

Updated Tuesday, June 21, 2022

Neighborhood Association and Neighborhood Coalition Guidelines for Bylaws

Why are bylaws so important?

Bylaws are the guiding, binding documents for any neighborhood association or neighborhood coalition. Your bylaws determine the manner and procedure in which your organization should be run. The City of Albuquerque cannot enforce your bylaws or give you legal advice. If you have questions about how to run your association/coalition, or what to do in certain circumstances, our response will often point you back to your bylaws. For this reason, we recommend careful attention to detail when crafting bylaws for the first time or amending existing bylaws.

How can we amend our bylaws?

If you plan to amend your bylaws, make sure you follow the notice and voting procedure as outlined in the current copy of your bylaws and that is stipulated in the updated Neighborhood Association Recognition Ordinance (NARO). If you plan to amend your association's boundaries and want to remain in recognized status with our office, please first discuss the changes with the Office of Neighborhood Coordination so we can make sure you are still in compliance with our requirements.

Once the bylaws are amended, approved by your board and have been reviewed by the ONC, please submit to our office the following documents:

- A letter outlining the changes to your bylaws
- A copy of the meeting notice announcing the proposed bylaw changes

- A copy of the newly amended bylaws with all amendments incorporated into the document. The updated bylaws must be signed by the President and Vice-President, and dated. The date indicates when the bylaws officially go into effect.
- A zone map showing the new boundaries, if amending the boundaries of your neighborhood association.
- If you are amending your neighborhood coalition boundaries, please include an updated list of all coalition members to the ONC.

What is required by the NARO to be in our bylaws?

According to the updated Neighborhood Association Recognition Ordinance (NARO), bylaws must contain the following information:

- Geographic boundaries of the neighborhood association or neighborhood coalition.
- For a neighborhood association:
 - Indication of open membership. Membership must be open to all adult persons residing within the neighborhood association boundaries and to each place of business within the boundaries.
- For a neighborhood coalition:
 - Indication of open membership. Membership must be open to all recognized neighborhood associations, unrecognized neighborhood associations, homeowner associations, business groups, community groups, and may also be available to individuals and property owners within the coalition boundaries.
 - A complete list of all neighborhood association, homeowner association, business group, community group or individual members of the coalition.
- Process of succession when an officer steps down voluntarily or is removed, and how vacant positions will be filled.
- Clearly defined process of how membership is established, e.g., affirmation of membership.

- Date of annual meeting

The updated Bylaws Template document contains highlighted sections that specify what information is required by the NARO and those sections cannot be changed or edited. However, there are many other sections that can and should be customized for each individual neighborhood association or neighborhood coalition.

Do we have to update our bylaws? How often do we have to do this?

The updated NARO requires that bylaws should be reviewed regularly, at least every ten years, and revised and resubmitted to the ONC if your association has changes to its organizational structure, or to election, communication or financial processes. If none of these have changed, your bylaws don't need to be updated.

Does the ONC review bylaws to ensure compliance with the NARO?

Yes, the ONC reviews all bylaws that are submitted to our office. Outside of NARO requirements, we don't specify what other information should be in bylaws, but we do make recommendations based on the Bylaws Template form that is on our Resources page under the header Neighborhood Resources, at:

<https://www.cabq.gov/office-of-neighborhood-coordination/resources>