

Constitution and Bylaws

Of the

**The National African American Caucus
(AFRAM)**

Of the

**Service Employees
International Union (SEIU)**

Service Employee International Union

**The Constitution and Bylaws of the National African American Caucus (AFRAM) of the Service
Employees International Union (SEIU) as adopted in Las Vegas, Nevada
April 10-13, 2005.**

Article I
Name and Affiliation

The name of this caucus will be the National African American Caucus of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU).

Article II
Objectives and Purpose

The National African American Caucus of the Service Employees Union (SEIU) is committed to enhancing opportunities for education, training mentorship, leadership development and networking for SEIU members and staff of African descent.

We further engage to promote social, economic and political justice within our workplace, our communities, our nation and within our union.

We shall further encourage our members to actively engage in efforts to organize the unorganized and to fully participate in the development and implementation of labor's political agenda and programs.

Article III
Membership and Voting

Membership in the National African American Caucus shall be open to all SEIU members and staff without regard to race, creed, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, or political belief, who have satisfied the dues requirements of this organization.

Voting Rights

Voting in general sessions and in committee meetings shall be limited to those members who have satisfied the dues requirements of this organization and shall be based on one person one vote. Regional caucuses shall establish their own voting procedures.

Proxy voting will not be permitted. Members may vote by absentee ballot. No more than two (2) members from the same local shall serve simultaneously as National Officers.

No elected SEIU International Officer or Executive Board member can hold office of President, Treasurer or Recording Secretary of the African American Caucus of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU).

Article IV
Dues/Rebates

Effective January 1, 2006, the annual membership dues shall be \$20.00. The dues year of this organization shall be January 1st – December 31st. Annual dues shall be paid prior to March 31st of each year.

Dues shall be rebated as follows:

National Caucus
\$10.00
Regional Caucus
\$8.00
Local/Area Caucus
\$2.00

The rebates shall be paid by May 1st of each year, based on dues collected by March 31st of each year.

Article V
Officers, Terms and Election Duties

Officers of this organization shall consist of:

President	(1)
Vice Presidents (5)	New VP for International members in Canada and Puerto Rico.
Treasurer	(1)
Recording Secretary	(1)
Executive Board (15)	One seat for Retiree members and two seats for International members.

Terms of Office & Elections

Nominations and election of officers will be held every four (4) years during the National Convention. The President, Treasurer and Recording Secretary shall be elected by at large by a simple majority of members voting at the National Convention.

Each regional caucus President or Chairperson will automatically hold the position of National African American Caucus Vice President.

The Executive Board will consist of three (3) members from each region and one member representing Retirees, and one member representing Canada/Puerto Rico. They will be elected by their respective delegations during the National Convention.

All officers of this organization serve at the pleasure of the members of this organization. Any local chapter, area chapter or regional officer who consistently fails to fulfill the duties of their office or fails to promote the objectives and programs of this organization shall be removed from office by a majority vote of the Executive Board of the local/area chapter or region in concurrence with a majority vote of the National Executive Board. No member shall simultaneously hold more than one elected office within any level of this organization.

Duties

President

The President shall preside at all Executive Board and National Meetings of this Caucus. The President is empowered to call special meetings of the Executive Board. The President shall strive to accomplish the purpose and objectives of this organization and the interest of its members. The President shall meet with each Regional Executive Board at least once a year. The President shall represent this organization at national meetings of affiliated organizations. The President shall be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the official performance of his/her duties. The President shall be empowered to authorize disbursement of funds or expenditures approved by the Executive Board.

Vice Presidents

Each National Vice President shall serve as a member of either Publications/Communications or the Ways and Means Committees.

Each National Vice President shall serve as a co-chair of designated Ad-Hoc committees established by the National Executive Board.

Treasurer

The Treasurer shall chair the finance committee. The Treasurer will receive all caucus funds and deposit all funds in the caucus bank account.

The Treasurer shall provide each member with a membership card, shall maintain an accurate record of all caucus expenditures, and shall provide written financial reports during each Executive Board meeting. The Treasurer shall perform other duties as the President may require. The Treasurer shall receive a stipend of two hundred (\$200.00) per month.

Recording Secretary

The Recording Secretary shall keep the minutes at the Executive Board and General Caucus meetings. The Recording Secretary shall maintain the official membership roster, and prepare a narrative account of all caucus activities.

Executive Board

The Executive Board shall consist of the elected officers. The Executive Board will meet at least two (2) times annually, or upon the call of the President or by request of a majority of Executive Board members. The Executive Board will consider committee recommendations submitted by the President, and may authorize the President and Treasurer to disburse funds for expenses incurred between meetings.

In the event any National Officer resigns or becomes unable to fulfill the responsibilities of the position, the Executive Board shall appoint a representative to serve until the next regular scheduled election. The Executive Board is empowered to adopt amendments to this Constitution where such amendments are vital to the survival of this organization. Any such amendment shall be effective from the date of adoption until approved or vetoed by a majority vote during the next National Convention.

Article VI Committees

The Standing committees of the caucus are:

- Ways and Means Committee
- Publication/Communication Committee

The President with the approval of the Executive Board may appoint Ad-Hoc National committees. The Executive Board shall develop the duties and responsibilities of each committee.

Local & Geographic Caucuses

National African American Caucus members may develop local union caucuses and/or (geographic) caucuses in conjunction with other NAAC members in their local union and/or area. The NAAC Executive Board must approve area (geographic) caucuses.

Each established caucus: local, area and regional must annually provide the National Secretary with the name of the caucus, the list of officers (including address, phone number, and e-mail) and frequency of meetings along with the minutes.

Article VII Meetings

The NAAC shall meet annually at a time and location approved by the Executive Board. The NAAC shall meet during each SEIU International Convention. Nation meetings shall be rotated between the national regions. NAAC members shall receive no less than a (60) sixty day notice of all bi-annual meetings.

The Regional Caucuses Executive Boards will meet bi-annually and minutes of the meetings will be sent to the National Secretary.

Local and Area Caucuses must meet at least four times annually and minutes of the meetings will be sent to the National Secretary.

Each meeting shall include written minutes from the last previously held meeting and the most current written financial report.

Article VIII
Amendments to Constitutions

NAAC members may propose amendments to this constitution at any National caucus meeting. Proposed amendments must be approved by the Executive Board prior to the presentation to the membership until approved or vetoed in accordance with the provisions of Article 8. Amendments shall require an affirmative vote of 2/3 of the regular members attending/voting at the Convention.

Article IX
Resolutions

Members must submit all resolutions to be acted upon at the annual meetings in writing to the Caucus Recording Secretary at least ten (10) days prior to the National meeting.

The NAAC Executive Board may submit resolutions to be acted upon at the annual meetings in writing to the Caucus Recording Secretary at least ten (10) day advance notification requirement.

Article X
Rules and Orders

The rules contained in the most current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the caucus in all causes in which they are applicable and consistent with the provisions of SEIU constitution, federal, state of other applicable laws.

**National Constitution & Bylaws of the National African American Caucus (AFRAM) of the Service
Employees International Union (SEIU).**

Afram Mission Statement

The National African American Caucus of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) is committed to enhancing opportunities for education, training mentorship, leadership development and networking for SEIU members and staff of African descent.

We further engage to promote social, economic and political justice within our workplace, our communities, our nation and within our union.

We shall further encourage our members to actively engage in efforts to organize the unorganized and to fully participate in the development and implementation of labor's political agenda and programs.

The History of AFRAM

The creation of the African American Caucus within SEIU evolved over several decades via several internal structures, all having root in concerns about full participation in all levels of SEIU's structure and resource allocations.

Prior to Caucuses, In the 70's and 80's, Black SEIU leaders led the struggle to create a functional Civil & Human Rights Department within SEIU, and a Civil & Human Rights Committee of the International EBoard. This struggle was led in part by Ophelia McFadden, Peter Otley, Will Smith, and Herman Lewis, with the assistance & support of several others. The SEIU Civil & Human Rights Department laid the foundation for SEIU Regional Civil & Human Rights Conferences, which in turn created SEIU Regional Civil & Human Rights Committees

In the early 1990's, The Western Region Civil & Human Rights Committee, under the leadership of Patricia A. Ford, with support and assistance by numerous others, crafted a resolution creating Caucuses within SEIU. This resolution was adopted by the full Western Regional Conference and referred to the 1992 SEIU International Convention. Speaking on behalf of the resolution were Patricia A. Ford, Marchel Smiley, and Marshall Walker, III. After debate and amendment, the resolution authorizing regional caucuses within SEIU was adopted by convention delegates.

Between 1992-96, The Western Conference African American Caucus (WCAAC), was the only caucus created in SEIU. The WCAAC adopted a constitution, elected officers, established a dues structure, and begin functioning as a coordinated body. African American Leaders in the East and Central Regions encountered opposition and indifference to forming caucuses in those regions.

This uneven regional development and lack of enforcement of the 1992 Convention resolution, sparked the effort to create a National African American Caucus. In addition, the departure of John J. Sweeney, created a competitive political environment, as Richard Cordtz and Andrew Stern campaigned for International President. Several African American Leaders, meeting in Denver, Colo., agreed to convene a national meeting of African American leaders and activists, to develop a national agenda.

The original conference call was signed by all nine (9) African American members of the International EBoard: Ophelia McFadden, Fay Childs, William Stodghill, Jarvis Williams, Mary Martin, Pat Ford, Marjorie Taylor, Janett Humphries and Bob Moore. An African American Leadership Conference Coordinating Committee was formed which consisted of: Tyrone Freeman, Pat Ford, Marchel Smiley, Bob Moore, John Johnson, Bill Lloyd, Janett Humphries, Jarvis Williams and Willie Hampton.

The first SEIU African American Leadership Conference was held in Atlanta, Ga., during Black History Month (Feb. 16-18) 1996. Over three hundred (300) SEIU members were in attendance. The Conference was hosted by Tyrone Freeman with logistical support from Valerie Hairston. The African American agenda was adopted and several resolutions were passed. Resolution 1: Creating a National SEIU African-American Caucus, included the establishment of a twenty-four (24) person Constitutional Draft Committee and the requirement to set a date within six (6) months to convene a Constitutional Convention. The Conference also featured workshops on "Leadership Development", "Internal Organizing/Community Organizing", "Power Through Labor/Management Partnerships", Political Empowerment and Involvement" and others.

Invited speakers included SEIU President Richard Cordtz, SEIU Secretary-Treasurer Betty Bednarczyk, Georgia Congress Persons, Cynthia McKinney and John Lewis, and community activist Rev. James Organge.

The African American agenda was presented to both Andrew Stern and Richard Cordtz, for comment and response. Based on their response and plans for SEIU, the African American Steering Committee voted on March 9, 1996, to endorse the New Voices Slate headed by Andy Stern. A list of recommendations for EVP, International Vice President, International Executive Board, and other leadership positions were submitted to Andy Stern. The African American Steering Committee unanimously elected Marchel Smiley, as Interim Chairperson. He was charged with producing the National AFRAM Constitution, arranging the first AFRAM Constitutional Convention, coordinating AFRAM's fundraising for the New Voices Slate, and to be intermediary between the Steering Committee and the New Voices Slate.

A follow up resolution was submitted at the 1996 International Convention, which was identical to the resolution adopted in Atlanta, Ga. It called for the authority to create National Caucuses in SEIU. To demonstrate support for this resolution and the names previously submitted for SEIU leadership positions, the African American Steering Committee called an AFRAM Caucus meeting during the 1996 International Convention. The meeting was held away from the Convention Hotel, at the South Shore Culture Center, on April 21st. Eighty percent (80%) of African American convention delegates boarded buses to attend the AFRAM meeting. The logistics of this historic meeting was coordinated by Jarvis Williams, Pia Davis and John Johnson.

A record number of African Americans were elected or appointed to leadership positions at the 1996 Convention. Chief among them was the election of Patricia Ann Ford as Executive Vice President. In addition, a resolution was adopted authorizing National Caucuses.

The National SEIU African American Caucus Founding Convention and Election of Officers was held March 14-16, 1997, at the Fairmont Hotel, in New Orleans, LA. Three Hundred and Forty-five (345) SEIU members representing Twenty-nine (29) Local unions were in attendance. The Draft Constitution presented by the Constitution Draft Committee was reviewed, debated, amended, and adopted. A major change was to name the organization, The International Caucus for People of African Descent (AFRAM) SEIU.