

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF THE
RIO GRANDE VALLEY CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL**
AS ADOPTED 3 SEPTEMBER 2025

PREAMBLE

The establishment of this Central Labor Council as a subordinate body of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) reflects the commitment of the unions and working families of the Rio Grande Valley to participate fully in advancing the goals of the labor movement, and to fulfill the hopes and aspirations of all who labor in our region.

We pursue these goals through democratic processes and civic engagement, grounded in the constitutional traditions of our country and the rich cultural, bilingual, and binational character of our border region.

At the collective bargaining table, in our communities, and in the exercise of our rights and responsibilities as residents and citizens, we shall serve the interests of all working people—organizing for dignity, equity, and justice in every workplace.

We pledge ourselves to the stronger organization of workers across all sectors; to securing full recognition and enjoyment of their rights; to raising living standards; to achieving workplace justice; and to defending the fundamental freedoms that are the foundation of our democracy.

We will confront and defeat the forces of exploitation, division, and injustice that threaten the dignity of labor. We will speak out against racism, xenophobia, and authoritarianism, and work to ensure the full inclusion of all workers, regardless of language, status, or background.

With respect for our past, confidence in our future, and faith in the power of solidarity, we proclaim this Constitution in the name of all who labor.

ARTICLE I: Name and Affiliation

Section 1: This organization shall be known as the Rio Grande Valley Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO, hereinafter referred to as “the Council.”

Section 2: The Council shall at all times maintain affiliation with the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations and conduct all of its affairs in accordance with the AFL-CIO Constitution and the AFL-CIO’s Rules Governing Area Labor Councils and Central Labor Councils.

Section 3: As a chartered organization of the AFL-CIO, this Council shall conform its activities on state matters to the policies of the Texas AFL-CIO, and on national affairs to the policies of the AFL-CIO.

ARTICLE II: Jurisdiction

Section 1: The jurisdiction of this Council shall include the counties of Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr, Willacy and Zapata in the State of Texas.

Section 2: This Council may extend its activities to support workers and labor organizations in adjacent counties and regions when such activities advance the purposes of the state and national AFL-CIO and this Council.

ARTICLE III: Purposes and Objectives

The purposes of this Council shall be to promote the principles of the AFL-CIO, through appropriate activities in the Rio Grande Valley region. These principles include:

- A. To assist in promoting the objectives and policies of the AFL-CIO and organizations affiliated with the AFL-CIO;
- B. To promote and assist the organizing activities of local unions and their parent national or international unions or organizing committees affiliated with the AFL-CIO;
- C. To provide cooperation and support to affiliated local unions and other affiliated bodies in their common and individual endeavors.
- D. To propose, support, and promote legislation favorable to, and oppose legislation detrimental to, the interests of workers and organized labor.
- E. To encourage workers to register and vote, to exercise their full rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and to participate in the political life of local, state, and national communities.
- F. To engage in such other activities as are consistent with the principles set forth in the AFL-CIO Constitution and AFL-CIO policies.

ARTICLE IV: Composition and Delegates

Section 1: This Council shall be composed exclusively of the following organizations within the previously defined jurisdiction in Article II:

- A. Local unions of national and international unions, and organizing committees affiliated with the AFL-CIO, or whose membership is authorized by the AFL-CIO, and local unions chartered directly by the AFL-CIO;
- B. Local unions holding solidarity charters authorized by the Executive Council of the AFL-CIO, for so long as such charters remain in effect;

- C. Local councils chartered by the trade and industrial departments of the AFL-CIO, and joint boards, district councils, and similar subordinate organizations duly chartered by an affiliate of the AFL-CIO;
- D. Local chapters of constituency groups recognized and approved by the AFL-CIO, provided such chapters operate within the jurisdiction of this Council;
- E. Union retiree clubs or chapters. Where two or more retiree clubs or chapters exist, affiliation shall be through a Union Retiree Council.

Section 2: Each affiliated local union in good standing shall be entitled to representation in the Council through duly elected or appointed delegates.

- A. The number of delegates to which each affiliated organization is entitled shall be based on proportional representation based on per capita membership size according to the following schedule:

100 members or less	1 delegate
101 - 250 members	2 delegates
251 - 500 members	3 delegates
501 - 750 members	4 delegates
751 - 1000 members	5 delegates
1001 - 2000 members	6 delegates
Over 2000 members	One additional delegate for each additional 1,000 members above 2,000

- B. The number of delegates that each affiliated local union is entitled to shall be calculated using the twelve (12) month average of membership each June and December.
- C. Affiliated subordinate bodies other than local unions, as defined in Section 1 of this article, shall be entitled to one delegate and one vote each.

Section 3: To be eligible to serve as a delegate to the Council an individual must:

- A. Be a member in good standing of a local union affiliate with this Council; or
- B. Be a representative of a national or international union who regularly services such an affiliated local union.

Section 4: Delegates shall represent only the local union in which they hold good standing membership, unless:

- A. They are selected to represent a local body chartered by a trade or industrial department of the AFL-CIO;
- B. They are selected to represent a state or local chapter of an AFL-CIO constituency group, located within the geographical limits of this Council, and chartered by a national AFL-CIO constituency group.

Section 5: No person shall be eligible to serve as a delegate if they hold a salaried position or any administrative or executive authority in a union or subordinate body that has been suspended or expelled from the AFL-CIO.

Section 6: Except on roll call votes, each delegate shall be entitled to one vote. Voting shall be conducted by voice vote or division of the house (show of hands or standing vote), unless a roll call vote is properly demanded by the required number of delegates as provided elsewhere in this Constitution.

- A. No delegate shall be permitted to cast the proxy of another delegate, and no delegate shall be allowed to represent more than one organization.

Section 7: No delegate shall be seated except upon presentation of a proper credential from an affiliated organization in good standing. This credential shall be examined and attested to by the Credentials Committee, verifying both the eligibility of the delegate and the standing of the organization submitting the credential.

- A. The report of the Credentials Committee shall not be made until the Committee has had adequate opportunity to examine and verify the credential. However, in no case shall the report be delayed beyond the meeting following the meeting at which the credential was first presented.

Section 8: Upon acceptance of delegate's credential, the presiding officer shall administer the following obligation:

"I, [name of delegate], do solemnly pledge my honor that I will obey the Constitution, Bylaws, and all rules and regulations of the Rio Grande Valley Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO, and to the best of my ability, perform all the duties I may be called upon to discharge as a delegate. I pledge to abide by the Ethical Practices Code of the AFL-CIO and the anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policy and Code of Conduct of this Council."

Section 9: Absence from three consecutive meetings of the Council without an acceptable excuse shall constitute sufficient grounds for declaring a delegate's seat vacant. Upon such declaration, the Secretary-Treasurer shall notify the delegate's organization and request that a new delegate be appointed.

- A. Delegates must notify the Secretary-Treasurer in writing or by electronic communication prior to any meeting they are unable to attend, stating the reason for their absence.

Section 10: The Council shall make every reasonable effort to ensure diversity of representation at all levels of its leadership and membership.

ARTICLE V: Roll Call Voting

Section 1: A roll call vote shall be held on any pending question, including the election of officers, upon the demand of thirty percent (30%) or more of the delegates present at any meeting.

Section 2: On roll call votes, each local union shall be entitled to a number of votes equal to its average membership, as determined in accordance with Section 3 of this Article.

Section 3: The average membership of a local union shall be determined on the basis of per capita tax payments for the first twelve of the immediately preceding thirteen months. For local unions affiliated for fewer than twelve months, the average shall be computed from the month of affiliation by dividing the total per capita tax paid for all months affiliated by twelve.

Section 4: The votes of a local union shall be divided equally among all its accredited delegates present, and each delegate shall be entitled to cast only their assigned number of votes. However, to facilitate the calling of the roll, one delegate may be designated to cast all of the votes for their delegation, provided that if any delegate challenges the correctness of the votes cast, the individual delegates of that local union shall be polled.

Section 5: The Secretary-Treasurer shall maintain, on a current basis, the official roll of delegates, indicating the average membership of each local union as established under the provisions of Section 3 of this Article.

ARTICLE VI: Meetings

Section 1: Regular meetings of this Council shall be held on the first Wednesday of each month at a time and place as determined by the Council.

- A. Meetings may be conducted in person, virtually, or in a hybrid format as determined by the Executive Board. ***Virtual meetings for the following purposes shall require a waiver from the President of the AFL-CIO:***
 - a. ***Changes to the Constitution, including per capita changes***
 - b. ***Election of Officers***
 - c. ***Endorsements of candidates or issues***
 - d. ***Spending money outside of the current delegate-approved budget***
- B. Due written or electronic notice of time and location, and any changes, shall be given to all affiliated organizations and delegates.
- C. The Council shall advise the President of the AFL-CIO of the day, time, and place of its regular delegate meeting.

Section 2: Special meetings for the consideration of specified matters shall be held when ordered by a regular meeting of the Council or by a vote of the Executive Board.

- A. Written or electronic notice of any special meeting shall be provided to all affiliated organizations and/or each delegate at least five (5) days in advance.
- B. The notice must clearly state the specific matter(s) to be considered, and no other business shall be transacted at the special meeting.

Section 3: A quorum for the transaction of business at any regular or special meeting shall consist of at least fifteen (15) credentialled delegates ***representing no less than four (4) of*** the affiliated local unions in good standing.

ARTICLE VII: Officers and Elections

Section 1: Composition and Eligibility

- A. The officers of the Council shall consist of a President, a Secretary-Treasurer, a Vice President, and three (3) Trustees. Together, they shall constitute the Executive Board of the Council. The combined constituency groups affiliated with the Council shall be entitled to one (1) voting seat on the Council's Executive Board.
- B. No individual shall be eligible to serve as an officer, member of the Executive Board or committee, delegate, representative, agent, or employee of this Council who consistently pursues policies or activities that promote authoritarianism, totalitarianism, terrorism, or other ideologies that suppress individual liberties and freedom of association.
 - a. No person shall be eligible to serve in any of the aforementioned capacities who holds a salaried position or any administrative or executive authority in a union, or any subordinate body thereof, that is suspended from, unaffiliated with, or disaffiliated from the AFL-CIO.
 - b. No person who is convicted of any felony involving the infliction of grievous bodily injury, any crime of dishonesty, or any crime involving abuse or misuse of such a person's position in a labor organization or employee benefit fund, shall serve as an officer or managerial employee of the Council.

Section 2: Officer Delegate Requirement

- A. Each officer, at the time of election and throughout the term of office, must be a duly accredited delegate from an affiliated organization. Should the officer cease to be a delegate, the office shall be declared vacant and filled through a special election as provided elsewhere in this Constitution.

Section 3: Term of Office

- A. The term of office for all elected officers shall be three (3) years.
- B. Each officer shall serve until a successor has been duly elected and installed.

Section 4: Limitation on Union Representation

- A. No more than one (1) delegate from the same local union shall be eligible to hold office concurrently.
- B. No more than two (2) delegates from different locals of the same National or International Union shall be eligible to hold office concurrently.

Section 5: Nominations and Election Procedures

- A. Nominations for all officers shall take place at the regular November meeting. Elections shall be held at the regular December meeting. Officers shall be installed immediately following the election, except that an officer-elect who is unavoidably absent shall be installed at the next meeting or may be obligated at a meeting of the Executive Board.

- B. Prior to the nomination meeting, the President shall appoint, with delegate body approval, an Election Committee to oversee the election. No individual seeking office may serve on this committee.
 - a. The Election Committee shall:
 - i. Work with the Secretary-Treasurer to verify the eligibility of affiliates and delegates to participate and vote;
 - ii. Confirm that each nominee is a credentialed delegate in good standing from a union in good standing;
 - iii. Confirm acceptance of nomination by each candidate, either in person or in writing;
 - iv. Coordinate with the Credentials Committee and/or Secretary-Treasurer to verify delegate eligibility;
 - v. Serve as the first level of authority on procedural issues during the election process;
 - vi. Operate independently of the Executive Board during the election, though decisions may be appealed post-election;
 - vii. Cooperate fully with any AFL-CIO investigations, reviews, or appeals.
- C. Upon completion of the election, the Election Committee shall prepare a signed written report detailing the number of votes received by each candidate. The report, along with all ballots and related materials, shall be retained until all appeal periods have expired, then submitted to the Secretary for safekeeping for a minimum of six (6) months or the conclusion of any appeals, whichever is later.

Section 6: Election Notification and Inspection Rights

- A. At least forty-five (45) but not more than one hundred twenty (120) days prior to the officer election, the Secretary-Treasurer shall notify each affiliate of the availability of a list containing:
 - a. The names and addresses of elected Council officers and Executive Board members;
 - b. The names and mailing addresses of affiliated organizations;
 - c. The names of principal officers of affiliated organizations;
 - d. Each affiliate's projected per capita voting strength and delegate entitlement;
 - e. The names and mailing addresses of delegates, to the extent available.
- B. Officers of affiliated organizations shall be entitled to inspect and make notes from the most current underlying records at the location where such records are maintained.

Section 7: Trustee Positions

- A. For nomination and election purposes, each Trustee position shall be numbered sequentially and considered a separate office.

Section 8: Voting Procedures and Runoffs

- A. Any uncontested office may be filled by acclamation. Contested elections may be decided by voice vote, division of the house, or by roll call vote if requested

in accordance with Article V, Section 1. Roll call ballots must indicate the delegate's name, local union, and the number of votes cast.

- B. If no candidate receives a majority vote in a contested race with more than two candidates, a runoff between the top two vote-getters shall be held.
- C. If an election violates the eligibility rule in Section 4, the elected candidate for the highest-ranking office shall retain the seat. New elections shall be held for any additional affected offices. Rank order is determined by Section 1 and the sequential number assigned to Trustee positions.
- D. Runoff elections or tie-breaking votes may be deferred to the next regular meeting by majority vote.

Section 9: Oath of Office

- A. Before assuming duties, each officer-elect shall take the following oath:

"I, (name), do hereby promise to faithfully perform all the duties of the office to which I have been elected to the best of my ability and to uphold the constitution of this Central Body and of the AFL-CIO. I further promise to deliver all property in my possession belonging to this Central Body to my successor in office and to surrender such property to the President of the AFL-CIO upon official demand. I pledge to abide by the ethical practices code of the AFL-CIO and the anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policy and code of conduct of this Council."

Section 10: Vacancies

- A. Vacancies shall be filled by special election, with nominations at the next meeting following the vacancy and elections held at the subsequent meeting.

Section 11: Election Protests and Appeals

- A. Any candidate, delegate, or principal officer of an affiliated organization may protest the results of an election by:
 - a. Filing a written and signed protest with the Election Committee within thirty (30) days of the election report;
 - b. Including in the protest all relevant information and alleged violations.
- B. The Election Committee shall:
 - a. Investigate the protest, gather facts, and review compliance with all constitutional and AFL-CIO election rules;
 - b. Submit a report to the Executive Board within thirty (30) days.
- C. The Executive Board shall:
 - a. Decide by majority vote at its next meeting whether a hearing is warranted;
 - b. If warranted, provide at least thirty (30) days' notice to all parties, including a record of actions taken.
- D. At the hearing:
 - a. Both sides shall have equal opportunity to present their case and evidence.
 - b. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Board may order remedies up to and including a new election.

- E. All parties shall be notified in writing by certified mail within thirty (30) days of the hearing outcome. The Executive Board's decision shall be reported at the next Delegate Body meeting.
- F. Affected individuals may appeal the Executive Board's decision to the Delegate Body by notifying the President or Secretary in writing within ten (10) days.
 - a. At the next regular Delegate Body meeting, each party will have 15 minutes to present their case, followed by 10 minutes for delegate questions.
 - b. A majority vote is required to sustain the Executive Board's decision.
- G. Any party may appeal the Delegate Body's decision to the President of the AFL-CIO within thirty (30) days of notice.
 - a. The decision remains in effect unless reversed or stayed by the AFL-CIO President.
- H. No organization or individual governed by this Constitution shall pursue judicial relief until all remedies within the AFL-CIO have been exhausted.

ARTICLE VIII: Duties of Officers

Section 1: President

- A. The President shall be the Presiding Officer at all meetings of the Council and the Executive Board.
- B. The President shall countersign all authorized orders for the disbursement of funds by the Council.
- C. The President shall exercise general supervision over the affairs and activities of the Central Body and shall perform all duties customarily associated with the office, as well as any additional responsibilities assigned by the Central Body or the Executive Board.
- D. The President shall have the authority to interpret this Constitution, subject to ratification by the Executive Board and the Central Body.
- E. The President shall serve as an ex officio member of all committees and may appoint such Sergeants-at-Arms as necessary to maintain order and ensure the orderly conduct of meetings.

Section 2: Secretary-Treasurer

- A. The Secretary-Treasurer shall serve as the custodian of the records of the Central Body. They shall maintain an accurate and complete record of the proceedings of all meetings of both the Central Body and the Executive Board.
- B. The Secretary-Treasurer shall receive and disburse all funds of the Central Body upon proper authorization.
 - a. They shall maintain adequate financial records that document the standing of all affiliated organizations and clearly show the sources and disposition of all funds in their custody.
 - b. All financial practices must conform to the applicable requirements of the AFL-CIO Code of Ethical Practices concerning accounting and financial controls, as approved by the AFL-CIO Executive Council and as

may be further required by the Secretary-Treasurer of the AFL-CIO under rules governing local Central Bodies.

- C. The Secretary-Treasurer shall present to the Central Body a monthly financial statement detailing all funds in their custody. This statement shall include such account details as the Executive Board or the Central Body may require.
 - a. Additionally, the Secretary-Treasurer shall submit the financial records for audit upon request by the Executive Board, and in all cases, no less than once annually.

Section 3: Vice President

- A. The Vice President shall perform the duties of the President in the President's absence or incapacity and shall assist the President when requested.

Section 4: Trustees

- A. The Trustees shall be the custodians of the Central Body's physical property. They shall maintain an inventory of all property, including purchase date, cost, and estimated current value. The Trustees shall review the Secretary-Treasurer's financial records quarterly and report their findings to the Central Body.

ARTICLE IX: Executive Board

Section 1: The Executive Board shall consist of all officers as enumerated in Article VI, Section 1 of this Constitution.

Section 2: The Executive Board shall serve as the governing body of the Central Body between regular Delegate Body meetings. It is authorized and empowered to take such actions and render such decisions as may be necessary to:

- A. Carry out the decisions and instructions of the Central Body;
- B. Safeguard and promote the interests and objectives of the Central Body and its affiliated unions;
- C. Ensure the proper and lawful administration of the Council's operations in accordance with this Constitution and AFL-CIO policies.

Section 3: The Executive Board shall meet regularly at least once each month at a time and place it determines. Special meetings may be called by the President when necessary.

Section 4: The Executive Board shall have the authority to make temporary appointments to fill any officer vacancy not otherwise provided for in this Constitution, either due to temporary disability or until a special election can be conducted in the event of a permanent vacancy.

Section 5: A majority of the members of the Executive Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

ARTICLE X: Charges and Hearings

Section 1: Any affiliated organization, by vote of its membership, or any officer of or delegate to the Council shall have the right to file charges against the following:

- A. Any delegate to the Central Body for engaging in conduct or a course of activity hostile or contrary to the best interests of the Central Body or in violation of its Constitution;
- B. Any officer of the Central Body for violating the Constitution or rules of the AFL-CIO, the Constitution of this Central Body, conduct unbecoming an officer, misappropriation of funds, malfeasance in office, or neglect of duty;
- C. Any affiliated organization for engaging in conduct or a course of activity hostile or contrary to the best interests of the Central Body or in violation of its Constitution.

Section 2: All charges shall:

- A. Be submitted in writing;
- B. Specify the particular act or acts charged;
- C. Be signed by the charging party, or by the officers of the affiliated organization if the charge is filed by an organization;
- D. Be filed with the President or the Secretary-Treasurer of the Council, or with another officer if both the President and the Secretary-Treasurer are charged.

Section 3: Upon receipt of properly filed charges, the officer receiving the charges shall present them at the next meeting of the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall determine, by majority vote, whether the charges warrant a hearing.

Section 4: If the Executive Board determines that a hearing is warranted, it may—by a two-thirds vote, following a hearing—take appropriate disciplinary action. This may include:

- A. Suspension or expulsion of any delegate or affiliated organization;
- B. Suspension or removal of any officer found guilty of the charges.

The accused shall be notified and furnished with a copy of the charges not less than thirty (30) days prior to the hearing. Both the accused and the charging party shall be given full opportunity to be heard and to present evidence.

Section 5: The Executive Board's decision under Section 3 or Section 4 shall be reported at the next meeting of the Central Body. This decision shall be final and binding unless appealed as provided in this Article.

Section 6: Either party may appeal the Executive Board's decision to the full Council.

- A. Written notice of appeal must be filed with the President or Secretary-Treasurer within ten (10) days of the report of the Executive Board's decision to the Central Body.
- B. The appeal shall be heard promptly at a regular meeting of the Central Body. At that meeting, the charging party, the accused, and a representative of the Executive Board shall each be allowed ten (10) minutes to present their statements, in that order.
- C. A majority vote of the delegates present shall be required to sustain the Executive Board's decision.

Section 7: The final decision of the Council may be appealed as provided in the rules of the AFL-CIO governing local central bodies.

ARTICLE XI: Per Capita Taxes and Fees

Section 1: Monthly Per Capita Tax for Affiliated Unions

- A. Affiliated unions shall pay a monthly per capita tax of twenty cents (.20¢) per dues paying member in good standing. Per capita payments shall be based on the actual number of dues-paying members reported by each affiliate and shall be due on the first day of each month.
- B. Affiliates may, with the approval of the Executive Board, make payments on a monthly, quarterly basis provided that the full amount owed is paid in a timely manner.

Section 2: Annual Fee for Other Affiliated Organizations

- A. Other affiliated organizations, as defined in Article IV, Section 1, shall pay an annual fee of fifteen dollars (\$15.00).
- B. This annual fee is due at the time of affiliation, and then due on January 1 for each year thereafter.
 - a. If no payment is made by February 1, the organization shall be deemed in arrears.

Section 3: Notice of Arrears

- A. Any local union or other affiliated organization that becomes two months in arrears shall be notified in writing by the Secretary-Treasurer.
- B. Upon becoming three months in arrears, the local union or other affiliated organization shall no longer be considered in good standing and shall lose voice and vote in meetings of this Council.
 - a. Written notice of this status shall also be provided to the local union or other affiliated organization by the Secretary-Treasurer.

Section 4: Suspension for Non-Payment

- A. Any local union or affiliated organization that becomes four months in arrears shall be suspended from membership and shall be notified in writing by the Secretary-Treasurer.

Section 5: Reinstatement

- A. A local union or organization that has been suspended or has withdrawn from membership may be reinstated upon payment of:
 - a. All amounts due at the time of suspension or withdrawal, and
 - b. The current per capita tax or annual fee.
- B. The average membership used to calculate roll call voting strength for a reinstated union shall be computed from the date of reinstatement as if it were a newly affiliated local union.
- C. A union suspended for non-payment of per capita tax shall pay only the amounts in arrears at the time of suspension. It may not retroactively pay for

the months between suspension and reinstatement in order to increase voting strength.

Section 6: Underreporting Membership

- A. A local union that pays per capita tax on less than its full dues-paying membership shall be subject to suspension by the Executive Board. The Board may require such a union to provide proof of its membership if there is reason to believe the union is in violation of this provision. Failure or refusal to provide such proof may result in the Board basing its determination on any available evidence. **The provisions of this Section 5, if invoked, must be uniformly applied to all affiliates.**

Section 7: Exoneration of Per Capita Tax

- A. The Executive Board may exonerate any local union from the payment of per capita tax for any month if, in its judgment, good cause exists. Such exoneration is subject to ratification by the Council. Exonerated members shall be regarded as paid-up members for the period of exoneration for all constitutional purposes.

ARTICLE XII: Financial Practices and Audits

Section 1: Deposits and Disbursements

- A. All funds of this Council shall be deposited in a national bank or other federally insured financial institution, as designated by the Executive Board.
- B. Disbursements shall be made only by check bearing the signatures of both the President and the Secretary-Treasurer.
- C. No check shall be drawn unless properly supported by a voucher, invoice, or receipt that:
 - a. Indicates the specific purpose of the expenditure, and
 - b. Includes the source of the authority for making such expenditure.
 - i. All invoices, receipts, and supporting documents shall be attached to the voucher.
 - ii. Each voucher must be signed by the Secretary-Treasurer and countersigned by the President.
 - iii. No funds shall be expended unless approved by the Council for necessary expenses that support the objectives and principles of the Council and the AFL-CIO.
- D. No funds shall be expended unless they have been approved by the Council to defray necessary expenses for the advancement of the objects and principles of the Council and the AFL-CIO.

Section 2: Audits and Financial Oversight

- A. If the Council receives more than \$200,000 in annual revenue, a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), selected by the Executive Board, shall conduct an audit or perform agreed-upon procedures in accordance with AFL-CIO requirements.

- B. The Secretary-Treasurer shall promptly report the CPA's findings to the Executive Board and the Council.
- C. The Executive Board may require additional or more frequent audits or reviews at its discretion.

Section 3: Secretary-Treasurer Expense Allowance

- A. The Secretary-Treasurer shall receive a monthly expense allowance of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00)

Section 4: Reimbursement of Authorized Expenses

- A. Officers, delegates, and other individuals authorized by the Council shall be reimbursed for necessary and legitimate expenses incurred during the performance of approved duties.
- B. Reimbursable expenses may include actual lost wages.
- C. An itemized expense report must be submitted to the Executive Board for approval.

Section 5: Fidelity Bond Requirements

- A. All officers and agents with financial responsibilities shall be covered by a fidelity bond.
- B. The bond amount shall be determined by the Executive Board but shall be no less than ten percent (10%) of the Council's revenue from the prior fiscal year.
- C. The AFL-CIO will provide this bond at no cost up to the 10% threshold.
- D. If additional bonding is required beyond this amount, the Council shall pay the additional cost.

Section 6: Budget and Expense Policy

- A. The Council shall prepare an annual budget.
- B. A written expense policy shall be adopted, and must include the following minimum provisions:
 - a. Reimbursement through a voucher system
 - b. Submission of original receipts
 - c. Approval procedures for all expenditures
 - d. Prohibition of the use of Council credit cards for personal expenses
 - e. Prohibition of the use of debit cards
- C. The fiscal year for the Council shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31 each year

Section 7: Recordkeeping and Reporting Compliance

- A. The Council shall maintain its records in accordance with the rules and directives issued by the AFL-CIO President or Secretary-Treasurer.
- B. The Council shall file all reports in the manner and time required by the AFL-CIO.
- C. Upon demand of the AFL-CIO President, the Council shall produce its books and records, including those related to any IRS Code Section 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4) entities it has established or with which its officers are affiliated.

ARTICLE XII: Committees

Section 1: Standing Committees

- A. The following standing committees, consisting of two (2) members each, shall be appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Executive Board:
 - a. Ethical Practices
 - b. Credentials
 - c. Affiliation and Organization
 - d. Legislation
 - e. Community Services
 - f. Economic Opportunity
 - g. Union Labels
 - h. Education
 - i. Civil Rights
 - j. Immigration and Workforce Justice
- B. The members of the standing committees shall serve at the pleasure of the President.

Section 2: Special Committees

- A. Special committees may be established from time to time by the Council as needed.
- B. Unless otherwise directed by the Council, special committees shall be appointed by the President.

Section 3: Committee Accountability

- A. All committees, both standing and special, shall report regularly to the Council.
- B. Any committee that fails to function effectively may be dismissed, and a new committee shall be appointed in its place.

Section 4: Ethical Practices Committee

- A. The Ethical Practices Committee shall consist of at least three (3) members of the Executive Board, serving on a rotating basis.
- B. Either the Council President or the Secretary-Treasurer may also serve, but not both at the same time.
- C. The EPC shall be responsible for enforcing the substance of the Ethical Practices Code for AFL-CIO Officers and Representatives.
- D. The EPC shall be convened only when a formal charge of an ethical practices code violation is filed with the Council.

ARTICLE XIV: Legislative and Political Action

Section 1: Direction of Legislative Activities

- A. The legislative activities of the Council shall be under the direction of the Secretary-Treasurer.
- B. These activities shall conform to the following:
 - a. The policies of the Texas AFL-CIO on any state matters,
 - b. The policies of the national AFL-CIO on any national affairs,

- c. The policies adopted by the Executive Board or the Council itself on any local matters.

Section 2: Direction of Political Activities

- A. The political activities of the Central Body shall be under the direction of the Council's Committee on Political Education (COPE).
- B. COPE is hereby constituted as the political arm of this Council.
- C. COPE shall operate in conformity with the following:
 - a. The policies of the AFL-CIO;
 - b. The policies of the National and State COPEs.

Section 3: COPE Committee

- A. The officers of the Central Body listed below shall occupy corresponding positions in the Central Body's COPE:
 - a. President
 - b. Vice President
 - c. Secretary-Treasurer
 - d. Other members of the Executive Board
- B. These individuals shall collectively constitute the Central Body's COPE.

Section 4: COPE Bylaws

- A. The COPE Committee shall have the authority to formulate By-Laws to govern its operations.
- B. These By-Laws shall:
 - a. Be consistent with the policies of National COPE;
 - b. Be subject to ratification by the Council.

Section 5: Restrictions on Political Participation

- A. In accordance with AFL-CIO policy, the following individuals or groups shall not participate in any meetings or proceedings related to political endorsements or any partisan political activity concerning public elective office:
 - a. Delegates of any AFL-CIO constituency group
 - b. Delegates of the Alliance for Retired Americans
- B. These individuals or groups shall not have voice or vote in any meeting or decision of this Council's Committee on Political Education (COPE) or any other body of the Council engaged in:
 - a. Endorsing political candidates; or
 - b. Engaging in any other partisan political activities concerning public elective office.

ARTICLE XV: Rules, Parliamentary Procedure, and Amendments

Section 1: Compliance with AFL-CIO Rules

- A. The procedures of this Council regarding boycotts, unfair lists, strikes, collective bargaining, and publications issued or endorsed by the Council shall conform to the AFL-CIO Rules Governing Area Labor Councils and Central Labor Councils.

Section 2: Supremacy of AFL-CIO Constitution and Rules

- A. In the event of any conflict between the provisions of this Constitution—or any laws or actions of this Council—and the Constitution of the AFL-CIO or the Rules Governing Area Labor Councils and Central Labor Councils issued by the AFL-CIO Executive Council:
 - a. The Constitution and Rules of the AFL-CIO shall prevail.
 - b. The Executive Board shall take appropriate steps to initiate the necessary amendments or modifications to bring this Constitution or Council policies into full conformity.

Section 3: Parliamentary Procedure

- A. The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, Revised shall govern the proceedings of this Central Labor Council in all applicable cases, except when inconsistent with:
 - a. This Constitution, or
 - b. Any special rules of order adopted by the Council.

Section 4: Amendments to Constitution

- A. This Constitution may be amended at any regular meeting of the Council by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote of all votes cast, provided that:
 - a. The proposed amendment has been submitted in writing to the Secretary-Treasurer at the preceding regular meeting, and
 - b. The amendment has been properly certified by either:
 - i. An affiliated organization, or
 - ii. A delegate representing an affiliated organization
- B. Proposed amendments may also be submitted by the Executive Board.
- C. All proposed amendment shall be:
 - a. Read in full at the meeting at which they are received, and
 - b. Made available upon request to all delegates prior to final consideration.
- D. Amendments to this Constitution shall take effect only upon approval by the President of the AFL-CIO.

ARTICLE XVI: Strategic Planning

Section 1: Coordination and Integration

- A. State, area, and local central labor bodies within a state shall ensure that their programs and activities are coordinated and integrated:
 - a. With one another, and
 - b. With the programs and priorities of the AFL-CIO and its affiliated national and international unions.

Section 2: Unified Work Plan and Budget

- A. State, area, and local central labor bodies shall develop a unified work plan and budget at least once every two years.
- B. This plan shall clearly define:
 - a. The roles and responsibilities of each organization,
 - b. Budget allocations, and

- c. Specific activities and initiatives.

Section 3: Submission and Approval

- A. Upon request, the unified work plan and budget shall be submitted to the President of the AFL-CIO or to their designated representative.
- B. The AFL-CIO President may Approve, Modify, or Reject any work plan or budget submitted.

Section 4: Compliance and Disciplinary Action

- A. A state, area, or local central labor body—or any of its officers—may be subject to disciplinary action if they:
 - a. Fail to participate in the unified planning and budgeting process,
 - b. Fail to conform their activities to the approved unified work plan and budget, or
 - c. Fail to meet performance standards and benchmarks as established by the AFL-CIO Executive Council.

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