

NAHJ ELECTIONS GUIDE

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HISPANIC JOURNALISTS

NAHJ

ASOCIACIÓN NACIONAL DE PERIODISTAS HISPANOS

Reformatted for Election Season 2025

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Purpose

This manual is meant to guide the Elections Committee, board candidates, and voters through the NAHJ elections process. It draws from NAHJ's bylaws, staff experience and recommendations from NAHJ's attorney. Where necessary, the manual codifies practices to be used by the Committee when identifying and vetting candidates for board eligibility, and rules of conduct for candidates, voters and the Committee during the elections period; and the basic duties of those elected to the board.

About the 2025 Elections

The 2025 NAHJ elections will take place electronically between October 20 and November 3.

To take part in the 2025 elections as a candidate or voter you need to have a paid NAHJ membership valid on Monday, October 6, 2025.

The NAHJ elections committee, composed of NAHJ board members appointed by the president as stated in the bylaws, will oversee candidate vetting, the elections process and publication of results.

Members can get more details about the 2025 elections and submit their candidate nominations online by visiting the [NAHJ 2025 Elections Hub](#).

There are 9 board officer positions, including Student Rep is up for election this year:

- **Regional Directors**
 - **Region 1 Director:** Caribbean -- Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands
 - **Region 2 Director:** Northeast -- Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont
 - **Region 3 Director:** Mid-Atlantic -- Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington D.C., West Virginia
 - **Region 4 Director:** South -- Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee
 - **Region 5 Director:** South Central -- Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas
 - **Region 6 Director:** Midwest -- Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin
 - **Region 7 Director:** Southwest -- Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming
 - **Region 8 Director:** Pacific -- Alaska, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Oregon, Washington
- **Student Representative:**
 - The Student Representative is the board liaison for NAHJ's student members. They should keep abreast of student member concerns and activities and relay them to the board, and advise on programming for student members and other courses of action.

Board Terms

All board members, with the exception of the Student Representative, serve two-year terms. The Student Representative serves a one-year term.

Regional Directors are elected every two years on odd years. No person shall be elected to a seat as Regional Director for more than three consecutive terms.

In the event of a resignation from the Board, the remaining Board members may appoint a successor to fulfill the remaining term. Vacancies that are not the result of a resignation must be filled through an election, whether regular or specially-held.

Candidate Eligibility Requirements

Each candidate for an open NAHJ Board position must meet certain criteria, as laid out in the organization's bylaws, both to run for office and to serve on the Board. A copy of the bylaws can be found on the [NAHJ Website](#).

An Elections Committee (see page 6) will vet each candidate to ensure that they are eligible to run for office and serve on the Board. In order to perform that duty, any NAHJ member interested in running for the Board is asked to provide the Committee with a current resume; contact information for their current employer or, for those running for Student Rep, their university registrar; and contact information for one professional or academic reference (preferably, NAHJ members) at the time that they decide to run.

The Elections Committee will use this information to verify that each candidate meets the requirements to hold a seat on the Board, and that the candidate is able to perform Board duties. Please expect that the Elections Committee will call your employer.

In the event that the Elections Committee finds that a potential candidate is not eligible for office, that candidate will be notified immediately and, if possible, given the opportunity to meet the necessary qualifications.

The criteria to run and serve in each position are summarized as follows:

Regional Directors

Regional Directors must be nominated by at least 10 Regular, Retired, or Academic Members in good standing who live or work in the region where the election is taking place. Candidates must be working or retired journalists. Working journalists are defined as earning at least 51% of their income from practicing journalism or teaching it. Retired Members are those who were previously eligible for Regular or Academic Membership for the majority of their careers but have permanently left the workforce.

Student Representative:

Candidates must have a paid STUDENT MEMBERSHIP, and must have demonstrated an interest in broadcast, print or new media journalism, including taking media-related classes or working for a student media outlet. They must gather 25 signatures of student members with a current, paid membership and be a FULL-TIME student at a recognized and accredited college or university. Moreover, the student must REMAIN a full-time student at a recognized and accredited college throughout his/her tenure.

Please note that candidates are allowed to include their own signature to qualify for the ballot.

Elections Committee

The Elections Committee is a group of NAHJ board members appointed by the president as stated in the bylaws to oversee candidate recruitment and vetting, the elections process, and publication of results. The committee is expected to identify potential candidates, help those members through the qualification process and campaigning, and oversee voting and verification of election results.

At the start of the elections process, the Committee will put out a call for nominations and a list of candidate requirements. The committee will also publish an elections timeline, which will set dates for candidates to qualify for the ballot, for potential voters to renew or verify their membership, and for the opening and closing of the polls.

The 2025 elections committee is composed of:

- Julio-César Chávez, Co-Chair
- Jaime Cardenas, Co-Chair

Candidate Qualifications and Vetting

Any NAHJ member who wants to be considered for a position on the board must be a member in good standing, with dues paid and must meet the criteria of the position for which they are running, as described above and in NAHJ's bylaws. Candidates' qualifications - including employment or student status - will be verified by the Elections Committee.

Potential candidates also should:

- Demonstrate a commitment to NAHJ through regular involvement in the organization.
 - o Activities include but are not limited to:
 - Serving as an active member of a committee or initiative
 - Routine attendance at NAHJ conferences and events
 - Financial support of NAHJ and its efforts
- Demonstrated a commitment to journalism by having been active within his or her place of employment at a news gathering organization, or college or university journalism program.

The candidate, if elected, must be prepared to fulfill the responsibilities of an NAHJ board member, including:

- Being active, engaged and committed to NAHJ's growth and success.
- Being committed to editorial independence, journalistic excellence, freedom of expression and freedom of access across all media platforms.
- Being committed to developing and supporting members at all stages of their careers through NAHJ's programs, particularly its annual conference and regional events, and through its publications and partnerships
- Participating in conference calls, attending three board meetings (virtual or in-person) preferably at the expense of your news organization.
- Leading or participating in various initiatives, including fundraising, membership and chapter development, outreach, and contributing directly to the organization's fundraising drives including
 - o Representing NAHJ at industry-related events

- o Chairing or serving on standing and ad hoc committees; organizing and/or hosting local events
- Being familiar with NAHJ's bylaws and the organization's history.

Qualifying for the ballot:

In order to qualify for the ballot, potential candidates must provide the Election Committee with the required number of signatures from paid members by the scheduled deadline and must pass the candidate vetting process. Current NAHJ members can submit their nominations and signatures via an [NAHJ 2025 Elections Hub](#).

Vetting process:

The Elections Committee will screen candidates and present the final slate to members for voting.

To facilitate the screening process, candidates are asked to provide:

1. A current resume
2. Contact information for your supervisor or manager to confirm employment

In the case of the Student Representative, candidates should provide:

1. A current resume
2. Contact information for one academic reference who can confirm the student's interest in journalism
3. Contact information for their school's registrar to confirm enrollment

The Elections Committee will use this information to verify that each candidate meets the requirements to hold a seat on the Board, and that the candidate is able to perform Board duties.

Please expect that the Elections Committee will call your employer, professor, or school.

In the event that the Elections Committee finds that a potential candidate is not eligible for office, that candidate will be notified immediately and, if possible, given the opportunity to meet the necessary qualifications.

Candidates who qualify for the ballot will be asked to provide following:

1. A headshot
2. A 250-word bio
3. A 250-word candidate statement to be disseminated to members when the slate is announced.

Policy for Elections Committee Members on Candidate Signatures:

The Elections Committee is an appointed body that helps find candidates, and vets their qualifications for the NAHJ Executive Board. To ensure a fair elections process, the Committee strives for independence, and, in nearly all cases, its members will refrain from lending their signatures to help a potential candidate qualify for the ballot.

However, if the Committee determines in an election year that (1) too many seats might remain vacant, and (2) that the majority of potential candidates are in danger of not qualifying for the ballot due to a lack of member signatures, the Committee will authorize its members to lend their signatures to all potential candidates that they are individually qualified to sign for (i.e., in such a case, an Election Committee

member must sign for all potential officer candidates, and all potential regional candidates for the region in which the Committee member resides). The Committee members' signatures will not constitute an endorsement of any candidate, nor will they mean that a candidate's qualifications for office have been vetted and confirmed by the Committee.

Campaigning:

Candidates will be given two opportunities to send a campaign message to our membership. In order to ensure that NAHJ members are not spammed, the emails will be sent by NAHJ staff. Candidates must turn in their first message of no more than 250 words to the election committee upon being notified where their nominations stand. The second message of no more than 350 words is due to the election committee by October 17.

Candidates may campaign through other means, including informational fliers, campaign buttons, Facebook fan pages, blogs, and videos uploaded to a social media site.

Write-Ins:

There will be a blank space on the ballot for write-in candidates. Any qualified NAHJ member may run a write-in campaign but will be subjected to the same vetting process and standards as candidates officially named on the ballot. A write-in candidate will not be allowed to sit on the board unless they pass the screening process.

Write-in candidates will be subject to the same rules of campaigning as those named on the ballot. Write-in candidates should make their intentions known to the elections committee, and after proper vetting will be allowed to send one direct email to members. The message must be no more than 350 words and due to the election committee by October 17.

Voting:

NAHJ members in good standing, with dues paid, by the date October 6, 2025 will be eligible to vote electronically and the vote will be sent to the Elections Committee. Each member may cast one ballot and must do so by 5 p.m. on the days the polls close. **Important note: The 2025 elections will be held entirely electronically as they have been done in previous years.**

Because the electronic voting system is disabled automatically by the company that NAHJ uses to prepare and tally the ballots, voters are strongly urged to cast their ballots early.

2025 ELECTIONS TIMELINE

Wednesday, July 9th: Elections Q&A Session at NAHJ25

Wednesday, September 17th: Announcement & Call for nominations.

Monday, October 6th: **The date of record.** *Members must be in good standing by this date to be eligible to vote. [Click here](#) to renew your dues.*

Monday, October 6th: Last day to submit nominations & Deadline to qualify for the ballot. **(10 signatures required for Regional Director & 25 for Student Rep)**

Friday, September 19th – Monday, October 6th: Vetting period conducted by the Elections Committee. (Committee will be vetting throughout nomination process)

- *The Elections committee will notify potential candidates where their nominations stand. Will also request a headshot, bio and 250-word campaign message.*

Tuesday, October 7th: NAHJ announces candidates. Email with candidates' messages will be sent to current members by NAHJ.

Tuesday, October 14th: Virtual candidate forum at 7 p.m. ET (If candidates absolutely cannot attend the forum, they may submit a 2-min video at least 24 hours in advance.)

Friday, October 17th: Candidates second campaign message is due to the elections committee.

Monday, October 20th: Candidates second message will be emailed to current members by NAHJ

Monday, October 20th: Election begins. Polls are open for two weeks.

Monday, November 3rd: Elections close at 5:00 p.m. EST. NAHJ will announce winners immediately following.

Further information about these deadlines and requirements:

Call for nominations and candidate requirements:

The Elections Committee should put out a call for nominations and publish a list of open seats and candidate requirements no less than one month (30 days) before the deadline to qualify for the ballot.

Interested NAHJ members should notify the Elections Committee as soon as possible of their desire to run for office.

Deadline for qualifying for the ballot:

Signatures from members in good standing meant to help potential candidates qualify for the ballot must be received by the Elections Committee -- preferably sent to the Committee chair -- before midnight (11:59 pm) on October 6, which the committee here defines as the 35-day preceding the scheduled closing of the polls.

Deadline for candidates to send in their vetting materials:

Candidates must turn in their vetting materials, headshot, bios, and candidate statements to the Elections Committee within one week (7 days) of qualifying for the ballot. Failure to do so will delay candidates' screening and ballot preparations, and will be taken by the Committee as a candidate's withdrawal from the race unless the Committee is notified of a potential problem before the deadline.

Deadline to become a member in good standing:

NAHJ members must be members in good standing, with their dues paid, on the same date that candidates' vetting materials are due. This is because the company that NAHJ uses to prepare and tally

its electronic ballots needs several weeks to create those ballots and make them accessible to eligible voters.

Deadline to request a paper or absentee ballot:

Eligible voters must request a paper ballot at least one week (7 days) prior to the opening of the polls.

Paper ballots should be sent to the Elections Committee.

Scheduling the opening of the polls:

The committee has determined that the polls should be open for no less than two weeks, in order to give all members -- whether voting electronically, in person, or by absentee -- enough time to cast their ballot.

Scheduling the closing of the polls:

The committee has determined that the polls should close at 5 p.m. ET on November 3, 2025. This will be done electronically by the company NAHJ uses to prepare and tally Ballots.

BALLOT COUNTING AND ELECTIONS RESULTS

The Elections Committee will verify the election results, under the watch of the Executive Director and any candidate who wishes to be present. Results are to be announced on November 3, 2025.

Post-election:

Candidates elected to Board of Directors **ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND THEIR FIRST BOARD MEETING ON THE SCHEDULED DATE FOLLOWING THE CLOSE OF THE ELECTIONS.**

By the Winter Board meeting, all Regional Directors should have identified an alternate, as required in the bylaws, who can serve in case of their absence. Those alternates will also be placed on a list of potential future board candidates kept by the Elections Committee. All other board members are also asked to identify a potential successor to be added to the Elections Committee's list.

Questions & Concerns

If a candidate or voter has a question or concern about the election, they-should email the elections chair and copy the president.

- elections@nahj.org
- delvir@nahj.org