



# New Delegate Training

*An Introduction to the CWA Convention*





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## INTRODUCTION

The CWA Convention is the highest governing authority of the Union. Once the Convention makes a decision, that decision stands, and it must be carried out by every single member, officer, and employee of the union – at both the Local and International levels.

## DEMOCRATIC UNIONISM AT WORK

CWA is very proud of its reputation as one of the most democratic unions in the world. CWA members have a vote in every major decision in the union; the members elect their Local representatives and Convention delegates; they vote on whether to accept or reject a union negotiated contract; and, of course, they vote on whether or not to join CWA in the first place.

Every Local elects rank and file members to the Convention. These elected delegates form CWA's highest governing body. The Convention has the final authority over CWA's budget, policies, programs and dues structure.



## **CONVENTION POWERS**

Under of the CWA Constitution, the Convention has the power to:

- (a) Pass upon the credentials and seating of delegates;
- (b) Establish the policies to be followed by the Union;
- (c) Interpret and amend the Constitution;
- (d) Establish the number of Locals and Districts, and determine their jurisdiction and boundaries;
- (e) Cause the issuance and revocation of Local Charters
- (f) Determine the number of Vice Presidents and/or At-Large Executive Board Members;
- (g) Cause the selection of delegates to AFL-CIO and CLC Conventions;
- (h) Do all things necessary for the proper disposition of any matter which may come before it for consideration.

## **PERMANENT RULES OF CONVENTION**

The permanent rules governing conduct of CWA Conventions can be found at the end of the CWA Constitution. Included are delegate certification and seating, voting, alternate and visitor seating, conduct during Convention, microphones, and hours of convention committees.



## DELEGATE NUMBERS BASED ON MEMBERSHIP

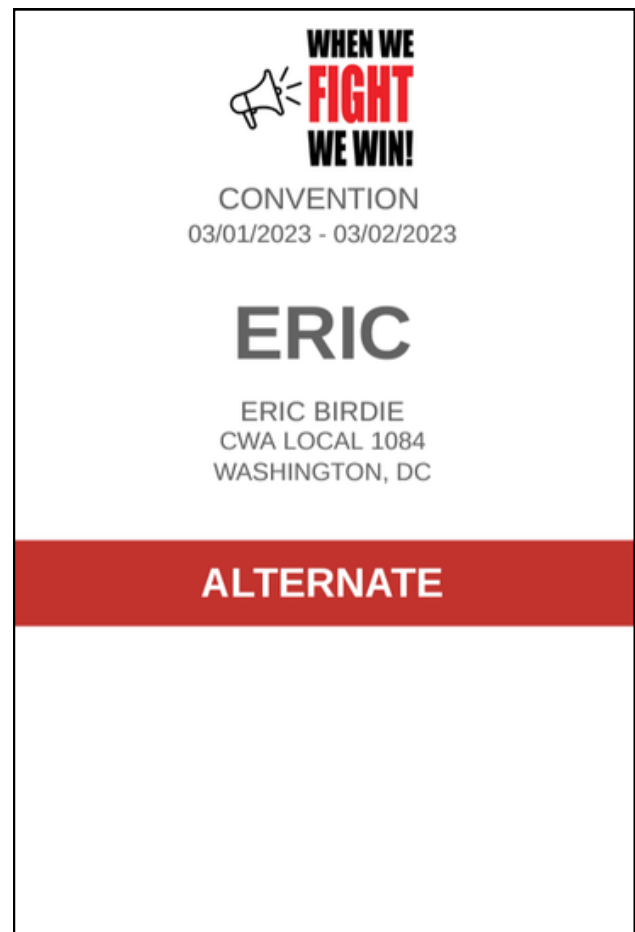
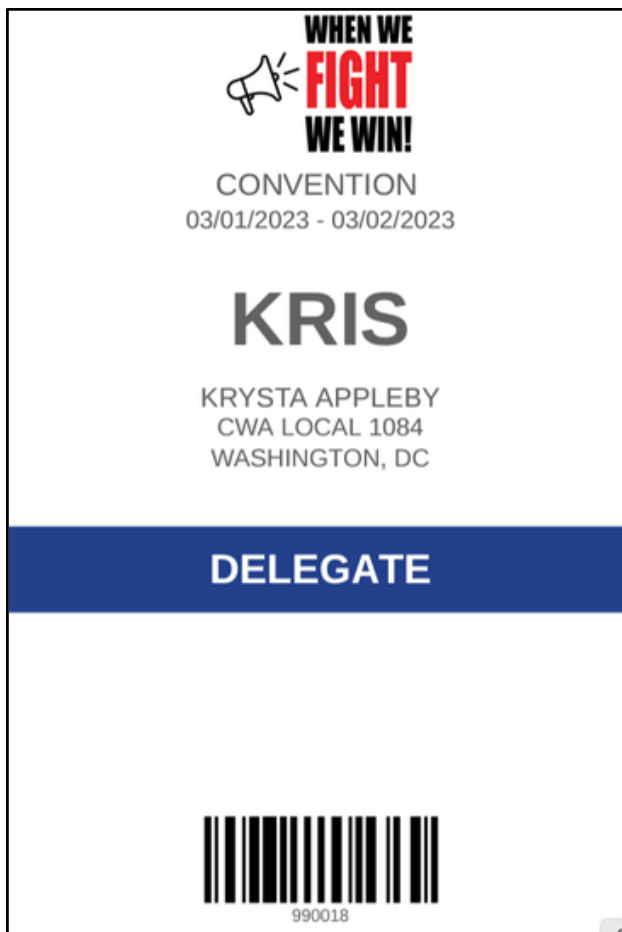
The number of delegates which each Local is entitled to is based on its paid membership numbers. Under Article VIII, Section 4 of the CWA Constitution, each Local is entitled to:

| Local Membership                                   | # of Delegates        |
|--|-----------------------|
| Less than 200 members                              | 1                     |
| 200-399  | 2                     |
| 400-599  | 3                     |
| For every additional 400 members above 600 members | 1 additional delegate |

## REGISTRATION & CONVENTION BADGES

All delegates attending the CWA Convention must pick up their badge at registration from the Credentials Booth. A photo identification will be required to get your badge. At the Credentials Booth, delegates are also responsible for confirming their per capita vote, also known as their “voting strength” or “voting weight.” All delegates, alternates, and guests attending the CWA Convention must display a convention badge.



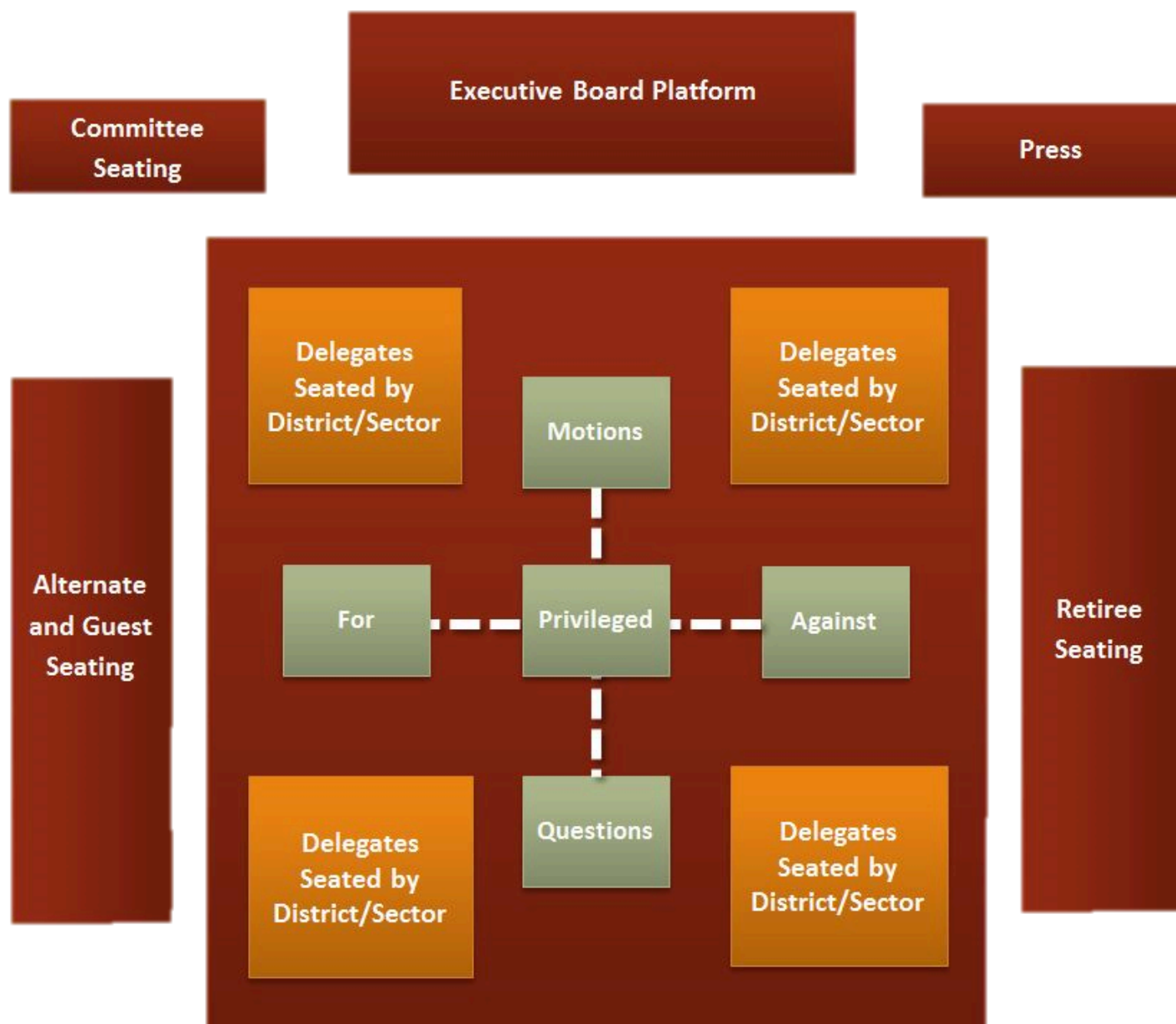


Delegate badges include the delegate's name, local, city, and a blue bar with the delegate title. Alternate badges will have a red bar with the alternate title. Badges will also have a barcode on the front. In the event of a roll call vote or election, delegates will scan the barcode at the voting station to vote on the issue at hand.

Only those wearing a delegate badge are permitted on the convention floor. CWA Staff serve as "Sergeant at Arms" and are stationed at every entrance to the convention floor to assure only delegates are on the convention floor.

## PHYSICAL LAYOUT OF CONVENTION FLOOR

The convention floor's physical layout changes slightly each year depending on the convention site. The diagram below provides a general depiction of how the convention hall is set up.





## CONVENTION CHAIR

The President of the Union is the Chair of the Convention. Parliamentary procedure (Robert's Rules of Order) is used to ensure orderly debates.

## MICROPHONES ON THE CONVENTION FLOOR

There are five microphone lecterns on the convention floor for delegates. Each microphone lectern has a telephone and scanner. Delegates must scan their badge and pick up the telephone, then provide their name and Local prior to being recognized by the Chair. The microphones are designated as follows:

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Motions<br/>Microphone</b>    | This microphone is used by delegates desiring to make a motion, including motions to close debate, amend, reconsider, table, etc. The telephone at the motions microphone is connected to the parliamentarians seated on the platform. In order to be recognized, the delegate will pick up the telephone at the microphone, press the dial button, and give the parliamentarian your name, Local number and what kind of motion you wish to make. |
| <b>Privileged<br/>Microphone</b> | The privileged microphone is used by delegates to raise a point of order or raise a point of personal privilege. The telephone is connected to the parliamentarians who are seated on the platform. In order to be recognized, the delegate will pick up the telephone at the microphone, press the dial button, and give the parliamentarian your name, Local number and what your point of privilege or point of order is.                       |

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| <p><b>“For” and “Against” Microphones</b></p> | <p>The “For” and “Against” microphones are used by delegates desiring to speak for or against a motion or subject on the Convention floor. The telephones at these microphones are connected to the parliamentarians seated at the platform. In order to be recognized, the delegate will pick up the telephone at the microphone, press the dial button, and give the parliamentarian your name and Local number. Each delegate will be allowed up to five (5) minutes to speak in accordance with the Convention rules. There is a small red light at the lectern which will come on after four minutes to indicate that one minute remains. The microphone will automatically turn off after five (5) minutes.</p> |
| <p><b>Questions Microphone</b></p>            | <p>The Questions microphone is used by delegates to ask a question, clarify, or get more information on an issue which is before the Convention. The telephone at the questions microphone is connected to the parliamentarians seated on the platform. In order to be recognized, the delegate will pick up the telephone at the microphone, press the dial button, and give the parliamentarian your name and Local number. Each delegate will be allowed two (2) questions when recognized by the Chair.</p>   |

## SPEAKING AT CONVENTION

- Delegates must scan their badge and pick up the telephone at the microphone to provide their name and Local number.
- Once recognized by the Chair, remember to start by stating your name and Local number. This is necessary for the verbatim record.
- Write down what you want to say. Put your name and Local number on the top of the paper as a reminder.
- If you are offering an amendment or resolution, the Chair will ask for a written copy, so you should have one prepared.

## VOTING ON THE CONVENTION FLOOR

There are three methods of voting at the Convention:

- **Show of Hands:** Each delegate has one vote.
- **Division of House:** Delegates stand on the right or left side of the convention hall depending on their position on an issue. This is done to help call a close vote.
- **Per Capita or Roll Call Vote:** Each delegate casts the number of votes assigned to him/her by the Local and approved by the Credentials Committee and the Convention. Your convention badge and photo ID is required to vote. In order to have a roll call vote, 20% of the delegates must vote for it.

**Platform Observers:** Each day two delegates are selected to be platform observers. The Chair will call on them to help him/her determine the result of a close vote.

## CONVENTION COMMITTEES

Some delegates are appointed to convention committees to review and recommend action to the Convention on issues of concern to the Union. The CWA Constitution requires the following committees:

### Credentials Committee

The Credentials Committee shall consist of not less than seven (7) members appointed by the President and approved by the Executive Board. It shall meet prior to the opening date of each Convention for the purpose of examining the credentials of delegates and reporting thereon to the Convention. Action taken by the Convention on reports and recommendations of the Credentials Committee shall be final and conclusive.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Constitution Committee</b></p>                          | <p>The Constitution Committee shall be appointed by the President and approved by the Executive Board. It shall consist of five (5) members and be charged with the duty of considering and reporting to the Convention and to the Executive Board on proposals to change this Constitution.</p>   |
| <p><b>Resolutions Committee</b></p>                           | <p>The Resolutions Committee shall consist of not more than seven (7) members (none of whom shall be full-time employees of the Union or members of the Executive Board) appointed by the President and approved by the Executive Board. It shall meet prior to the opening date of the Convention for the purpose of giving consideration to the form and substance of proposed resolutions submitted through the Locals and by members for action by the Convention. The Committee may also originate resolutions for submission to the Convention. The Committee shall serve throughout the Convention.</p> |
| <p><b>National Committee on Civil Rights &amp; Equity</b></p> | <p>The National Committee on Civil Rights &amp; Equity consists of one member from each CWA District and Sector. Its mission is to advocate for the removal of systemic barriers that affect the fair and just treatment of working people. Its vision is to build a society where members of all races, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, genders, disabilities, ages, and nationalities feel welcomed, respected, and heard in our union and our communities. The committee reports on its activities and presents recommendations to the Convention.</p>  |

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| <b>National Women's Committee</b>       | <p>The National Women's Committee consists of one member from each CWA District and Sector. Its mission is to educate, inspire, and empower women while working all sides of the CWA Triangle. Its vision is to create a just and equal society for all women by protecting the interests of the membership and our Communities. The committee reports on its activities and presents recommendations to the Convention.</p>  |
| <b>Finance Committee</b>                | <p>The Finance Committee shall consist of five (5) members, the Secretary-Treasurer of the Union and four (4) members appointed by the President and approved by the Executive Board. The Secretary-Treasurer shall be the only member of this Committee who is a full-time employee of the Union or a member of the Executive Board and the Secretary-Treasurer shall not serve as Chair of the Committee. The Committee shall meet prior to the assembling of the regular Convention at the call of its Chair and review the financial operations of the Union for the preceding year including the audits of the books of the Secretary-Treasurer.</p> |
| <b>Defense Fund Oversight Committee</b> | <p>The Defense Fund Oversight Committee (DFOC) shall consist of one representative from each CWA District, one representative from the Public Workers Sector, one representative from the IUE Division, one representative from the Airline Industries and one representative from the Media Sectors (TNG-CWA and NABET-CWA). The election of the DFOC representatives and their alternates shall be conducted as established by the CWA Convention and shall be for four-year terms. The committee is responsible for reviewing the funds (receipts, disbursements, etc.), SIF and Growth Funds, and making a report to the convention delegates.</p>    |



### **Appeals Committee**

The Appeals Committee shall be appointed by the President and approved by the Executive Board. It shall consist of five (5) members and be charged with the duty of considering and reporting to the Convention or Presidents' Meeting on all pending appeals.

**Note:** Convention committee reports will be electronically posted at [cwa.org/convention-materials](http://cwa.org/convention-materials)

## **ELECTION VOTING**

When Convention recesses for elections, delegates will attend their District Meetings for the purpose of nominating District Vice Presidents. Following the District Meetings, voting stations will open. The time allocated for District Meetings, and the time voting polls open and close will be announced before the Convention recesses.

Prior to entering the election area, delegates will have their badge and photo identification reviewed. Delegates must present their badge at the voting station. There, delegates will have their badge scanned, review their number of votes, and receive an access code they will use to vote in a private booth. Delegates will affirm they have received the correct ballot(s) with the correct per capita vote, or voting strength, before proceeding to a voting booth. If a delegate believes they have received an incorrect ballot this concern should be presented to the Credentials Committee located in the election area.

Proceed to a voting booth and be sure to follow instructions provided on the screen to properly cast your ballot. A confirmation screen will appear indicating that the ballot has been submitted. The delegate can then exit the election area and dispose of their access code. Note that an access code is unique to each delegate and cannot be used more than once.



## **SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

The Convention Schedule of Events is posted along with other Convention materials at [cwa.org/convention-materials](https://cwa.org/convention-materials). It is also available in the Convention section of the CWA App. The Schedule of Events lists the order of the Convention proceedings and any other meetings or events that are scheduled during the Convention.

## **VERBATIM CONVENTION RECORD**

A verbatim record of the Convention is transcribed and made available to Locals. This is why it is important for all delegates to state their name and local number when speaking at a microphone.





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