

## UNISON North Devon Health Branch (10222) Rules

### 1 Branch Name

The branch shall be called North Devon Health Branch of UNISON.

### 2 Relationship to National Organisation

- a) Branch rules shall be in accordance with national rules, decisions of the Annual Delegate Conference and the NEC.
- b) Any member may have a copy of the current Rule Book.
- c) The branch shall make an audited annual return of branch income, expenditure, assets and liabilities, as prescribed by the NEC and in accordance with national rules.

### 3 Aims of the branch

- a) The aims of the branch shall be in accordance with the aims and values of UNISON as set out in the Rule Book.
- b) To achieve the aims and targets set annually by the Branch through the Branch Assessment Process

### 4 Membership

- a) Eligibility for membership shall be in accordance with the Rules of the union.
- b) Applications for membership take effect from the date at which completed forms are received by the branch or at regional/national level and the first contribution is made.
- c) A meeting of the branch or branch committee may decide not to support a membership application but such a decision must be consistent with the Rules and with Statute. Such a decision must be explained to the individual in writing, together with their rights of appeal.
- d) All members must comply with the Rules.
- e) The NEC may terminate an individual's membership in accordance with the Rules.

### 5 Branch Structure

- a) There will be an Annual General Meeting of the branch to elect, or confirm the election by ballot of branch officers and members of the branch committee.
- b) Other general meetings may be called by the branch committee or by 20 members of the branch or 2.5% of the membership, whichever is the greater.
- c) The AGM will determine the basis of representation in the branch and the number of stewards and other representatives to be elected in each work group or workplace.
- d) The branch shall keep a bank/building society account in the name of the branch.

- e) The quorum for a general meeting shall be 2.5% of membership participation at a single AGM meeting or through aggregate meetings
- f) Meetings will be convened and officers appointed to ensure the democratic representation of all groups of members, irrespective of employer, in the branch decision making structure.
- g) Sections will be established for each bargaining group covered by the Branch to provide for the participation and representation of members in that section in accordance with rule 8 below.
- h) The Branch committee will comprise all elected representatives from the Branch. It will be responsible for the general organisation and development of the Branch and for policy, nominations and decision making on matters affecting all members within the Branch between general meetings.

## 6 Branch Officers

- a) The branch shall elect the following officers annually:
  - ❖ Branch Chairperson
  - ❖ Branch Secretary
  - ❖ Treasurer
  - ❖ Education Co-ordinator
  - ❖ Lifelong Learning Co-ordinator
  - ❖ Equality Officer(s)
  - ❖ Health and Safety Officer
  - ❖ International Officer
  - ❖ Membership Officer
  - ❖ Young Members Officer
  - ❖ Welfare Officer
  - ❖ APF Officer (elected by the APF members only)
  - ❖ Women's Officer
  - ❖ LGBT Officer
  - ❖ Communications Officer
  - ❖ Disabled Member's Officer
  - ❖ Black Member's Officer
  - ❖ Retired Member's Officer
  - ❖ Two Branch Auditors
  - ❖ Others to be determined as necessary for the effective operation of the branch
- b) Each section within the Branch shall elect a convenor and senior stewards from amongst the stewards in that section in accordance with rule 6d.
- c) Election of Branch officers
  - i. Branch officers may be nominated by the Branch committee or any two members, with the exception of the Labour Link officer who will be elected by the APF members only.
  - ii. Nominations will be invited 8 weeks before the AGM . All nominations must be received in writing at least 6 weeks before the AGM

- iii. If there is more than one candidate, a vote will be conducted by postal ballot.
- iv. Where no valid nomination has been received before the deadline, any vacancy or subsequent vacancy arising before the next AGM, may be appointed to by the Branch committee
- d) Election of convenors and senior stewards.
- i. the process for nomination and election shall be as in (6c) save that the nomination may be by the section committee or any two members employed in that section, and only members employed in the relevant section may participate in the election.

## 7 Branch Committee

- a) Representation on the branch committee will be agreed by the AGM and will include:
  - Branch officers
  - Representatives of self-organised groups
  - One or more stewards from each work group or workplace
- b) The branch committee shall administer branch business in accordance with the national rules and guidance
- c) The quorum for the branch committee shall be 33% (one third) of the members of the committee
- d) The branch committee will establish arrangements for representation of members and any difficulties will be referred to the regional organiser in the first instance.
- e) The Branch committee will meet monthly
- f) The Branch will conduct virtual meetings to secure the greatest possible participation where otherwise a decision would be delayed due to a non-quorate branch meeting or where an important decision has to be made between branch meetings. The quorum shall be as in (7e).

## 8 Sections

- a) In order to support a sub-structure of the branch based on bargaining units, a convenor from each major employer/section will be elected annually.
- b) Sections comprise all members within the relevant service group and/or bargaining group and will have autonomy within the Branch in respect of collective bargaining with their employer(s) only, subject to the policies and any guidelines and procedures of the Branch, Region and National union.

- b) Sections will be led by a convenor and sub-sections by senior stewards elected in accordance with rule 6d. They will be the senior accredited representatives within the section, and the committee of all accredited representatives within the section.

## 9 Steward's Constituencies

The branch to be divided into constituencies that steward's will be accountable for. These constituencies may be subject to change as a result of organisational change within each employer and varying numbers of branch stewards. The aim of the branch is to achieve constituencies wherever possible on the basis of 1 steward for every 25 members.

## 10 Conduct of meetings

- a) All meetings will be conducted in a fair and democratic manner.
- b) All meetings will be advertised widely and in advance as possible.
- c) The procedures to be used at the meeting will be explained clearly.
- d) The branches will maintain records of meetings, financial records, books of accounts and other appropriate records to enable the branch to function.

## 11 Media communications

Communications to the media on behalf of the branch shall be made only by officer(s) authorised by the branch committee.

## 12 Affiliations

- a) Affiliations to relevant constituency Labour Parties will be decided by the APF membership.
- b) Affiliations to trade councils and other external organisations shall be determined by the AGM or branch committee.

## 13 Donations

Donations shall be agreed by the AGM or branch committee in accordance with the union's policies and objectives and subject to provisions of national rule.

## 14 Finance

The Branch shall keep a bank/building society account in the name of the Branch and will maintain a financial record of all assets and transactions in accordance with UNISON guidelines

## 15 Expenses

Rates of expenses for members attending meetings or carrying out other activities on behalf of the branch shall be agreed by the AGM subject to any national scheme.

## 16 Honoraria

Any honorarium paid to a Branch officer will only be made in accordance with the Scheme for Branch Officers Honoraria Payments 2009.

## 17 Branch Staff

- a) The Branch secretary will be responsible for the employment, direction and supervision of any staff employed by the Branch consistent with employment law and current good practice.

## 18 Approval/alterations to branch rules

- a) Branch rules must be agreed by two thirds of members present and voting at a quorate branch meeting.
- b) Branch rules must be approved in accordance with UNISON's procedures.
- c) Any changes to branch rules must be agreed and approved in the same way.