

State Boards Have the Sole Discretion to Hold or Cancel Their 2021 Conferences or Meetings

On February 5, 2021, the National Board conducted a Zoom meeting with the state presidents and state secretary treasurers. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss upcoming state meetings, especially those where officer elections are conducted. Prior to the ZOOM meeting, the Board and NRLCA legal counsel participated in a teleconference with the Department of Labor (DOL) Office of Labor-Management Standards. The purpose of the teleconference with the DOL was to obtain guidance on what options would be available for holding meetings, conventions, and elections should the pandemic again limit our ability to hold face to face meetings. The DOL provided only general information, however the agency representatives acknowledged that many unions may need to take steps that are inconsistent with their constitutional provisions governing conventions and elections due to the pandemic.

Based on the DOL guidance and our additional research, the National Board and legal counsel carefully analyzed our current situation and suggested four options for the states to consider. We made it very clear that these were *suggestions* and that state boards must make their own decisions as to how to handle meetings in their state. As of late we have seen various articles in state publications that appear to misrepresent the nature of the guidance and suggestions that we provided. Some articles report that the state board's are waiting for guidance from the national board or that "we have our hands tied." This is simply not the case; the National Board is not dictating what the states must do.

In case there is any further confusion, let us make this clear, just as we did on the February 5 teleconference with the state presidents and state secretaries: states are not required to cancel their meetings or to follow the suggestions offered by the National Board. **State boards have the sole discretion to hold or cancel their 2021 conferences or meetings.**

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