

# Guide to resolutions

## AN OVERVIEW

### THE RESOLUTIONS PROCESS

At every Convention delegates debate resolutions, which, if adopted, amend the Party's policy or Constitution, or direct the Party to undertake a specific action. All three types of resolutions will be considered at the Convention in Ottawa in 2018.

#### 1 Policy Book

At the 2006 Convention in Québec City, delegates resolved to create a policy book bringing existing policy into a comprehensive document that would be accessible to members and non-members who were interested in the Party's policy goals. The resulting policy book was developed by the Party's Policy Review Committee and forms the basis of debates at all future Conventions. This policy book was approved and further amended at the 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2015 Conventions.

The policy book is available online and is distributed electronically to electoral district associations, affiliates, commissions, committees and clubs so that delegates to the 2018 Ottawa Convention can consider amendments to the document.

The policy book contains the Party's principles and policy as formulated and voted on by Party members. Thus, amendments should focus on the text that follows "New Democrats believe" and not on the preamble at the beginning of each section. The preamble is simply an introductory narrative to those policies.

Proposals for amending the policy book, to change the content, add to it, or delete from it, require a simple majority to be adopted at Convention.

#### 2 Directives and Statements

Some resolutions take the form of directives or statements. Directives may require the Party to undertake a specific action, such as a research project. Directives may also require the Party to ensure its activities are all undertaken in a certain way, such as requiring that all activities be carried out in an energy efficient manner.

Statements provide an opportunity for the Party to take a position on an ongoing event or issue, such as a labour dispute or an international human rights crisis.

Both directives and statements require a simple majority to be adopted at Convention.

#### 3 Constitutional Amendments

From time to time, members may wish to amend the Party's Constitution. Amendments may include such changes as new names for standing committees, or representation at Convention. Changes to the Party's Constitution require a two-thirds vote of all delegates present and voting at any Convention.

## STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS FOR RESOLUTIONS

### Process in the lead-up to convention

Where do resolutions come from? Most of them come from members like you – people interested in an issue, who bring ideas forward to their electoral district association or affiliate for debate.

In the months leading up to a convention, electoral district associations hold General Meetings to select delegates to convention and to debate resolutions. Any member of an electoral district association may submit a resolution for consideration at a meeting. If the resolution passes, it is forwarded to the Federal NDP office and is added to the list of resolutions to be debated at Convention.

Resolutions can also come from the Party Executive and Council, provincial or territorial sections, affiliates and affiliated organizations, the New Democratic Youth of Canada and the Party's standing committees and commissions.

Usually, the Party receives more resolutions than can be discussed in the time available at a convention. Therefore, a process has been established to determine the priority of resolutions for debate. This process is described below.

### Process at convention

The Party's Convention Rules and Guidelines for Convention Chairs and Panel Chairs have been developed to facilitate the process for resolutions. Beginning at the 2006 Québec Convention, the Party modified the way in which resolutions are prioritized, as well as the way in which amendments to resolutions are made.

The following outlines the step-by-step process for resolutions at convention.

1. Resolutions must be submitted to Convention Headquarters (Federal Office) by the end of the day December 18, 2017 in order to be considered. Resolutions can only be submitted by e-mail at [resolutions@ndp.ca](mailto:resolutions@ndp.ca)
2. A Resolutions Committee will be struck by the executive to perform two tasks:
  - a. All resolutions that seek to amend the Party's Constitution, as well as directives and statements related to Party affairs, are grouped together in one group called Building on our momentum.
 

The other resolutions are grouped according to the specific issue they refer to (issues are listed on the other page). There are six (6) specific issues each one corresponding to a chapter of the policy book.
  - b. To establish an initial priority list of resolutions for each group.
3. Resolution Panels that correspond to each of the seven (7) groups will meet on the first day of Convention (Friday), before the Call to Order.
4. Resolution Panels will meet in separate meeting rooms with simultaneous interpretation services. Each Resolution Panel will be assigned co-chairs and a recording secretary.
5. The first order of business of each Resolution Panel will be to consider the priority list developed by the Resolutions Committee. Consideration of the priority order for resolutions will be limited to 30 minutes of the 90-minute session.
6. Each resolution assigned to a Resolution Panel will require Panel participants to move and second the resolution in order for it to be considered by the Panel.
7. The Panel will dispose of a resolution by adopting, defeating, or tabling it. As part of this process, resolutions may be amended or combined by the Panel.

8. Each Panel's ranking of resolution priorities becomes its report to plenary and will be dealt with in the corresponding Resolution Block (e.g. the "Building a clean and sustainable Canada" Panel's report will be dealt with in the "Building a clean and sustainable Canada" Resolution Block).
9. The plenary will consider a Panel's report in its corresponding Resolution Block in the following order:
  - a. Resolutions adopted by the Panel
  - b. Resolutions tabled by the Panel
  - c. Resolutions defeated by the Panel
  - d. Resolutions that did not have a mover or seconder in the Panel
10. Time limits will be assigned to each Panel's report.
11. Resolutions are not amendable in plenary. Delegates who wish to amend a resolution in plenary must move a motion to refer it to the Resolutions Committee with instructions. The Resolutions Committee will then consider the instructions and report back to Convention if time permits, otherwise they are referred to Federal Council.
12. Resolutions adopted by Panel but not dealt with in plenary will be referred to the Federal Council.

Need more information? Questions on this resolutions procedure should be sent by e-mail to [resolutions@ndp.ca](mailto:resolutions@ndp.ca)

## PANEL AND RESOLUTION BLOCK CATEGORIES

All resolutions submitted will be assigned to one of the seven (7) Panels below. These groupings are subject to change depending on the number of resolutions submitted.

### Innovating and prospering in the new energy economy

Resolutions in this section will address ideas for building a stronger, greener economy that safeguards the jobs of today and creates the jobs of tomorrow. Topics may include infrastructure, industrial strategies, monetary policy, and our rights as workers and consumers.

### Building a clean and sustainable Canada

This panel will address our Party's plans for ensuring the sustainability of our planet. Topics may include addressing climate change, protecting fresh water and natural resources, and the development of new energy technologies.

### Investing in a Canada where no one is left behind

Resolutions in this section will address Canada's social policies and justice system. Topics may include healthcare, education, childcare, and poverty, as well as crime prevention and Canada's justice system.

### Redefining Canada's place in the world

Resolutions in this section will address Canada's foreign policy, aid and development and trade policy. Topic areas in this section may include protecting Canadian sovereignty, foreign aid, peacekeeping, defense, third world debt, addressing the AIDS pandemic, and fair trade.

### Governing in an inclusive and fair Canada

This panel will address our Party's vision for Canada's democracy and ethics in government. Topics in this panel may include cooperative federalism, Aboriginal self-governance, electoral reform, and transparency in government.

### Strengthening human rights and the Canadian identity

Resolutions in this panel will address the rights of women and persons with disabilities, multiculturalism, Canadian arts and culture. Topics may include the support for artists, the role of the public broadcaster, and net neutrality.

### Building on our momentum

Resolutions in this section include items on Party affairs and the Party Constitution, as well as directives and statements that build on our electoral successes.

## WRITING YOUR RESOLUTION

Want to make sure your resolution is one of those debated at Convention? It's important to take some time to consider exactly what you want to achieve.

### Resolutions relating to the policy book

Before sitting down to write a resolution relating to the policy book, familiarize yourself with the Party's policy book. The policy you are interested in may already be there, or you may just want to amend what currently exists.

In order to illustrate the various ways the policy book can be amended, an example using Section 3.7 (Seniors and retirees) is provided below.

Section 3.7 of the policy book currently reads:

*3.7. New Democrats believe in:*  
*h. Creating an ombudsman position for the seniors.*

#### Option 1: Delete existing policy

If you wish to delete Section 3.7.h., you could write a resolution as follows:

*Therefore be it resolved that section 3.7.h. in the policy book be deleted.*

#### Option 2: Amend an existing policy

To amend Section 3.7.h., you could write a resolution as follows:

*Be it resolved that Section 3.7.h. in the policy book be amended to read:*

*h. Creating an ombudsman position for the seniors and pensioners.*

#### Option 3: Create new policy

To create a new policy, you could write a resolution as follows:

*Be it resolved that the following clause be added to Section 3.7 of the policy book:*

*3.7. New Democrats believe in:*  
*i. Reversing the Government's raising of the age of eligibility for OAS from 65 to 67.*

Keep in mind that time is limited at Convention. A clear resolution, that does not repeat existing policy, is more likely to be chosen by delegates for debate and discussion.

### Directives and Statements

Some resolutions are not necessarily an expression of policy, but direct the Party to do a specific thing, (e.g. research a certain issue). The following is an example of a directive resolution:

*BE IT RESOLVED that the New Democratic Party's Federal Council conduct research into the expansion of cooperative housing;*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Federal Council presents the research at the next convention.*

Statements enable the Party to take a position on an ongoing event, such as a labour dispute, or recent actions in international affairs. The following is an example of a statement resolution:

*BE IT RESOLVED that the Party support the CLC campaign to protect pensions.*

Both directive and statement resolutions require a simple majority to be adopted at Convention.

### Amendments to the Constitution

Some resolutions seek to amend the Party's Constitution. For example, the motion below seeks to change the name of a standing committee:

*BE IT RESOLVED that Article IX, Section 4(1) of the Constitution be amended by striking "Participation of Women Committee", and replacing this phrase with "Women's Committee";*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this change be made throughout the document wherever "Participation of Women Committee" appears.*

If you propose to amend the Party's Constitution, make sure you refer to a specific article. Include the precise wording for the amendment or addition you wish to make, as well as any text you wish to remove.

Resolutions to amend the Party Constitution are reviewed by the Party's Constitution Committee before being sent to Convention for debate. Changes to the Party's Constitution require a two-thirds vote of all delegates present and voting at Convention.

### How to write a resolution

1. Find out if the Party has an existing policy on the issue you want to address. The Party's current policies have been compiled in the policy book, which can be amended at Convention.
2. Ask yourself if you want to:
  - // Amend or delete existing policy,
  - // Add new policy,
  - // Direct the Party to take a specific action (e.g. run a campaign, research an issue, develop a policy),
  - // Have the Party make a statement on an on-going event or issue, or
  - // Amend the Party Constitution.

Clarifying your goals will help you come up with appropriate wording for your resolution. Always try to keep in mind the Party's core principles of Democracy, Equality and Sustainability.

### 3. Write your resolution

There are a few things to keep in mind when you draft your resolution:

- // You are not preparing legislation. Resolutions should outline policy in clear and concise language.
- // If you're drafting a resolution relating to the policy book, follow the format of the policy book. Identify the section where you'd like to amend, delete, or add policy and make sure this identification is clearly stated in the resolution.
- // Keep the whereas clauses/preamble to no more than 50 words due to the significant cost in translation and printing. "Whereas" clauses simply set up a rationale for adopting a particular policy; they do not constitute the policy itself. Only the "Be it Resolved" clause will be debated at Convention and can become Party policy.
- // Stick to one topic. Keep the resolution short and concise. Resolutions must be under 100 words in order to be considered.
- // When writing resolutions relating to the policy book please avoid resolutions that are too specific as they will go out of date. Directives or statements can be more specific and can refer to an emerging issue or event of public interest.
- // Ask yourself if your resolution is necessary. For example, if New Democrats have an existing policy supporting the creation of affordable housing, it may not be necessary to submit a resolution calling for the Party's support for an affordable housing project in your area.

**RESOLUTION SUBMISSION**

All resolutions to be considered at convention must:

1. Be adopted at a general meeting of the electoral district association/affiliate/chartered youth chapter or otherwise adopted by sections/ affiliates/committees/commissions;
2. Be submitted to the party headquarters by December 18, 2017.

Resolutions can only be submitted by email at **resolutions@ndp.ca**

Each resolution must be accompanied by all of the information below, even if your email contains more than one resolution. Organizations submitting multiple resolutions must rank them in order of priority. For each resolution, please indicate:

**Resolution Title** (short and specific)

**Priority Number** (if you are submitting more than one resolution)

**Electoral District Association/Affiliate/ Delegating Body**

**Date of General Membership Meeting at which the resolution was passed**

**Name of one Officer** (include all of the contact information – address, telephone number and email address – for the primary contact person)

Please also indicate which of the following applies to each of your resolutions:

1. The submitted resolution is a constitutional amendment, directive or statement.
2. The submitted resolution adds new policy to the existing Policy Book.
3. The submitted resolution amends the existing Policy Book. (In this case, please indicate the chapter and section number being amended, as well as how it will be amended.)
4. The submitted resolution deletes content from the existing Policy Book. (If you wish to delete content from the Policy Book, please indicate the chapter and section number, as well as the precise text you wish to delete.)