

# Policy on Institute Branches

## Preamble

The Institute has a parallel structure by Occupational Group and by Region. Members belong to Regions, which include all the members located within the geographic boundaries of the Region as defined in By-Law 4. Regions may be further subdivided into Branches, which are geographically based constituent bodies made up of at least ten (10) members from at least two (2) different Groups in accordance with By-Law 11.2.1. Each Branch operates under its own Constitution which must be consistent with Institute and Region By-Laws and Regulations and Institute policies.

The Institute encourages member participation by paying travel expenses and compensatory salary (where applicable) for approved attendance at all authorized meetings. Any and all limitations are outlined in the By-Laws and Regulations and/or policies of the Institute.

### 1. Effective Date

This policy is effective as of March 10, 2017.

### 2. Policy Objective

To outline roles, responsibilities, and procedures related to Institute Branches not covered in Institute, Region, or Branch By-Laws, Regulations, and other policy.

### 3. Branch Constitution

Every Branch is governed by a Constitution made up of By-Laws and Regulations. The Branch Constitution must be consistent with Institute and Region By-Laws and Regulations and Institute policies, and must be approved by the Board of Directors. Newly formed Branches approved by the PIPSC Executive Committee shall automatically have the model constitution updated to add their name and this becomes their constitution. Branches are encouraged to use the language included in the Model Branch Constitution (see Appendix B). Any Branch that does not have a specific Constitution in place shall be governed by the Model Branch Constitution until they develop their own. (Reference: By-Law 11.2.2, Regulation 11.2.2)

**BOD – March 2017**

### 4. Branch Name

The Executive Committee will approve name changes to constituent bodies. Once approved, the constituent body constitution be automatically update to reflect the new name. The name syntax shall consist of the geographic location and/or department reference (if applicable) (in that order).

**BOD – March 2017**

### 5. What is a Branch, and What are it's Aims?

A Branch is a constituent body of the Institute made up of 10 or more members from two (2) or more Groups in a geographic area. (Reference: By-Law 11.2.1) Every Branch is governed by a Constitution approved by the Board of Directors. (Reference: By-Law 11.2.2, Regulation 11.2.2)

The aim of the Branch shall align with the aim of the Region and shall be to represent Branch interests, to provide a forum for the discussion of Institute affairs, to administer the Branch Constitution, to make recommendations to Regional Council and to the Institute on topics or matters within the objectives of the Institute, and to nominate delegates to Regional Council and Institute meetings in accordance with the Constitutions and By-Laws of those constituent bodies.

A Branch may specify additional aims in their Constitution.

## **6. Composition of the Branch**

A Branch is comprised of all Regular and Retired members of the Region within the geographic area of the Branch as defined by the Institute. For Regular members, their address is based on their work address as provided by the member as their normal daily work reporting location. For retired members, their address is based on their home address.

## **7. Authority of the Branch**

The authority of a Branch is limited to their own affairs. A Branch must act in line with the aims of the Region and Branch, and comply with any direction from the Region or Institute.

## **8. Branch Executive**

The Branch Executive shall exercise the authority of and act on behalf of the Branch on all matters subject to the Branch Constitution between general meetings of the Branch. The Branch Executive shall speak for the Branch in dealing with the Institute. This in no way infringes on the right of an individual to approach the Institute on his own behalf.

Branch Executives shall provide copies of minutes and all financial reports to the Region in a timely manner. The Branch executive shall provide any additional information or records as requested by the Region.

Branches shall file annual reports at the Regional Council meeting.

## **Composition**

The Branch Executive shall be composed of a minimum of three (3) members and up to the maximum number specified in the Institute By-Laws, elected by the members of the Branch for a term of office not exceeding three (3) years. The specific composition of a Branch Executive, their terms of office, nomination procedures, election procedures, and procedures to fill vacancies on the Branch Executive will be as defined in the Branch Constitution. (Reference: By-Law 11.2.3) Alternates to Branch Executive Members (ie. a non-Branch Executive member taking the place of a Branch Executive member) shall not be allowed.

Notwithstanding the above, where the Branch executive has not complied with the Branch Constitution to fill vacancies on the Branch Executive, the Region may appoint new members to fill vacancies on the Branch Executive on an interim basis, until such time as a call for nominations and an election take place as per the Branch Constitution.

## **Duties**

In general, the members of a Branch Executive shall have the following duties:

**President:** The President shall call and preside at all meetings of the Branch and of the Branch Executive, and shall present to the Annual General Meeting of the Branch a report on Branch activities.

**Vice-President:** The Vice-President shall assist the President in the performance of his duties, and in the absence of the President, perform the duties of that position.

**Secretary:** The Secretary shall be responsible for sending notices of all meetings of the Branch and of the Branch Executive. The Secretary shall record minutes of meetings, including attendance, maintain records and correspondence of the Branch and of the Branch Executive, and shall ensure that a copy of minutes are filed with the Institute.

**Treasurer:** The Treasurer shall maintain the financial records of the Branch as required by Institute policy, prepare a financial report for each meeting of the Branch Executive and each General Meeting of the Branch, submit a detailed financial statement to the Institute as required, and prepare the request for the annual allowance of the Branch. Copies of the financial report shall be available to all Branch members.

**Members-at-Large:** Members-at-Large shall perform such duties as may be assigned by the Executive.

Additional duties will be as defined in the Branch Constitution.

## **Elections**

The Branch Executive shall appoint an Elections Committee to receive nominations for positions on the Branch Executive, and to conduct the elections. The specific nomination and election procedure for the Branch will be as defined in the Branch Constitution. There shall be no additional cost to the Institute.

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## **Committees**

The Executive may establish committees as necessary, with terms of reference and membership to be decided by the Executive. Copies of Committee reports shall be filed with the Branch Secretary. Committees shall be dissolved by majority vote of the Executive. Committees shall normally be funded from the Branch's annual allocation.

## **Document Filing and Document Retention**

Each year, following the Branch Annual General Meeting, the Branch Executive shall submit a copy of the draft Annual General Meeting minutes, the annual financial report and the elections report to the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Institute and to the Region prior to the end of the calendar year. A Branch failing to file these documents is not in good standing will not receive an annual allocation.

Approved minutes of Branch Executive Meetings and Branch Annual General Meetings shall be filed with the Institute for long term storage.

Detailed financial records shall be maintained by the Branch. The Branch shall keep no more than two (2) years of records on hand. Older records shall be filed with the Institute for long term storage.

## **9. Branch Executive Meetings**

The Branch Executive shall meet as frequently as is required, but at least three (3) times per year. (Reference By-Law 11.2.3) Except as provided below, the Institute will fund travel and meals for up to six (6) Branch Executive meetings per year. For Branches spread over a large geographic area (such as spread over several northern fly-in communities), the Institute will only fund one face-to-face Branch Executive per year, in conjunction with the Branch AGM. All other Branch Executive meetings for these geographically dispersed Branches shall be held using electronic means. This in no way affects the rights of Branches to bring in observers at any meeting at their own expense.

Branch Executive meetings shall be held during non-working hours at the most cost effective location. Meetings will be scheduled in accordance with the availability of the members of the Branch Executive, recognizing the frequency of meetings and the requirement to permit a balance between union activities and family life.

Branch Executive meetings, other than Closed Sessions, are open to any member of the Branch.

Minutes shall be taken at all regular and special meetings of the Branch Executive. The minutes shall contain formal motions and a short summary of the discussions that take place. Minutes of the Branch Executive meetings are not normally distributed beyond the members of the Branch Executive until after they have been approved at the next regular meeting of the Branch Executive. However, when necessary, Branch Executive decisions will be distributed as soon as possible to the appropriate individual(s).

Notwithstanding the above, detailed minutes are not taken during Closed Sessions of the Branch Executive. For each decision made during a Closed Session, the Branch Executive shall determine whether the record of this decision shall be published. If the record for a decision is to be published, it shall be considered to be an integral part of the Minutes of the Open Session. Violation of the confidentiality of Closed Sessions of Branch Executive meetings shall be considered a matter subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Institute By-Laws and Regulations.

When and where feasible, Branch executives are encouraged to use electronic means (such as e-mail, teleconferences, and video-conferences) to conduct the business of the Branch Executive in order to reduce the burden of travel on Branch members.

#### **10. Branch Annual and Special General Meetings**

Each Branch is governed by an Annual General Meeting. The costs to hold a Branch Annual General Meeting are paid out of the Branch's annual allocation. Any travel required to attend a Branch General Meeting is at the member's expense.

Simultaneous interpretation will be provided by the Institute at Branch Annual General Meetings at the request of the Branch Executive.

#### **11. COMMUNICATIONS**

##### **Newsletters**

A Branch may publish newsletters from time to time using Institute resources.

The issuance of newsletters shall be limited to a maximum of four (4) per year. The size of all newsletters shall not exceed eight (8) pages. Any exception to the size and frequency of newsletters shall be subject to prior approval of the Board of Directors.

##### **Logos**

Branch logos or identifiers may be used provided that:

- the logo / identifiers are submitted to the Executive Committee for approval;
- logo / identifiers do not replace or interfere with the Institute logo or address
- the placement of identifiers to comply with postal regulations, and
- additional printing costs are paid for by the Branch.

## **PIPSC Web Site**

The Institute retains editorial authority over material published on its web site. Such authority shall be exercised by the Communications Section, under the direction of the President or as delegated by the President.

Material submitted for publication may be edited, reformatted, or rejected due to the limitations of the site, other technical considerations or costs.

Branches submitting material are encouraged to do so in a format compatible with that used by the Institute. Branches considering making submissions are encouraged to contact the Communications Section or Informatics to determine the preferred formats.

## **12. Branch Funds**

Branches shall conduct their business in accordance with the financial policies of the Institute as specified in the Policy on Constituent Body Finances.

All Branch funds remain the property of the Institute, and shall be returned to the Institute upon dissolution of the Branch.

## **13. Travel & Compensatory Salary**

Travel expenses, in accordance with Institute policy, is paid to members of the Branch Executive for attendance at meetings of the Branch Executive.

For the one face-to-face executive meeting funded by the Institute for Branches spread over a wide geographic area (such as several northern fly-in communities), compensatory salary may be paid in accordance with Institute policy, subject to prior approval by the Institute.

Travel expenses and compensatory salary, in accordance with Institute policy, is paid to the member of the Branch Executive who attended the annual Branch Presidents meeting.

Branch funds shall not be used for compensatory salary.

## **Appendix A – Balancing Union and Family Life**

Link to Balancing Union and Family Life policy

[http://www.pipsc.ca/portal/page/portal/website/memberservices/forms/policy\\_docs/Implementation%20of%20the%20Policy%20on%20Balancing%20Union%20Activity%20an1](http://www.pipsc.ca/portal/page/portal/website/memberservices/forms/policy_docs/Implementation%20of%20the%20Policy%20on%20Balancing%20Union%20Activity%20an1)

## **Appendix B – Policy on Constituent Body Finances**

Link to the Policy on Constituent Body Finances

[http://www.pipsc.ca/portal/page/portal/website/memberservices/forms/policy\\_docs/policy\\_body\\_finances](http://www.pipsc.ca/portal/page/portal/website/memberservices/forms/policy_docs/policy_body_finances)

## **Appendix C – Model Branch Constitution**

Link to model constitution

<http://www.pipsc.ca/portal/page/portal/website/memberservices/forms/documents>