



SOP TITLE:	TNI NEFAP Executive Committee Voting Procedure for General Business and Field Activities Accreditation Matters
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Voting Procedure for General Business and Field Activities Accreditation Matters

1.0 Purpose and Applicability

This procedure establishes a fair and equitable process for each NEFAP Executive Committee (EC) member of The NELAC Institute (TNI) to have an equal voice in the business of the TNI National Environmental Field Activities Program (NEFAP) Executive Committee for voting on business before it, including matters pertaining to accreditation.

Because many issues considered by the EC will have direct, broad and binding effects on the operations of the member Accreditation Bodies (ABs) and/or on Field Sampling and Measurement Organization (FSMO) facilities accredited under NEFAP auspices, it is essential that each NEFAP EC member actively participate. The NEFAP EC shall use Roberts Rules of Order to conduct votes during meetings of the EC.

2.0 Summary

This procedure describes how the TNI NEFAP EC votes, including:

- votes taken by the EC on general business matters and matters related to field activities accreditation,
- who may cast votes on behalf of EC members,
- quorums and processes for voting, recording votes, and disseminating the results of votes, and
- minimum requirements for adopting a motion.

3.0 Related Documents

None

4.0 Definitions

General Business Quorum (Simple Majority Quorum):	A simple majority (half plus one) of NEFAP EC members shall be present, at the meeting or through email vote, for a vote on matters of general business to be complete and valid. Matters of general business are defined in Section 5. Vacant positions are not included when determining the requirement for a simple majority quorum.
Full Quorum:	A minimum of two-thirds of the NEFAP EC Membership.
Meeting:	A coming together of the NEFAP EC. A meeting may be a physical gathering, conference call, or other electronic means that allows for free, timely exchange of ideas.
Abstention	A vote to "Abstain" or otherwise not vote "For" or "Against" the motion or action being put forth for vote.
Veto:	A special type of negative vote cast when an element of the motion at hand would preclude implementation by an EC member because existing requirements could not be appropriately changed before the motion, if passed, would be implemented.

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5.0 Votes on Matters of General Business

For most general business, follow Robert's Rules of Order using a Simple Majority Quorum.

Votes on general business matters include votes to:

- Approve minutes;
- Adopt or change agendas, work plans, charters, or NEFAP business operational procedures (these are not recognition or accreditation procedures) and activities; and
- Adjourn meetings.

5.1 Eligibility

An EC member may cast one vote on any matter of general business submitted for a vote at a meeting or through email. The designated representative or designated alternate representative of an EC member may cast an EC member's vote. The NEFAP EC may vote on matters of general business during any meeting of the EC or through email. Votes initiated through email must be recorded in meeting minutes..

5.2 Types of Votes

An EC member may vote "for" or "against" on matters of general business. An EC member may also abstain from voting. For general business matters, an abstention has the equivalent of a "no" vote and does not alter the number of "yes" votes needed for such a matter to be approved.

5.3 Conflict of Interest

A person shall abstain from voting if there is a conflict of interest.

5.4 Voting Requirements

To be adopted, matters of general business require a general business quorum and a majority of "For" votes from the EC members present during a meeting or who vote by email within the voting deadline established by the Chair or Program Administrator. An exception is made for adjourning meetings, where a general business quorum is not required.

The vote is not considered valid unless a general business quorum has been met within the designated voting period. If a general business quorum fails to vote within the designated period, the vote is considered invalid and the issue must be presented again for vote.

5.5 Subcommittee Voting

All voting items for subcommittees will follow the voting procedures as stated in this section (5.0).

6.0 Votes on Matters Related to Field Activities Accreditation and Recognition

Matters concerning field activities accreditation include votes on all matters that are not matters of general business or recognition of ABs. These matters include, but are limited to, SIRs, standards adoption and Field of Proficiency Testing tables.

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6.1 Eligibility

An EC member may cast one vote on any matter related to field activities accreditation submitted for a vote. The designated representative or designated alternate representative of an EC member may cast a NEFAP EC member's vote.

6.2 Types of Votes

An EC member may cast one of three votes on matters concerning field activities accreditation:

- "For" – signifies acceptance of the matter in question;
- "Against" – signifies opposition to the matter in question, but implies that the matter will be implemented if approved by the voting process; or
- "Veto" – signifies that the matter in question cannot be implemented due to conflict with existing law or regulations or TNI standards. The reason for "veto" must be specified.

An EC member may also abstain from voting. Abstention does not alter the minimum number of "for" votes required for passage of any matter for field activities accreditation.

6.3 Voting Requirements

The NEFAP EC may initiate a vote on matters concerning field activities accreditation or accreditation body recognition during a meeting of the EC.. Votes on matters concerning field activities accreditation or recognition will close two weeks after a vote is initiated and must include a full quorum vote.

6.3.1 Motions

During any meeting, any NEFAP EC member may bring matters related to field activities accreditation or accreditation body recognition before the EC by the appropriate motion and second. This includes matters that originate from other TNI boards or committees.

6.3.2 Discussion and Comment

Discussion shall continue until a two-thirds majority agrees that the motion is ready for a Full Quorum Vote.

6.3.3 Quorum and Voting Process

6.3.3.1 During the meeting or via email, the motion is presented to the NEFAP EC for final comment and Full Quorum Vote.

6.3.3.2 EC members may cast votes by voice during a meeting of the NEFAP EC. NEFAP EC members who are absent during the meeting in which a Full Quorum Vote is made, have two weeks to place a vote electronically, by FAX, or hard copy on an official ballot provided by the NEFAP EC Chair or NEFAP Program Administrator.

6.3.3.3 The vote is not considered valid unless a full quorum has been met within the designated two-week period. If a full quorum fails to vote within the two-week period, the vote is considered invalid and the issue must be presented again for vote.

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6.3.3.4 At the time the vote is cast, any member who casts a veto must submit to the EC Chair and NEFAP Program Administrator written justification that clearly outlines the specifics of the objection. The written justification must be submitted within one week of the veto vote.

6.3.3.5 To be adopted, matters concerning field activities accreditation or accreditation body recognition require a vote of "For" from two-thirds or more of the EC members casting votes and no votes of "Veto."

6.3.4 Veto Votes

Although it is expected that most issues are presented and resolved during the discussion period, veto votes must be addressed. Each of the following steps must be taken.

6.3.4.1 Vetoes must be identified, documented and the written rationale recorded.

6.3.4.2 Members casting a veto vote shall present written rationale that will explain the reason(s) for their negative vote. The written rationale must be submitted within one week of the veto vote.

6.3.4.3 If a majority of the EC determines that the veto vote is persuasive, the NEFAP EC must reconsider the motion. If majority of the EC does not agree that the veto vote is persuasive, the member submitting such veto shall either provide additional or stronger rationale or withdraw the veto. Additional rationale should be accomplished within the 2 week period.

6.3.4.4 The NEFAP Program Administrator returns any item that does not pass to the originating body for resolution.

6.3.5 Recording of the Full Quorum Vote

The NEFAP Program Administrator records the vote of the NEFAP EC on a member-by-member basis and the tally is attached to the final version of the motion in the minutes. The NEFAP Program Administrator must confirm and document that a full quorum was met at the time of completion of the vote. All votes are recorded as part of the meeting minutes meetings in which the vote was initiated.

6.3.6 Disposition

The Chair or designee will record votes cast by EC members and include the results of votes in the minutes of the EC. If a EC member does not cast a vote, the Chair or designee shall count the vote as if the EC member voted "Abstain." If a EC member casts both a voice vote and a vote by electronic mail, facsimile transmission, or correspondence, the Chair or designee shall only record the vote cast by electronic mail, facsimile transmission, or correspondence.

7.0 Records Management

Records associated with the NEFAP EC voting shall be handled in accordance with TNI Policy POL-104 Management of Records. All NEFAP EC electronic votes shall be saved by the NEFAP Program Administrator and the results reported in the minutes.

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8.0 Quality Control

This SOP will be reviewed every three years or whenever the NEFAP EC requires, whichever occurs first. The NEFAP Program Administrator will initiate this review. This review must be documented and any changes deemed necessary must be made with the vote of the NEFAP EC. If the document is revised, the revisions will be posted on the TNI website.

9.0 References

TNI Management of Records, POL-104
 TNI SOP Process for Creating Guidance, SOP-1-105

10.0 SOP Approved Changes

Prev. SOP No.	New SOP No.	Date of Change	Description of Change
N/A	5-102 Rev. 0	06/01/2010	New Document.
5-102 Rev. 0	5-102 Rev. 1	08/06/2012	Allow for voting on accreditation matters during the meeting the vote is initiated. Add Sections 7.0 Records Management, 8.0 Quality Control and 9.0 Replaced Section 7.0 References. Added TNI SOP references.
5-102 Rev. 1	5-102 Rev. 2	06/07/2017	Additions to the SOP include inclusion of SIRs, a definition for abstention and implementation guidance, clarification on the definition of General Business Quorum, conflict of interest and subcommittee voting sections, definitions of types of votes, additional procedures for handling veto votes, and simplification of Section 7. The term Executive Committee was replaced with EC to be consistent throughout the SOP.