

Process for Local Fraternity Elections St. Elizabeth of Hungary Region, OFS

(Revised February 23, 2026)

At Least 2 Weeks Prior to the Election

The Presider should obtain a slate of nominees from the Fraternity Minister. The region has a form that collects all the information needed to determine term limits and voting requirements. Nominees for Council must be professed for 2 years (unless an exception is approved by the Regional Minister.)

If the slate is incomplete, or is "too thin", (a candidate listed for multiple offices resulting in fewer total candidates than positions on the slate) there is a risk of not being able to elect a Council. The Presider should discuss with the Fraternity Minister what measures are being taken to resolve the issue prior to the election. If the Presider is a delegate, the Regional Minister should be notified of the issue.

Before the Election

The Presider should:

- Print out a copy of the Report of Local Fraternity Election (Regional record of election).
- Print out a copy of the Ballot and Vote Count (Fraternity's record of the election).
- Have a copy of the Nicene Creed for the new Minister to read.
- Print out a copy of the Announcement of Elections.
- Provide a bag for used ballots so that they can be used for later destruction.

The Fraternity Minister should:

- Have a roster of active professed members who are not permanently or temporarily excused for the Roll Call.
- Have a complete slate of nominations.
- Have the most recent Treasury Audit available for review.
- Have the Fraternity Register available to sign.
- Assign secretary and two tellers for the election (all must professed members)
- Ensure an appropriate space for the election, including a table for five individuals (Presider, Ecclesial Witness, Secretary of Elections and two Tellers), an adequate number of blank ballots, writing utensils, set up a flip chart or white board that can be seen by the full Fraternity along with markers.

The Day of the Election – Before Beginning (by Presider)

- Ensure the presence of the duly delegated Ecclesial Witness. (Ecclesial Witness is delegated by the Regional Spiritual Assistant. The Presider is delegated by the Regional Minister)

- Check room set up. Assure all nominees, those assisting with the election, and those voting are in the room. Only professed members may vote and a Spiritual Assistant belonging to that fraternity as a member may vote.
- Make sure the seating arrangement of the Presider, Tellers, Secretary and Ecclesial witness are workable:
 - Optimal arrangement is two tables facing the Fraternity Members.
 - The Ecclesial Witness needs to sit next to the teller who will be counting and reading out the ballots, since he or she needs to see and confirm the names written.
 - The Presider should sit next to the Secretary.
 - The teller who is distributing and collecting ballots, and recording the votes on the flipchart should be seated at the end of a table for ease of movement.
 -

Seating: Secretary-Presider-Friar/Eccles Witness-Teller 1-Teller 2
or
Teller 2-Teller 1-Friar/Eccles Witness-Presider-Secretary

- Explain duties to Secretary
- Explain duties to two tellers. It works best if one teller counts, distributes, reads, and collects ballots and the second records the vote tally on the board.
- Get Fraternity Roster (must include all active members who are not excused from attendance [National Statutes, Article 18.6])
- Get list of pre-nominations (Presider should ensure that term limits and office compatibility requirements are observed)

Introductions (by Presider)

- Introduce yourself, Ecclesial Witness and anyone else with you.
- Recognize and thank the past council.
- Elections take place according to the norms of the law of the Church and our Constitution (Articles 76-84).
- An election represents the Holy Spirit working within us. It is a sacred time for your fraternity. Remind everyone that the election will begin with prayer after which there should be silence.
- It is a very structured process to ensure transparency
- Once we take roll call, no one may leave the room. If there is an emergency, inform the Presider. Voting will be paused until person returns to room. (Suggest a bathroom break?)
- Voting members may make nominations from the floor: nominate oneself or another professed person. Nominations from the floor are called for before voting on each position by the Presider.
- Request that those not eligible to vote sit in a separate area of the room to facilitate distribution of ballots.

Opening Prayers (Convocation of the Elective Chapter)

- In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen (Invocation of the Holy Spirit) – Ecclesial Witness
- Short reading from Sacred Scripture, from the writings of St. Francis, or appropriate source followed by a brief reflection or meditation. (e.g. St. Francis, v11-19 Ritual page 68-69/ new 116). Letter to all the Faithful – Ecclesial Witness
- Opening Prayers – (Ritual page 41/ new 68) - Presider

The Election Process

Roll Call – Establishing a Quorum (by Secretary)

- Take Roll Call – Secretary of Elections (should include only active professed members who are not permanently or temporarily excused from attendance).
- Check quorum (more than half of the members included in the roll call above).
- Sequence of election: minister, vice minister, formation director, secretary, treasurer, councilor. (If there are multiple councilors, a separate vote is taken for each)

Nominations (Presider)

- Presider will review all nominations, including those from the floor, to make sure they conform to the requirements outlined in the GC, IS, NS.
- Announce pre-nominations for Minister
- Ask the nominees individually to stand: “_____, do you accept the nomination for Minister?”
- Ask Teller to write the names on the flip chart
- Ask for nominations from the floor (only voting members may make nominations from the floor.) Those nominated from the floor must be present to accept the nomination, or alternatively a dated and signed letter from the nominee indicating both the acceptance of the nomination and election if elected. A phone call to the nominee to confirm acceptance of nomination and election is also acceptable.
”Are there any nominations from the floor for Minister?”
”Second call. Are there any nominations from the floor for Minister?”
”Third and final call. Are there any nominations from the floor for Minister?”
 - Ask each of the nominees from the floor individually to stand: “_____, do you accept the nomination for Minister?”
- Ask Teller to write the name on the flip chart
- Announce close of nominations

Voting Procedure (Presider and Secretary)

- Will the teller please count out the ballots - Teller 1
- Will the teller please distribute the ballots - Teller 1
- Will the teller please collect the ballots - Teller 2
- Will the teller please count the ballots - Teller 1
- Will the teller please read the ballots **exactly as written** (ask the Ecclesial Witness to ensure that the names on the ballots are those being read.) - Teller 1
- Other teller marks and tallies the votes as names are called - Teller 2
- If the vote is conclusive (Ritual page 42/ new 68-69)
 - the Secretary says, **"In the name of Christ. Amen. I announce that the newly elected (position) of the ____ Fraternity is (Name)."**
 - the Presider asks the person elected to stand, and says **"(Name), do you accept this election?"**
 - If they answer **"Yes I do"...**
 - the Presider says: **"In the name of the Church and the Franciscan Family, I confirm the election of (name) as (position) of the ____ Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order."**
- If the vote is not conclusive, proceed to the 2nd and 3rd ballots. (General Constitutions Article 78).
- Secretary fills in the form with the number of votes.
- The Ecclesial Witness places votes in bag for later burning/shredding.

Repeat the nominations and voting procedure for Vice Minister, Formation Director, Secretary, Treasurer and Councilor(s).

- At the conclusion of the last election, the presider calls for a motion to destroy the ballots.

Concluding Remarks (by Presider)

- Read Constitution, Article 31, Item 2
 - "The office of minister or councilor is a fraternal service, a commitment to hold oneself available and responsible in relation to each brother and sister and to the fraternity so that each one will realize his or her own vocation and each fraternity will be a true community, ecclesial and Franciscan, actively present in the Church and in society."***
- For a successful transfer, encourage the new and outgoing Council to arrange a time and place to transfer the records of the Fraternity and take care of signature authority for any bank accounts (the Minister and Treasurer should both have signing authority).
- The Regional Executive Council is available to support and guide you.

Concluding Prayers

- The Presider asks the new Council to come to the front of the room, and to bring their Rituals.
- The newly elected Council reads the Nicene Creed (new 70)
- All recite prayers (Ritual 42-43/ new 70-72)
- Ecclesial Witness, if a Priest or Deacon, concludes with the blessing (Ritual 39/ new 65). Otherwise, the Presider reads the blessing (Ritual 39/new 66)

Sign and date the fraternity Register (Presider and Ecclesial Witness)

After the Elections

- After the concluding prayers, the presider asks the Council to remain standing at the front of the room for pictures, and to fill in their section of the Report of Local Fraternity Election before joining the rest of the fraternity members for greetings and celebrations.
- On the day of the election, a photo will be taken of the completed Slate, Report of the Local Fraternity Election Form, and Ballot and Vote Count. This will be electronically sent the Regional Minister.
- Secretary of Elections makes sure that the **Report of Local Fraternity Election** form is completed (signed by the Presider and Ecclesial Witness) and given to the Presider. The Presider gives the original Report of Local Fraternity Elections to the Regional Secretary as soon as possible. The Regional Secretary updates the NAFRA database with the new Council and updates the election and individual information and retains the original form in the Regional records. The Regional Secretary provides a copy of the completed Report of Local Fraternity Election to the Fraternity Minister and the Regional Minister for their respective fraternity and regional files.
- Secretary of Elections gives the completed **Ballot and Vote Count** (signed by the Presider, Secretary of the Election, Ecclesial Witness, and two tellers.) to the new Minister for filing in the Fraternity's records.
- Ballots are destroyed – usually by the Ecclesial Witness to the elections.
- Presider sends an email with the results to the Regional Council along with a picture of the Regional Minister and newly elected Fraternity Minister (if possible) on the day of the election.

Take pictures of the newly elected Council (including their Spiritual Assistant) and the entire Fraternity and send them to the Regional Minister and the newly Elected Fraternity Minister. The Regional Minister will send an announcement of the newly elected Council as well as provide a copy for the upcoming Herald.

Notes on Term Limits and other Restrictions:

- All offices may be elected for two consecutive terms of three years each. For a third and final successive election to office, a majority of two-thirds of the votes of those present, which must be obtained on the first ballot, will be necessary. (General Constitutions Article 79.1 and National Statutes 13.2)
- The outgoing Minister cannot be elected Vice Minister (General Constitutions Article 79.2)
- The spiritual assistant is by right a voting member of the council and of the chapter of the fraternity to which he or she gives assistance and collaborates with it in all activities. Only in economic/ financial matters and in elections at any level does he or she not enjoy the right to vote. (Statutes for Spiritual and Pastoral Assistance to the Secular Franciscan Order Article 12.3)

Definition of Quorum, Absolute Majority, and Election Requirements

For all Fraternity Council positions, an Absolute Majority of the votes cast (more than half) is required for election on the 1st and 2nd ballot.

If the second ballot is inconclusive, the 2 candidates with the most votes are put on the third ballot. In case there are more than two (i.e., there is a three-way tie), the two candidates who are oldest by profession are put on the third ballot. If the third ballot is a tie, the oldest by profession is considered elected (See General Constitutions 78.1 and 78.2).

	First Ballot	Second Ballot	Third Ballot
Minister	Absolute Majority	Absolute Majority	Majority of the 2 candidates with the most votes (or the two oldest by profession if there is a three-way tie). If the 3 rd ballot is inconclusive, the oldest by profession is considered elected.
Vice Minister	Absolute Majority	Absolute Majority	Same as for Minister.
Councilors			
Formation Director	Absolute Majority	Absolute Majority	Same as for Minister. (See National Statute Article 14.4)
Secretary	Absolute Majority	Absolute Majority	Same as for Minister. (See National Statute Article 14.4)
Treasurer	Absolute Majority	Absolute Majority	Same as for Minister. (See National Statute Article 14.4)
Councilor(s) at Large	Absolute Majority	Absolute Majority	Same as for Minister. (See National Statute Article 14.4)

Definition of Quorum

General Constitutions Article 77.4 “The presence of more than half of the number of those having the right to vote is required for the valid celebration of an elective chapter.”

NAFRA Statutes 18.6 “The Quorum consists of a majority of active members who are not excused from attendance.”

Definition of Absolute Majority

NAFRA Statutes Article 9.2 “A majority, sometimes designated an absolute majority, is more than half of the total number of votes cast. [cf. Code of Canon Law, canon #119]

Election Requirements

General Constitutions Article 78.1 “An absolute majority of the votes of those present, cast in secret, is required for the election of the minister. After two inconclusive ballots, the voting continues between the two candidates who have obtained the largest number of votes, or in case there are more than two, between the two candidates who are oldest by profession. If there is still a tie after the third ballot, the older by profession will be considered elected.”

General Constitutions Article 78.2 “The election of the vice-minister proceeds in the same manner.”

General Constitutions Article 78.3 is superseded by National Statutes Article 14.4, which imposes the same voting requirements for councilor positions as for minister and vice-minister.

Date: 4/2025 (from NEC)

Announcement of Elections (by the Secretary of Elections)

In the name of Christ. Amen. I announce that the new elected Minister of the _____ Fraternity is _____

In the name of Christ. Amen. I announce that the new elected Vice Minister of the _____ Fraternity is _____

In the name of Christ. Amen. I announce that the new elected Formation Director of the _____ Fraternity is _____

In the name of Christ. Amen. I announce that the new elected Secretary of the _____ Fraternity is _____

In the name of Christ. Amen. I announce that the new elected Treasurer of the _____ Fraternity is _____

In the name of Christ. Amen. I announce that the new elected Councilor of the _____ Fraternity is _____

#78 St. Elizabeth of Hungary Region- OFS

REPORT OF LOCAL FRATERNITY ELECTION

Fraternity Name _____ **National #** _____
City, State _____ **Province Affiliation** _____

Secretary of Election _____
Tellers: (1) _____ **(2)** _____

RESULTS OF ELECTION: **Date of Election:** _____ **# VOTING** _____

Minister _____
Address _____
Phone _____ **E-MAIL** _____

Vice Minister _____
Address _____
Phone _____ **E-MAIL** _____

Formation Director _____
Address _____
Phone _____ **E-MAIL** _____

Secretary _____
Address _____
Phone _____ **E-MAIL** _____

Treasurer _____
Address _____
Phone _____ **E-MAIL** _____

Councilor (1) _____
Address _____
Phone _____ **E-MAIL** _____

Councilor (2) _____
Address _____
Phone _____ **E-MAIL** _____

Councilor (3) _____
Address _____
Phone _____ **E-MAIL** _____

(All names should be followed by OFS to indicate they are professed)

Presider: _____ **Office:** _____

Friar Witness: _____
(or designated representative of the Church)

Nicene Creed (new Roman Missal)

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
and by the Holy Spirit
was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.
For our sake he was crucified under
Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven and is seated
at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge
the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,
the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is
adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
I believe in one, holy, catholic and
apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the
forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the
resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.

Slate of Nominees for the Fraternity Council

Fraternity Name: _____ Location: _____

For the Term _____ to _____ Date of Election: _____

Office	Nominee Name	Term*	Profession Date
Minister			
Vice Minister			
Formation Director			
Secretary			
Treasurer			
Councilor at Large	(number of Councilor to be elected _____)		

Current Council – years _____ to _____	
Minister	
Vice Minister	
Formation Director	
Secretary	
Treasurer	
Councilor at Large	
Councilor at Large	
Councilor at Large	

Previous Term Council – years _____ to _____	
Minister	
Vice Minister	
Formation Director	
Secretary	
Treasurer	
Councilor at Large	
Councilor at Large	
Councilor at Large	

Past Previous Council – years _____ to _____	
Minister	
Vice Minister	
Formation Director	
Secretary	
Treasurer	
Councilor at Large	
Councilor at Large	
Councilor at Large	

* if elected, the number of terms on the Council. If 3, a 2/3 majority is required on the first ballot.

Notes on Eligibility, Term Limits and Voting Requirements:

Definitions:

The term “**Councilors**” in the General Constitutions refers to any of the offices other than Minister and Vice Minister. The offices of Secretary, Treasurer, Councilor at Large and Formation Director are all considered “Councilors”.

“**Absolute Majority**” means more than half of the voting members present for the election.

“**Quorum**” means more than half of the active professed members (whether present at the election or not). Members excused from attending Fraternity gatherings are not counted as “active professed members” for purposes of establishing a quorum.

Those Eligible for Nomination/Election for Fraternity Council

- Permanently professed active members of the Fraternity are eligible to be nominated and elected to the Fraternity Council. (General Constitutions).
- An outgoing Minister cannot be nominated/elected Vice Minister. (General Constitutions Article 79.2)
- St. Elizabeth Region Guidelines for Election of the Fraternity Council recommends that a transferee or newly professed member should wait at least a year before running for fraternity election.
- Members of the Regional Executive Council are eligible for nomination/election to local Fraternity office. (See National Statute Article 28).
- Although the National Statutes (Article 28) allow for an outgoing Minister to serve in a councilor position (i.e., Formation Director, Secretary, Treasurer or Councilor at Large), it is recommended that the outgoing Minister not be a member of the new Council, unless there is a critical need for candidates for those positions.
- Members of the Fraternity who have been professed for less than two years should not be considered for election to the Fraternity Council.

Term Limits

- The minister, vice-minister and council members may be elected for two consecutive terms of three years each. A third (and final) term is allowed, but voting requirements for a third term are stricter than those for a first or second term (See General Constitutions Article 79.1 and National Statutes Article 13.2)
- In the spirit of General Constitutions Article 32, current Fraternity Council members should only be considered for a third term in exceptional circumstances.
- Term limits for Minister, Vice Minister, and Councilor positions are considered independently. For example, if a 2nd term Vice Minister is elected Minister or Treasurer, they would be considered as 1st term in those offices.
- The intent of National Statutes Article 13.2 is to apply term limits to Councilor positions as a group (Secretary, Treasurer, Formation Director and Councilors at large). In other words, a member having served three terms in any combination of these positions would not be eligible to be elected for another term. (In the case of smaller fraternities, the presider may apply term limits to specific offices only with permission of the Regional Minister.)

Voting Requirements

- An “Absolute Majority” is required for the election of any of the Fraternity Council positions.
- For a third term for any office, a two-thirds vote is required on the first ballot for election.
- If the first ballot is inconclusive, a second ballot is taken.
- If the second ballot is inconclusive, the two candidates with the most votes are carried over to the third ballot. If there is a three-way tie on the second ballot, the two oldest by profession are carried over to the third ballot.
- If the third ballot is inconclusive (i.e., there is a tie), the oldest by profession is considered elected. If both individuals were professed on the same day, the oldest by age is elected.

Notes on Term Limits and Voting Requirements:

- The ministers' and councilors' task to lead is temporary. The brothers and sisters, rejecting all ambition, should show love for the fraternity with a spirit of service, prepared both to accept and to relinquish the office. (General Constitutions Article 32)
- The minister and vice-minister may be elected for two consecutive terms of three years each. For a third and final successive election to the office of minister or vice-minister, a majority of two-thirds of the votes of those present, which must be obtained on the first ballot, will be necessary. (General Constitutions Article 79.1) (See note below)

The following articles of the NAFRA Statutes supersede the General Constitution Articles 79.2 and 79.3 regarding eligibility for nomination and term limits for Councilors:

- "For a **third** and **final** successive election to the office of National Councilor (which includes every elected office except those of National Minister and National Vice Minister) or International Councilor, a majority of two-thirds (2/3) of the votes of those present, which must be obtained on the first ballot, will be necessary." (National Statutes Article 13.2).
- "The election of National Councilors proceeds in the same manner as provided for in article #78.1 of the General Constitutions". (National Statutes Article 14.4) Article 78.1 of the General Constitutions specifies that an absolute majority is required to elect the Minister for both the 1st and the 2nd ballot. In our National Statutes, an absolute majority is required on the 1st and 2nd ballots to elect Councilors. Statute 14.4 overrides GC Article 78.3, which specifies that the second ballot for Councilors requires a relative majority rather than an absolute majority.
- National Statutes Article 28. Applicability of These Statutes to All Levels of Fraternity, states that all the provisions of the National Statutes apply to both the Regional and Local levels with the exception of Articles 11.4 and 13.3. These articles prohibit a member of the National Council from being a member of a Regional or Local Council and prohibit an outgoing National Minister from being eligible of any other office on National Council. As a result of Article 28, Regional Council members may also hold office at the local level, and an outgoing Minister is eligible to be nominated for any of the Councilor positions.

Note: The term "councilors" in the General Constitutions refers to any of the offices other than Minister and Vice Minister.

Term limits for Minister, Vice Minister, and Councilor positions are considered independently. For example, if a 2nd term Vice Minister is elected Minister or Treasurer, they would be considered as 1st term in those offices.

The intent of National Statutes Article 13.2 is to apply term limits to Councilor positions as a group (Secretary, Treasurer, Formation Director and Councilors at large). In other words, a member having served three terms in any combination of these positions would not be eligible to be elected for another term. (In the case of smaller fraternities, the presider may apply term limits to specific offices only with permission of the Regional Minister.)

Regional Governance

- "Fraternity elections will be conducted according to the provisions set forth in the General Constitutions, Art. 76 to 80, the National Statutes, the Ritual, and the procedures established by the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants." (St. Elizabeth of Hungary Region - Regional Governance, Chapter 10, Article 38.)

Regional Guidelines

- In the spirit of General Constitutions Article 32, current Fraternity Council members should only be considered for a third term in exceptional circumstances.
- Although the General Constitutions allow for an outgoing Minister to serve in a councilor position (i.e., Formation Director, Secretary, Treasurer or Councilor at Large), it is recommended that the outgoing Minister not be a member of the new Council, unless there is a critical need for candidates for those positions.

TABLE FOR DETERMINING MAJORITY AND TWO-THIRDS VOTES

(THE PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS CENTER)

NUMBER OF VOTES CAST	MAJORITY VOTE	TWO-THIRDS VOTE
1	1	1
2	2	2
3	2	2
4	3	3
5	3	4
6	4	4
7	4	5
8	5	6
9	5	6
10	6	7
11	6	8
12	7	8
13	7	9
14	8	10
15	8	10
16	9	11
17	9	12
18	10	12
19	10	13
20	11	14
21	11	14
22	12	15
23	12	16
24	13	16
25	13	17
26	14	18
27	14	18
28	15	19
29	15	20
30	16	20
31	16	21
32	17	22
33	17	22
34	18	23
35	18	24
36	19	24
37	19	25
38	20	26
39	20	26
40	21	27
41	21	28
42	22	28
43	22	29
44	23	30
45	23	30
46	24	31
47	24	32
48	25	32
49	25	33
50	26	34

NUMBER OF VOTES CAST	MAJORITY VOTE	TWO-THIRDS VOTE
51	26	34
52	27	35
53	27	36
54	28	36
55	28	37
56	29	38
57	29	38
58	30	39
59	30	40
60	31	40
61	31	41
62	32	42
63	32	42
64	33	43
65	33	44
66	34	44
67	34	45
68	35	46
69	35	46
70	36	47
71	36	48
72	37	48
73	37	49
74	38	50
75	38	50
76	39	51
77	39	52
78	40	52
79	40	53
80	41	54
81	41	54
82	42	55
83	42	56
84	43	56
85	43	57
86	44	58
87	44	58
88	45	59
89	45	60
90	46	60
91	46	61
92	47	62
93	47	62
94	48	63
95	48	64
96	49	64
97	49	65
98	50	66
99	50	66
100	51	67

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