



North American Region / Région de l'Amérique du Nord

RULES FOR THE NORTH AMERICAN REGION OF THE IOI - 2022

Whereas the International Ombudsman Institute (the “IOI”) is the only internationally recognized body that is comprised of “parliamentary/legislative-classical type” Ombudsman in the world.

Whereas in Canada and the United States of America, a number of Ombudsman institutions have been created at the national, provincial, state, territorial, and local or city level to investigate complaints of unfair treatment by public sector bodies and officials.

Whereas in 1996, the membership of the IOI voted pursuant to the IOI By-Laws and resolved to create regional IOI groupings within its membership. The North American Region of the IOI was formally established at that time. The objective was to allow members to participate more fully in the IOI and provide a platform for the members of the respective IOI Regions to communicate more effectively and share information and experiences in their respective jurisdictions.

Now therefore this document records the rules for the operation of the North American Region and the election of its Directors, including a Regional President, as adopted by the Ombudsman of the Region on **October 13, 2022**, and supersedes any and all of the previous rules of the North American Region.

1. The members of the Region shall be those Ombudsman of the Region who have been admitted to membership of the IOI and are in good standing.
2. The organization of the Region’s affairs shall be the responsibility of the Directors of the IOI elected to represent the Region. The Directors shall by agreement among them determine their own procedures.
3. The Regional President shall act as Chairperson of meetings of members of the Region dealing with IOI matters but may delegate this responsibility. In case the region is not otherwise represented on the IOI Executive Committee in the position of the President, First or Second Vice-President

or Treasurer, the Regional President will also be a member of the IOI Executive Committee pursuant to Article 13.1 of the IOI By-laws.

4. The Directors may make such rules as are necessary to ensure the smooth functioning and operation of the Region as long as they are not inconsistent with any of the proceeding rules or any By-laws of the IOI.
5. The Directors may determine what regional initiatives should be undertaken subject to their ascertaining the views of members of the Region by such means as the Directors consider to be most appropriate in the circumstances.
6. The Directors shall arrange for an annual meeting of members of the Region.
7. Notice of the meeting shall be given at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting. In exceptional circumstances, a majority of quorum of members may agree to dispense with this notice requirement.
8. Quorum shall be forty per cent (40%) of the total number of voting members in the Region.
9. All notices to and voting by Regional voting members in good standing, may be carried out electronically.
10. In cases where the incumbent of the Voting member is unable to vote during a regional election, they may inform the Regional President or the Secretary General (depending on who is running the election) at least one week in advance of the election, which staff member from their Office will exercise their right to vote. This is referred to as a proxy vote.

Regional Board Elections

11. Only voting members, in good standing can nominate a candidate. The number of directors in a Region is dependent on the number of voting members in a Region as set out in Article 11.1(c) of the IOI By-Laws and accordingly, this number may change from time to time. The North American Region currently operates with three (3) directors.
12. By a date set by the Secretary General of the IOI, each Region or the Secretary General, if the Regional President is standing for re-election, will invite written nominations for candidates for the Regional Board members' positions (directors). These directors not only serve as the North American Region's Board but also on the IOI Board of Directors.

13. Each candidate must be a voting member, in good standing, nominated and seconded by another voting member in good standing and using a specific nomination form that will be provided by the IOI. Once an election is called nominations will need to be received within twenty-eight (28) days.
14. Each nomination must be accompanied by a brief (250-word maximum) statement setting out the candidate's career achievements and outlining their aspirations for the IOI, if elected. On closure of the nomination period the Regional President or Secretary General if the Regional President is standing for election, will prepare a list of properly nominated candidates.
15. Voting members, in good standing, will be invited to vote for up to the allocated number of directors. The Region can either proceed by an electronic voting process that will close fourteen (14) days after commencing or at a Regional meeting where the vote will take place by secret ballot. In the event of a tie, the candidates with equal votes will be placed on a list and a further election will be conducted.
16. Once the Regional directors are elected, elections can take place for the Executive Officers (as per the IOI election process). It is only after this election that the North American Region will hold its election for its Regional President.

Election of Regional President

17. If the current Regional President intends to run, it is the Secretary General, who will invite nominations for the Regional President. If not, the Regional President will invite the nominations. There will be fourteen (14) days to submit nominations.
18. Only directors who are not elected as Executive Officers of the IOI (i.e. President, Vice-Presidents or Treasurer) are eligible for nomination.
19. To be nominated, a candidate must be in good standing, nominated, and seconded by a voting member in good standing. Each nomination is to be accompanied by a brief statement setting out the candidate's career achievements and aspirations for the IOI if elected (candidates can rely on a previous statement.)

20. If there is only one candidate, there will still be a process for a yes/no vote so that the candidate is endorsed.
21. Voting members, in good standing, will be invited to vote for the Regional President. There is only one vote per voting member office. The Region can either proceed by an electronic voting process that will close fourteen (14) days after commencing or at a Regional meeting where the vote will take place by secret ballot. In the event of a tie, the candidates with equal votes will be placed on a list and a further election will be conducted.

Casual Vacancies

22. A director shall resign their office as a director on vacating their office as an Ombudsman.
23. Any vacancies caused by the death, resignation or retirement of a director shall be filled by the remaining North American Region directors or the Secretary General holding an election. If the vacancy is within twelve (12) months of the next planned election, this position may be left vacant.
24. If the vacancy is the Regional President the same process as described under "Regional Board Elections" and "Election of Regional President" will apply.

Amendment to the Rules

25. The Regional directors may make such rules as are necessary to ensure the smooth functioning and operation of the Region and as are not inconsistent with any of the preceding rules or any By-laws of the IOI.
26. The voting members in good standing may by a vote of a majority of Quorum, alter, amend or add to these rules at any time and from time to time.