

# **Industrial Workers of the World Toronto General Membership Branch**

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## **Branch By-laws**

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## **Article I: Name & Structure**

- (a) The name of this Branch of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) shall be Toronto General Membership Branch (GMB).
- (b) The Toronto GMB constitutes a GMB for the Greater Toronto Area, entitled to all of the rights and responsibilities stipulated by the IWW Constitution & General By-laws.
- (c) The Branch Secretary is responsible for ensuring that this document is up to date and consistent with all official decisions made by the Toronto GMB membership.
- (d) These by-laws shall be posted on the Toronto GMB website and a copy issued to all new members within sixty (60) days of receipt of their first month's dues.
- (e) Any part of these by-laws which conflicts with the IWW Constitution & General By-laws, or which conflicts with amendments ratified by a referendum vote by the Toronto GMB, are hereby declared null and void.
- (f) These by-laws apply to all members of the Toronto GMB.

## **Article II: Membership**

- (a) Membership in the Toronto GMB shall be by voluntary association of IWW members in good standing who reside in the Greater Toronto Area.
- (b) The Branch Secretary shall maintain a list of all Toronto GMB members that includes full and current contact information, standing, Industrial Union number and membership number.
- (c) The membership list shall be:
  - i. verified by the Branch Secretary every six months without undue release of the contact details of any person to the public;
  - ii. made available to any Toronto GMB officer.
- (d) All members of the Toronto GMB shall pay dues to the Branch Secretary or Branch Delegates, rather than directly to IWW Headquarters.

## **Article III: Meetings**

- (a) Toronto GMB meetings shall be held on a monthly basis. Details for each upcoming meeting shall be confirmed at the previous monthly meeting when possible. Meetings of the Toronto GMB shall generally be scheduled thirty (30) days in advance. A minimum of five (5) days notice must be provided for the details of the meeting, including time and location.
- (b) The Branch Secretary shall notify all Toronto GMB members of the date, time and location of each upcoming meeting by distributing meeting minutes, email notification, and through other means as appropriate.

(c) The Branch Secretary may coordinate the scheduling of a special GMB meeting, provided that four members of the GMB in good standing who have attended at least one GMB meeting in the past three months agree it is necessary and at least five (5) days notice is given to all eligible voters of the Toronto GMB.

(d) The Branch Secretary may coordinate the cancellation of a Toronto GMB meeting, but must explain her/his reasoning for this cancellation at the following meeting, and may not cancel two subsequent meetings. If five (5) Toronto GMB members agree that a meeting should not be cancelled, the meeting will proceed as usual regardless of the Branch Secretary's ruling.

(e) Meetings shall be open to all Toronto GMB members in good standing. Members of other GMBs, at-large members, and members not currently in good standing may attend with voice but no vote. Non-IWW members may observe the meeting, provided that their presence be announced at the outset of the meeting and that Toronto GMB members vote to allow them to stay. Such persons may attend with voice but no vote.

(f) Membership cards shall be checked at each Toronto GMB meeting for good standing in accordance with the IWW Constitution. Members who are not found to be in good standing, or who are not vouched for by a present Branch Delegate, will not be permitted a vote and shall not be counted in determining quorum.

(g) For the purpose of voting, there must be a quorum of no less than five (5) Toronto GMB members in good standing, or ten percent (10%) of Toronto GMB members in good standing, whichever number is larger.

(h) All Toronto GMB decisions shall ultimately be determined by majority vote.

#### **Article IV: Officers**

(a) No individual may speak for, or act as a public representative of, the Toronto GMB without a mandate to do so from the Branch.

(b) The Toronto GMB shall elect officers for the following positions:

- i. Branch Secretary
- ii. Branch Treasurer
- iii. Branch Delegate(s)
  1. The number of Toronto GMB Branch Delegates shall not exceed four (4), except in the case that the ratio of Delegates to other members exceeds one (1) Delegate for ten (10) members in good standing. In this case, the Toronto GMB membership may decide to increase the number of Delegate positions.
  2. Job Branches may elect their own Delegates. These positions will not be counted toward the number of Branch Delegate positions available for the Toronto GMB.
- iv. Branch CanROC Liaison
- v. Branch Committee Chairs

(c) As required, the Toronto GMB may create other officer positions. An appropriate statement of duties shall be created and voted upon by the GMB for any such position. Within ninety (90) days of the creation of a new representative position, the Toronto GMB By-laws must be amended to reflect this modification. Each additional officer shall be subject to the provisions of this article at all times.

(d) Officer duties shall be organized as follows:

- i. The Branch Secretary shall be responsible for:
  1. the preparation of an agenda for each meeting;
  2. notifying the membership of details for upcoming meetings;
  3. ensuring that meeting minutes are distributed to the Toronto GMB membership in a timely manner;
  4. acting as the main contact between the Toronto GMB and the IWW General Executive Board;
  5. managing Branch correspondence not otherwise delegated to an other Toronto GMB member;
  6. keeping and verifying a current membership list as per Articles II(b) and II(c);
  7. consolidating monthly Branch Delegate reports into a Branch Secretary's Monthly Financial report;
  8. forwarding Branch Secretary's Monthly Financial reports, membership dues and Branch Delegate reports to the Branch Treasurer;
  9. preparation of election ballots during regular and special elections;
  10. overseeing all Toronto GMB records and supplies;
  11. attending monthly Toronto GMB meetings and special meetings whenever possible; and
  12. assuring the upkeep of these By-laws.
  
- ii. The Branch Treasurer shall be responsible for:
  1. regular accounting of all Toronto GMB funds;
  2. depositing Toronto GMB membership dues;
  3. writing and mailing cheques;
  4. reimbursing approved expenses;
  5. allocating funds at the direction of the Toronto GMB;
  6. making monthly financial reports to the branch, which include the current balance of all Toronto GMB funds, and money earmarked for projects, committees or actions;
  7. keeping a financial record for the Toronto GMB, including logging revenue and expenditures;
  8. forwarding Branch Secretary's Monthly Financial Reports to IWW General Headquarters; and
  9. attending monthly Toronto GMB meetings and special meetings whenever possible.
  
- iii. The Branch Delegate(s) shall be responsible for:
  1. signing up new members;

2. orienting new members and providing them with IWW orientation materials;
3. maintaining regular contact with membership;
4. collecting monthly membership dues and placing stamps in members' cards;
5. submitting monthly dues collection and activity reports to the Toronto GMB Branch Secretary whether or not any dues have been collected;
6. maintaining records of IWW materials in possession of the Toronto GMB;
7. distributing IWW publications and literature;
8. completing an annual inventory clearance form and submitting it to IWW General Headquarters;
9. adding new members and eliminating non-members to the email list; and
10. attending monthly Toronto GMB meetings and special meetings whenever possible.

iv. The Branch CanROC Liaison shall be responsible for:

1. subscribing to, and keeping up to date with, the CanROC email list;
2. representing the views of the Toronto GMB over the CanROC email list or at other special CanROC meetings; and
3. acting as the main contact between the Toronto GMB and CanROC.

v. Branch Committee Chairs shall be responsible for

1. iScheduling, organizing and publicizing meetings of the committee for which they are the chair;
2. Reporting to the Toronto GMB on a monthly basis on the activities of that committee.

(e) The term of office for each Toronto GMB officer is one (1) year in length.

(f) There shall be no limit to the number of terms served by any Toronto GMB officer.

(g) An elected Toronto GMB officer may be recalled at any time. An official recall takes place by a majority vote of members in good standing at a regular or special Toronto GMB meeting. A recall vote can take place when a recall petition, signed by a minimum of five (5) Toronto GMB members in good standing, is brought to a Toronto GMB meeting. If a recall vote is successful, the officer's term shall end immediately.

(h) Minimum notice for a recall vote is five (5) days, as per Article III(c).

(i) An elected Toronto GMB officer may resign at any time. In order to constitute an official resignation, the resigning officer must either make a verbal announcement at a Toronto GMB meeting or co-sign a statement (whether paper or digital) with one other Toronto GMB member in good standing.

(j) If a Toronto GMB officer is recalled or resigns, the nomination period shall open immediately and elections by secret ballot will take place at a any Toronto GMB meeting which allows for thirty (30) days notice.

(k) Vacant officer positions may be filled by electing acting officers by majority vote at a regular or special Toronto GMB meeting. The Branch Secretary is responsible for ensuring that all essential Toronto GMB tasks are completed in the interim prior to the election of a new officer(s). If the Branch Secretary office is vacant, this responsibility falls to the Branch Treasurer. An acting officer's term shall begin immediately following their election and shall terminate when the previous incumbent's term expires at a regular annual election.

(l) All officers must be members in good standing. If any officer falls more than three months behind in payment of dues, they shall be given the option of catching up or being replaced.

#### **Article V: Elections**

(a) Regular elections for all officer positions shall take place annually, on or around the October Toronto GMB meeting.

(b) In order to be eligible for election or re-election, a Toronto GMB member must be in good standing.

(c) A Toronto GMB member may be nominated for multiple offices and hold multiple offices.

(d) All members shall be notified of an election by the Toronto GMB Branch Secretary at least thirty (30) days in advance of the election.

(e) All elections shall be by secret ballot at a Toronto GMB meeting. Members may vote in absentia by submitting a ballot to a Toronto GMB officer in a sealed envelope indicating the in absentia voter's name, card number and the last month for which they paid dues.

(f) Ballots are to be prepared by the Branch Secretary at least five (5) days in advance of the election in order that they can be used for in absentia voting. Each ballot must be printed on a letter-sized piece of paper.

(g) Newly elected officers' terms shall begin immediately following their election.

(h) Each member in good standing is entitled to cast one (1) vote for each office.

#### **Article VI: Finances**

(a) The Toronto GMB fiscal year shall run from January 1 to December 30, in accordance with which the membership shall create an annual budget.

(b) At the end of each fiscal year, there shall be a year-end financial review conducted by two Toronto GMB members elected by the membership.

(c) An audit of the Toronto GMB financial accounts by a third party shall take place if a petition, signed by five (5) Toronto GMB members in good standing, makes such a request.

(d) No financial proposal which allocates one-time grants exceeding twenty-five dollars (\$25.00 CDN) or which involves recurrent expenditures of any amount shall be adopted by the Toronto GMB unless approved by majority vote.

(e) The Branch Treasurer shall be authorized to dispense irregular funds of less than twenty-five dollars (\$25.00 CDN) at her or his discretion, but these costs must be reported at the following Toronto GMB meeting.

(f) All sources of revenue and all expenditures must be recorded, including voluntary payments, donations and assessments.

#### **Article VII: Job Branches**

(a) A Job Branch of the Toronto GMB may be formed if five (5) or more Toronto GMB members are employed at the same workplace.

(b) A Toronto GMB Job Branch may elect officers and compose its own by-laws, provided that they do not contradict the IWW Constitution & General By-laws or the Toronto GMB By-laws.

(c) Members in good standing of Toronto GMB Job Branches are entitled to vote at Toronto GMB meetings and to hold elected office.

#### **Article VIII: Committees**

(a) The Toronto GMB may establish committees. These committees may compose their own by-laws, provided that they do not contradict the IWW Constitution & General By-laws or the Toronto GMB By-laws.

#### **Article IX: Amendment of By-laws**

(a) These by-laws may be amended by a majority vote of Toronto GMB members in good standing (including members who vote in absentia).

(b) Any Toronto GMB member in good standing may submit a proposal to amend these by-laws at a Toronto GMB meeting. Notice of this proposal must be made in the meeting minutes, and a vote on the proposal can take place at the proceeding Toronto GMB meeting.

(c) Toronto GMB members shall be provided with at least thirty (30) days notice prior to a

#### **Article X: Appendix**

(a) These by-laws have an appendix which can be modified by majority vote of members in good standing at any meeting of the Toronto GMB, with the exception of the harassment policy, which must be amended in accordance with Article IX.

## Appendix

### Section I: Committee Mandates

Organizing Committee: the purpose of the Organizing Committee is to discuss and nurture active and potential organizing projects by Branch members, or those who are interested in organizing with us.

Industrial Organizing Committee #620: The 620 IOC organizes education workers and students. We work as rank and file members within our business and student unions and organize non-unionized pockets of our industry. It seeks to coordinate and engage in coherent industry-wide direct action to improve working and learning conditions and fight for a better world where free, quality education is available to all.

Solidarity Committee: the solidarity committee seeks to increase the Toronto GMB's visibility and relevance both in organized and unorganized workers' struggles and to foster communication and support across the working class. It does this by supporting ongoing work actions by organized labour. It also offers a support mechanism and outlet for struggle for non-unionized workers by engaging in direct action case work.

Fundraising and Literature Committee: the fundraising and literature committee runs the IWW merchandise table at events, selling books, zines, clothing, posters, music, bike lights and other fabulous wobbly paraphernalia. This committee also organizes social events, like the annual May Day afterparty.

Public Outreach Committee: the public outreach committee is responsible for updating the website, twitter, facebook, youtube and other online and social media. It meets infrequently with most work being conducted over email. It is made up of one chair elected by the Toronto GMB and a member elected by each of the other standing committees, plus any interested member

Public and Internal Education Committee: this committee is responsible for organizing the logistics of all workshops and trainings put on by the branch. It also has a role in supporting the development of new workshops, the training of members to present them, and serves as a central location to store our various curricula.

### Section II: Harassment Policy

The Toronto IWW General Membership Branch, in keeping with the principles and beliefs of our organization, is committed to a just world. Justice includes the ability of all individuals to feel safe and protected while in the company of IWW members. We have developed a policy intended to prevent harassment of any type and to deal quickly and effectively with any incident that might occur.

Harassment of IWW members can occur any place where more than one member is gathered. This includes branch meetings, and formal and informal social events. Harassment is not limited to members' inappropriate behaviour to other members; it also includes members' behaviour

towards non-members.

Harassment occurs when an individual is subjected to unwelcome verbal or physical conduct because of reasons including but not limited to race, religious beliefs, colour, place of origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, age, ancestry, marital status, and/or family status.

Examples of harassment which will not be tolerated are: verbal or physical abuse, threats, bullying, derogatory remarks, malicious jokes, innuendo or taunts about any member's appearance, religious beliefs, colour, place of origin, sexual orientation, mental or physical abilities, ancestry, marital status, family status, or gender identity. The Toronto GMB also will not tolerate the display of pornographic, racist or offensive signs or images; malicious practical jokes that result in awkwardness or embarrassment; or unwelcome invitations or requests, whether indirect or explicit.

All harassment is offensive and in many cases it intimidates others. Harassment will not be tolerated by the Toronto IWW. From the point of branch adoption of this policy forward, there will be no statute of limitations on harassment complaints.

### **Definition of Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is a violation of this policy. Unwanted sexual advances, unwanted requests for sexual favours, and other unwanted verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment whether such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly. Sexual harassment can include such things as pinching, patting, rubbing or leering, "dirty" jokes, pictures or pornographic materials, comments, suggestions, innuendoes, requests or demands of a sexual nature. The behaviour need not be intentional in order to be considered sexual harassment.

### **Policy:**

(a) Tell the harasser his/her behaviour is unwelcome and ask him/her to stop. If you do not feel comfortable speaking to your harasser about the incident, report the incident to a Branch Delegate or the Branch Secretary as soon as possible. S/he will facilitate the completion of an official complaint form that will be kept as documentation of the incident for reference during the course of the investigation, but the report will be destroyed at the end of either conflict mediation or charges.

(b) The Branch Delegate or Branch Secretary will arrange a confidential meeting with the complainant in which they will decide whether or not to follow the charges procedure under Article III of the General Bylaws or the Conflict Mediation Procedure under Article XIV of the General Bylaws. S/he will also provide information on Victims Services.

(c) If Conflict Mediation is pursued and the accused refuses to attend meetings, or conciliation is not reached through bad faith on the part of the accused, this process can move to Charges as outlined under Article III of the General Bylaws.

### **Section III: Public Outreach Content Guidelines**

#### **Goal**

The goal of the Web Committee is to promote the methods and aims of the IWW to workers via online communications. This committee is specific to outward-directed materials and is not responsible for internal discussions.

#### **Audience**

- (a) The online material is considered to be introductory material and no familiarity with the IWW is to be assumed.
- (b) All IWW specific language must be explained in text, with the exception of “wobbly” or “wob” which may be omitted as space is an issue.
- (c) Labour terms which are *commonly* used in mainstream media reporting may be used without explanation, unless they have a use within the IWW which is atypical.
- (d) If it is not appropriate to explain in-text, the author may link to another document on the site or another site where an explanation is provided in an accessible way.
- (e) Materials produced and distributed by the committee are ideally written no higher than a grade 12 reading level. They should be submitted in a form which is ready to publish, with appropriate attention having been paid to grammar, style and spelling.

#### **Accountability**

- (a) Members are encouraged to follow and read online materials and comment either to the committee or to the branch as a whole in the event that anything is found to be inappropriate.
- (b) The Chair is responsible for ensuring this guide is followed. In the event there is a disagreement regarding the appropriateness of materials, either,
  - 1. Materials published which do not adhere; or
  - 2. Materials submitted which are refused.
- (c) Members should first address the concern to the individual who made the decision, or to the chair of the committee. If no resolution can be reached, the relevant pages should be posted to the GMB mailing list with an explanation. If no resolution by the date of the following GM meeting, it may be brought up to the branch where the committee’s decision may be upheld or altered by democratic process of the branch.

#### **Social media**

- (a) Third party materials which are linked to from Twitter, Facebook or other social media need not adhere to these guidelines, provided it is made clear on the profile or elsewhere for the service that the views expressed are those of individuals, and not of the branch or union.
- (b) Short posts on social media do not need to strictly adhere to rules if there are limitations imposed by the technology which make it impractical, i.e. character limits on posts.