

# NAMI Elections 2021

## Information for NAMI Affiliates/NAMI State Organizations Regarding Nominations and Bylaws Amendments

Welcome to the NAMI Elections 2021 Season! This document contains information about nominating candidates for the 2021-2022 NAMI Board of Directors and also for proposing changes to the NAMI Bylaws.

NAMI Board service is an honor and a privilege. For those who earn the opportunity, NAMI Board service must be a top volunteer priority. NAMI Board members must commit to do the following:

- Understand and protect the fiduciary health of the organization;
- Understand and adhere to the legal and fiduciary responsibilities of a nonprofit board;
- Serve a three-year term, with the opportunity to serve two consecutive terms if reelected;
- Attend quarterly meetings of two to three days' duration in Arlington, Virginia (note that due to COVID-19, meetings are currently being conducted virtually via videoconference);
- Dedicate time weekly to NAMI Board service, which may include the following:
  - Service on three standing committees
  - Conference calls
  - Other work groups as needed
  - Travel for Board and other meetings; and
- Make what the individual believes to be a significant financial contribution to NAMI, on an annual basis.

See the [NAMI Board's Open Letter](#) for a more complete discussion of the skills and expertise that are desired for NAMI Board service.

**Nominations:** Nominations are being accepted for candidates for election to the NAMI national board of directors in July of this year. Five (5) candidates will be elected to serve for the standard three-year term.

Board nominees must be current NAMI members and members of record of the NAMI Affiliate or NAMI State Organization making the nomination. Nominations may be made only by NAMI Affiliates or NAMI State Organizations that have submitted their membership and paid dues by the membership deadline of Friday, May 14, 2021 at 11:59 p.m. ET (70 days prior to the Annual Meeting). Each NAMI Affiliate and NAMI State Organization may nominate no more than one candidate.

Nominations must be received by NAMI **no later than Monday, May 24, 2021 at 11:59 p.m. ET** (60 days prior to the NAMI annual meeting) and addressed to:

[voting@nami.org](mailto:voting@nami.org)

OR

NAMI

Attn: Elections 2021

4301 Wilson Blvd., Suite 300

Arlington, VA 22203

Nominations must be made on the letterhead of the nominating NAMI Affiliate or NAMI State Organization, including evidence of authorization to nominate a specific candidate, in a resolution

passed by the board of the NAMI Affiliate or NAMI State Organization. The Letter of Nomination must be signed by the chief officer of the NAMI Affiliate or NAMI State Organization. (If the chief officer is the nominee, then another proper officer must sign.) Nomination letters via e-mail may be submitted to [voting@nami.org](mailto:voting@nami.org) if electronically signed, or scanned with a real signature.

In addition to the letter of nomination, nominators must complete the Nomination Questionnaire. Nominators will be emailed a link to complete the online questionnaire once the nomination letter and meeting minutes detailing the vote to nominate have been received, and the candidate's membership has been confirmed. The questionnaire must be completed before a nomination can be considered accepted. Please plan to spend up to one hour completing the questionnaire. **The deadline for the nominating process to be complete is Monday, May 24, 2021 at 11:59 p.m. ET.**

**Board Composition:** The NAMI bylaws require that a minimum of 75% of the board comprise persons who have or have had mental illness, or parents or other relatives, including civil and domestic partners. To ensure compliance with this requirement, all candidates are asked to identify if they have had a lived experience of serious mental illness.

Because all currently seated board members for the 2020–21 term do self-identify under this definition, nominations of those who do not have lived experience as an individual or as a family member are welcomed to this 2021 election cycle.

### **Summary of NAMI Board Candidate Responsibilities:**

- 1) **Has been formally nominated** by a NAMI Affiliate or NAMI State Organization in good standing (nominations are DUE by May 24, 2021). Nomination consists of (a) a letter of nomination; (b) nominating State or Affiliate Board meeting minutes from the meeting where the candidate nomination occurred; (c) a completed Nominator Questionnaire online via Survey Monkey, and (d) verification that candidate is an active member of nominating organization. **If all of these items are not complete and held by NAMI by Monday, May 24, 2021 at 11:59 p.m. ET, the candidate will not be eligible to stand for election.**
  
- 2) **Has completed the online 2021 Candidate Questionnaire no later than Wednesday, June 2 at 5:00 p.m. ET.** Candidates will receive an email with a link to complete the Candidate Questionnaire using Survey Monkey once their nomination is complete and accepted (see above). This process provides allows NAMI to confirm the candidate's willingness to:
  - a) be a candidate and to serve if elected;
  - b) be the subject of a criminal background check and professional certification/educational verification. *Please see below for more details on this requirement.*
  - c) provide current and accurate contact information to be used during the elections process;
  - d) self-identify as a person who has or has had mental illness or as a relative thereof, including civil and domestic partners, if applicable;
  - e) self-disclose any current public office or current membership on the governing board or any for-profit or not-for-profit organization and any employment with NAMI, NAMI State Organizations or NAMI Affiliates; and,
  - f) commit to disclosing for yourself and immediate family (spouse, civil or domestic partner, parents, dependent children, siblings) any employment, business or other financial interest that involves NAMI, any NAMI Affiliate or NAMI State Organization, or any other person or entity providing goods or services for payment that are related to mental health care;

- g) commit to uphold the NAMI Board policy “Fairness in Process”, located on page 60 section 6.7.4 of the [NAMI National Board Operating Policies and Procedures](#); and,
- h) complete the 2021 Candidate Questionnaire that will be used to develop the candidate profile presented to the membership.
  - i) The information provided in the Nominator Questionnaire and the Candidate Questionnaire will become part of the candidate portfolio. The content of this portfolio will be used by the NAMI Board of Directors to determine their recommendations to the membership for board service.
  - ii) In support of NAMI Standards of Excellence, candidates are expected to adhere to [NAMI's Style Guide](#) in responding to the Candidate Questionnaire. Statements may be edited for format and accurate use of NAMI programs and other terms that fall within the NAMI's protected intellectual property. Candidates will be afforded the opportunity for a final review to ensure that the substance being presented about them is accurate.

- 3) **Provide an updated, current resume or *curriculum vitae* (CV)** showing all relevant work and volunteer experience that can also provide information to the Board and the membership in relation to your candidacy.
- 4) **Provide a high-resolution photograph electronically** (jpeg preferred; no less than 1 MB) suitable for publication in the election mailing and on the web. We will confirm suitability of photos and may seek a replacement if our publications team alerts us that your photo will not reproduce well. We want you to look good!

Electronic submission of all materials is required, including the photograph. Candidates will receive instructions on the submission of materials after they are nominated.

### **Confidentiality of Information**

NAMI will keep confidential the results of the criminal background check.

The results will only be made available to staff who oversee the elections and members of the Board of Directors. The candidate may be invited to speak to a board workgroup about information in the background check. The results of the background check will not be presented to the voting membership.

Information contained in the background check **will not disqualify** an individual from being a candidate or a board member. If a candidate with a criminal background is elected to the board, their background may inform their committee appointments. For example, an individual with a history of financial crimes may not be assigned to the Finance Committee. This would be done to protect against a semblance of impropriety and manage risk.

Within 90 days following the NAMI election, information from the criminal background check of candidates will be deleted from NAMI systems and no additional records will be kept. The only exception is that the background check of an individual that is elected to the board will be kept on file.

The information from the professional certification/educational verification will be used to confirm that information on these topics that candidates wish to have presented to the voting membership is true and accurate.

### **Candidate Information Conference Call**

Shortly after the close of nominations, all candidates are expected to join a Candidate Information Conference Call for a review of election policies and procedures – and for answers to any questions candidates may have. The date and time will be communicated in May.

### **Candidate Visibility**

The NAMI Chair of Elections will review the venues and opportunities to candidates to present themselves and their views to the membership on the candidate call.

### **Campaigning**

NAMI has a “no campaigning” policy for candidates. This policy was initiated to maintain decorum in NAMI elections and to retain a “level playing field” for all candidates. Candidates may not directly solicit members for their support. Candidates may not use their personal social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and any other additional platforms that NAMI identifies in its sole discretion), those of NAMI organizations, those of individuals or groups supportive of their candidacy or with a vested interest in the outcome of the NAMI election, to advertise and promote their candidacy. Candidates’ venues for reaching voting members may vary from year to year, but are carefully spelled out at the outset of each election season by the Governance Committee. Candidates are expected to demonstrate their leadership by upholding this policy themselves and by intervening promptly in the event that their supporters may act outside the spirit of the policy.

In the event that candidates do not uphold this policy, the NAMI Chair of Elections may impose limitations on the promotion of an individual’s candidacy. These limitations shall be determined in the sole discretion of NAMI and may include, but not be limited to: informing voting entities of campaigning violations, reducing and/or eliminating candidates in violation access to approved venues to reach voting members.

### **Collegial Culture**

The NAMI Board seeks to establish and maintain a collegial culture that enables vigorous debate and ensures respect for the diversity of thought and experience that make the Board the rich environment that it is. All Board members share responsibility for upholding that culture.

The NAMI Board of Directors expects professional and respectful behavior of all its members as they carry out their duties in service to the NAMI mission. This policy is set forth in recognition of the fact that representatives from NAMI State Organizations and NAMI Affiliates which nominate individuals for board service, and individuals who accept nomination for board service, have a unique and important role in furtherance of this culture and the organization’s mission.

The following list, while not exhaustive, articulates expectations that NAMI Board Members have of themselves.

- Recognize that the chief function of NAMI at all times is to serve the best interests of our diverse constituency.
- Serve with respect, concern, courtesy, and responsiveness in carrying out the organization’s mission.
- Demonstrate the highest standards of personal integrity, truthfulness, honesty, and fortitude in all our activities in order to inspire confidence and trust in our activities.
- Act in such a manner as to uphold and enhance personal and professional honor, integrity, and dignity of the organization.

- Treat with respect and consideration all persons, regardless of race, religion, gender, abilities or disabilities, age, sexual orientation, or national origin.
- Engage in carrying out NAMI's mission in a professional manner. To collaborate with and support other professionals in carrying out NAMI's mission.
- Devote time to learn how NAMI functions—its uniqueness, strengths, and needs, its reputation and standing.
- Prepare carefully for, regularly attend, and actively participate in election related meetings and activities.
- Refrain from actions and involvement that might prove embarrassing to the institution and to voluntarily discontinue candidacy if such actions or involvement develop.

**All nominators and candidates will be asked to sign this policy in their respective questionnaires.**

### **Bylaws amendment proposals and resolutions:**

For consideration at the 2021 NAMI annual meeting, proposed amendments to NAMI Bylaws and proposed resolutions must be sent to the NAMI office at the above address by return-receipt mail and received by NAMI no later than **Monday, May 24, 2021 at 11:59 p.m. ET**. Proposed amendments to the NAMI Bylaws must be submitted in amendment form. For guidance on making submissions, please contact us at [voting@nami.org](mailto:voting@nami.org).

Amendment proposals and resolutions arriving after the 24<sup>th</sup> will be considered late and not accepted.

Thank you for joining us in another exciting election season!

**Questions? → [Voting@nami.org](mailto:voting@nami.org)**