

PRECINCT / PSA COMMUNITY COUNCIL REGULATIONS

[New York Police Department Insignia]
POLICE DEPARTMENT CITY OF NEW YORK

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PRECINCT / PSA COMMUNITY COUNCIL REGULATIONS

INTRODUCTION

New York City Police Department Precinct / PSA Community Councils have been in operation since 1943. Today there is a Council in each of the city's seventy-six Precincts and nine Police Service Areas (PSAs). They are nonpartisan and shall not endorse or give the impression of endorsing any political candidate or political party. Councils remain neutral in intra-police matters. Each Council, which meets on a monthly basis, provides the community with an opportunity for direct communication with the Precinct / PSA Commanding Officer and other key police personnel. This contact is a vital way to increase police awareness of the community's needs and for police and community to partner in the improvement of public safety, quality of life and police-community relations in their neighborhoods. As part of this partnership, a Council is expected to inform its Precinct Commanding Officer or his/her designee of all its events and activities.

All members of the public are welcome to attend and actively participate in monthly Council meetings. However, only official members "in good standing" are eligible to vote, nominate qualified members for Council office and run for Council office. All pertinent eligibility criteria and requirements are delineated herein.

The purpose of this document is to inform Precinct / PSA Community Council Executive Boards and members of the goals and guidelines that should govern the Councils. It is expected that all Councils will follow these regulations.

PRECINCT / PSA COMMUNITY COUNCIL MISSION

The mission of Precinct / Police Service Area Community Councils is to establish and maintain working partnerships between the New York City Police Department and community to improve public safety, quality of life and police-community relations throughout New York City.

PRECINCT / PSA COMMUNITY COUNCIL GOALS

1. To maintain direct contact between the Precinct / PSA Commanding Officer and the community.
2. To encourage community members to report local public safety and quality of life issues to the NYPD.
3. To raise awareness of law enforcement efforts.
4. To enhance relations between the local police and the people they serve.
5. To promote existing NYPD programs that enhance public safety, quality of life and police-community relations (e.g. Blockwatchers, Civilian Observation Patrols, Auxiliary Police, Civilian Observer Ride-Alongs, and the Citizen's Police Academy).
6. To initiate Council-sponsored programs that enhance public safety, quality of life and police-community relations (e.g. graffiti cleanups, crime prevention seminars, and a police-youth softball game).
7. To recruit broad and diverse community participation in Council meetings and other Council-sponsored initiatives.

A. MEMBERSHIP

1. Anyone from the community, 18 years of age or older may become an official member of a Precinct Community Council. The individual may be a resident, a local businessperson, or a member of a local civic organization or religious institution. The only limit is that elected public or political officials, appointed public officials - with the exception of Community Board members - and any full-time employee of the NYPD may not become an officer of the Council.
2. A member must be willing to volunteer his/her time to further the mission and goals of the Council and complete a Personal Data Sheet to become a member of the Council. Membership in the Council is on a voluntary basis without monetary compensation. All members in good standing, as defined below, are eligible to vote on Council business.
3. The Personal Data Sheet is confidential and shall not be made available to the public. It shall contain the name, signature, home address, business address, home and business telephone numbers and date of birth of the Council member. No other information will be contained on the Personal Data Sheet. The Precinct Commanding Officer or his/her designee will maintain the Personal Data Sheets at the Precinct. No copies shall be made or kept by any Council members or officers.
4. Each member of the council must sign an attendance log at the beginning of each meeting. The Commanding Officer or his/her designee will maintain the attendance log in a bound Department ledger. Failure to sign this log may affect a members eligibility to vote on council matters. New members shall sign the attendance log and be directed to complete a Personal Data Sheet from the person maintaining the log. A member may only sign the attendance log for his or herself.

B. EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board (hereinafter known as the Board) shall consist of all elected Council officers. There shall be no more than seven (7) in number: one (1) President, one (1) Vice President, one (1) Treasurer, one (1) Recording Secretary, one (1) Sergeant at Arms, one (1) Corresponding Secretary and one (1) Assistant Secretary. Council Boards are required to have a minimum of five (5) officers, (President, Vice President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, and Sergeant at Arms).

C. VOTING

1. GENERAL VOTES

A member of the Precinct Community Council who is in good standing must have attended three (3) or more regular meetings in the twelve (12) month period including and prior to the current meeting in order to be able to cast a vote. Only those members who are in good standing will be eligible to nominate officers, run for office or vote in Council elections. Anytime a vote is required, 20% of members in good standing shall constitute a quorum. A quorum must be reached at any general membership or board meeting where a vote will be taking place. If a quorum is not reached, any Council business that requires a vote will be postponed until the next meeting where a quorum is reached.

2. EXECUTIVE BOARD VOTES

Only members of the Board will be permitted to vote on issues presented at Board meetings. Anytime a vote is required, 50% of Board members shall constitute a quorum. A vote will be postponed if there is not a quorum.

D. FINANCES AND RECORD KEEPING

1. The Council shall maintain a fiscal year of July 1 through June 30. The Council shall limit its fundraising to no more than \$25,000.00 each fiscal year. Should the Council, under exceptional circumstances, wish to increase its fundraising to more than \$25,000.00, the Council must submit a written proposal to the Deputy Commissioner Community Affairs, and a copy to the Precinct Commanding Officer or his/her designee. Fundraising for amounts that may exceed \$25,000.00 per fiscal year shall be permitted only upon the written approval of the Deputy Commissioner Community Affairs.
2. If fundraising exceeds \$25,000.00 or total funds on hand are in excess of \$25,000.00 at any time, the Council President must notify, in writing, the Precinct Commanding Officer and the Deputy Commissioner Community Affairs. In addition, the Council must employ a Certified Public Accountant to review its books and accounts. The Certified Public Accountant will certify the accuracy of all record keeping. The certification by the accountant will be forwarded to the Precinct Commanding Officer and the Deputy Commissioner Community Affairs.
3. Council members and officers may not receive compensation for any services they may provide derived from their position in the Council (e.g. compensation for administering a grant received by or through the Council).
4. All Council funds shall be expended solely for the purpose of advancing public safety, quality of life and police-community relations as described in the "Overview."

E. ELECTION PROCESS

1. At the March meeting, the President of the Council shall appoint an Election Committee. It shall consist of three (3) members in good standing. No member of the Election Committee shall be allowed to seek office in the upcoming election.
2. After the March meeting, the Election Committee and the Precinct Commanding Officer, or his/her designee, will review the attendance log and compile a list of members who will be eligible to vote and run for office.
3. Eligible voters and candidates will be those members who have attended three meetings in the twelve (12) months prior to but not including April of the election year (i.e. April through March).

4. At the beginning of the April meeting, the Election Committee shall present the eligible voter and candidate lists to the Council members. Challenges to the eligibility lists shall be addressed at this time.
5. During the May meeting, nominations will be taken from the floor for all positions on the Board. Candidates may run for only one position on the Board.
6. The election shall be held at the regularly scheduled June meeting.
7. The Election Committee, with the assistance of the Precinct Commanding Officer, or his/her designee, shall create ballots with the names of all nominated candidates. The order of candidates for each position on the ballot shall be alphabetical.
8. There shall be sufficient ballots prepared to accommodate the number of eligible voters.
9. The election shall be by secret ballot. The ballots will be numbered on the back, and will be initialed by a member of the Election Committee and the Precinct Commander, or his/her designee. This will serve as a control number. Ballots will be distributed in a random order. No ballot will be identifiable with the voter by whom it was cast.
10. A second ballot with blank slots shall also be created which is to be used in the case of a tie. It will also be initialed and have a control number.
11. The election shall be coordinated by the Election Committee with the assistance of the Precinct Commanding Officer, or his/her designee.
12. The Election Committee will insure that the ballots are distributed in random order. Eligible voters must be present and cast their vote personally. No proxy voting shall be permitted. Each eligible voter present will be issued one ballot. A check will be made on the eligible voters list under the caption "Ballot Issued".
13. After all ballots have been distributed, a period of fifteen minutes shall be given for voters to make their selections.
14. The eligible voters will make one selection per Board position.
15. After making their selections, a voter shall place his/her ballot into the ballot box. A check will be made on the eligible voter list that the ballot was received from the voter.
16. A ballot marked with more than one choice for any position will disqualify that ballot from voting on those positions. Parts of the ballot marked correctly will be counted.
17. After all the ballots have been collected, the Election Committee, with the assistance of the Commanding Officer, or his/her designee, shall tally the votes.
18. In case of a tie for a board position, a second election will be held immediately between the candidates who tied using the previously prepared runoff ballots (see paragraph ten).
19. The Precinct Commanding Officer or his/her designee will announce the results of the election.
20. Officers elected in June shall assume their positions on July 1st following their election.

F. TERMS OF OFFICE

An officer shall only be able to serve two (2) consecutive, two (2) year terms in any Board position. Non-consecutive terms are unlimited. For example, a current Board President must relinquish his/her position at the end of two terms and may not run for any Board position in the election held in his/her last month of office. The next time the President will be eligible to run for any position would be after a full term has passed without him/her holding any office.

G. VACANCIES

If a Board seat becomes vacant during the term of office, all Board members will move up to the position directly above their current position. If all members of the Board have been moved up and there are still vacancies that need to be filled, the President will select a member in good standing to fill the vacancy. In either case, the person will serve out the unexpired portion of the term. For the purpose of filling vacancies, the order of succession will be:

- a. President
- b. Vice President
- c. Treasurer
- d. Recording Secretary
- e. Sergeant at Arms
- f. Corresponding Secretary
- g. Assistant Secretary

H. REMOVAL OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS

1. Any officer or member whose conduct is detrimental to the goals of the Council may be removed by a vote of two thirds (2/3) of the Council.
2. RECOMMENDATION FOR REMOVAL
An officer or member may be brought before the Council for removal by either:
 - a. The recommendation of two-thirds (2/3) of the Executive Board, or
 - b. The recommendation of the Precinct Commanding Officer. The Commanding Officer must notify the Deputy Community Affairs of his/her recommendations in writing. The Commanding Officer must also notify the officer or member concerned in writing.
3. REMOVAL PROCESS
 - a. Upon the recommendation of two-thirds of the Executive Board or upon the recommendation of the Precinct Commanding Officer, the Executive Board shall give notice to the officer or member thirty (30) days before the date of the vote to remove by the Council. The officer or member concerned shall have an opportunity to appear and make a statement of defense prior to the vote by the Council.
 - b. Failure of a Board member to attend three (3) consecutive Board meetings or three (3) consecutive General Membership meetings shall be presumptive grounds for removal.
 - c. Notices of such meetings must be sent to all members in good standing.
 - d. The notice must include a statement of the reason for removal.
4. Any member of the Council who does not attend any meetings during the Council's fiscal year shall automatically be removed as a member of the council.
5. A member of the Council may appeal his/her removal from the Council to the office of the Deputy Commissioner Community Affairs, in writing, within thirty (30) days.

I. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

The president of the Council shall preside over all meetings of the Council and of the Executive Board. Robert's Rules of Order, Revised is the parliamentary guide for all Precinct Community Council meetings. Each Council must purchase and maintain a copy of this parliamentary guidebook. Robert's Rules of Order, Revised shall govern the business meetings of the Council. All Council meetings shall be conducted in good order.

J. REQUIRED COUNCIL INFORMATION

Councils are required to provide DCCA with the name, address and telephone number of their President in writing and to provide immediate written notification upon any changes in that information.