

The Branch Board

Purposes:

The board integrates the activities of the branch. The board does the preliminary thinking, discussing, and planning for the total branch programming of programs, projects, and community activities.

Ideally, the board provides for leadership training. When branch members serve on various committees, they learn the fundamentals of AAUW purposes, policies and procedures and become active participants in the branch. This is the training ground for future AAUW leaders. Branch officers should be alert to recognize and recommend branch members for committees and committee members for positions of leadership in AAUW.

The board provides for continuity. Each board member keeps a file of important information and materials pertaining to the position. This information is passed on to their successors.

The board serves as a channel of communications between the appropriate Association and AAUW Maryland officers and committee chairs and the branch. A variety of communications from the state and the Association are received by branch board members. They are expected to share this information with the rest of the board and the branch, to recommend any suggested action, to reply promptly when requested, and to complete an annual report, if required by local bylaws.

Composition of Branch Board

Maryland requires a non-profit organization to have a minimum of three board members and three officers – a President, Secretary and a Treasurer. The officers are also counted as board members. An individual can hold two positions, with the exception that the President and Vice President can't be the same person. For example, the branch can have a president, secretary-treasurer, and a third board member who is not an officer.

AAUW requires a branch to have two officers who are different people – President/Administrator and Treasurer/Finance Officer. Your Branch by-laws should name the three officers that are required as a minimum. Depending on the size and needs of your branch you may want to consider having additional elected officers, such as a Program Vice President, Public Policy Vice-President, and Membership Vice President.

You may also want to have appointed board positions, such as College/University Representative, AAUW Funds Chair, Diversity and Inclusion Chair, Legal Advocacy Fund Chair, and Bylaws Chair.

Ensure that the branch has a standing committee or an individual to work with the State Diversity and Inclusion Chair. This is a best practice for an organization such as ours.

Be flexible with elected and appointed officers – perhaps three will do, or you may want to combine offices. Think about Co-Presidents, two recording secretaries: one for the board meetings and one for the branch meetings. For example, you may want to combine the secretary(s) position with the treasurer.

Obligations of an AAUW Branch:

An AAUW branch is not a local group operating independently of the Association or state. It must:

- Operate under affiliate agreement and bylaws approved by the Association and state.
- Hold two types of regular meetings: board and general (branch) meetings. Both are conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.
- Inform prospective members of AAUW objectives prior to joining. If a person has joined for any other than AAUW purposes, a branch is not obligated to meet their wishes.
- Conduct programs of a caliber consistent with the purposes and policies of the Association and the state.
- Operate with a budget and use branch funds for AAUW activities exclusively. Members may be encouraged to contribute as individuals to worthy projects, but an AAUW branch is not a promoter of the program and projects of other community organizations.

Relationship of the Branch to the State and the Association

Be familiar with the Mission, Vision and Purposes of AAUW – the Association and state. The Branch should make every effort to send delegates/representatives to state conventions, conferences, workshops and general meetings. The Branch should encourage members to participate in Association events such as educational webinars and keep apprised of news from the Association.

Provisions should be made in the branch budget to cover expenses, to the extent possible, of promoting a relationship with the state and the Association.

AAUW resources and publications are available on the Association website.

The AAUW Funds and the AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund are unique. Every Branch should learn about, talk about and support them. This is an excellent way to support higher education and equity for women.

Each branch has a responsibility to support, to the best of its ability, state projects and priorities.

Through state channels, branches are urged to exchange experiences and information, discuss problems, and make suggestions. Two-way communication between state chairs and the branch counterparts is a necessary part of this process.

Branches should be prepared to offer to host state meetings.

Guidelines for Branch Fundraising

The Association Board recommends that branches set dues at a level which will cover normal operating expenses of the branch.

Fundraising activities should be limited to support of AAUW Funds and Legal Advocacy Fund goals and occasionally, for branch-sponsored public and community service projects. Unless a branch is a 501c3, only donations to the AAUW Funds and Legal Advocacy Fund are tax deductible.

Any fundraising undertaken by a Branch should be carefully reviewed in relation to tax laws as well as AAUW Guidelines . Please refer to tax resources at www.irs.gov and AAUW Guidelines at www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/state-branch/fundraising-policies-what-members-need-to-know/

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