



# 2026 Board of Directors Candidate Information

**Application Deadline: Monday, September 29, 2025**

## Thank you for your interest in serving on the National League of Cities (NLC) Board of Directors!

Serving on the NLC Board is one of the most rewarding ways for you as a municipal leader to bring your expertise to the service of cities, towns, and villages at the national level. This guide tells you what the job entails and how to apply. **Applications are due no later than Monday, September 29, 2025.**

If you have questions or need assistance, please feel free to contact Carla Smith at 202-626-3179 or [smith@nlc.org](mailto:smith@nlc.org).

### Who can serve on the NLC Board of Directors?

To be eligible to serve on the NLC Board, you must be an elected official of a direct member city or a chief executive officer of a state municipal league. If you are an elected official, you must remain in office throughout your term on the board. You may apply to serve on the board even if you will have to run for reelection during your board term.

### What are the positions on the NLC Board?

The board of directors consists of the NLC president, first vice president, second vice president, the chief executive officers from eight state municipal leagues, forty at-large members, all past presidents still in elective office in a member city, and the chairs of the seven NLC advocacy committees. Among the vice president and president positions, only the position of second vice president is normally contested; other NLC officers usually rotate upward from second vice president to first vice president, and then to president.

### How long are the terms of office?

All Board members serve a two-year term and may run for reelection for a second two-year term. The maximum lifetime service is four years. The terms do not have to be consecutive.

The two-year term of office for all newly elected 2026 Board members begins immediately upon adjournment of the Annual Business Meeting on Saturday, November 22, during City Summit.

The NLC president, first vice president, and second vice president each hold office for a one-year term. The term of the newly elected Officers also begins immediately upon adjournment of the Annual Business Meeting on Saturday, November 22, during City Summit.

## **If I want to apply, what is the process?**

The process is summarized below.

1. Speak with your state municipal league director. All candidates must indicate on their Candidate Data Form whether they have obtained—or expect to obtain—their league's endorsement. (The state municipal league endorsement is strongly encouraged, but a written endorsement letter is not required.)
2. You may choose to request letters of endorsement from people in your community, region, or state. These endorsements are completely optional.
3. Submit your application by September 29, 2025. Applications are submitted using the MyNLC account. Please log in and select the Application tab.
4. Upload endorsement letters with your application if available at that time. Endorsement letters can be uploaded once you've submitted your application. The option to upload endorsement letters will be available until the closing date of September 29.
5. Submit a video presentation for the Nominating Committee.
6. If you are applying to serve as second vice president, participate in a closed-door interview process with the Nominating Committee on Friday morning, November 21.
7. Check the NLC conference app, the Ask NLC Desk, or go to the conference headquarters late afternoon on Friday, November 21, to see the slate of officer and board candidates recommended by the Nominating Committee.
8. Attend the Annual Business Meeting on Saturday, November 22, during which the officer and board elections will take place.
9. If you are elected, attend a short but important board convening on Saturday, November 22, immediately after the Annual Business Meeting.

## **Will I need campaign materials?**

While elaborate campaigns are discouraged, you may distribute materials such as flyers, brochures, or buttons at the City Summit. However, we ask that you not distribute these materials to members of the Nominating Committee.

## **How are members of the NLC Board of Directors selected?**

Each year, the NLC president appoints a Nominating Committee, which is comprised of not less than six and not more than fourteen members, plus the NLC Immediate Past President who serves as the committee chair. The nominating committee will hold a closed meeting during the City Summit to develop the recommended slate of officer and board candidates to be voted on during the Annual Business Meeting.

## **Nominating Committee Gifts**

Gifts, including token gifts, for the members of the Nominating Committee are not allowed.

## Nominating Committee Meeting: Friday, November 21

The Nominating Committee will hold a closed meeting on Friday, November 21, to recommend a slate of candidates for action at the Annual Business Meeting on Saturday, November 22.

Candidates running for second vice president will be invited to interview with the Nominating Committee on Friday morning during the closed meeting. The time and place of the interview will be given to applicants on or before Thursday, November 20.

All qualified board candidates will be considered by the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee may consider other candidates when there is an insufficient number of qualified candidates. Board candidates will not be interviewed.

The recommended slate of officer and board candidates will be posted in the NLC Conference Headquarters, in the NLC Conference Advocacy Office, at the Ask NLC Desk, and on the conference app on Friday afternoon, November 21.

All nominated 2026 Officer and Board candidates are expected to attend the Annual Business Meeting on Saturday, November 22, during which the Officer and Board elections will take place. Immediately following the Annual Business Meeting, all elected 2026 Officers and Board Members are expected to attend a short, informal, but important, board convening.

## 2026 Board Meetings and Travel Expenses

Below is a preliminary list of 2026 meeting dates and locations; however, some are subject to change. NLC will communicate the 2026 meeting dates, times, and locations when they are finalized. Officers and board members are expected to attend the meetings as outlined below.

### NLC 2026 Board Meetings

**January 2026 dates TBD Executive Committee Retreat:** This planning meeting for the Executive Committee only is to define the leadership direction for the year, set the overall framework for federal advocacy and determine other annual strategic plan priorities. The meeting generally runs for approximately one and a half days beginning Thursday evening and concluding Saturday afternoon. (Dates and location to be determined.)

**March 15, 2026, Board Meeting:** Held at the beginning of the Congressional City Conference in Washington, DC, this meeting is held to continue refining the advocacy strategy for the year based on the established priorities and to continue defining leadership roles in carrying out that strategy.

**July 2026 dates TBD Summer Board and Leadership Meeting:** This meeting is generally held during June or July. At the summer meeting, the Board reviews progress on the advocacy priorities, helps shape work on other NLC issues and priorities, and, as needed, considers federal policy issues referred by the seven Advocacy committees that require immediate action. This free-standing summer Board meeting also allows a mid-term review of progress under the NLC Strategic Plan and provides the best opportunity for exploring selected issues in depth. (Dates and location to be determined.)

**November 19, 2026, Board Meeting:** This meeting, will be held in Nashville, Tennessee at the beginning of the annual City Summit, and concludes the NLC governance year. At the November

meeting, the Board reviews the major accomplishments under the NLC Strategic Plan for the year and discusses any national policy issues requiring Board action before the Annual Business Meeting. (Dates and location of the conference are final. Exact board meeting days and times are to be determined.)

### **Travel Expenses**

Board members are expected to cover their travel and hotel costs for the Board meetings. NLC pays the cost of group meals during the Board meetings. For the two meetings held in conjunction with annual conferences, Board members are expected to pay their own conference registration.

## Roles and Responsibilities of the NLC Board of Directors

The NLC Board of Directors focuses on three broad roles: 1) fiduciary oversight; 2) strategic planning and thinking; and 3) implementation of policies and activities to support and advance the NLC mission and aspirations.

The items listed below provide a snapshot of ongoing roles and responsibilities of the NLC Board of Directors collectively and of individual Board members during a typical governance year. Specific roles and activities at Board meetings will vary depending upon the leadership priorities and the specific issues that emerge during the year.

- Provides overall direction for the organization based on the leadership priorities;
- Enhances NLC's stature and visibility through contacts, connections and outreach to local, regional and, where appropriate, national media;
- Shapes, refines and updates the annual advocacy and lobbying strategy;
- Advocates for NLC federal priorities and provides leadership and direction in his/her city and state on those priorities;
- Adopts amendments to National Municipal Policy and policy resolutions, on occasion, when the membership is not assembled;
- Participates in the national policy development process by serving on the Resolutions Committee and adopting the agenda for the Annual Business Meeting;
- Supports, guides and actively participates in major leadership campaigns and events;
- Ensures membership stability and growth by encouraging cities in his/her state to join NLC and to stay involved in NLC;
- Approves the annual operating budget and monitors financial progress;
- Ensures connections between the Board and NLC's Member Councils and Constituency Groups by serving as Board liaisons to those groups;
- Ensures connections with the members through participation in state municipal league and NLC programs and activities – serving as organizational emissaries;
- Approve City Summit sites;
- Provides guidance and direction on organizational governance matters;
- Carries out "corporate business" as the National League of Cities Institute (NLCI) Board; and
- Represents NLC.

# Roles and Responsibilities for Officers of the National League of Cities

## NLC President

- Provides overall leadership during the year working closely with the NLC Executive Director;
- Speaks on behalf of NLC on a wide range of issues through speeches, statements prepared by the staff on various issues, press conferences, testimony, and in meetings with key national leaders;
- Shapes NLC's direction and priorities, working with the NLC Officers and the Executive Director, to strengthen and promote NLC's aspirations (*to develop better cities/towns/villages and their leaders*) and to enhance the value of NLC to cities, towns, and villages of all sizes;
- Supports staff efforts to recruit and retain NLC direct member cities;
- Leads NLC's advocacy and lobbying work to achieve positive outcomes for the priorities that the Executive Committee sets at the January Executive Committee Retreat, including: (1) ensuring attention to the priorities; (2) leading and participating in lobbying campaigns; (3) representing NLC at meetings with key decision makers; (4) energizing other city officials to participate in the lobbying agenda; and (5) communicating about the agenda in speeches, President's columns and reports to the membership;
- Makes leadership appointments with input from other NLC Officers and the state municipal league directors;
- Appoints city officials as leaders and members of the NLC standing committees, councils and panels, with input from various sources, including the state municipal league directors;
- Establishes special committees as needed for action during the governance year;
- Selects the date and location for the January Executive Committee Retreat and presides at that meeting;
- Chairs the NLC Executive Committee meetings, the Board of Director meetings, and hosts the summer Board meeting;
- Addresses the delegates during the Congressional City Conference and the City Summit highlighting NLC priorities and accomplishments;
- Serves as the primary NLC spokesperson at press conferences during either or both annual conferences and during the year based on issues that may arise;
- Represents NLC by speaking at state municipal league annual conferences: the President generally attends between *six to seven* state league meetings with emphasis on states with the largest number of NLC member cities and others based on invitation, rotation and President's personal interest (*with the schedule developed by NLC and draft speeches*

*prepared by NLC);*

- Recognizes staff and city officials through award presentations at the City Summit;
- Moderates, convenes and serves as a “*welcomer*” at many events during both annual conferences – first-time attendee’s orientation, President’s reception, orientation for new Board members, etc.;
- Appoints the NLC Board Nominating Committee;
- Chairs the Annual Business Meeting during the City Summit; and
- Interacts regularly with the Executive Director on overall policy and emerging issues throughout the year.

### **NLC First Vice President**

- Participates in the January Executive Committee Retreat to assist in setting the leadership agenda for the year;
- Helps to carry out the annual advocacy and lobbying agenda that emerges from the January Executive Committee Retreat;
- Participates in leadership meetings in Washington, DC, with other public interest groups, etc., when requested by the President;
- Supports staff efforts to recruit and retain NLC direct member cities;
- Chairs the Board’s Finance Committee which meets in conjunction with the March, June/July, and November Board meetings, and chairs the separate stand-alone Board Finance Committee meeting in June, to review, discuss and adopt the proposed annual NLC budget to present to the full Board of Directors at its June/July meeting;
- Chairs the NLC Board meeting when the President is unavailable;
- Presides at one or more general sessions at the City Summit and the Congressional City Conference, depending on the overall program;
- Chairs the Resolutions Committee during the City Summit;
- Chairs or serves on any other special groups at the request of the President;
- Represents NLC by speaking at state municipal league conferences when the President is unavailable or upon request by the state league. The First Vice President generally attends *four to five* state league meetings (*with the schedule developed by NLC and draft speeches prepared by NLC*);
- Participates in the orientation webinar for new Board members; and
- Represents the NLC leadership team at various conference events.

## **NLC Second Vice President**

- Participates in the January Executive Committee Retreat to assist in setting the leadership agenda for the year;
- Helps to carry out the annual advocacy and lobbying agenda that emerges from the January leadership planning meeting;
- Participates in leadership meetings in Washington, DC, with other public interest groups, etc., when requested by the President;
- Supports staff efforts to recruit and retain NLC direct member cities;
- Chairs the Board's Legislative Action Committee, which meets in conjunction with the March, June/July and November Board meetings;
- Chairs the NLC Board meeting when the President and First Vice President are unavailable;
- Presides at one or more general sessions at the City Summit and the Congressional City Conference, depending on the overall program;
- Represents NLC by speaking at state municipal league conferences when the President and First Vice President are unavailable or upon request by the state league. The Second Vice President has traditionally attended *two to three* state league meetings (*with the schedule developed by NLC and draft speeches prepared by NLC*);
- Participates in the orientation webinar for new Board members; and
- Represents the NLC leadership team at various conference events.

## **NLC Immediate Past President**

- Participates in the January Executive Committee Retreat to assist in setting the leadership agenda for the year;
- Chairs the NLC Nominating Committee;
- Chairs the Board's Membership Committee;
- Supports staff efforts to recruit and retain NLC direct member cities;
- Participates in leadership meetings in Washington, DC, with other public interest groups, etc., when requested by the President;
- Serves, as needed, as a moderator for conference general sessions, depending on the program;
- Represents NLC by speaking at state municipal league conferences when the President, First Vice President and Second Vice President are unavailable; and
- Coordinates the annual performance review of the NLC Executive Director.



## The NLC Executive Committee of the Board

The Executive Committee is composed of the following members of the Board: the president, the first vice president, the second vice president, the two (2) most immediate past presidents still in elective office in a member city, two (2) chief executive officers of member leagues recommended by the president and approved by the board, and up to three (3) members of the board recommended by the president and approved by the board. The National League of Cities' executive director also serves on the committee in an ex officio capacity.

## 2026 NLC Officer and Board of Director Candidate Application Instructions

In order to provide the NLC Nominating Committee with general background information, Officer and Board of Director candidates must complete the online application.

Electronic submission of the application must be received by the NLC Executive Office no later than **Monday, September 29, 2025**. Candidate endorsement letters may be submitted with the application, but they are not required.

Please login to [MyNLC](#) and click the **Application** tab to start the application.

If you don't remember your password for your MyNLC account, please click **Forgot Password**. **Do not create a second account.**