

# MRSA ELECTIONS AND VOTING POLICY

## SECTION I - FUNDAMENTAL MATTERS

### 1.0 POLICY RATIONALE

1.01 This policy covers the process of conducting a ballot within the membership of the Mount Royal Staff Association. It includes the process for elections, ratification votes, resolutions and other general votes that may from time to time be conducted on behalf of the MRSA.

Other votes at Annual General Meetings (AGM), General Meetings, Special Meetings and MRSA Executive Board meetings will follow the procedures laid down in *Robert's Rules of Order*.

In the event of conflict between this policy and the MRSA Constitution, the Constitution shall prevail.

### 2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

2.01 The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for fair, accessible, transparent and timely elections; continuity in governance, and to ensure vacancies are filled within the MRSA.

### 3.0 DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are used in this policy:

3.01 **General Election** – An election in which members of the MRSA vote to elect a member to the MRSA Executive Board or a MRSA Committee.

3.02 **By-Election** – An election held between general elections to fill a vacant seat, to replace a member of the MRSA Executive or MRSA Committee who has resigned or was required to step down.

3.03 **Constitutional Vote** – A vote that is called by the MRSA Executive to bring changes or amendments to the MRSA Constitution.

3.04 **Ratification Vote** – A vote that is called by the MRSA Negotiating Committee to accept or reject a vote on a new Collective Agreement

3.05 **Non-disclosure** – A formal agreement for maintaining the confidentiality of a process, program or operation such that all information about that subject can only be disclosed to signatories of the non-disclosure agreement.

3.06 **Plurality** - The candidate or proposition with the greatest number of votes actually cast shall be declared the winner, regardless of the number of choices on the ballot and even in the absence of majority support for that candidate or proposition amongst the ballots actually cast.

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- 3.07        **MRSA Members** - as defined in the MRSA Constitution Article 3.04
- 3.08        **MRSA Officer**- shall include the following positions; the President, the two (2) Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer/Secretary and the Past President.
- 3.09        **MRSA Executive** - shall consist of its officers, the Board of Governors Representative, and a minimum of eight (8) Directors at Large elected or appointed from the membership.

## SECTION II - ELECTIONS AND VOTING INFORMATION

### 4.0 PURPOSE OF ELECTIONS AND VOTING

Voting shall take place for the election of the MRSA Executive, Board of Governors Representative and all MRSA committees as outlined in the committee “Terms of Reference” documents. Voting will also be conducted for the ratification of the Collective Agreement, amendments to the Constitution and any other such items as deemed necessary by the Executive.

- 4.01        The following are the types of elections and votes:
- a. general elections held annually to fill vacant positions;
  - b. by-elections called at any time when deemed necessary by the MRSA Executive to fill vacant positions;
  - c. votes on constitutional changes called when deemed necessary by the MRSA Executive to accept/reject changes to the MRSA Constitution;
  - d. votes on ratification called when deemed necessary by the Negotiations Committee to accept/reject a proposed collective agreement; and
  - e. other types of votes.

### 5.0 FREQUENCY OF ELECTIONS AND VOTES

- 5.01        The following is the frequency of elections and votes:
- a. general elections – to be held annually, preferably prior to the General Meeting, as per Article 18 of the MRSA Constitution;
  - b. by-elections – as necessary to fill a Vacant Position (SEE Section V);
  - c. constitutional changes or amendments – as necessary as per Article 22 of the MRSA Constitution;

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- d. ratification votes – as deemed necessary by the MRSA Negotiating Committee; and
- e. other types of votes as deemed necessary by the MRSA Executive.

### 6.0 ELIGIBILITY TO VOTE

- 6.01 All MRSA members in good standing are eligible to vote.
- 6.02 The list of voters that includes all members shall be compiled one (1) week prior to the elections.

### 7.0 ELIGIBILITY TO RUN FOR OFFICE

- 7.01 All MRSA members in good standing can run for office with the following qualification:
  - a. candidates for the position of President must be full time, 12- month employees and are required to have served a minimum of one (1) year on the MRSA Executive Board;
  - b. candidates for the positions of Vice-President, and Treasurer must be full time, 12- month employees and are required to have served a minimum of one (1) year on the MRSA Executive Board;
  - c. candidates for the position of Board of Governors Representative are preferred to have served a minimum of one (1) year on the MRSA Executive Board;
  - d. no member may hold more than one elected position on the Executive excluding committees.
  - e. for the purpose of eligibility, one (1) year shall be defined as twelve (12) months cumulative, and will generally be understood to align with the fiscal year (July 1 to June 30).

## **SECTION III - ELECTION AND VOTING DETAILS FOR MRSA OFFICERS, EXECUTIVE BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

### 8.0 MRSA OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE

- 8.01 The following officers or executive positions shall be elected from the membership during a general election or a by-election if the position is vacant:
  - a. President - shall serve a two (2) year term beginning in an even-numbered year;
  - b. Vice-President 1 - shall serve a two (2) year term beginning in an odd-numbered year;

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- c. Vice-President 2 - shall serve a two (2) year term beginning in an even-numbered year;
- d. Treasurer/Secretary - shall serve a two (2) year term beginning in an odd-numbered year;
- e. Directors at Large - a minimum of eight (8) members, shall each serve a two (2) year term with staggered terms. i.e. four (4) members will be elected during even years and four (4) members will be elected during odd years; and
- f. Board of Governors Representative - shall serve one two (2) year term with selection to be confirmed by the appropriate Alberta Government ministry. This representative can only serve for two (2) consecutive terms.

Even Year	Odd Year
President	Vice-President 1
Vice-President 2	Treasurer/Secretary
Director at Large 2	Director at Large 1
Director at Large 4	Director at Large 3
Director at Large 6	Director at Large 5
Director at Large 8	Director at Large 7
	Board of Governors Representative

### 9.0 ELECTING MEMBERS OF MRSA COMMITTEES

9.01 The following committee positions shall be elected from the membership:

- a. Negotiating Committee Members- shall each serve a minimum of two (2) years or the duration of the negotiation process if it is longer than the two years. There will be a total of five (5) members, the President, two (2) members elected during even-numbered years and two (2) members elected during odd-numbered years); and
- b. EDT Committee Members- shall each serve a two (2) year term. There will be a minimum of five (5) to a maximum of seven (7) members elected with four (4) members elected during even-numbered years and three (3) elected during odd-numbered years.

**SEE CURRENT MRSA COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE DOCUMENTS FOR MORE INFORMATION.**

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### SECTION IV - ELECTIONS OFFICERS

#### 10.0 ELECTIONS OFFICERS

Elections officers are the people involved in holding the MRSA elections.

10.01       **Elections Chair** - The MRSA Executive Assistant shall function as the Elections Chair. He/she shall oversee the entire process of any election, ratification or other ballot. The Elections Chair is required to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement (**SEE APPENDIX 1**) for each election.

10.02       **Nominations Officer** - The Nominations Officer is appointed by the MRSA Executive and is responsible for seeking nominees for elected positions. In the absence of an appointed Nominations Officer, the MRSA Executive will serve this function. This position is necessary for both electronic voting and manual voting.

### SECTION V - ELECTIONS

#### 11.0 PROCEDURES FOR GENERAL AND BY-ELECTIONS

A general election is held annually to fill vacant positions (SEE 4.01). Where a vacancy exists, a by-election may be called at the discretion of the MRSA Executive.

#### 11.01       **Vacant Positions**

Vacant positions occur when:

- a. a incumbent's term ends;
- b. an incumbent steps down or is removed from a position; or
- c. if a general election has occurred and there are no successful candidates to fill the position(s).

#### 11.02       **Declaring Vacant Positions**

A Vacant Position(s) is declared:

- a. three (3) weeks before the scheduled date for a general election (SEE 5.01), the Executive shall inform the Elections Chair of the vacant positions and those whose term is about to expire;
- b. if an incumbent leaves or is removed from office before the term is complete and it is greater than ninety (90) calendar days preceding a general election, then a vacancy

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must be declared and a by-election is to be held ; or

- c. any vacancies occurring within the ninety (90) calendar day period may be filled by an interim volunteer appointed by the Executive to fulfill the duties of office until the next general election.

### 11.03 **Filling Vacant Positions**

- a. A general election will be called to fill vacant positions annually (SEE 5.01a)
- b. In the event that no individual is elected to succeed an incumbent, the incumbent may remain in office in an interim capacity until a by-election is called (SEE 5.01b).
- c. A by-election may be called at any time at the discretion of the MRSA Executive to fill a vacancy (SEE 5.01b).
- d. Any vacancies occurring within the ninety (90) calendar day period preceding a general election may be filled by an interim volunteer appointed by the Executive to fulfill the duties of office until the next general election.
- e. After an election or a by-election and in the event the position still remains unfilled, the MRSA Executive Board shall have the authority to appoint a member to fill the vacant position until the next general election.
- f. No member may hold more than one elected position on the Executive excluding committees.

### 11.04 **Nominations**

The following is the nominations procedure:

- a. immediately following the Declaration of Vacancy, the Elections Chair shall announce to the membership what positions are eligible for nomination and the date of the election. Nominations will be accepted until one (1) week prior to the general election;
- b. to submit nominations, members must complete the Nomination Form from the MRSA website or obtain a copy from the MRSA office. The completed Nomination Form (SEE APPENDICES 2 and 3) must be emailed or hand delivered to the Elections Chair care of the MRSA office by the specified deadline;
- c. a Nomination Campaign Statement, found on the MRSA website, must be completed and accompany the Nomination Form (SEE APPENDIX 4);
- d. all MRSA Nomination documentation must be completed and submitted by the deadline to be eligible for nomination; and

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### 11.05 **Notification of an Election**

The membership will be notified of an election in the following manner:

- a. the membership will be notified by email that nominations are open three (3) weeks prior to the general or by-election. At this point, the membership will also be notified of the specific dates and times of the general election;
- b. the membership will be notified of eligible candidates, one (1) working day after the closing of nominations (one (1) week prior to the general election); and
- c. notification will include the length of each term (SEE 8.01).

### 11.06 **Canvassing**

- a. Candidates may begin to canvas support from the membership one (1) working day after the closing of nominations.
- b. Any candidate found violating this time frame must be reported to the Elections Chair and his/her name is to be removed from the ballot.

## **SECTION VI - CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES AND RATIFICATION VOTES**

### 12.0 PROCEDURES FOR CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

A vote for Constitutional changes or amendments shall be called by the MRSA Executive.

#### 12.01 **Notification**

In the event that the membership is required to vote on matters other than an election of the Executive and committees, then the purpose of the vote and information on the subject of the vote must be announced formally and be made available to all members.

Members shall be given the opportunity to review the information on the subject of the vote. Notice of the proposed amendments must be given to the membership at least ten (10) working days prior to the vote.

A minimum release shall include the following:

- a. posting on the MRSA website; and
- b. a direct email to all members;

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### 12.02 **Vote Dates**

Changes to the Constitution can be voted on at the same time as a general election. If not, it is recommended that voting on changes to the Constitution occur at the same time as a ratification vote to ensure the voter turnout threshold is met for Constitutional changes.

## 13.0 PROCEDURES FOR RATIFICATION VOTES

A Ratification Vote will be called by the MRSA Negotiation Team in order to receive formal approval from the membership for the negotiated Collective Agreement, in order that it can become valid or operative.

### 13.01 **Notification**

In the event that the membership is required to vote on matters other than an election of the Executive and committees, then the purpose of the vote and information on the subject of the vote must be announced formally and be made available to all members.

Members shall be given the opportunity to review the information on the subject of the vote. Notice of the proposed amendments must be given to the membership at least ten (10) working days prior to the vote.

A minimum release shall include the following:

- a. posting on the MRSA website; and
- b. a direct email to all members.

### 13.02 **Vote Dates**

A ratification vote may take place at the same time as a general election. If so, it will be a separate question.

## 14.0 OTHER TYPES OF VOTES

Other types of votes, such as specified levies (See the MRSA Constitution) or special resolutions, may be called by the MRSA Executive.

### 14.01 **Notification**

In the event that the membership is required to vote on matters other than an election of the Executive and committees, a constitutional change or amendment, or a ratification vote, then the purpose of the vote and information on the subject of the vote must be announced formally and be made available to all members.

Members shall be given the opportunity to review the information on the subject of the

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vote. The period between the notification and the vote will be determined by the Executives. A minimum of one (1) working day is required for the review of information.

### SECTION VII - THE BALLOTING PROCESS

#### 15.0 CONDUCTING THE VOTE

##### 15.01 **Requirements of the Electronic Voting System**

To conduct a vote, the following shall occur:

- a. votes will occur for all General Elections, By-Elections, Ratifications of the Collective Agreement, changes to the Constitution and any other votes indicated to the membership;
- b. the Election Chair will incorporate the official Mount Royal University Staff list into the electronic voting software prior to the elections;
- c. the electronic voting software that is selected shall:
  - i. ensure that only members are able to vote;
  - ii. ensure that members are only able to vote once;
  - iii. ensure there is no connection between the voter's name and his/her choice;
  - iv. produce a list of members who have and have not voted; and
  - v. have a function to clearly define the voting date(s) and time(s).
- d. voting will commence on the first day at 9:00 a.m. and conclude at 4:00 p.m. on the last day of the designated voting day.

##### 15.02 **Advance Polls**

- a. Advance polls will not be conducted. Members will know in advance the election dates and if off campus, and will be encouraged to log into their Mount Royal University email account to allow them to vote during the regular voting dates.

##### 15.03 **Balloting Process**

- a. An email with a link to a ballot shall be sent to the membership on the day of the vote. If a member does not receive the ballot electronically, it is the obligation of that member to contact the MRSA office to request a ballot be sent.
- b. A reminder email, generated from the electronic voting program, will be sent to each member that has not yet voted to encourage participation in the vote.

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- c. Electronic ballots will not be nullified upon elector request. Once a vote has been cast, it is final.

### 15.04 **Counting the Electronic Ballots**

The voting program will generate the results of the vote. The following process shall be observed:

- a. all elections will be determined by plurality vote; and
- b. in the event of a tie, a second vote will be held the following week for all candidates for that role. If there is still a tie after the second ballot, then the successful candidate will be determined by random draw performed by the Elections Chair.

## **SECTION VIII - REPORTING THE RESULTS**

### 16.01 **Reporting the Results**

The following process shall be used to report the results:

- a. the Elections Chair shall be responsible for the release of the results of the vote regardless of the purpose of the ballot;
- b. the notification shall include the particulars of what was voted on and the results of that vote;
- c. the Elections Chair shall have the results distributed such that every member has a reasonable opportunity to review the results;
- d. a minimum release shall include the following:
  - i. posting on the MRSA website;
  - ii. a direct email to all members;
  - iii. an email shall be sent to notify the MRU President's Office, Human Resources and the Alberta Labour Relations Board of any changes to the MRSA Executive Board or the Collective Agreement. The Alberta Minister in charge of post-secondary education must be informed by the MRSA office of a change in the Board of Governors position.
- e. results must be released within two (2) working days of the vote.

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### SECTION IX - DESTROYING THE BALLOTS

#### 17.01 Destroying the Ballots

The destruction of ballots will not be required. The information stored on the voting site is secure, confidential and each member's vote is accessible only by that individual voter; no one else can see how a voter voted.

### SECTION X - CHALLENGES TO THE VOTE

#### 18.01 Challenges to the Vote

To challenge a vote, the following must occur:

- a. a print or electronic challenge to the vote, containing signatures of 10 members outlining their concerns, must be submitted to the Elections Chair; (SEE Appendix 5);
- b. as per Challenge to the Vote Procedure, a challenge to the vote must be received by the Elections Chair within three (3) working days of the reporting of the election results;
- c. a challenge to the vote will be presented by the Elections Chair to the MRSA Executive Board for their review;
- d. any challenge deemed valid by the MRSA Executive Board shall result in voiding of the contested result and a call for a by-election;
- e. depending on the results of the investigation of the challenge, the candidate involved in the challenge may be permitted to run again; and
- f. any intentional infractions of the Elections and Voting Policy will result in the candidate's name being removed from the ballot by the Elections Chair.

This document shall not be modified or changed without the approval of the MRSA Executive.

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**APPENDIX 1**

**NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT FOR MRSA ELECTIONS CHAIR**

OATH OF REPRESENTATIVE

I, THE UNDERSIGNED, AUTHORIZED TO UPHOLD THE RULES AND REGULATIONS AS DISCLOSED IN THE MRSA ELECTIONS AND VOTING POLICY DOCUMENT, SWEAR OR SOLEMNLY AFFIRM THAT:

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
(PLEASE PRINT)

- I will not disclose any confidential MRSA business;
- I will not use any MRSA information for personal use;
- I will maintain and aid in maintaining the secrecy of the vote;
- I will not directly or indirectly induce an elector's voting intentions; AND
- I will not interfere with the marking of a ballot by an elector or obtain or communicate any information as to how an elector is about to vote or has voted.

**SWORN OR AFFIRMED BEFORE**

This \_\_\_\_\_ Day of \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Person Taking the Oath

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of MRSA President

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### APPENDIX 2

#### MRSA NOMINATION FORM-ODD YEARS

**Candidates must be MRSA members. Completed Nomination Forms must be submitted electronically or in a sealed envelope addressed to the Elections Chair in the MRSA office by 4:00 pm on \_\_\_\_\_ . In the event that the office is not open, please put them in the mailbox across the hall from the MRSA Office. All positions commence July 1.**

I hereby nominate: \_\_\_\_\_ for the position of:  
(Please Print)

(Check one box only)

**Vice-President 1**

The Vice-President's position is a two-year term. Candidates for the positions of Vice-President, Treasurer/Secretary and Board of Governors Representative must be full time, 12- month employees and are required to have served a minimum of one (1) year on the MRSA Executive Board. The Vice-President receives time off with pay equal to one-quarter (1/4) of the employee's normal hours of work per month to conduct Association business as per Article 7.2 (b) of the current Collective Agreement. See the Constitution for the list of duties. **Please note that the Vice- President must be a full-time, 12-month employee. This is to ensure that Association business may be carried out.**

**Treasurer/Secretary**

The position of Treasurer/Secretary is a two-year term. Candidates for the positions of Vice-President, Treasurer/Secretary and Board of Governors Representative must be full time, 12- month employees and are required to have served a minimum of one (1) year on the MRSA Executive Board. This person shall be allowed 3 ½ hours time off with pay every week to conduct Association finances as per Article 7.2 (c) of the current Collective Agreement. See the Constitution for the list of duties. **Please note that the Treasurer must be a full-time, 12- month employee. This is to ensure that Association business may be carried out.**

**Board of Governors Representative**

The Board of Governors Representative position is a two-year term. Candidates for the positions of Vice-President, Treasurer/Secretary and Board of Governors Representative must be full time, 12- month employees and are preferred to have served a minimum of one (1) year on the MRSA Executive Board. See the Constitution for the list of duties.

**Director at Large (4 positions)**

The four Director at Large positions are two-year terms. See the Constitution for the list of duties.

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**EDT Committee Representative (3 positions)**

The three EDT Committee Representative positions are two-year terms. See our website at [www.mrustaff.ca](http://www.mrustaff.ca) for a list of duties.

**Negotiating Committee (2 positions)**

The three Negotiating Committee positions are two-year terms. See our website at [www.mrustaff.ca](http://www.mrustaff.ca) for a list of duties.

In submitting this form, I acknowledge that I have informed my supervisor/manager of my intent to run for this role(s).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nominator's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nominator's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nominee's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nominee's Signature

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## APPENDIX 3

### MRSA NOMINATION FORM-EVEN YEARS

Candidates must be MRSA members. Completed Nomination Forms must be submitted electronically or in a sealed envelope addressed to the Elections Chair in the MRSA office by 4:00 pm on \_\_\_\_\_. In the event that the office is not open, please put them in the mailbox across the hall from the MRSA Office. All positions commence July 1.

I hereby nominate: \_\_\_\_\_ for the position of:  
(Please Print)

(Check one box only)

**President**

The President's position is a two-year term. Candidates for the position of President must be full time, 12- month employees and are required to have served a minimum of one (1) year on the MRSA Executive Board. The President receives full time release from his/her normal working hours to conduct Association business as per Article 7.2 (a) of the current Collective Agreement.

**Vice-President 2**

The Vice-President's position is a two-year term. Candidates for the positions of Vice-President, Treasurer/Secretary and Board of Governors Representative must be full time, 12- month employees and are required to have served a minimum of one (1) year on the MRSA Executive Board. The Vice-President receives time off with pay equal to one-quarter (1/4) of the employee's normal hours of work per month to conduct Association business as per Article 7.2 (b) of the current Collective Agreement. See the Constitution for the list of duties. **Please note that the Vice- President must be a full-time, 12-month employee. This is to ensure that Association business may be carried out.**

**Director at Large (4 positions)**

The four Director at Large positions are two-year terms. See the Constitution for the list of duties.

**EDT Committee Representative (4 positions)**

The four EDT Committee Representative positions are two-year terms. See our website at [www.mrustaff.ca](http://www.mrustaff.ca) for a list of duties.

**Negotiating Committee (3 positions)**

The two Negotiating Committee positions are two-year terms. See our website at [www.mrustaff.ca](http://www.mrustaff.ca) for a list of duties.

In submitting this form, I acknowledge that I have informed my supervisor/manager of my intent to run for this role(s).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nominator's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nominator's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Nominee's Name

Nominee's Signature

**APPENDIX 4**

**NOMINATION CAMPAIGN STATEMENT**

Name:	
Department:	
Number of years at MRU:	
Professional Development/Training:	
Previous MRSA service:	
Previous MRU service:	
Other previous experience:	
How do you envision your role in the MRSA?	
What do you want to accomplish?	
How will you commit to these goals?	

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**APPENDIX 5**

**CHALLENGE TO THE VOTE**

DATE OF VOTE: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF VOTE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE CHALLENGE SUBMITTED:  
\_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF CANDIDATE/MATTER:  
\_\_\_\_\_

REASON FOR THE CHALLENGE:

SIGNATURE OF 10 MEMBERS IN SUPPORT OF THE CHALLENGE:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

SIGNATURE OF CHALLENGER: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE OF ELECTIONS CHAIR: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

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<b>Version Number</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Approved By</b>	<b>Description</b>
1.0	April 2014	2014 MRSA Executive by plurality vote	Approval of document
2.0	September 2017	2017 MRSA Executive by plurality vote	Revisions to policy to update
2.1	January 2018	2017 MRSA Executive by plurality vote	Revision to policy to update
2.2	October 2018	2018 MRSA Executive by plurality vote	Revision to policy to update
2.3	April 2019	2019 MRSA Executive by plurality vote	Revisions to policy to align with the Constitution

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