

CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY UNISON BRANCH RULES

1 Branch Name

The Branch shall be called the Cambridgeshire County Branch of UNISON and is referred throughout the rules as "the Branch".

2 Aims of the Branch

- a) to support and pursue the Aims and Objectives contained in the UNISON Rule Book, and the Objectives agreed by UNISON's National Executive Committee annually, and in particular:
- b) to achieve the aims and targets set annually through the Branch assessment.

3 Membership

Eligibility for membership shall be in accordance with the Rules of the union

4 Branch structure

- a) There will be an Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Branch to confirm the election by ballot of Branch Officers and members of the Branch Committee, to receive the Branch Accounts and report on Branch development from the Branch Committee. Nominations for positions not received before the deadline for nominations prior to the AGM will be taken from the floor of the meeting. Where there is more than one nomination from the floor for a position, those nominated will have the opportunity to speak to their nomination if they so wish, before going to an election vote, which will be a show of hands of those present. The AGM may be held as either an in-person meeting, an online meeting, or as a hybrid meeting. The AGM may comprise one meeting or a series of aggregate meetings based on sections or geographical areas in order to maximise the active participation of members
- b) The AGM will transact the following business:
 - 1 - the receiving of reports from the Branch Officers and the Branch Committee, including a report on the branch's finances and presentation of branch accounts;
 - 2 - the election or confirmation of election of Branch Officers for the coming year;
 - 3 - the election or confirmation of election of branch representatives to other levels of the Union and to external bodies;
 - 4 - the approval or rejection of honoraria for Branch Officers
 - 5 - such other business as may be required by the branch rules.
- c) Other General Meetings may be called by the Branch Committee or by 20 members of the Branch or 5% of the membership, whichever is the greater. Other General meetings may be held as either in-person meetings, online meetings, or as hybrid meetings.
- d) The quorum for any General Meeting, including the AGM, is 30 members of the Branch at a single meeting or through aggregate meetings.
- e) Sections will be established for each bargaining group covered by the Branch to provide for the participation and representation of members in that section.
- f) The first Branch Committee following the AGM will ratify Steward nominations for the forthcoming year
- g) The Branch Committee will comprise all Branch Officers and Stewards, and will be responsible for general organisation and development of the Branch and for policy and decision-making on matters affecting all members within the Branch between General Meetings, including the ratification of Officers and Steward nominations received during the year .

5 Branch Officers

- a) the Branch shall elect the following Officers annually in accordance with rule 6c:
 - Chair
 - Vice Chair
 - Branch Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Auditor
 - Education Officer
 - Lifelong Learning Officer
 - Equality Officer(s): Black Members, Womens, LGBT, Young Members, Disabled Members
 - Health and Safety Officer
 - Communications Officer
 - International Officer
 - Membership Officer
 - Welfare Officer

- Labour link Officer (elected by the members who pay the affiliated political levy only)
 - Retired Members' Secretary (elected by the retired members)
 - Others to be determined as necessary for the effective operation of the branch
- b) each section within the Branch shall elect a Convenor (senior steward) from amongst the Stewards in that section in accordance with rule 6d.
- c) election of Branch Officers
- i. Branch Officers may be nominated by the Branch Committee or any two members, with the exception of the Labour Link Officer who will be elected by the Affiliated Political Fund (APF) members only.
 - ii. nominations will be invited 12 weeks before the AGM and nomination forms will be made available through the Branch web-site, via email and by post. All nominations must be received in writing at least seven weeks before the AGM.
 - iii. each nominee will be notified and given the right to withdraw, or the option to consider job sharing the role with the other nominee(s), not later than six weeks before the AGM.
 - iv. if there is more than one candidate, and candidates are not prepared to job share the role, then a vote will be held prior to the AGM. This will be conducted by either a postal and/or an electronic ballot in accordance with the procedure and timescales contained in the Code of Good Branch Practice.
 - v. where no valid nomination has been received before the deadline, nominations may be called for and candidate(s) elected at the AGM, or endorsed by the Branch Committee subject to ratification by the next General Meeting.
- d) election of Convenors
- i. the process for nomination and election shall be as in (c) save that the nomination may be by the section Committee or any two members employed in that section, and only members employed in the relevant section may participate in the election.

6 Branch Committee

- a) Representation on the Branch Committee will be agreed by the AGM and will include:
 - Branch Officers
 - Representatives of self-organised groups
 - Workplace Stewards
- b) The Branch Committee shall administer Branch business in accordance with UNISON rules and guidance.
- c) The quorum for the Branch Committee shall be 7 members of the Committee.
- d) Branch Committee meetings may be held as either in-person meetings, online meetings, or as hybrid meetings.
- e) The Branch Committee may use an electronic voting system to determine matters that require a Branch Committee decision where there is no scheduled Branch Committee meeting within the timescale available for that decision to be made.
- f) The Branch Committee shall ensure that sections within the Branch are appropriately and equitably resourced to ensure the effective participation of members, recruitment and organisation, representation, and collective bargaining and campaigning on behalf of members in each section.
- g) The Branch Committee will establish arrangements for the individual representation of members.
- h) The Branch Committee shall meet bi-monthly.
- i) Informal Stewards' Network sessions shall be held around four times per year.

7 Branch Management Team

- a) The Branch Management Team shall comprise the Branch Secretary, Branch Chair, Branch Vice Chair and Branch Treasurer. Other Branch officers, Stewards, Convenors or Branch employed staff may attend as required by invitation
- b) The Branch Management Team will meet regularly to ensure the effective day to day management of the Branch within the parameters of the decisions and guidance issued by the Branch Committee. The Branch Management Group may commit to no expenditure, policy decision or affiliation that has not been previously agreed by the Branch Committee. It can however make recommendations to the Branch Committee.

8 Sections

- a) Sections comprise all members within the relevant service group and/or bargaining group and will have autonomy within the Branch in respect of collective bargaining with their employer(s) only, subject to the policies and any guidelines and procedures of the Branch, region and national union.
- b) Sections will be led by a Convenor elected from within the membership of that section who will be the senior accredited representative within the section, and a Committee of all accredited representatives within the section.

9 Conduct of meetings

- a) All meetings will be conducted in a fair and democratic manner.
- b) All meetings will be advertised widely as far in advance as possible (in the case of the AGM, all members will be notified in writing at least 12 weeks before the meeting (or first aggregate meeting)).
- c) The procedures to be used at the meeting will be explained clearly.
- d) The Branch will maintain records of all meetings and other appropriate records to enable the Branch to function.

10 Media communications

Communications to the media on behalf of the Branch shall be made only by Officer(s) authorised by the Committee.

11 Affiliations

- a) Affiliations to relevant constituency Labour Parties will be decided by the APF membership.
- b) Affiliations to Trade Councils shall be determined by the AGM or Branch Committee.

12 Finance

The Branch shall keep a bank/building society account in the name of the Branch and will maintain a financial record of all assets and transactions in accordance with UNISON guidelines

13 Donations

Donations shall be agreed by the AGM or Branch Committee in accordance with the union's policies and objectives and subject to provisions of national rule.

14 Expenses

Rates of expenses for members attending meetings or carrying out other activities on behalf of the Branch shall be agreed by the AGM in accordance with the Scheme for Branch Expenses contained in the Branch Finances Handbook.

15 Honoraria

Any honorarium paid to a Branch Officer will only be made in accordance with the Scheme for Honoraria Payments in Branches contained in the Branch Finances Handbook and will be agreed at the AGM before any payments are made.

16 Branch staff

- a) The Branch Secretary will be responsible for the employment, direction and supervision of any staff employed by the Branch consistent with employment law and current good practice.
- b) In the event of any first stage hearings of staff disciplinary or grievance matters, the Branch Secretary will be joined by another senior Branch Officer other than the Branch Chair.
- c) Any appeal arising from a first stage grievance or disciplinary hearing will be heard by the Branch Chair and other senior Branch Officers not involved at the first stage hearing.
- d) The outcome of any disciplinary or grievance hearing will remain confidential and the outcome only will be reported to the Branch Committee on its conclusion.

17 Approval/alteration to Branch rules

- a) Branch rules must be agreed by two thirds of members present and voting at a quorate Branch meeting.
- b) Branch rules must be approved in accordance with UNISON's procedures.
- c) Any changes to Branch rules must be agreed and approved in the same way.