to join us Monday/Tuesday, November 18-19 in beautiful Alexandria, VA for engaging workshops, networking opportunities, and captivating speakers.

Cost

There is no cost to register for the annual convention. Transportation, lodging, and some meals, however, are at your own expense. NWSEO will provide a Welcome Reception with hors d'oeuvres on Sunday evening, lunch on both days of the convention and a banquet dinner on Monday evening, November 18.

Accommodations

Hotel reservations are your responsibility; however, NWSEO has negotiated rooms at the Federal per diem rate of \$179 at the Westin Alexandria Old Town hotel. Hotel reservations can be made by individual attendees directly by going to this link: [2024 Convention](#). If you prefer to make your reservations by phone, call (866) 837-4210 to secure a reservation under the group name "NWSEO." **Room reservations must be made by Friday, October 18, 2024.**

Recruitment Incentive

A Recruitment Incentive is available to assist members with convention expenses. Any NWSEO member who recruits two (2) or more new members to join NWSEO via Form 1187 for payroll deduction by July 31, 2024 will be eligible for reasonable airfare*, three (3) nights' lodging, and approved group meals for the 2024 National Convention.

**In order for airfare to be reimbursed, you must be able to provide documentation that it is the lowest available airfare rate. Printed copies of airfares from Expedia or other travel sites will serve as documentation.*

Tentative Agenda

Convention sessions generally begin at 8:00 a.m. and end around 5:00 p.m. each day.

Monday, November 18, 2024

- NWSEO President and Executive Vice President Report
- Financial Report & 2025 Budget
- General Counsel Report
- Legislative Report
- Training Workshops:

Workshop 1: Basic Training for Stewards

Workshop 2: NWS Grievances and Arbitrations

Workshop 3: NWS Local Office Team (LOT) / Negotiations

Workshop 4: Understanding Your NWS Contract

- Banquet Dinner

Tuesday, November 19, 2024

- Communications & Membership Engagement
- NOAA Attorneys' Guild Report
- NESDIS Report
- New Business
- Committee Appointments

The above topics are subject to change. Information on guest speakers will be provided at a later date.

2024 NWSEO Officer Elections & Voting

About NWSEO Elections

Credentials Committee

Throughout this section, you will see the Credentials Committee referenced — If an election is held, ballots must be sent to the Credentials Committee for certification of the results. All Credentials Committee members are listed on **page five** of this letter.

Positions

Available positions are **NWSEO Branch Steward and Branch Vice Steward, Convention Delegate and Alternate Delegates**, who are elected on an annual basis, and the **Regional Chairpersons and Vice Chairpersons**, who are elected every two years.

Branch Officers

NWSEO consists of regions that are either a branch, or a group of branches, recognized within the union. A NWSEO branch refers to a recognized group of active members in good standing within a facility of the:

- National Weather Service (NWS)
- National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service (NESDIS)
- NOAA Office of General Counsel (NAG)
- Aircraft Operations Center (AOC)
- Atlantic Oceanographic & Meteorological Laboratory (AOML)

On an annual basis, each NWSEO branch is required to elect a Steward, Vice Steward, Convention Delegate, and Convention Alternate Delegate.

Regional Officers

2024 is an election year for Regional Officers, which are two-year terms. This includes Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons for each NWS region, NESDIS and NAG.

2024 Elections Procedures — Nominations

If you are interested in nominating either yourself or another NWSEO member for an elected position, please read carefully about each role's eligibility and nomination requirements:

Branch Stewards and Vice Steward Nominations

Nomination eligibility: Any member in good standing, including yourself

Nomination format: Written/mailed letter or email nominations are accepted

Nomination deadline: May 31, 2024

Branch Steward and Vice Steward nominations may be of yourself or another member, and must be dated/signed by the member making the nomination. Completed nominations must be sent to the local Branch Steward or designee, Regional Chairperson, and appropriate Credentials Committee member by the election's deadline.

Convention Delegate/Alternate Delegate Nominations

Nomination eligibility: Any member in good standing, including yourself, within your NWS region or NWSEO bargaining unit. *Note: Each NWS region consists of multiple NWSEO branches. Other NWSEO bargaining units (AOC, AOML, NESDIS and NOAA Attorneys Guild) have their own branches.*

Nomination format: Written/mailed letter or email nominations are accepted

Nomination deadline: May 31, 2024

All nominations must be in writing, dated, and signed by the member making the nomination and sent to the local Branch Steward or designee, Regional Chairperson, or appropriate Credentials Committee member by the deadline. You may be nominated for Convention Delegate or Alternate Convention Delegate for more than one branch within your region.

Note: If you are a Convention Delegate or Alternate Convention Delegate by unopposed nomination or election, please plan to attend the convention.

Regional Chairperson/Vice Chairperson Nominations

Nomination eligibility: Any NWSEO member, including yourself, that has been a member since November 2023 and has been in good standing for one year.

Nomination format: All nominations must be made in writing and delivered in person or by registered/certified mail to:

Emily Roy
6585 HWY 431 S Suite E # 247
Hampton Cove, AL 35763

Email nominations are not acceptable. If you nominate someone for regional office, please contact your nominee prior to nominating them to ensure they accept the nomination. Once received, NWSEO will contact nominees to verify they accept their regional officer nomination.

Nomination deadline: Nominations must be received **no later than May 31, 2024**.

2024 Elections Procedures — Voting

Steward, Vice Steward, Convention Delegate and Alternate Convention Delegate

Where does voting take place?

An election only occurs if more than one person is nominated for an open position. If only one person is nominated for a position, that person automatically serves in that position. If more than one person is nominated for an open position for Branch Steward or Vice Branch Steward, Convention Delegate, and Convention Alternate Delegate ballots are sent via mail and submitted in person in an easily-accessible branch location and tallied at the branch location.

A branch delegate or alternate delegate nominated by a branch member votes in the place of members who do not attend the Convention. If a member attends the National Convention, they're eligible to vote on matters raised at the Convention. If a member does not attend the Convention, then the member's vote will be cast either by the Convention Delegate or Alternate Delegate for their branch. Each Convention Delegate votes on all matters that come before the convention, with one vote for each NWSEO member in the branch or branches that delegate represents. If an elected Convention Delegate is not present at the convention for a vote, then the Alternate Delegate may cast the delegated votes.

Reminder: You do not have to be a Convention Delegate or an Alternate Delegate to attend the convention. If you attend the convention and are not a delegate, you may cast your own vote, and the delegates nominated for your branch may not cast a vote on your behalf.

Only one nominee

If there is only one nominee for a position, there is no need to hold an election with secret ballots — That one nominee is automatically elected. In this case, your Branch Steward should provide an election update to your Regional Chairperson and your assigned Credentials Committee member immediately after nominations close on **Friday, May 31, 2024**.

More than one nominee

If more than one member is nominated for an open position, the current Branch Steward must conduct a secret ballot election for that position (i.e., Steward, Vice Steward, Delegate, or Alternate Delegate). This is done by preparing a paper ballot with the names of the nominees for each contested position listed individually and mailing the ballot to each branch member's home address.

- If there are **exactly two nominees**, the nominee who receives a majority of the votes cast shall be certified elected.
- If there are **more than two nominees**, the election shall be conducted by preferential voting (the person with the most votes wins) to determine the winner.

The Branch Steward will provide a sealed ballot box in a central location by **Friday, July 26, 2024**. Members will return their ballot to this ballot box. Please do not sign or otherwise identify yourself on your ballot. Although it is not required, it is recommended that the Branch Steward convene a local NWSEO meeting for the purpose of opening the ballot box and counting the ballots.

Note: Balloted elections for offices with more than one nominee are not optional; the Branch Steward must hold an election. If this is not done, NWSEO may be found in violation of Federal Law and could be subject to enforcement action by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Right to Observation & Vote Counting

Per Article 8, Section 1 of the NWSEO Constitution, each nominee has the right to have an observer at the polls and at the tallying of the votes. The counting of the ballots should take place as soon after **Friday, July 26, 2024** as possible. The current Branch Steward is responsible for counting the ballots, but may obtain the assistance from the Vice Steward if necessary. After counting, all ballots must immediately be sent to the Credentials Committee for results certification.

Reporting Elections Results

The newly elected Branch Steward takes the steward position at the end of election and announces the election results to their members, Regional Chairperson, and Credentials Committee member. They must complete the [Designation of Delegate form](#) available online at NWSEO.org/elections and either mail or email it to their respective Credentials Committee member, as well as provide a copy of the Designation of Delegate form to the delegate that they have elected.

Regional Chairperson and Vice Chairperson:

The election of regional officers, if needed, will be conducted by delegates at the National Convention. The newly elected Regional Officers will take office at the conclusion of the Convention.

Campaign Rules

It is against the Department of Labor regulations to campaign for NWSEO office, make nominations, or solicit votes as a delegate from another branch using NWSEO stationery, NWSEO postage, a NWSEO email account, or otherwise at any NWSEO expense. It is a violation of Federal Law to campaign using any government property, including NWS or any other NOAA telephones, stationery, or email.

It is permissible for a Branch Steward to use NWSEO stationery, postage, or telephone to conduct the local election, i.e., preparation or mailing of ballots, or notification of results. A Branch Steward may claim reimbursement for any election expenses that are incurred by submitting a request and appropriate receipts to NWSEO Secretary/Treasurer Chris Jacobson at c.jacobson@nwseo.org.

If you become aware of any NWSEO member campaigning at NWSEO expense, you should report the matter immediately to the Credentials Committee representative for your region.

The procedures above are required by the NWSEO Constitution or By-Laws or have otherwise been approved by NWSEO's National Council to ensure fair and democratic elections. If you become aware of any situation wherein these procedures are not being complied, you should first discuss the matter with your local Branch Steward. If this does not correct the problem, please contact me at e.roy@nwseo.org.

Very truly yours,



Emily Roy
NWSEO Chief Financial Officer and Director of Membership

Credentials Committee Members and Assignments

If an election is held, ballots must be sent to the Credentials Committee for certification of the results. Copies of all nominations for Delegate, "Designation of Delegate" forms, and hard-copy ballots must be mailed to the following Credentials Committee contact for your region **no later than Monday, August 12, 2024**:

Region	Contact	Email Address	Mailing Address	Phone Number
SR, NCEP, NESDIS	Karleisa Rogacheski, Chairperson	karleisa.rogacheski@gmail.com	2700 Welaunee Blvd, Unit 1506 Tallahassee, FL 32308	(414) 379-1166
CR, AR, AOML	Earl (Lynn) Breon	lynn.breon@gmail.com	8638 Arailia Drive Plainfield, IN 46168	(574) 527-6391
ER, HQ, NAG	Britt Westergard	britt.westergard@gmail.com	58 Campus Club Drive Guilderland, NY 12084	(518) 250-9077
WR, PR, AOC	Eric Schoening	eric.schoening@gmail.com	373 E. Sandy Park Circle Midvale, UT 84047	(512) 497-0816

Union Member Rights and Officer Responsibilities under the Civil Service Reform Act

The standards of conduct provisions of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (CSRA), among other statutes, guarantee certain rights to members of unions representing Federal employees and impose certain responsibilities on officers of these unions to ensure union democracy, financial integrity, and transparency.

Union Member Rights

Bill of Rights - Union members have:

- equal rights to participate in union activities
- freedom of speech and assembly
- protection of the right to sue
- voice in setting rates of dues, fees, and assessments
- safeguards against improper discipline

Collective Bargaining Agreements - Union members (and certain nonunion employees) have the right to receive or inspect copies of collective bargaining agreements.

Constitutions, Bylaws, and Reports - Unions are required to file an initial information report (Form LM-1), copies of constitutions and bylaws, and an annual financial report (Form LM-2/3/4) with OLMS. Unions must make these documents available to members and permit members to examine the records necessary to verify the financial reports for just cause. The documents are public information and copies of reports are available from OLMS and on the Internet at www.unionreports.dol.gov.

Officer Elections - Union members have the right to:

- nominate candidates for office
- run for office
- cast a secret ballot
- protest the conduct of an election

Officer Removal - Local union members have the right to an adequate procedure for the removal of an elected officer guilty of serious misconduct.

Trusteeships - A union may not be placed in trusteeship by a parent body except for those reasons specified in the standards of conduct regulations.

Protection for Exercising CSRA Rights - A union or any of its officials may not fine, expel, or otherwise discipline a member for exercising any CSRA right.

Prohibition Against Violence - No one may use or threaten to use force or violence to interfere with a union member in the exercise of his or her CSRA rights.

Union Officer Responsibilities

Financial Safeguards - Union officers have a duty to manage the funds and property of the union solely for the benefit of the union and its members in accordance with the union's constitution and bylaws. The union must provide accounting and financial controls necessary to assure fiscal integrity.

Prohibition of Conflicts of Interest - A union officer or employee may not (1) have any monetary or personal interest or (2) engage in any business or financial transaction that would conflict with his or her fiduciary obligation to the union.

Bonding - Union officers or employees who handle union funds or property must be bonded to provide protection against losses if their union has property and annual financial receipts that exceed \$5,000.

Labor Organization Reports - Union officers must:

- file an initial information report (Form LM-1) and annual financial reports (Forms LM 2/3/4) with OLMS.
- retain the records necessary to verify the reports for at least five years.

Officer Elections - Unions must:

- hold elections of officers of local unions by secret ballot at least every three years.
- mail a notice of election to every member at least 15 days prior to the election.
- not use union funds or resources to promote any candidate (nor may employer funds or resources be used).
- conduct regular elections in accordance with their constitution and bylaws and preserve all records for one year.
- comply with a candidate's request to distribute campaign material.
- permit candidates to have election observers

Restrictions on Holding Office - A person convicted of certain crimes may not serve as a union officer, employee, or other representative of a union for up to 13 years.

Loans - A union may not have outstanding loans to any one officer or employee that in total exceed \$2,000 at any time.