

State Network Model

Why change the state model?

While Women's Council underwent a network model overhaul in 2016, the focus was really on local networks, with the state redesign left largely intact. The model is intended as a set of minimum standards that all state networks must follow in key operating areas to ensure a baseline of support to local networks, consistency in member value and experience, and the integrity of the Women's Council brand.

How soon do changes need to occur?

If approved, Women's Council will conduct comprehensive training in the first half of 2020, with 2021 being the actual transition year. The proposal as outlined would have state networks operating under the new model by January 2021.

What type of training will assist us in making the transition?

A comprehensive training program is envisioned including webinars and Zoom calls, as well as live sessions at Women's Council national meetings (including Midyear and Network 360). Trainers will be available to conduct field visits to states as well.

My state has special bylaws provisions that are unique to our state. Can we modify state bylaws to meet special circumstances with our state?

No. Currently, 23 states have various "localized" bylaws. Going forward, the state model bylaws will be standardized across all states, with no modifications allowed (beyond state dues amounts). Note that the model bylaws take into account best practices for states of varying sizes. To the extent that standing rules don't conflict with bylaws, we recommend that unique situations be addressed in the standing rules.

Why can't National Affiliates participate in official leadership positions like on the local level?

Note that the state network has a special role in delivering value to local networks and members through leadership development, local network support, industry relations, and branding. This charge is best overseen by the core membership base (REALTOR® members) and is a leadership opportunity for them. Additionally, national bylaws also prohibit leadership team (or line office) positions with national affiliates.

Why are there so many mandated committees for the state network in the new model?

The model requires 5 mandated committees, with the possibility of adding project teams as needed (with no maximum). Having these committees is a necessary function to fulfill the state network's unique role of delivering value to local networks and members through leadership development, local network support, industry relations, and branding. Note that the committees offer increased leadership development opportunities and decreased expectations in areas that local networks need to focus on (ex, member recruitment, events, etc). The required committees are a reflection of the new purpose of the state network.

Does the new state model require that we use the state microsite provided by national?

Yes, the new model mandates that states use the Women's Council provided technology. Note that each microsite can fulfill all obligations of the state network model and all features are live and fully functional

for states. The "old" technology did not offer state websites, which is why there are home-made sites out there, but states should plan now for moving all information to the national provided microsite.

My state network is too small to reach all of the minimum standards as outlined in the model. What accommodations can be made for smaller states?

Note that the model was designed as minimum standards, and the member groups that designed the state model included state networks of various sizes, so smaller states had a voice in the process. During the one year transitional period, various training methods will be outlined to assist states in getting up to speed.

I like the new model, but my network has no state. How do I get a state network started?

This process has not changed. To have a state network, the state must have a minimum of 2 networks and 50 members. Where that threshold is not met, a National Liaison can provide baseline support.

Does the new state model give less involvement to past state presidents?

The state model is designed to encourage continued involvement from past state presidents. This includes a standing Past Presidents Advisory Committee, no restrictions on committee involvement, and immediate past president involvement in nominating committee.

There is a new position called State Liaison. What is this all about?

This newly created position is designed to oversee local network compliance, including development of an annual plan and budget, and provide support where needed. The State Liaison acts as the first contact to resolve local operating issues or conflicts and coaches local network leaders to improve network performance. They are an integral member of various groups, including the Leadership Identification and Development committee, National Liaison team, the state network leadership team, and national governing board. Given the important stature of this position, training is provided at Network 360 Leadership Conference and they are integral in identifying potential new local networks and following protocols to chartering.

Isn't the State Liaison the same as the governor position?

No. The governor position has always been vague, but the State Liaison position has specific job responsibilities and an elevated visibility within the state network, including part of the leadership team (of the state) and some dotted line reporting responsibilities to national. The State Liaison is specifically tasked with overseeing network compliance and identifying new networks. Additionally, there is only one per state. Its an appointed (versus elected) position. Under the new model, there will no longer be governors.

What happens if a state does not follow through on minimum standards?

Each year, a state will enter into an affiliation agreement. Similar to the local level, it outlines the duties, responsibilities, and process if standards are not followed. The National Liaison and national leadership team will address non-performance and disbandment process will be followed that is similar to local networks.