Note: Text appearing in red reflects changes to BLET election procedures since the “On The Right Track” booklet was published for the previous division triennial elections.
Notice To Division Secretary-Treasurers

This version of On the Right Track supersedes all previous versions. There are several critical changes in this version which MUST be adhered to in order to enable your division to withstand an election challenge. Failure to follow these instructions will put your election at risk of being overturned, with the consequent aggravation and financial costs involved.

Please study this pamphlet carefully. The rules have changed! This election will be substantially different, and more rigorous, than any you have participated in before. Don’t wait. Study and be prepared!
TRIENNIAL NOMINATION AND ELECTION PROCEDURE CHECK-OFF LIST

☐ Thirty (30) days prior to nominating meeting, post notices of nomination meeting on BLET bulletin boards and at every location at which members report to work. Notices must be mailed to members in status 29(h)(1)-(5) and on leave of absence (except company officials). Notices must include the form for submitting nominations (See sample nomination notice, Page 18).

☐ At the nominating meeting, elect or appoint an election committee composed of at least three (3) non-candidates.

☐ Work with election committee to develop a schedule for the preparation and mailing of ballots, checking post office box for undeliverable ballots, and picking up voted ballots immediately prior to the election meeting.

☐ Within five (5) days following nominating meeting, notify all members nominated of their nomination, if they did not attend the nominating meeting.

☐ Rent two post office boxes.

☐ Election Committee prints or orders ballots.

☐ Inform National Secretary-Treasurer of nominees; completed sample ballot is sufficient. Sample ballot will be furnished by National Office.

☐ At the conclusion of the nominating meeting in September, secretary-treasurers will report nominations online, listing all candidates for all offices. A “Report Nominations” link will be available in the “TRIENNIAL ELECTIONS” section of the online reporting system (https://www.ble-t.org/streport).

☐ Election Committee prepares notice of election. This may be shown on ballot.

NOTICE WILL CONTAIN:
- Announcement of Triennial election of officers;
- Date and time of election; and
- Place of election.

☐ At least fifteen (15) days before election meeting, Election Committee mails to each active member balloting material and notice of election.

☐ Upon completion of election, forward results to National President.

☐ Immediately after your division election, results should be reported online via the “Report Election Results” link in the “TRIENNIAL ELECTIONS” section of the online reporting system. All new and reelected officers must be reported, even if all officers were elected by acclamation and no election was held. List all officers, not just those newly elected (https://www.ble-t.org/streport).
Elections
Both federal and Brotherhood law require that local division elections be held every three (3) years.

Information given on the following pages is to assist the divisions in conducting nominations and elections in accordance with both federal and Brotherhood law. It is the obligation of the secretary-treasurer and the president of the local division to see that all requirements are followed to the letter.

Please note: Items appearing in bold reflect changes that have occurred since elections held in previous years.

WHO MUST BE ELECTED
President
Vice President
Secretary-Treasurer
Alternate Secretary-Treasurer
Guide
Chaplain
Delegate to National Convention
1st Alternate Delegate to National Convention
2nd Alternate Delegate to National Convention
Legislative Representative
Alternate Legislative Representative
Local Chairman
1st Vice Local Chairman
2nd Vice Local Chairman
Additional Vice Local Chairman or Chairmen (if division has created the offices)

We suggest both the president and secretary-treasurer very carefully follow the checklist in the front of this booklet. This will help avoid the possibility of holding a second nomination or election. As you know, this would be a very expensive procedure. Also, separate elections for the offices of Delegate to the ND and alternates are now required. Elections for these offices cannot be combined into one contest.
**Nomination Procedure**

**NOTICE OF NOMINATION**

The secretary-treasurer of each local division shall post a notice on BLET bulletin boards and at every location at which members report for work, at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting at which nominations are to be held, such notice to state the time, date, place and purpose of such meeting. Notice must be sent to those active members not expected to be at the locations where notices are posted, such as those in status 29(h)(1)-(5).

**WHEN ARE NOMINATIONS FOR OFFICERS?**

Nominations are to be held at the first regular meeting in September every third year. This means that if your local division holds two or more meetings per month, nominations will be held at the first meeting in the month.

**QUALIFICATIONS TO HOLD OFFICE**

The following members are ineligible to hold offices in the BLET:

- Members holding membership in any other labor organization which purports to represent locomotive engineers, such as UTU.
- Members promoted to an official position on the railroad.
- Members removed from office because of defalcation.
- Members under BLET suspension.
- Members who have not been in
continuous good standing with the BLET for a period of twenty-four (24) consecutive months immediately preceding the meeting at which nominations are held (IBT Continuous Good Standing Rule).

- Members who are in status 29(h) (1), (3), (4) and (5), unless all dues to the National Division, general committee of adjustment, legislative board and local division continue to be paid in a timely manner during the twenty-four (24) consecutive months immediately preceding the meeting at which nominations are held.

- No salaried national officer or employee of the National Office may be nominated as a delegate or alternate to the ND.

For all offices, a member must hold active membership as defined in Section 25(b) – Local Division Rules, as well as meet the dues payment requirements found above.

A member may not accept nomination for two or more offices that cannot be held simultaneously. For example, the law and interpretations thereof do not allow for the following offices to be held at the same time:

- President/Vice President and Local Chairman/Vice Local Chairman
- President/Vice President and Secretary-Treasurer
- Local Chairman and Vice Local Chairman
- Secretary-Treasurer and Alternate Secretary-Treasurer
- Legislative Representative and Alternate Legislative Representative
- Delegate to the National Division and Alternate Delegates to the National Division

QUALIFICATIONS TO NOMINATE OR SECOND FOR OFFICE

In order to be eligible to nominate or second a candidate for office, a member must have been a member in good standing with the local division as of the end of the month prior to the nominating meeting. This means timely payment of dues.

AT THE NOMINATION MEETING

The president, under new business, says, “Brothers and Sisters, it is now time to nominate members to fill the division offices which will be vacant. Nominations are now in order for the office of __________.” An active member in good standing may rise and after obtaining recognition of the chair may say, “I nominate Brother/Sister __________ for the office of __________.” To be valid, a nomination must also be seconded by an active member in good standing, who may say, “I second the nomination of
Brother/Sister _________ for the office of __________.”

After all active members have been given the opportunity to nominate the members of their choice, the president will say, “Brothers and Sisters, if there are no further nominations, we will now close the nominations for __________ and proceed to nominate candidates for the office of __________.”

If only one candidate is nominated for any office, that candidate is elected by acclamation. The president will say, “Brothers and Sisters, if there are no further nominations, I cast my vote for Brother/Sister _________ for the office of __________, and he/she is declared elected by acclamation.”

Those members unable to attend the nomination meeting on account of being on vacation, sick, working, or on outlying assignments may write in their choices of nomination to the division secretary-treasurer, who will read these nominations at the meeting.

A member who is present may decline to accept a nomination at the time of being nominated, or may do so by submitting to the secretary-treasurer within five (5) days, a written request that his/her name be taken off the ballot.

After nominations are closed, an Election Committee of no less than three (3) non-candidate members shall be elected by a balloting of the members in attendance at the nominating meeting or by appointment of the president with the unanimous consent of the members present.

AFTER NOMINATING MEETING

Within five (5) days, a member nominated in his/her absence shall be notified of such nomination, giving him/her the opportunity to withdraw his/her name should he/she desire to do so.

At the conclusion of the nominating meeting in September, secretary-treasurers will report nominations online, listing all candidates for all offices. A “Report Nominations” link will be available in the “TRIENNIAL ELECTIONS” section of the online reporting system (https://www.ble-t.org/streport).

Election Procedure

Election of officers must be held at the first regular meeting in December every third year.

Active members, as defined in Section 25(b) – Local Division Rules, with the
exception of those holding official position on the railroad, may vote for all offices representing them, provided that they are in good standing as of the month prior to the month in which the election is held. This means timely payment of dues.

**RIGHTS OF CANDIDATES AND/OR CANDIDATES’ OBSERVERS**

Candidates have the right to have campaign literature distributed to the members of their division, at their own expense. Candidates wishing to avail themselves of this right must contact the National Division for pricing and instructions.

Membership lists must NOT be furnished to candidates.

Candidates and/or their observers have the right to observe all facets of the election process, including ballot packet preparation, ballot packet mailing, opening of post office boxes, voted and undeliverable lot retrieval, repackaging and remailing of undeliverable ballots, voted ballot transport, and ballot counting and tabulation. The Election Committee will prepare a schedule of all of these events and distribute it to all candidates.

Candidates must advise the Election Committee of their choices for observers.

**DUTIES OF THE ELECTION COMMITTEE**

The Election Committee shall oversee the election of officers. It shall provide all required notices, prepare and mail ballots, pick up and process undeliverable ballots, pick up voted ballots immediately prior to the election meeting, and act as a board of tellers at the election meeting.

Following the nominating meeting, the election committee will develop a schedule for the preparation and mailing of ballots, checking the post office box for undeliverable ballots, and picking up voted ballots immediately prior to the election meeting. All candidates for office shall be provided with a copy of this schedule.

The Election Committee shall retain all election materials in its possession until elections are concluded. Election materials include a copy of a members’ address list, additional ballots, and keys to post office boxes. No officers or members, except for the Election Committee, shall have access to ballots or to the post office boxes.
THE BALLOT
The ballot and necessary material to conduct the election is described in Section 8(a) – Local Division Rules. A sample copy of the ballot, envelopes, notice of election, and order blank will be furnished each secretary-treasurer, which will enable ordering material through the National Office. It is not necessary, however, to order supplies through the National Office, but you must follow the sample forms furnished.

**Note:** Write-ins are no longer permitted. Be sure there are no write-in lines or spaces on the ballot.

Every secretary-treasurer must submit information relating to nominees to the National Secretary-Treasurer.

The secretary-treasurer shall rent two post office boxes – one designated for voted, returned ballots, and the other designated for ballots returned as undeliverable.

CIRCULATING THE BALLOT
AND NOTICE OF ELECTION
After the ballots are printed, they will be folded and placed in the small envelopes. The small envelope containing the ballot will be placed inside the pre-addressed return envelope. This envelope must contain space for the member’s name, return address and have first class postage affixed thereto and must contain the local division number and the address of the post office box designated for voted, returned ballots.

The ballot and return envelope will be sent by first class mail to the last known address of the member and must have the address of the post office box designated for ballots returned as undeliverable affixed in the space for return address. Each ballot must show notice stating the time, date, place and the purpose of the election (notice of election) and must be mailed to each active member at least fifteen (15) days before the election meeting.

The ballot is to be filled out by the member, in whose name it is to be voted, naming his/her choice for officers. Write-ins are no longer permitted. The completed ballot must then be folded and placed in the small envelope that is provided for that purpose. The small envelope must then be sealed and placed in the larger envelope upon which the member will clearly mark his/her name and return address. The member will then place the larger envelope, containing the ballot, in the government mail for delivery to the post office box designated thereon.
UNDELIVERABLE BALLOTS
The Election Committee shall open the post office box designated for undeliverable ballots in accordance with its published schedule to determine if any ballots are therein. Efforts will be made by the Committee to deliver them to the member(s) correct address.

COLLECTING THE BALLOTS
The Election Committee shall remove the voted, returned ballots from the post office box in accordance with its published schedule and deliver them intact to the December meeting. Ballots must be sealed in a container until the count begins. The Election Committee shall sign the tape sealing the package.

Members may present their ballots at the meeting under the following conditions:

1) A member may hand carry his/her own ballot to the meeting.

2) A member claiming that he/she did not receive a ballot may pick up another ballot and vote, as long as the ballot count has not yet begun and it can be ascertained that the local division did not receive the original ballot from the member.

COUNTING THE BALLOTS
The secretary-treasurer has no duties during the counting of the ballots except to assist the Election Committee by giving the financial standing and status of each member whose name is announced.
Each candidate or his/her observer may stand not less than five feet from the table and observe the work of the Election Committee. The observers will address any remarks to the secretary-treasurer, who will convey such remarks to the Election Committee and record in the minutes of the election any grievances registered by the candidate or the observer.

The Election Committee must count the ballots in full view of candidates and members and in same room.

When the election begins, the name of each member returning a ballot will be announced. The secretary-treasurer will advise the Election Committee of the status and voting eligibility of each member when his/her name is announced. Envelopes from members determined to be ineligible will be placed in a separate stack and remain unopened.

When eligibility determination is finished, the inner envelopes will be removed and stacked. Once all inner envelopes have been removed, they will be shuffled and opened. Ballots will be removed from the inner envelopes, and tabulation will proceed.
If the election is for more than one local chairman or local committee, the Election Committee will also mark the envelopes of eligible voters with the Local Committee to which the member belongs. The inner envelopes will be removed and placed in stacks designating the Local Committee of the member voting the ballot.

When the Election Committee has completed its work and any unidentified outer envelope remains, it will be retained, unopened, with the records of the election. Ballots affixed with the signature or identification of the voter shall not be counted.

CLOSING THE ELECTION AND FINAL RESULT

The president shall now declare the election closed. The Election Committee will make an exact return of the total number of votes cast for each candidate and announce such returns to the president, who will thereupon declare the results of such election. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes in each contest is declared the winner.

If the election ends in a tie vote, the winner will be decided by another election in which the tied members are the only candidates.

When a member is elected to an office to which he/she is ineligible, the election for that office must be run again with the name of the ineligible candidate stricken from the ballot. If, after the ineligible candidate is stricken, there is only one candidate on the ballot, then nominations for that office must be conducted again.

When a member is elected but resigns or refuses to accept the office, and the office is not covered by an alternate, a vacancy is created which must be filled in accordance with the provisions of Section 20(a) – Local Division Rules.

Immediately after your division election, results should be reported online via the “Report Election Results” link in the “TRIENNIAL ELECTIONS” section of the online reporting system. All new and reelected officers must be reported, even if all officers were elected by acclamation and no election was held. List all officers, not just those newly elected (https://www.ble-t.org/streport).

BALLOTS SEALED AND PRESERVED

The ballots and envelopes shall be sealed by the Election Committee in the presence of the division, and together with all other records pertaining to the election, will be placed among the private papers.
of the local division. Ballots may not be unsealed except through the provisions of Section 9(b) – Local Division Rules.

PROTEST OF ELECTIONS
Protests must be filed in duplicate with the local division and the National President within thirty (30) days of the date of election.

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS
All officers, except those elected to succeed themselves, shall be installed at the first meeting in January.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON DIVISION ELECTIONS

Q. How long does a person have to be a member in order to be eligible to vote in local division elections?
   A. A member is eligible to vote if his/her dues are paid through the month prior to the month in which the election is held.

Q. May retired members vote for local division officers?
   A. No.

Q. May members who do not hold seniority in engine service (conductor/trainmen or honorary members) be elected to a local division office?
   A. As long as they do not hold membership in another organization that purports to represent engineers, maintain seniority in a craft eligible for representation by the BLET, and are in continuous good standing for twenty-four (24) months prior to nominations, they may be elected to any office. Retired members are not eligible for election to any office in the local division.

   Q. May conductor/trainmen members be elected to the local chairman position?
      A. If they do not hold membership in another organization that purports to represent engineers, and are in continuous good standing for twenty-four (24) months prior to nominations, the answer is yes.

   Q. In a one-division GCA, are nominations held for the position of general chairman?
      A. No. Nominations are held for local chairman and for vice local chairmen. The position of local chairman is synonymous with the position of general chairman in a one-division GCA. In like manner, the vice local chairman positions are synonymous with the general committee of adjustment. (Section 2(a) – General Committee Rules).

   Q. Section 2 (c) – Local Division Rules states that the president may not hold the office of secretary-treasurer,
local chairman or vice local chairman. Does that same restriction apply to the vice president?

A. Yes. Though not specifically stated in the BLET Bylaws, past interpretations have held that the same restrictions apply.

Q. If only one nomination is received for a particular office, can the person so nominated be declared elected by acclamation?

A. Yes. The president casts his vote in favor of the lone candidate, and that candidate is declared elected by acclamation. As a result, write-ins are no longer permitted in division elections.

Q. Only one person is nominated for a particular office. After nominations and before election, that person becomes ineligible to hold the office for which he/she was nominated and elected by acclamation. Can nominations be reopened for that office?

A. Yes, nominations for that office should be reopened under the provisions of Section 20(a) – Local Division Rules, once elections for the other offices have concluded.

Q. How would the votes received by the ineligible candidates be treated in tabulating the election results?
A. If the ineligible candidate received the most votes, the election would have to be rerun with the ineligible candidate stricken from the ballot. If only one candidate remains in the contest after the ineligible candidate is stricken from the ballot, nominations for that office would need to be conducted again.

Q. Can a person nominate himself/herself for an office?
A. Yes. There are no provisions in the BLET Bylaws or Roberts Rules of Order that prohibit a person from nominating himself/herself for an office.

Q. Must nominations be seconded?
A. Yes, including written nominations.

Q. Must the division provide a membership list to candidates for campaigning purposes?
A. No. On a union shop railroad in the United States, the division need only allow a candidate to inspect its membership list within 30 days prior to the election. However, any further privilege granted to one candidate must be granted to all, upon request. Candidates requesting distribution of campaign literature using the membership address list should be referred to the National Division for assistance.

Q. How does a member contest an election?
A. A member wanting to contest an election must file a protest in duplicate with the local division and the National President within 30 days of the election. (Section 8(g) – Local Division Rules)

Q. Members who are off due to illness or injury are carried by the secretary-treasurer on the books as excused members. Do these members have the right to vote for all officers of the local division?
A. No, unless they pay full dues as of the end of the month prior to the month in which elections are held.

Q. Members who are retired due to disability are carried by the secretary-treasurer on the books as 29(h)(1) members. Do these members have the right to vote for all officers of the local division?
A. No, unless they pay full dues as of the end of the month prior to the month in which elections are held.

Q. May a member submit a ballot by any means other than by government mail?
A. The only means by which a member may submit a ballot other than by mailing it to the designated post office box is by delivering it to the division...
meeting, in person, prior to the opening of any ballot envelopes.

Q. May a member change his/her vote after mailing the ballot?
A. No.

Q. May a member who was initiated after ballots were mailed out by the secretary-treasurer be allowed to vote?
A. The member may vote only if he/she paid dues the month prior to the month in which the election is held. If there are more than fifteen (15) days before the election meeting, the new member may request that a ballot be mailed from the secretary-treasurer. If there are less than fifteen (15) days before the election meeting, the new member must attend the meeting to receive a ballot and vote.

If there are less than fifteen (15) days before the election meeting, the new member must attend the meeting to receive a ballot and vote.

Q. A member does not receive a ballot from the secretary-treasurer. How may he/she vote?
A. If there are more than fifteen (15) days before the election meeting, the member may request that a duplicate ballot be mailed from the secretary-treasurer. The ballot envelope should be marked, “Duplicate Ballot.” If there are less than fifteen (15) days before the election meeting, the member must attend the meeting to receive a ballot and vote.
BROTHERHOOD OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND TRAINMEN

OFFICIAL NOTICE

NOMINATION OF OFFICERS FOR DIVISION _____

_____________ (DATE)

THIS IS TO INFORM YOU THAT DIVISION ________ WILL CONDUCT ITS ELECTION OF OFFICERS.
THEREFORE, IN COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL DIVISION LAW, SECTION 7(a) - LOCAL
DIVISION RULES:

“Nominations for officers of divisions shall be made at the first regular meeting in September
preceding the date of election; no member shall be nominated for office who is not eligible for
election at the time of nomination. Members in good standing desiring to place their
nominations for Division officers, may nominate by voice from the floor at the meeting at which
nominations are being held and those unable to attend the above meeting on account of being on
vacation, sick, working, or on an outlying assignment, may write in his choice of nominations to
the Division Secretary, who will read same at the meeting."

NOMINATIONS FOR ALL DIVISION OFFICERS WILL BE IN ORDER AT THE DIVISION MEETING
WHICH WILL BE OPEN IN DUE FORM AT _____ A.M./P.M. O’CLOCK ON THE _______ DAY OF
__________________ AT THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS:

___________________________________
___________________________________
___________________________________

YOU MAY SUBMIT NOMINATIONS IN WRITING TO THE SECRETARY-TREASURER. SUCH
WRITTEN NOMINATIONS MUST INCLUDE THE NAME OF THE CANDIDATE(S) AND OFFICE(S)
NOMINATED FOR, THE DATE, YOUR SIGNATURE, AND YOUR NAME LEGIBLY PRINTED.

___________________________________
Secretary-Treasurer, Division No. ________