
Section I – General

As announced earlier, NEC will be conducting elections for the post of President to serve NEOTA in the year 2019.

- Life Members and Paid Members as of July 31st 2018 are eligible to vote in the election.
- NEC has snapshot of the list and can be shared with the candidates, if requested.
- Family Membership holders can cast two votes— one by each spouse.
- Single Membership holders can cast one vote
- Student Membership holders cannot cast votes.
- Eligible Members can cast their votes in either of the two following ways:
  o In Person
  o Mail In w/ Email confirmation
- No campaigning at the election venue in terms of canvassing or displaying any material with any type of election related content inside the premises.
- NEC and NEOTA Will initiate legal actions on anyone who makes attempts of illegal voting or rigging of elections.
- NEC reserves the right to make a final decision in all matters.

Section II - Booth Agents

1. Each candidate will be asked to nominate a booth agent, who will be present with NEC members during the in-person election process – voting, counting and announcements. The booth agent nominations should be made before the day of the elections via email to NEC@neota.org.
2. The booth agent will act as a representative of the candidate and communicate with NEC throughout the process.
3. NEC will not engage in any conversations with anyone other than the booth agents and trustees, including candidates, during the voting and counting process, unless a need arises that NEC decides to involve others.
4. The person nominated as a booth agent should be a NEOTA member eligible to vote in the election.
5. The booth agents will have to sign a declaration stating that they will participate in a fair fashion and conduct themselves in a professional manner during discussions or arbitrations.
6. The booth agents will also acknowledge that they will not raise any concerns after the process is complete and they've acknowledged the results by signing the records.
7. The booth agents will promise that they will not reveal or discuss the results or the happenings with anyone including the candidates, until the final results are announced.
8. The booth agents will be mere spectators in the process and will be allowed to ask questions or seek clarifications, except a few responsibilities identified below.
9. The booth agents can raise any concerns and NEC will attend to their concerns in a prompt manner, during which time the election process will be suspended briefly.
10. The booth agents will also be witnessing the counting process and follow the process detailed below.
11. The booth agent will vote in the election at a time they choose after informing the NEC members and his/her counterpart.
12. In case of an emergency situation where the nominated agent has to leave, the Presidential candidate will be contacted to identify another person to serve. This can be done only once. The new agent will have to sign the declaration too.

Section III - In-Person Voting Guidelines

1. NEC will host a voting booth during upcoming Diwali celebrations on Sunday, December 2\textsuperscript{nd} 2018 from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM at Nordonia High School, Macedonia.
2. Voting Member must present a valid Government issued Photo ID to identify them. Members who cannot present a valid Government issued photo ID will not be allowed to vote.
3. Voting Member will be asked to sign a confirmation stating that they were physically present to cast the vote and has not sent in a mail-in vote.
4. Upon signing the confirmation, a ballot paper will be issued to the member. A NEC member will sign the back-side of the ballot paper just before handing it over to the voting member. Ballots without signatures, if found in the ballot box, will be considered invalid.
5. Member will be provided with a table that provides privacy for them to cast the vote.
6. Member will fold the ballot and drop it in a box manned by a NEC member so that no one can see the ballot entry.
7. Spouse, Family members or friends cannot vote on anyone’s behalf ie., no Proxy Voting
8. Members who already mailed in their votes cannot vote in person. The only exception that NEC can allow is if NEC confirms that the mail-in vote was not received within the due date/time. Member will be asked to sign a waiver letter where he/she confirms that NEC has acknowledged that their mail-in vote is not received and allows them to vote in-person.

Item #8 is deleted and Items #9 and #10 are added, per an amendment to guidelines announcement made by NEC on 11/29/2018:

9. If members who already mailed in their votes attend the Deepavali celebration, their mail-in ballots will be invalidated automatically. All members attending the Deepavali celebration will have to vote in-person.

   A NEC Member will be at the registration desk along with Executive Committee and inform the members about the in-person voting.

10. The mail-in ballots received/confirmed from members who don’t attend the Deepavali celebration, will be considered valid and included in the counting process.

Section IV - Mail-in voting w/ Email confirmation Guidelines

1. Members, who cannot be physically present at the venue on December 2\textsuperscript{nd} 2018, can avail the Mail-in w/ Email confirmation voting option.
2. A mail-in w/ Email confirmation ballot will be published on the web site in PDF format.
3. Member will print the ballot on their own.
4. Once printed, Member will place a check mark next to the Candidate they support and would like to vote for. (The check mark should be inside the check box placed next to candidate name)
5. Member will make sure that no other marks are placed anywhere on the ballot paper. If any marks were found, then NEC reserves the right to consider the vote invalid.
6. Once filled, member will place the ballot in an envelope and write their FROM address using the following format
   i. Full name of the member voting
   ii. Full Address
7. Member should understand that the envelope will not be opened until the counting is done and hence, any information they enclose other than ballot may invalidate the ballot depending on the content.
8. Each envelope can contain only one vote. If the spouse is also voting using mail-in w/ Email confirmation option, NEC recommends the spouse to send the mail-in vote in a different envelope.
9. Member will seal the stamped envelope and mail it to:

   NEC
   C/O: Raju Doddi, NEOTA
   P.O. BOX 39155
   SOLON, OH 44139

10. Once mailed, Member will have to send an email to NEC@neota.org informing that they have mailed in the ballot and provide their contact details (Name, Email address and Phone Number).
11. Member should Email to make their mail-in ballot accounted for. This is to avoid misuse of mail-in w/ Email confirmation option, if any.
12. All mail-in ballot envelopes should be received by the NEC on or before Saturday, December 1st 2018 5:00 pm.
13. Upon receipt of the envelope, a NEC member will call the member and confirm the receipt of the vote. An email will also be sent to their email address.
14. If a member did not receive a call from NEC on or before December 1st 2018 by 8:00 pm, they can reach out to NEC to check on the status. In case, NEC is not able to confirm the receipt of the vote, the member will be asked to use in-person option to cast their vote.
15. Any mail-in envelopes received after December 1st 2018 5:00 pm will be considered invalid and these members will automatically be eligible for casting in-person votes.
16. NEC will not be responsible for postal delays.
17. NEC members will not open the envelope until the counting process begins. All envelopes will be saved in a box by NEC.
18. In unforeseen circumstances with mail-in option, NEC reserves the right to determine the appropriate action to take. No contest will be entertained from anyone on the action determined.

**Section V - Counting Process**

1. Once the in-person voting is complete, the ballot box will be sealed and transported to a private area.
2. Only the NEC members, Trustees and booth agents nominated by the candidates will be present during the counting.
3. The counting process will be a manual one performed by NEC members in the presence of booth agents and Trustees.

Section V-a - Counting Process – Mail-in w/ Email confirmation ballot opening

4. NEC members holding all the mail-in votes will ask the agents to cross-verify the list of members who chose to vote by mail and ensure that they didn't cast in-person. Exceptions as prescribed above will be reviewed by them.
5. A NEC member will open each mail-in envelope, pull the ballot out and drop it in a sealed box (different than one used for in-person voting). No one should be able to see the ballot contents to protect secrecy of the vote.
6. After all the mail-in envelopes are opened and ballots dropped in to the box, the box will be sealed.

Counting Process – In-Person vote counting

7. NEC members will open the in-person ballot box and open the ballots. Ballots will be placed in three different groups:
   a. Votes for Candidate #1
   b. Votes for Candidate #2
   c. Invalid Votes (NEC will make the determination)
8. Once grouped, NEC member will count the number of invalid votes and record it.
9. All invalid votes will be inspected by the booth agents and confirmed them to be invalid. In case of dispute, NEC decision will make the final decision.
10. Any vote that was originally classified as invalid, if considered valid, will be added to the appropriate group.
11. NEC member will record the number of invalid votes and the booth agents will acknowledge the number by signing the record.
12. NEC Member will pick each ballot from Group #1 and count one at a time by announcing the number. After all the ballots are counted, the number will be recorded and acknowledged by the booth agents via signature on the record.
13. NEC member will pick each ballot from Group #2 and count one at a time by announcing the number. After all the ballots are counted, the number will be recorded and acknowledged by the booth agents via signature on the record.
14. Only NEC members will be allowed to handle the ballot papers. Neither the trustees nor the booth agents will attempt to touch the ballots other than verifying the invalid votes.
15. NEC members will place all the mail-in ballots in an envelope and seal it. Booth agents and NEC members will sign on the flap of the envelope.

Section V-b - Counting Process – Mail-in w/ Email Confirmation vote counting

16. NEC members will then open the mail-in ballot box and open the ballots. Ballots will be placed in three different groups:
   a. Votes for Candidate #1
b. Votes for Candidate #2

c. Invalid Votes

17. Once grouped, NEC member will count the number of invalid votes and record it.
18. All invalid votes will be inspected by the booth agents and confirmed them to be invalid. In case of dispute, NEC decision will be final.
19. Any vote that was originally classified as invalid, if considered valid, will be added to the appropriate group.
20. NEC member will record the number of invalid votes and the booth agents will acknowledge the number by signing the record.
21. NEC Member will pick each ballot from Group #1 and count one at a time by announcing the number. After all the ballots are counted, the number will be recorded and acknowledged by the booth agents via signature on the record.
22. NEC member will pick each ballot from Group #2 and count one at a time by announcing the number. After all the ballots are counted, the number will be recorded and acknowledged by the booth agents via signature on the record.
23. Only NEC members will be allowed to handle the ballot papers. Neither the trustees nor the booth agents will attempt to touch the ballots other than verifying the invalid votes.
24. NEC members will place all the mail-in ballots in an envelope and seal it. Booth agents and NEC members will sign on the flap of the envelope.

Section V-c - Counting Process – Count Consolidation

25. NEC member will add the in-person votes and mail-in votes for each candidate and invalid group, and record the numbers in a separate record. Trustees, Booth agents and NEC members will sign this record certifying that they agree with the result of the process.
26. A copy of the counts will be made and placed in a separate envelope. This envelope will be used to announce the results on the stage.
27. Until the announcement is made, Trustees, NEC members and booth agents will not share the results with anyone.
28. If possible, the counting group will walk to the stage directly from the counting area to avoid external interferences seeking information. The group will take over the stage for the announcements after the program in-progress ends.