

NPU-Y 2025 Operating Procedures

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1V2bIKDBtUrsYiFVeIkLtvIfAcI0IuI4Vlw6-j6M3Z68/edit?tab=t.0>

Preliminaries

NPU-Y's Operating Procedures serve as a supplemental document to the NPU-Y Bylaws. These procedures provide detailed guidance on processes, actions, and mechanisms that support the effective operation of NPU-Y, particularly where the bylaws are broad or silent. These procedures are not independent of the bylaws. In cases of conflict, the bylaws shall prevail.

These Operating Procedures align with Article VIII of the NPU-Y Bylaws, which authorizes their adoption to ensure consistent and lawful governance. All procedures must be consistent with the bylaws, as well as applicable City Ordinances, State Laws, and Federal Laws.

Article VIII: Adoption of Operating Procedures.

The Executive Board of NPU-Y may propose appropriate Operating Procedures which shall provide additional guidance on processes, actions, and mechanisms that are related to but not fully described in these Bylaws. The Operating Procedures shall be considered as a companion to the Bylaws, and are not independent of the Bylaws. Where there is a conflict between the Bylaws and the Operating Procedures, the Bylaws shall prevail. Said Operating Procedures must be consistent with these Bylaws, as well as any applicable City Ordinances, State Laws, Federal Law, and other applicable legal authority.

8.1 Amendments

Amendments to these Operating Procedures may be proposed by any member of NPU-Y at a regularly scheduled monthly meeting of NPU-Y. If the motion prevails, then the Chairperson of NPU-Y shall immediately establish an ad hoc committee to consider, discuss, and draft amendments to the Operating Procedures. The ad hoc committee reviewing the Operating Procedures shall provide to the Executive Committee a draft of the proposed amendments to the Operating Procedures. The Operating Procedures shall be approved at a regularly scheduled meeting at which a quorum is present and by a simple majority of FIFTY PERCENT PLUS ONE (50% + 1).

Any amendments to the Operating Procedures shall not become part of the bylaws currently in effect, and shall only be incorporated at the annual adoption of the bylaws, and become effective on January 1st of the following year.

1. Implementation and Interpretation of Operating Procedures

These operating procedures should be interpreted in a manner so as to effectuate the spirit of the language contained herein, and form should never be permitted to triumph over substance.

Therefore, hyper-technical reading of the operating procedures is inappropriate and strongly discouraged. All words contained herein should be read using their common meanings, unless a term is specifically defined otherwise.

In the event of any question as to the implementation and/or interpretation, the Executive Board shall be responsible for responding to such issues and such inquiries should be directed to the Executive Board.

2. Rules of Conduct

2.1. Expected Behavior

All attendees at NPU-Y meetings, including General Body meetings, committee meetings, and post-meeting discussions, are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful and professional manner, following Robert's Rules of Order. This includes refraining from interrupting, maintaining order during debates, and respecting the presiding officer's rulings. Additional conduct guidelines outlined in these procedures apply to all official communications and events. Civility, order, and inclusivity are essential to ensuring productive deliberations.

Any attendee who is unwilling or unable to conduct himself or herself in a decorous and appropriate manner may be subject to the Consequences & Discipline per Article II, Sec. 2.5, depending on the level of misconduct involved. The rules of conduct shall apply to all attendees at NPU-Y general Body

2.2 Applicability

The rules of conduct apply to all NPU-Y-related activities, including:

- General Body meetings.
- Executive Committee and Standing Committee meetings.
- Ad hoc committee meetings.
- Post-General Body meeting discussions and follow-ups.
- In-person workshops and events hosted by the NPU, and other situations in which business is conducted on behalf of or in representation of the NPU.
- Communications conducted on behalf of NPU-Y, including emails, texts, and social media.

2.3 Unacceptable Behavior

Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Interrupting or speaking out of turn without being recognized by the presiding officer.
- Engaging in personal attacks, harassment, or intimidation towards another person; rather than addressing the point that person has made.
- Use of profanity, lewd language, or threatening gestures.
- Persistent disruption of meetings or refusal to comply with the presiding officer's rulings.

2.4 Consequences for Misconduct

Depending on the severity of the violation, the following actions may be taken:

1. Verbal warning by the presiding officer.
2. Loss of speaking privileges for the remainder of the meeting.
3. Removal from the meeting by majority vote of the body, pursuant to a motion from the floor, and barred from re-entry for the remainder of that meeting.

In cases of repeated or severe misconduct, recommendations for suspension or removal from a position may be made to the Executive Board, requiring a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the General Body for final approval.

3. Conflict of Interest

3.1 Disclosure and Recusal

All members, officers, and committee chairs must disclose conflicts of interest and recuse themselves from discussions and votes where they or their immediate family have:

- A financial interest.
- Ownership of property impacted by a decision.
- Employment or contracts related to the matter.

Officers in Conflict of interest as described in the Bylaws shall recuse themselves from their officer role prior to the item being addressed, in order to remove any appearance of impropriety, as their position has a level of influence that could call into question their ability to affect in any way the deliberations of the item.

3.2 Documentation

Disclosures and recusals must be recorded in the meeting minutes to ensure transparency. Additionally, any committee or officer who fails to disclose a conflict of interest prior to deliberation or voting may be subject to disciplinary action, as outlined in Section 8.

3.3 Distinguish between individual interests and community interests if you are a leader of an organization.

As a leader of an organization, you can represent yourself or the organization as each representation can have competing interests. The definition of organization is to include both neighborhood and NPU Executive Board Members, and Committee Members, when speaking on the behalf of the NPU's General Body. Shall a member state their leadership title of the organization, it is confusing to city officials to decide whether you are speaking on behalf of yourself or your organization. If not explicitly stated, it can be misleading.

Therefore, when discussing interests, in conversation with or writing to city departments, city held boards, and/or elected officials, explicitly stating whether your message is a personal interest or the voice of the community. Another way is to not mention leadership title if you feel you are not speaking on the voice of the community. For emails, ensure your signature reflects that of your distinguished interest.

- A Committee Chair/Officer may represent themselves, in opposition of the NPU General Body, so long as they only represent themselves, and not that of the community. The NPU Chairperson, however, may ONLY represent that of the community, if the item has been voted on by the General Body. For more details on limitation of officers, see the City of Atlanta's Code of Ethics pertaining to the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson representation before city departments and boards.
 - Committee Members shall speak on behalf of their personal interest, and not that of the Committee. This is to not conflict with the Committee Chair Member(s) as they represent the Standing and/or Ad-Hoc Committee; as the General Body ratified the person(s) holding the Committee Chair position.
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4. Meeting Guidelines

4.1 Hybrid and Virtual Meetings

- Virtual participants must register using their full names to ensure eligibility for voting and attendance.
- Family members, and those sharing the same household, who are seeking eligibility to vote and are attending together must list eligible and present voters in the chat, or sign-in sheet.

4.2 Order of Recommendations

The presiding officer must ensure that recommendations from Neighborhood Associations and committees are fully presented before opening the floor to motions.

Before the General Body discusses a matter, recommendations must be solicited in the following order:

1. Neighborhood Associations:

- Neighborhood associations representing the impacted area must present their recommendations first.
- A representative of the association shall state the recommendation clearly, including the outcome of the Neighborhood Associations vote when applicable.
- No motion may be called to the floor during this time to allow for General Body discussion.

2. Standing or Ad Hoc Committees:

- Relevant committee recommendations are presented after neighborhood input.
- Recommendations must include the rationale and any supporting documentation.

- No motion may be called to the floor during this time to allow for General Body discussion afterward.

4.3 General Body Discussion

- After all recommendations have been presented, the presiding officer will open the matter for General Body discussion.
- To ensure orderly discussions and equitable participation: Each speaker will be limited to two (2) minutes unless otherwise adjusted by the Chairperson.
- Time limits for entire discussions may be applied at the discretion of the Chairperson or by a motion approved by the General Body.

4.4 Motioned Question

- Motions may only be introduced after the General Body has had the opportunity to discuss the matter at hand.
- No final action on motions may occur until all eligible members who wish to speak have had an opportunity to do so, subject to time limits set by the Chairperson.
- Motions must be called within a reasonable timeframe.

4.5 Voting Matters

- Voting will be conducted using the Poll system in Zoom, or a similarly public recording option if hosted on an alternative platform, including the chat feature.
 - Participants by phone shall raise their hand, and will be polled to submit their voice vote.
- During hybrid meetings, in-person votes will use a written or hand-raising method. Voice votes will not be used.
- Upon the close of the Voting Poll, all member votes are closed. No additional voting shall take place after such.

4.6 Post-Meeting Discussions

- Post-General Body meeting sessions may be utilized to address unresolved matters, administrative follow-ups, or the development of committee recommendations.
 - These discussions are considered official and subject to the same rules of conduct as General Body meetings.
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5. Voting Procedures

5.1 Calling the Question (aka Motion)

- The Presiding Officer of NPU-Y shall use the Zoom Poll system when hosting Zoom meetings, where applicable.
- Polls must clearly state the motion being voted on, with multiple choice options listed as "Approve," "Deny," and "Abstain."

- Conditions for Approval are not required to be listed in the Poll, however they shall be clearly presented when calling the question.
- Members shall cast their votes in the Poll, or through the Chat either to the Host or “Everybody” to be counted.
- Votes taken during meetings will be considered provisional until attendance records verify eligibility.
- Final results will be submitted to the Department of City Planning and reflected in meeting minutes.

5.2 Provisional Vote

- Votes taken during meetings will be considered provisional until attendance records verify eligibility.
- To verify Eligibility of Voters, the Executive Board shall account for attendance of members in the attendance report, along with alternative approved record of attendance, which will be used to compare those in the Voting Poll Results to those listed as Eligible Voters.
- Final results will be submitted to the Department of City Planning and reflected in meeting minutes. These amended voting results shall be the voice of the General Body and not be adjusted after the Voting Report is submitted.

5.3 Tie Vote

- Shall a tie vote result after verifying voter eligibility, the Chairperson may cast a tie-breaking vote, if:
 - The Chairperson did not cast a vote on the matter during the voting process.
 - The voting matter necessitates that a tie be broken, for which the Chairperson may decide at their sole discretion.

6. Alcohol License and Festival Permit Voting

Due to the nature of LRB and MOSE applications, all motions will be pre-defined to maintain consistency and clarity. These motions will be announced prior to any discussion, ensuring that members understand how they can vote at the outset rather than feeling rushed or pressured into a decision at the conclusion of the discussion. It also eliminates the conflict of a double negative motion.

For Example - The agenda item for and LRB would be stated as follows in a Zoom Poll:

Question: "**Request for LRB at (address).**"

- A. Approve / Approve with Conditions
- B. Deny
- C. Abstain

6.1 Procedure

- The body does not state the motion, instead calls the question to the floor, "Call to Question." For which the presiding officer shall seek if there are conditions to the question, prior to calling for a second on the motion.
- The motion shall only state the exact agenda item, and if there are conditions, with answer choices of "Approve" or "Approve with Conditions," and "Deny," "Abstain."

6.2 Presentation of Conditions

- If conditions are recommended, they must be stated explicitly before voting, and this motion must be replicated in the poll question to avoid misinterpretation.
 - No conditions may be introduced after voting has commenced.
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7. Referral of Matters to Neighborhood Associations

7.1 Neighborhood Recommendation

- On any matter that the City requires a vote by the NPU, during an NPU General Body Meeting, the matter in question shall first be referred to the appropriate Neighborhood Association, presented by one (1) Neighborhood Association Officer, for a recommendation, prior to opening discussion to the general body.
 - The NPU-Y Executive Board, at its discretion, may refer other matters to the appropriate Neighborhood Association on which the City does not require a vote.
 - During the referral process, the Neighborhood Associations shall state their recommendation, which should be strongly considered, however the NPU is not required to uphold the Neighborhood Associations recommendation, and thus shall proceed with a vote of the general body, per a democratic voting process.
 - When a Neighborhood Associations representative is called to state the recommendation, they shall not call a motion to the floor, limiting the inclusion of other members.
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8. Committee Operations

8.1 Responsibilities

- Standing and ad hoc committee chairs shall prepare quarterly written reports summarizing activities, recommendations, and financial disclosures (if applicable).
- Reports shall be submitted to the Executive Board and included in General Body meeting minutes.

8.2 Financial Disclosures

- Committees handling funds shall submit financial disclosures regularly to the Executive Board, and upon request by the Treasurer or Chairperson.

9. Disciplinary Actions

9.1 Grounds for Disciplinary Actions

Disciplinary actions may be considered for:

- Repeated violations of the rules of conduct.
- Failure to disclose conflicts of interest.
- Persistent non-attendance or dereliction of duty by officers or committee members.

9.2 Process

1. Allegations must be submitted in writing to the Executive Board.
 2. The Executive Board will investigate and present findings to the General Body.
 3. Disciplinary actions, including suspension or removal, require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the General Body.
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10. Annual Review and Amendments

10.1 Review Process

- The Operating Procedures will be reviewed annually by an Ad Hoc Committee, appointed by the Chairperson.
- Proposed amendments must be submitted to the General Body for approval by a simple majority vote.

10.2 Timeline

- Approved amendments will be incorporated into the bylaws during the annual adoption process, becoming effective January 1 of the following year.
 - Unforeseen circumstances, or by acts of god, agreed by the Executive Board
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These Operating Procedures were adopted by NPU-Y on [Date] and serve as a guiding document for the effective and transparent operation of the organization.

Signed:

[Chairperson's Name]
NPU-Y Chairperson
[Date]