

NEPALESE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF EDMONTON

Election Policy and Procedures 2019

Prepared by

NECASE Election Policy Committee

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5624-53 Avenue, Edmonton Alberta
Canada**

NECASE Election Policy and Procedures

This policy and procedure is developed under the purview of NECASE Bylaws 2012 and by aligning with NECASE Policy 2013. NECASE Bylaw allows election of directors to be either by show of hands or by secret ballot. This policy document deals with election by secret ballot. The objective of this policy is to outline the basic electoral principles and guideline to facilitate a free and fair NECASE Board election. The policy clarifies roles and responsibilities of the Board, Returning Officer, Society members and associated parties.

Part I. Election Policy

1. General Policy for NECASE Election

- 1.1. The election for NECASE directors and auditors will be held in the third Saturday of January each year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- 1.2. Election should be held only to those positions that have nominations more than the number of announced vacant positions.
- 1.3. Returning Officer (RO) has full authority on matters related to election and RO's decision is final in all election related disputes.
- 1.4. NECASE members fall under two categories: voting member and non-voting member. Members in voting category are: life member and general member, while members in non-voting category are: honorary member, organizational member, and associate member.
- 1.5. Only the members having voting right are eligible to be a candidate for any one position.
- 1.6. Voting is permitted in person only. Voting by proxy is prohibited.
- 1.7. NECASE should develop procedures for electronic voting in the future when such capacity and resources are available.
- 1.8. Annual General Meeting (AGM) or Special General Meeting (SGM) of the Society should fill any vacant director positions remaining.
- 1.9. After 30 days from declaring the results, the ballots shall be destroyed.
- 1.10. Election policy and procedures, within NECASE Bylaws, endorsed by AGM should be used to conduct NECASE election.

2. General Policy on Electoral Fraud

2.1. Electoral Fraud

- 2.1.1. NECASE member has the duty and responsibility to make the election free and fair.
- 2.1.2. NECASE prohibits any act of intimidation, vote buying and voter impersonation.
- 2.1.3. NECASE prohibits any type of assault, harassment or libel to RO, members of election committee, and any members of the society.
- 2.1.4. NECASE members must refrain from activities that result in electoral fraud. Activities that are considered as electoral fraud include but not limited to:
 - 2.1.4.1. purchasing membership for second person, except immediate family member,
 - 2.1.4.2. providing false information to NECASE to be eligible for voting,
 - 2.1.4.3. trying to vote for another person,
 - 2.1.4.4. entering voting station with weapon,
 - 2.1.4.5. demanding a ballot paper without having eligibility,
 - 2.1.4.6. causing disturbance during election and voting process,
 - 2.1.4.7. acting with the intention of sabotaging voting procedure.
 - 2.1.4.8. committing the offense of bribery.
- 2.1.5. Under Canadian Election Law, electoral fraud is criminal activity. Electoral fraud is punishable under Canadian Common Law and can be reported to appropriate authority.

2.2. Management of Electoral Fraud

- 2.2.1. RO has authority to cancel the eligibility of a voter or nominee if the member or nominee continues activities intended to sabotage voting process (campaigning within voting area, exhibiting undue influence to voter and other activities not allowed under NECASE election policy). RO will provide written statement if and when such action is taken to the member or the nominee.
- 2.2.2. Electoral fraud with evidence should be reported in writing to the RO within seven days from the Election Day. RO will investigate the matter and try to resolve the issue. If the investigation cannot be completed within RO's current tenure; RO should recommend the Board to form independent committee to investigate further.
- 2.2.3. Up on receiving such recommendation; NECASE Board should form three member independent committee within 30 days of such recommendation.

- 2.2.4. The election fraud committee (EFC) should reach its final decision within six months with a written report and a punishment recommendation to the Board.
- 2.2.5. If the investigation concludes a wrong doing; NECASE Bylaws 2012, Section 2.3.1 shall be used to determine the appropriate action.

3. Roles and Responsibilities of NECASE Board

- 3.1. NECASE Board appoints RO from the member in good standing at least thirty days ahead of the election date. Appointment of RO and election date should be made public. The notice should also be posted on NECASE website. With this appointment, Board provides:
 - 3.1.1. date, time, and venue for election/AGM;
 - 3.1.2. voter list containing name, physical address, e-mail and phone number.
 - 3.1.3. documents or access to information (previous meeting minutes, membership registry, volunteer data) to examine and verify nominations.
 - 3.1.4. Financial and logistic supplies required for the election
- 3.2. The Board enforces cut-off dates for purchasing membership for current year and immediate next year for election purpose. The Auditor should scrutinize the final voter list and make sure voter list is developed based on the procedure described in this policy document. If the Auditor is seeking candidacy for the director; he or she should refrain from auditor's responsibility.
- 3.3. The NECASE Board should secure facility for the AGM at least thirty days ahead of the Election Day. Such facility should be close to the location where most of the NECASE programs are operated.
- 3.4. If a director, except President, resigns from the position or otherwise ceases to hold the position, the remaining directors should appoint a member in good standing to the vacant position. Two-thirds majority of the Board is required to approve the appointment to the director position.
- 3.5. The director so appointed holds the office until the next election of the directors.
- 3.6. The Board must call SGM to fill the vacancy if five directors, resign concurrently. The SGM should take place within sixty days of such event.
- 3.7. If President resigns, Board must call SGM to elect new President within sixty days of resignation.

4. Roles and Responsibilities of Returning Officer

- 4.1. Forms a three-member Election Committee (EC) from NECASE members in good standing. RO is one member of the committee. EC will act on behalf of RO in his/her absence.
 - 4.1.1. EC members shall be independent and should not be involved in any of the election campaign of any of the candidates.
- 4.2. Develops and publishes election schedule. A recommended election schedule outline is provided in Appendix 1. The procedure and schedule should be followed as closely as possible.
 - 4.2.1. Election procedure consists of the following task (events are in chronological order):
 - 4.2.1.1. call for nomination,
 - 4.2.1.2. publication of voter list,
 - 4.2.1.3. claim on voter list,
 - 4.2.1.4. publication of final voter list,
 - 4.2.1.5. deadline for filing of nominations,
 - 4.2.1.6. publication of candidate's list,
 - 4.2.1.7. deadline to protest and withdraw candidacy,
 - 4.2.1.8. publication of final candidates' list,
 - 4.2.1.9. voting process,
 - 4.2.1.10. vote counting,
 - 4.2.1.11. declaration of election result.
- 4.3. keeps a record of all activities and a log of all time-bound tasks.
- 4.4. makes changes to the schedule, if deemed necessary under extraordinary circumstances. NECASE Board and Society members must be notified immediately of such changes along with valid reason.
- 4.5. receives nomination forms within stipulated time and examines the nomination for approval or rejection.
 - 4.5.1. Each nominee must fill and sign the nomination form (Appendix 2), along with signatures of a proposer and a seconder. Proposer and seconder must be in voter list.

- 4.5.2. Each nominee must indicate willingness to serve the NECASE Board for a complete term, if elected.
- 4.6. verifies candidate eligibility based on the criteria outlined below. RO's decision to approve or reject a nomination is final. RO should provide a written statement if a nomination is rejected.
 - 4.6.1. The Candidate has refused or declined to provide proof of qualification or;
 - 4.6.2. The Candidate is not qualified to hold office, or is otherwise prohibited by NECASE bylaw from being nominated; or
 - 4.6.3. The nomination form is not complete; or
 - 4.6.4. The Candidate's name does not appear on the Voters' List; or
 - 4.6.5. The Candidate does not meet member in good standing status for 12 months; or
 - 4.6.6. Candidate has been criminally convicted by a Court in Canada.
- 4.7. develops ballot paper for voting purpose.
- 4.8. verifies the voter's identity to vote on election day. RO will accept the following items as valid document for address verification: (a) Government issued photo ID; (b) Alberta Health Card; and (c) any recent utility bill or bank record with name and address printed.
- 4.9. publishes starting and closing time of voting. As the election is held together with AGM, enough consideration should be given to the logistics and management while developing the voting schedule.

5. Voters Eligibility

- 5.1. GM and LM are voting members. HM, OM, and AM are non-voting members.
- 5.2. A Society member must meet all of the following criteria to be eligible to vote:
 - 5.2.1. must be at least 18 years old,
 - 5.2.2. must be in voter list,
 - 5.2.3. must have maintained residency for at least six months in NECASE jurisdiction. The City of Edmonton and places adjacent to the City of Edmonton.

6. Candidate eligibility

- 6.1. A candidate for the director of NECASE Board must meet all of the following criteria to be eligible to contest:
 - 6.1.1. must be in voter list;
 - 6.1.2. must be a member in good standing in the category of GM or LM for at least twelve months on the nomination filing day;
 - 6.1.3. must have maintained local residency in NECASE jurisdiction for at least twelve months on nomination filing day.
 - 6.1.4. must have volunteered in NECASE programs and activities in the past five years;
 - 6.1.5. must not have been disciplined by the Board, including a written warning or expelled from the NECASE membership by the Society in the past;
 - 6.1.6. must not have been convicted by Canadian Court in any criminal offences.
- 6.2. The candidate for the President should meet all the criteria described in 6.1 and also have any one of the following experiences:
 - 6.2.1. held a director position in the Board for at least one complete term in the past; or
 - 6.2.2. led (coordinator or chair) at least one NECASE's event or program or activity in the past.

Part II. Election Procedure

7. Guideline for NECASE Board to Prepare of Voter List

- 7.1. LM and GM in good standing who meets local residency criteria must be included in the Voter List. Member in good standing is the one who has retained NECASE membership at the time of request.
- 7.2. HM, AM, and OM should not be included in the Voter List.
- 7.3. NECASE Board must maintain a membership registry with the information collected through application form. It is the responsibility of NECASE members to provide current address of residence to the NECASE. The Board must protect members' personal information and keep the records safe and secure.
 - 7.3.1. Members Outreach Director is responsible for updating and maintaining membership registry by checking membership status for LM, GM, HM, OM, and AM.

- 7.3.2. Member Outreach Director with the help of Treasurer and General Secretary checks status of Local residency of LM, GM, and AM.
 - 7.3.3. Membership registry contains first name, surname, address, postal code, telephone number, e-mail and membership status. Treasurer verifies the payment of membership fees.
- 7.4. Member's physical address is required by the Board to verify local residency. NECASE member must meet the local residency and the person's place of residence is located in the NECASE jurisdiction. The City of Edmonton and places adjoining the City of Edmonton are within NECASE jurisdiction.
- 7.5. Membership Outreach Director in consultation with Treasurer and General Secretary prepares the current members list. Treasurer provides confirmation of fee payment and General Secretary finalizes the status of all members. The following two cut-off dates are used to validate local residency requirement.
 - 7.5.1. June 30th to purchase new General Membership or Life Membership for the current fiscal year.
 - 7.5.2. November 30th to renew General Membership for the election year.
- 7.6. To approve voters list NECASE Board examines membership status to confirm whether a GM or LM is a member in good standing and satisfies the requirement of local residency. Following procedure is a guide to examine the status of a member in good standing:
 - 7.6.1. Examines membership registry for accuracy.
 - 7.6.1.1. The Board should not approve membership request if the applicant declines to provide the physical address. Board should request the applicant to furnish current physical address before deciding on the application for NECASE membership.
 - 7.6.2. Check if the member's physical address is within the NECASE jurisdiction.
 - 7.6.3. A new membership should be purchased on or before June 30th of current year and renewed that membership for next year on or before Nov 30th of current year to be eligible to vote for board position in the upcoming election.
 - 7.6.4. Check whether the membership fee payment is complete. Only the applicant and the family members are permitted to pay the membership fee. Paying membership fee for others is prohibited. The Board will reject the application of membership, if membership fee payment is found to have been made by other person than applicant itself or an immediate family member.

- 7.6.5. The family includes spouse and their dependent adults sharing the same living space, who have maintained Local residency.
- 7.7. New member who has purchased membership or a GM who has renewed membership after Nov 30th cut-off date until AGM date will be allowed to participate in AGM, but will not be allowed to vote.
- 7.8. Member and Outreach Director should confirm with LM, who do not reside within NECASE jurisdiction, for their physical presence on the Election Day.
- 7.9. General auditor of NECASE should audit the voter list and assess whether due diligence is applied in the decision. The auditor should also check whether list of membership match with the payment deposited in the account.
- 7.10. General Secretary provides Board approved voters list to RO on the day of his/her appointment.

8. Election Procedure

8.1. Election Preparation

- 8.1.1. Election schedule (Appendix 1) is prepared by RO and should be published along with the call for nominations at least 24 days ahead of Election Day.
- 8.1.2. Nomination should be called for all vacant positions in the Board.
- 8.1.3. Nomination form (Appendix 2) must be signed by the candidate and filed with RO. The form should be accompanied by the signatures of one proposer and one seconder. It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure they meet all of the qualifications and file proper nomination papers, prior to nomination deadline. Any nomination submitted after the deadline shall not be accepted.
- 8.1.4. Nomination could be filed electronically or in-person. RO can make this call based on his/her availability.
- 8.1.5. Proposer and seconder of the nominee must be in the voter list. Nomination will be rejected if any of the proposer or seconder is not included in voter list.
- 8.1.6. A candidate is allowed to contest for only one position in the election.
- 8.1.7. RO will examine each nomination filed and decide whether to accept or reject nomination form. RO may consider the following requirements in the decision to reject or accept individual nominations:
 - 8.1.7.1. The nomination form is not complete;
 - 8.1.7.2. The Candidate is not qualified to vote in the upcoming election

- 8.1.7.3. The Candidate has refused to provide proof of qualification when asked or;
- 8.1.7.4. The Candidate is not qualified to hold office, or is otherwise prohibited by NECASE bylaw from being nominated;
- 8.1.8. A candidate may withdraw his or her candidacy by giving written notice to the RO prior to the withdrawal deadline. RO can accept such notices in-person, or by e-mail.
- 8.1.9. Any claim on the voter list must be submitted on or before the deadline. Any claim submitted after the deadline will not be considered.
- 8.1.10. All deadlines expire at midnight MST of the day.
- 8.1.11. Publication of voter list and candidate's list will be done by RO by: (a) posting the list at Nepal Centre, (b) circulation the list through NECASE mailing list, and (c) posting on the NECASE website.
- 8.1.12. RO published voter list contains name, residence area and city.
- 8.1.13. RO will design and print ballot as per the following:
 - 8.1.13.1. Only the names of eligible candidates shall appear on the ballot.
 - 8.1.13.2. The Candidates' names shall appear in the format of first name then last name (e.g. John Doe), in alphabetical order, based on their surnames and in the case of identical surnames, their first names. Middle initials shall not be used unless it is deemed necessary by the EC/RO.
 - 8.1.13.3. No reference to a Candidate's occupation, degree, title, honour or decoration shall appear on the ballot.
- 8.1.14. While a voter is in a voting location, no one shall attempt, directly or indirectly, to influence whom to vote.
- 8.1.15. No campaign material, literature or advertising of any nature whatsoever of any Candidate in the Election shall be displayed at, or within an election help centre or voting facility, including parking lots.
- 8.1.16. The premises are deemed to include the entire building and the property on which it is located, including the parking lot. Campaign material or literature of any nature found in this location will be removed immediately and disposed of without notice.

8.2. Voting Process

- 8.2.1. Ballot papers will be printed, if secret voting process is decided by the RO.

- 8.2.2. Voting is permitted in person only.
- 8.2.3. Each voter gets one ballot paper.
- 8.2.4. Each voter must have a government issued photo ID or recent document that bears address to verify the voter's identification. The ID and address must match with name and address in the voter list.
- 8.2.5. Voting must start and end by the published time. Voting will be permitted to those who arrive at the voting station within the specified closing time.
- 8.2.6. Counting of votes will start after the completion of voting.
- 8.2.7. Counting of votes will be done by the Election Committee

8.3. Announcement of Election Result

- 8.3.1. A nominee for each position who receives highest votes will be declared elected.
- 8.3.2. If no more than one nomination is received for a position of director, the RO will declare the member so nominated, elected by acclamation.

NECASE Election Schedule

Events	Action By	Date
Call for nominations for vacant director positions in NECASE Board	RO	24 days ahead of Election Day
Publication of 1 st voter's list	RO	21 days ahead of Election Day
Deadline to claim on voters' list	NECASE members	18 days ahead of Election Day
Publication of final voters' list	RO	15 days ahead of Election Day
Deadline for filing of nominations	NECASE members	11 days ahead of Election Day
Publication of candidates' list	RO	10 days ahead of Election Day
Deadline to withdraw candidacy	Nominee	8 days ahead of Election Day
Publication of final candidates' list	RO	7 days ahead of Election Day
Election and result announcement	RO/Election Committee/Voters	Election Day



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APPENDIX 2

CANDIDATE NOMINATION FORM FOR THE ELECTION OF NEPALESE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF EDMONTON (NECASE) BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND AUDITORS

I _____ of _____
(Full name of the candidate) (Full address of the candidate)

file this nomination for the position of _____.

If elected, I will perform my duties as Board director in such a manner that members' confidence and trust in the integrity, objectivity and impartiality NECASE are conserved and enhanced. I promise that I will serve for the complete tenure of this position.

I confirm that:

I am a General Member Life Member of NECASE and eligible to file nomination.

I have been living in the above-mentioned address or within NECASE jurisdiction for the past twelve months. The City of Edmonton and places adjoining the City of Edmonton are within NECASE jurisdiction.

I have not been criminally convicted by the Court in Canada.


I have held the following position(s) in the Board for a complete term (at least one year):

Position	Fiscal Year	Name of President

I have assumed leadership (Chair or Coordinator) or volunteer role in NECASE's programs and activities:



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Program	Position	Year	Name of Coordinator

Signature: _____

Date: _____

To be filled by proposer

I _____ of _____
(Proposer's full name) (Proposer's full address)

propose _____ for the position of _____
(Full name of the candidate)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

To be filled by seconder

I _____ of _____
(Secunder's full name) (Secunder's full address)

second _____ for the position of _____
(Full name of the candidate)

Signature: _____

Date: _____



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APPENDIX 3

Position to be contested for:

1. President
2. Vice President
3. General Secretary
4. Treasurer
5. Asset Management Director
6. Sports and Recreation Activities Director
7. Members Outreach Director
8. Information Technology and Communications Director
9. Cultural Program Director
10. Newcomers, Youths and Senior Engagement Director
11. Fundraising Director
12. General Auditor 1
13. General Auditor 2

Note: Please submit the completed form to the Returning Officer within the due date. This form can be photocopied or printed. Please visit NECASE website at www.necase.ca if you would like to know more about NECASE Bylaws and NECASE General Policy for responsibilities of Board Directors and General Auditors.

Map of NECASE Jurisdiction

