

## Bylaws Committee

It is necessary that every permanent organization, such as County and State Extension Councils, have rules in order to define the organization to provide for efficient and equitable transaction of its business and to protect its membership. These rules generally deal with basic rules of the organization itself (i.e. name, purpose, etc.), and standing rules, which deal with the administrative regulations. It is the recommended practice that the basic rules be combined in a single instrument called “bylaws.”

A Bylaws Committee is essential for each Extension Council. Bylaws Committee members can volunteer to serve or be appointed by the Council Chair. Bylaws Committee members should also serve a specified term (1, 2, or 3 years as designated in the organization’s bylaws) to ensure rotation. The Bylaws Committee may consist of an officer along with other general members. Bylaws Committee members should be well-versed with knowledge of the Council’s bylaws in order to ensure that business is being conducted according to the bylaws.

### Duties of the Bylaws Committee

Each council should have a Bylaws Committee to review the current bylaws yearly and to prepare proposed changes to ensure that currently used bylaws are up-to-date. When bylaw amendments are completed, copies of the proposed bylaws should be given to every member in advance (at least one to two weeks) prior to the meeting at which they are to be considered and action will be taken. Here are a few tips to remember when making changes to bylaws:

- Changes to the bylaws require a motion at the meeting,
- A motion is to be made by the Committee Chair or a member of the Bylaws Committee to adopt a proposed bylaw.
- The Council should assess each bylaw amendment one at a time, discuss and decide whether to accept or decline the bylaw amendment.
- A majority vote is necessary to adopt the bylaw amendments.
- Bylaws become effective immediately upon their adoption unless otherwise stated.

Adapted from *Simplified Handbook of Parliamentary Procedure*,  
University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service  
([http://www.uaex.edu/Other\\_Areas/publications/PDF/MP350.pdf](http://www.uaex.edu/Other_Areas/publications/PDF/MP350.pdf))