

Regulations

FOR THE NORWEGIAN SOCIETY OF RURAL WOMEN

CONTENT

Last revision June 2016

REGULATIONS

Page 3

Section 1 The aims of the organisation

Section 2 Main tasks and work methods

Section 3 Membership

Page 4

Section 4 Organisation

Section 5 National congress/annual meeting

Page 7

Section 6 The responsibilities of the national congress/annual meeting

Page 8

Section 7 The board

Page 10

Section 8 Financial responsibilities

Section 9 Membership fees

Section 10 Funds

Page 11

Section 11 Accounts

Section 12 Communication

Section 13 Amendments to regulations

Page 12

Section 14 Dissolution of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women

Section 15 Dissolution of regional societies

Page 13

Section 16 Dissolution of local societies

Section 17 Mergers of local societies

ASSISTANCE FUND

p. 15 Regulations for

Rural Women's Assistance Fund

RULES AND INSTRUCTIONS

I Election of election committee

II The work of the election committee

Section 1

The aim of the organisation

The aim of the organisation is to bring women who believe in the importance of active village environments and primary industries together. The Norwegian Society of Rural Women is a party-politically neutral organisation whose aim is to safeguard the cultural, social and economic interests of women and village populations and build on values of equality, democracy and a Christian cultural heritage.

Section 2

Main tasks and work methods

The priorities of the organisation are embodied in its political platform, budget, strategy document and work plan.

Section 3

Membership

a) Anyone who supports the aims of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women can become a member of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women. Membership is personal. Members are affiliated to a local society. Where a local society does not exist, members join the nearest local society or regional society.

b) Affiliate membership

Persons/institutions/organisations wishing to support the work of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women are able to become affiliate members. Affiliate members have no voting or representation rights.

Section 4

Organisation

a) Members of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women are organised in local societies. The national congress is the highest authority of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women.

b) Local societies within the same region must join to form a regional society. The highest decision-making authority in the region is the annual meeting.

c) The Norwegian Society of Rural Women and the Norwegian Society of Rural Youth. The Norwegian Agrarian Association is mutually represented on the boards at regional level and in the main organisation. Mutual representation should be in place in local societies.

e) The Norwegian Society of Rural Women uses the same logo at all levels of the organisation. The logo can be combined with the name of the local society, regional society or the Norwegian Society of Rural Women.

f) Local and regional societies must comply with the decisions adopted by the organisation, current regulations and policy documents. Local, regional and central societies discuss proposals submitted by members. If local or regional societies wish to submit requests to central

authorities, such requests must be submitted to the Norwegian Society of Rural Women for onward processing.

g) Management positions in the Norwegian Society of Rural Women, regional and local societies have a maximum duration of six (6) consecutive years.

Section 5

National congress/annual meeting

a) The highest decision-making authority in the Norwegian Society of Rural Women is the annual meeting.

b) An ordinary national congress is held every two years before the end of June and should, as far as possible, alternate between different regions. Regional annual meetings are held before 1 April. Local societies hold their annual meetings before 1 November.

c) The national congress/annual meeting is called by the chairman of the board.

d) An extraordinary national congress is held when a minimum of half the board or a minimum of half the national congress representatives require it. An extraordinary regional annual meeting is held when a minimum of half the board, one fourth of the members or the main organisation require it. An extraordinary local annual meeting is held when a minimum of half the board, one fourth of the members of the society or the regional society concerned require it.

e) Notification of the national congress must be issued a minimum of ten (10) weeks in advance, the regional annual meetings a minimum of eight (8) weeks in advance and local annual meetings a minimum of four (4) weeks in advance – all in writing. The call for and agenda/documentation for the national congress must be distributed four (4) weeks prior to the meeting. In the case of annual meetings, two (2) weeks prior to the meeting. An extraordinary national congress/annual meeting may be called with two (2) weeks' notice.

f) The board of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women, regional societies and local societies affiliated to a regional society, the Norwegian Farmers Union and the Norwegian Society of Rural Youth have the right to submit proposals to the national congress. Proposals that are to be discussed at the national congress must be submitted to the board a minimum of eight (8) weeks prior to the ordinary national congress. Proposals for amendments to regulations and changes to the political platform must be submitted to the board a minimum of eight (16) weeks prior to the ordinary national congress.

g) The regional board, local societies, regional agrarian association and regional rural youth societies have the right to submit proposals to the regional annual meeting. Proposals must be submitted to the board eight (8) weeks prior to the annual meeting. The board and society members have the right to submit proposals to the local society annual meeting. If the location's Farmers Union and rural youth society are represented on the board, they have the right to submit proposals to the meeting. Matters must be submitted to the board eight (3) weeks prior to the annual meeting.

h) The central board has the right to submit proposals that do not appear on the agenda to the national congress. Decisions cannot be taken without the approval of the national congress. The same applies to the regional boards/local society boards and their annual meetings. For proposals pertaining to amendments to regulations, political platform and dissolution of local societies, regional societies or the Norwegian Society of Rural Women, the deadlines contained in points e and f in Section 5 apply.

I) **THE NATIONAL CONGRESS COMPRISES:**

1. members of the central board
2. the chairman of the regional society and one representative for every unit of two hundred (200) members (or part thereof) of the regional society
3. two (2) representatives elected by the Norwegian Farmers Union
4. two (2) representatives elected by the Norwegian Society of Rural Youth

THE REGIONAL ANNUAL MEETING COMPRISES:

1. members of the regional board
2. chairman of the local society plus an elected representative for each society with up to twenty (20) members and an elected representative for every further unit of fifty (50) members (or part thereof) Member
3. Two (2) representatives from the regional Farmers Union
4. Two (2) representatives from the regional Rural Youth Society

THE LOCAL ANNUAL MEETING COMPRISES:

1. members of the board
2. other members

j) All national congress/annual meeting delegates have meeting, speaking, proposal and voting rights.

1. The board does not have voting rights on matters pertaining to the annual report, budget or accounts.
2. The chairman of the meeting does not have voting rights.
3. Members of the election committee have the right to speak on the proposals recommended by the election committee.
4. One (1) deputy representative has the right to speak.
5. The general secretary has the right to speak at the national congress.
6. All members and associate members of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women have the right to attend the negotiations at the national congress/annual meeting, but they do not have speaking or proposal rights. The national congress/annual meeting may in exceptional circumstances grant speaking rights.

k) The national congress/annual meeting may decide that certain matters are to be discussed in a closed meeting and will decide how such matters should be made public.

l) The cost of accommodation and meals for national congress delegates is paid by the head office of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women. The regional societies cover travel expenses for their delegates. This is based on the travel distribution principle. The Norwegian Farmers Union and the Norwegian Society of Rural Youth pay for their own representatives.

Section 6

The responsibilities of the national congress/annual meeting

THE MEETING MUST:

a) elect two (2) people who, in addition to the chairman, sign the minutes

- b) discuss the board's proposals for the annual report issued by the Norwegian Society of Rural Women/regional societies/local societies
- c) discuss the accounts with auditor's note
- d) discuss work plan proposals
- e) discuss the board's membership fees and budget proposals
- f) discuss reports and accounts for boards, committees and fund elected by the national congress/annual meeting
- g) elect a chairman and board members, including deputies, for the applicable part of the organisation
 1. members and deputies to the election committees for the coming period
 2. elect a chairman of the meeting and deputy for the coming national congress/annual meeting
 3. elect accountant/accountants and set remuneration of elected accountants
 4. On the basis of proposals by the election committee, set the remuneration of elected representatives, reimbursement of travel, dietary and living expenses and other expenses, if applicable
- h) discuss other submitted proposals
- i) take minutes

Section 7

The board

- a) The various parts of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women are managed by a board elected by the national congress/annual meeting, central board, regional board and local board.
 - b) The board reports to the national congress/annual meeting on its activities and management of the funds belonging to the Norwegian Society of Rural Women.
 - c) The central board comprises nine (9) members and three (3) deputy members. Seven (7) are elected by the national congress. One (1) member is elected by the Norwegian Farmers Union and one (1) member is elected by the Norwegian Society of Rural Youth.
- Regional boards comprise 5-7 members and 2-3 deputy members elected by the annual meeting and a member of the regional association of the Norwegian Farmers Union and a member of the regional society of the Norwegian Society of Rural Youth.
- Local boards comprise 3-7 members elected by the annual meeting and 1-2 deputy members, and a member elected by the local Norwegian Farmers Union and a member elected by the local Norwegian Society of Rural Youth.
- d) Minor matters may be decided by a working group of three (3) members. The chairman and deputy chairman are ex officio members of the committee. One (1) member is elected by and from the board. Decisions taken by the working group are submitted to the board.
 - e) The board meets when the chairman calls a meeting or a minimum of half the board members require it. The board forms a quorum when a minimum of half the board members are present. In the event of parity of votes, the chairman has the casting vote. The general

secretary participates in the meetings of the central board and has speaking rights, but no voting rights.

f) The board may, as required, appoint groups/committees of two to five members and prepare instructions for these groups/committees.

g) The duties of the board are:

1. to lead the work of the society in compliance with the decisions, regulations and policy documents issued by the Norwegian Society of Rural Women
2. to discuss matters that are of interest to members and the society as a whole
3. to discuss matters submitted by members/other parts of the organisation
4. to take responsibility for recruiting employees and members
5. to manage and monitor the finances of the organisation
6. to prepare proposals to be submitted to the national congress/annual meeting
7. to appoint and dismiss the general secretary of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women
8. the general secretary has the authority to make appointments and to manage staff policies based on guidelines set by the central board
9. to appoint representatives to organisations to which the Norwegian Society of Rural Women is affiliated

h) If a local or regional society makes decisions that are in contravention of the decisions or regulations of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women, the central board may cancel the decision.

i) The Norwegian Society of Rural Women is bound by the signature of the chairman and general secretary jointly. The board may in exceptional circumstances authorise and grant power of attorney. Regional and local societies are bound by the signature of their chairman.

j) Minutes must be taken of board and working group discussions. The same applies to committees, councils and boards appointed by the board.

k) All elections of board members of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women are written votes in the case of chairman, deputy chairman, board members and deputy board members. Other elections may be held using other voting methods with the approval of the annual meeting. The requirement for approved elections by written vote is more than half the votes cast – absolute majority. Blank votes count. If no candidate achieves an absolute majority, a new vote must be held. If no candidate achieves an absolute majority in the second vote, another vote will be held between the two candidates who have achieved the most votes. If a parity of votes should occur, the election will be decided by drawing lots.

At regional and local level, a written vote must be held if multiple candidates run for the same post or when anyone should require it.

Section 8

Financial responsibilities

The Norwegian Society of Rural Women is not responsible for the financial and organisational decisions and disposals that local and regional organisations make unless these have been submitted to and approved by the board of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women.

Section 9

Membership fees

Members pay annual local society membership fees, regional membership fees and central membership fees directly to the Norwegian Society of Rural Women. When payment has been made to head office, local and regional membership fees are passed on to the respective local and regional societies. Central membership fees and membership fees for affiliate members are determined by the annual meeting of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women. Regional membership fees are determined by the regional annual meeting and local membership fees by the local annual meeting. Membership fees must be paid to the Norwegian Society of Rural Women by 15 February.

Section 10

Funds

a) With the approval of the annual meeting, the Norwegian Society of Rural Women may set aside monies for funds such as working funds, operational funds etc. These funds are managed by the board of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women unless otherwise determined.

b) Funds with their own boards manage the returns of the funds according to applicable statutes. Management reports and accounts must be submitted to the national congress/annual meeting of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women/regional society/local society.

Section 11

Accounts

The Norwegian Society of Rural Women is to have its own separate accounts which are to be audited by a certified accountant. The accounts follow the calendar year. Regional and local societies must keep separate accounts that follow the annual meeting period, audited by two accountants elected by the annual meeting.

Section 12

Communication

Local societies, regional societies and permanent committees are under obligation to provide any reports and information that the Norwegian Society of Rural Women may request. Elected representatives who represent the Norwegian Society of Rural Women in other organisations, committees etc. must report to the Norwegian Society of Rural Women on their work. Such representatives cannot hold the Norwegian Society of Rural Women responsible without special authority.

Section 13

Amendments to regulations

Amendments to the Norwegian Society of Rural Women's regulations and political platform can only be carried by a two-thirds majority at an ordinary national congress of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women. Proposals for amendments to regulations and political platform must be sent to the regional and local societies for consultation three (3) months prior to the national congress.

Section 14

Dissolution of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women

The decision to dissolve the Norwegian Society of Rural Women must be taken at two (2) consecutive national congresses with a three-fourths majority of the attending national congress delegates. The attendance of the total number of representatives must be at least 75% of the elected delegates.

- A minimum of six (6) months must separate the two national congresses.
- Proposals for the dissolution must have been submitted in advance – a minimum of three (3) months prior to the national congress – to the local and regional societies for consultation.
- If the Norwegian Society of Rural Women is dissolved, the final national congress must decide with a three-fourths majority how any assets should be disposed of.

Section 15

Dissolution of regional societies

The decision to dissolve regional societies must be taken at two (2) consecutive annual meetings with a three-fourths majority of the attending annual meeting delegates. Attendance of the total number of elected representatives at the annual meeting must be at least 50%. If the requirement for 50% attendance, either in person or by proxy, at the annual meeting cannot be met, the proposal must be submitted to the board of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women. Calls for an extraordinary annual meeting cannot take place until at least two (2) months after the first annual meeting. Proposals for dissolution must have been submitted in advance – a minimum of three (3) months prior to the first annual meeting – to the local societies for consultation. The board of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women must receive written notification of the proposal no later than three (3) months before the proposal is discussed for the first time. On dissolution of a regional society, the society's bank deposits and cash holdings will pass to the Norwegian Society of Rural Women's start-up fund. The society's files and property will pass to the Norwegian Society of Rural Women. The regional board is responsible for distributing the society's remaining assets.

Section 16

Dissolution of local societies

Decisions on the dissolution of local societies must be taken at two (2) consecutive annual meetings with a three-fourths majority of the present annual meeting delegates. Calls for extraordinary annual meetings cannot take place until at least two (2) months after an ordinary annual meeting. The regional society and the central board of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women must be notified in writing of such proposals no later than two (2) months prior to the first discussion. If the society no longer has paying members to make an extraordinary annual meeting possible, the responsibility for further discussion of the matter will rest with the Norwegian Society of Rural Women.

On dissolution of a local society, society funds must remain untouched for three (3) years and be managed by the regional board. If a new society is founded in the municipality/village in this period with the same aims, the society's funds will pass to the new society at no cost. If a new society is not founded in this period, the funds will pass to the Norwegian Society of Rural Women where they will be reserved for the start-up of new societies. Society files pass to the applicable regional society. The society's other assets must be distributed by the board of the local society. Society property will pass to the applicable regional society.

Section 17

Mergers of local societies

Decisions to merge with other societies are taken at the annual meeting with a three-fourths majority of the members attending the annual meeting. Attendance must be a minimum of 50% of the membership. The Norwegian Society of Rural Women and the regional society must be notified in writing of mergers of local societies no later than one (1) month prior to the annual meeting. If a society is merged with another society, assets, property and files pass to the new society.

RULES AND INSTRUCTIONS for election committees

I Election of election committee

a) The national congress of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women elects one (1) representative and a personal deputy to the election committee from each of the four election areas:

- Finnmark, Troms, Nordland, Nord-Trøndelag and Sør-Trøndelag
- Møre and Romsdal, Sogn and Fjordane, Hordaland and Rogaland
- Vest-Agder, Aust-Agder, Vestfold, Østfold and Telemark
- Oppland, Hedmark, Buskerud and Akershus

b) Annual meetings in regional and local societies elect one election committee of 2-3 members and 1-2 deputies.

c) The national congress/annual meeting must elect a chairman and deputy chairman among the elected members of the election committee. The election of members and deputy members applies to two national congress/annual meeting terms while the chairman and deputy chairman are appointed for one national congress/annual meeting term. At the first election, half the members are eliminated in a draw so that half the members are elected every other term.

II The work of the election committee

a) The election committee must submit recommendations for the national congress/annual meeting, cf. Section 6 g of these Regulations.

b) 1. The recommendations of the election committee must be available when ordinary documentation is sent out to national congress/annual meeting representatives.

2. Under extraordinary circumstances, the election committee may make its recommendations during the national congress/annual meeting.

c) Local and regional societies may submit proposals for candidates for positions of trust in the central organisation. The election committee must be in receipt of these no later than two (2) weeks prior to the national congress/annual meeting.

d) The chairman of the election committee has attendance and speaking rights at the national congress/annual meeting during discussion of proposals submitted by the election committee.

e) The general secretary of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women acts as secretary to the central election committee.

REGULATIONS

for the Rural Women's Assistance Fund

- a) The aim of the Rural Women's Assistance Fund is to help farmers and/or members of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women who are experiencing financial and/or other difficulties due to illness, accident or personal crisis.
- b) The fund's capital mainly constitutes donations from local societies. The fund's capital is managed by its own board. Capital held by the fund must at all times be a minimum of NOK 250,000 which can only be disbursed in consultation with the board of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women.
- c) The working group of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women constitutes the board of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women's Assistance Fund. The secretariat of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women acts as secretary for the fund. The board forms a quorum when a minimum of two (2) members are present.
- d) 2-3 board meetings a year are held, more if the number of applications requires it. Applications to the Norwegian Society of Rural Women's Assistance Fund are submitted to the board according to a set schedule and are processed in confidence.

APPLICATIONS FOR DISBURSEMENTS MUST INCLUDE:

- information about what the money is to be used for
- information about the applicant and the applicant's finances
- information about the applicant's farming activities, if applicable

The board of the assistance fund has the right to obtain information about the application. The applicant must state the name of the persons/referees (where one must be a public sector employee) who can be contacted if the board of the assistance fund requires further information. Application forms must be complete in order for the application to be processed.

- e) The accounts of the assistance fund must be kept in the same location as the accounts of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women. Disbursements must be made as soon as possible after the decision by the board of the fund has been taken. In urgent cases, the manager of the fund has the authority to approve applications. Disbursements are assigned by the person from the secretariat of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women who is authorised to do so. Accounts are audited by an accountant elected by the national congress.
- f) An annual report with a summary of donations and disbursements is submitted to the national congress of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women.
- g) Amendments to these Regulations may only be carried by a two-thirds majority at the annual meeting of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women. Proposals for amendments must be submitted to the regional societies for consultation three (3) months prior to the national congress.

Ethical

guidelines of the Norwegian Society of Rural Women

- We must respect each other
- We must be open and honest
- We must show commitment
- We must be loyal to agreements and decisions
- We must generate satisfaction, pride and joy

The Norwegian Society of Rural Women 2016

www.bygdekvinnelaget.no – post@bygdekvinnelaget.no

Printing and layout: Flisa Trykkeri – www.flisatrykkeri.no