

By-laws Polish Canadian Women's Federation

2015, Hamilton, ON

Chapter I **Name, character of the organization**

1. The organization's name is – "Polish Canadian Women's Federation" – thereafter also referred to as the "Federation".
2. The head office of the Federation are located in the province of the Federation's Executive Board.
3. The Federation is a non-soliciting, not-for-profit Canadian corporation whose social-charitable activities are guided by democratic principles.
4. The activities of the Federation include maintaining links with the Polish Nation, the defense of its good name and promoting the knowledge of historical truth about Poland within Canada.

Chapter II **Goals**

5. Increase knowledge of Polish culture, arts and traditions in Canada.
6. Active participation in Canadian social life and pursuit of the achievement of a significant place within Canadian society.
7. Recognition of the family as the basic social unit and the defense of life.
8. Attainment of equality of rights for all women.
9. **Cooperation with women's and other organizations in Canada.**
10. Moral and financial support for all people of Polish origin.
11. Develop among the young generation of Polish descent a spirit of national Polish traditions and custody of the Jadwiga Dobrucka Youth Fund.

Chapter III **Scope of activities**

12. Increase knowledge of Polish culture, arts and national traditions in Canada by organizing discussion meetings, public lectures and readings, topical courses and seminars, expositions, commemorative celebrations on important national anniversaries and holidays, etc.
13. Keeping the use of the Polish language and maintaining national traditions.
14. Providing information and help to members of the Federation and caring for sick members and the elderly.
15. Support Polish education in Canada and abroad.
16. Develop links with youth of Polish origin.
17. Publish our own magazine „Informator”.

Chapter IV Organizational structure

18. The basic organizational unit of the Federation is the Branch, namely: **Polish Canadian Women's Federation, Branch No.**
19. To create a new Branch a **minimum** of 5 (five) founding candidates is required and the approval of the Federation's Executive Board.

Governance

20. The Federation's governing bodies are:
 - A) Convention
 - B) Executive Board
 - C) Main Review Committee
 - D) Committee for Dispute Resolution
21. Governance of the Branches is based on:
 - A) General Meeting of the Branch
 - B) Branch Executive Board
 - C) Branch Review Committee

Convention

22. The Federation's Convention has decision-making powers over the programs and by-laws of the Polish Canadian Women's Federation and it is the final instance for appeals. Only Branch delegates, the Federation's Executive Board and representatives of the special committees may participate in the Convention.
23. A branch with up to 10 members may delegate one person.. **Each additional 10 members gives a Branch right to one additional delegate.**
24. Notice of a Convention and an agenda must be sent to branches six weeks before the start date of the Convention. An updated agenda and minutes of the previous Convention must be sent to the branches 21 days before the start date of the Convention.
25. The Convention of the Polish Canadian Women's Federation elects:
 - A) Executive Board
 - B) Main Review Committee
 - C) Committee for Dispute Resolution
 - D) Special committees such as: by-laws, press, others.
26. The full cost of participation of delegates to the Convention is covered by their respective Branch. The cost of participation of the president and treasurer of the Executive Board is the responsibility of the Federation's Executive Board.
27. The Federation's Convention may:
 - A) Decide to change the location of the head office to another city where an active Branch is present
 - B) Is the ultimate instance of appeals for decisions of the Committee for Dispute Resolution.
 - C) Propose and approve changes to the By-laws and Regulations of the Federation.
 - D) Carry out and approve the dissolution of the Federation.
 - E) Resolutions approved at Convention must be sent to the Federation's Executive Board within one month.

- F) Minutes of the last Convention must be sent to the Federation's Executive Board within six (6) months after the Convention, and distributed by the Executive Board to the Branches within the following month.

Executive Board of the Polish Canadian Women's Federation

28. The Federation's Executive Board is elected for a three-year term. The Board will be composed of members of the Branches as follows:
- A) president
 - B) past president
 - C) four vice –presidents (one for the Executive, and one for each region: Western Canada and Central Ontario)
 - D) secretary
 - E) treasurer
 - F) four members

Presidents of the Executive Board may be elected for no more than two terms.

29. The Executive Board provides steering and coordinates the work of the Federation and is its external representative. Decisions of the Executive should be taken in consultation with the Branches.

Main Review Committee

30. The Main Review Committee is composed of five members, three presiding and three substitutes. Which represent the Branches and have adequate qualifications. The President of the Committee and the other members are elected by a separate vote at Convention. The President of the Committee should participate in the meetings of the Executive Board in an advisory role.
31. Purpose of the Main Review Committee:
- A) control of the financial activities of the Federation's Executive Board and of the Special Committees.
 - B) ensure the legality and purpose of the expenses, put forward the motion to approve the final report of the retiring Executive Board .
 - C) the Main Review Committee is independent of the Federation's Executive, and watches over its work and answers only to the Convention.

Committee for Dispute Resolution

32. An issue can be raised for review at the Dispute Resolution Committee by:
- A) The Federation's Executive Board
 - B) Branch Executive Board
 - C) Member of the Federation
33. The Committee for Dispute Resolution is composed of five members from different Branches elected at Convention, and in the case of conflict of interest, the member of the Branch affected by the conflict does not participate in the resolution of that specific dispute.

Special Committees

34. Special Committees work alongside the Federation's Executive and follow their own regulations, which are approved by the Convention and if they are called in between Conventions approved by the Federation's Executive Board.

Branch General Meeting

35. Annual Meetings of each Branch are called by its Executive Board to provide an Annual Report. A General Meeting to elect Board members should be called by the Board every two years. A written notice and agenda of the meeting must be sent to all branch members of record at least two weeks before the planned meeting date. Notice of the meeting must also be sent to the Federation's Executive Board and to the corresponding regional vice-president.
36. The Branch General Meeting is chaired by a member of the Branch elected by simple majority of those present at the meeting. The members present at the meeting also elect by simple majority a secretary to take the minutes.
37. Members in good standing who have paid their annual dues have the right to vote.
38. General Meeting:
- A) summarizes the Branch activities for the term that just ended
 - B) at the motion of the Review Committee approves the final report of the retiring Executive Board
 - C) elects a new Executive Board and Review Committee for the Branch
 - D) decides on all matters related to the Branch and proposes an action plan for the new term.

Branch Board of Directors

39. The Branch Executive Board is composed of:
- A) president
 - B) vice - president
 - C) past president
 - D) secretary
 - E) treasurer
 - F) members of the Board and presidents of committees elected at Convention.
40. The Branch Executive Board
- A) directs all activities of the Branch
 - B) prepares reports and proposals
 - C) represents the Branch
 - D) initiates cooperation with other organizations
 - E) may increase the amount of dues or cancel them
41. The term of the Executive Board for a Branch is two years.
A Branch president can be elected for a maximum of 3 terms.
42. The Review Committee for the Branch is composed of the president and two members of the Branch and a substitute member.
The goal of the Branch Review Committee is:
- A) carry out the control of accounts and records of the branch
 - B) ensure the legality and good use of funds and disbursements
 - C) put forward the motion to approve the final report of the retiring Branch Executive Board
 - D) the president of the Review Committee should participate in the meetings of the Branch Executive Board as an advisor.

Chapter VI Membership

43. Regular membership is attained upon:
- A) contacting the Branch Executive and filling an application
 - B) approval of the application by the Branch Executive
 - C) signing the declaration and payment of the dues.
44. Regular members have the right to:
- A) participate in all activities of the Federation
 - B) elect and be elected to the Executive of the Federation
 - C) make use of all the means of assistance that the Federation has at its disposal.
45. Regular members have the responsibility to:
- A) act according to the By-laws of the Federation
 - B) collaborate towards the attainment of goals and tasks of the Federation
 - C) pay the required dues.
46. Extraordinary membership may be granted to persons who support the activities and goals of the organization, and help in the attainment of specific goals. Extraordinary membership can be obtained upon approval by the voting members at Convention. A written application must be submitted one month before the date of the Convention.
47. Extraordinary members have the right to:
- A) participate in meetings and activities of the Branch without the right to vote.
48. Membership in the Branch expires if:
- A) a written notice of resignation is presented to the Branch
 - B) Branch approval by a simple majority vote
49. The Branch Executive Board has the right to suspend members rights under the following:
- A) in case of a dispute until such is resolved;
 - B) suspended members can appeal to the Federation's Committee for Dispute Resolution.
 - C) suspended members who had financial authority lose the right to dispose of the Branch assets and documentation until the dispute is resolved and Branches must ensure the corresponding financial institutions and other interested parties are notified.**
50. Membership may be cancelled by agreement of the Federation's Executive under the following:
- A) committing an act not in keeping with the by-laws of the Federation
 - B) an action harmful to the Federation
 - C) failure to pay dues for two consecutive years.
51. In case of suspension of the president of a Branch, the function of president will be performed by the vice-president, until the dispute is resolved or until new elections are called.

Chapter VII

Finances

- 53. The Federation's sources of funds are:
 - A) membership dues
 - B) donations and bequests
 - C) income from organized events
- 54. Membership dues are paid to the Branch Treasurer. The amount of dues is set by the Branch General Meeting.
- 55. The Convention sets the amount of dues that Branches should send to the Federation's Executive.

Chapter VIII Meeting organization

- 56. The Convention is called every three years by the Federation's Executive. An Extraordinary Convention may be called by the Federation's Executive upon demands raised by a majority of the Branches in which case it should be held no longer than 60 days from the moment the written demand is received.
- 57. Delegates to the Convention have the right to provide a written proxy to another delegate or to the Federation's Executive. One delegate should not have more than 3 proxies.
- 58. Branch delegates are granted proxy votes after the Branch has fulfilled the condition of being up-to-date with the corresponding payment of membership dues to the Federation's Executive.
- 59. Quorum in the Federation's Convention and the Branch General Meetings is achieved if at least half of the voting members are present at the beginning of the meeting.
- 60. Approval of resolutions and proposals is by simple majority.
- 61. An Extraordinary General Meeting of the Branch can be called by
 - A) the Branch Executive Board
 - B) the Branch Review Committee
 - C) at the request of at least half the Branch members within 3 weeks after receipt of the written request.
- 62. An Extraordinary General Branch Meeting may only discuss and resolve the specific issues for which the meeting was called.

Chapter IX Final regulations

- 63. Polish women's organizations with similar mission and values and who support the Federation's goals and activities may become affiliates on the basis of special agreements. Approval of such agreements should be granted at the first Convention following their signing.
- 64. Proposals to change By-laws should be forwarded by members to their respective Branch Executive Board. The Branch Executive Board will forward them to the By-laws Committee at least six months before the Convention. Changes in the By-laws

are approved at Convention by 2/3 votes of the participants present at the Convention.

65. The decision to dissolve the Federation can be made at an Extraordinary Convention with the approval of 2/3 of the votes of delegates with voting mandates.
66. The Extraordinary Convention that approves the decision to dissolve the Federation must dispose of the assets of the Federation's Executive.
67. The decision to dissolve a Branch must be approved at a Branch General Meeting. Support of 2/3 of voting members is required. A representative of the Federation's Executive must be present at the Branch General Meeting.
68. The Branch General Meeting that approves the dissolution of the Branch must secure and dispose of the Branch assets by committee agreement and notify of the results the Federation's Executive, as well as provide the Federation's Executive full documentation after dissolution of the Branch.
69. The Convention recommends the assets of the dissolved Branch be transferred to the Federation's Executive, however the ultimate decision in this matter resides with the Branch General Meeting. If not transferred to the Federation's Executive, the dissolved Branch assets must be fully donated to a charitable organization according to the mission and values of the Polish Canadian Women's Federation.