

STEPS TO UPDATING BYLAWS

Bylaws must be adopted by the unit or council and approved by New York State PTA every three years for the unit or council to remain in good standing. Don't be intimidated by bylaws. Follow these steps and you'll be done before you know it.

- Form a bylaws committee of 3-5 members including the chair. Use experienced people on the committee as well as newer members. Form the committee early so that the members can attend a region or state bylaws workshop.
- The chair should:
 - a. Secure a copy of the most recent state approved bylaws. The president and secretary should have official copies signed by the State Bylaws Coordinator.
 - b. Consult executive board members for possible changes. Bylaws should reflect the way your unit or council operates.
 - c. Make a copy of the existing bylaws and any recommended changes for every member of the committee so they can be reviewed prior to the meeting.
- The committee members should review the existing bylaws and consider any recommendations submitted by the executive board or membership.
- Bylaws should:
 - a. Meet the needs of the unit or council. The intent must be clear.
 - b. Not give detailed instructions for carrying out each provision. Detailed instructions are better handled in unit or council procedures that can be modified at the local level. These procedures, after adoption, complement the bylaws by defining how the unit or council operates.
- Go to the NYS PTA website at: www.nyspta.org. Click on the Unit Portal Access button on the bottom of the homepage and login. The Bylaws Wizard button will walk you through a series of easy questions, e.g. dues amounts, officers, etc. The Wizard validates the information as you go through each step. Normally, all information can be completed within 10 to 15 minutes
- As information is entered into Bylaws Wizard, appropriate data or sections of text are added to the bylaws document template. As the final step in this process, a draft template of your bylaws will be available for downloading or printing for review. The committee should review this draft and repeat the process until the final draft meets all committee concerns

- The membership must receive 30 days' notice of a meeting at which they will vote on any proposed changes or, if there are none, the proposed re-approval of the existing bylaws.
 - a. Unit proposed bylaws are submitted to all members and must be approved by a 2/3 vote of members present and voting at a general membership meeting.
 - b. Council proposed bylaws are submitted to all member units and must be approved by a 2/3 vote of members present and voting at the member units' general membership meetings.
- Once the bylaws are adopted, the President and Secretary must sign the cover page and insert the Adoption Date. Make a copy of this cover page for your records and send the signed original cover page to your Region Bylaws Chair (contact information is available on the NYS PTA website)
- Go back into the portal bylaws record and click on the "Submit for Approval" button to send the bylaws electronically to start the approval process.
- Do not make additional copies for distribution until the state approved bylaws are generated and available on the portal. Bylaws become effective on the date of approval by the State Bylaws Coordinator.
- The Region Bylaws Chair will review the bylaws and forward them to the State Bylaws Coordinator. Any questions or issues will be addressed during this process before state approval is given
- You will receive notification when your bylaws have been state approved and are ready to download and print. These are your official copies and are to be placed in the president's and secretary's books.
- Units can make additional paper or electronic copies for members as appropriate and may place a copy on file in the school office and/or library. Councils should provide a set of approved bylaws to each member unit.
- Bylaws are valid until the expiration date shown on your bylaws cover sheet and also in your unit portal. They can be reviewed at any time and resubmitted. However, every three years they must be sent, whether revised or not, 90 days prior to date of expiration to the Region Bylaws Chair or, in the Chair's absence, to the Region Director.

NOTES:

Changes in mandated articles and sections are voted upon by delegates at the National PTA and New York State PTA conventions and automatically become part of your bylaws. Unit or council members should be made aware of changes in mandated sections.