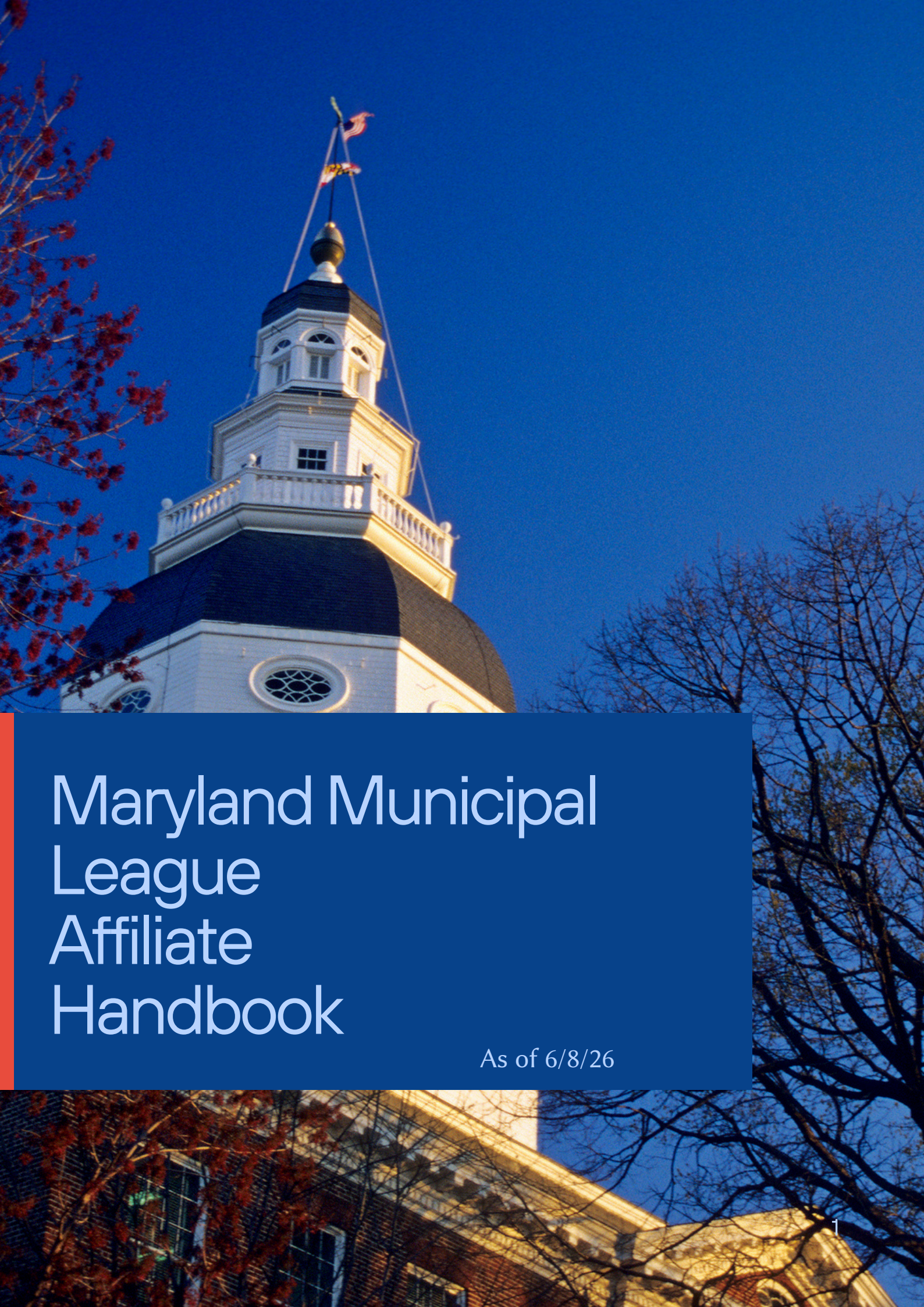




Maryland Municipal League Affiliate Handbook

As of 6/8/26

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Welcome to Leadership

On behalf of the Maryland Municipal League, thank you for stepping forward to serve as a volunteer leader within one of our affiliate organizations.

Volunteer leadership is the foundation upon which our League has been built. For nearly 90 years, dedicated municipal officials and professionals have generously shared their time, expertise, and passion to strengthen local government and advance the interests of Maryland's communities.

By accepting this leadership role, you join a long tradition of service that has helped shape and sustain our organization for generations.

Your willingness to lead is both
valued and appreciated.

Your willingness to lead is both valued and appreciated. The success of our affiliate organizations depends on committed volunteers who bring people together, foster professional development, encourage collaboration, and help ensure that the voices of our members are heard. Through your service, you play an important role in strengthening not only your affiliate organization but also the broader League and the municipalities we collectively serve.

As we celebrate 90 years of service to Maryland's municipalities, we are reminded that every milestone achieved by the League has been made possible by leaders like you—individuals who were willing to contribute their talents, build relationships, and invest in the future of local government.

Thank you for your commitment to service and for continuing the legacy of leadership that has defined the Maryland Municipal League for nearly a century. We look forward to partnering with you in the year ahead and supporting your efforts to make a meaningful impact on your members and communities.

Let's have a wonderful year!

Theresa Kuhns

MML, Chief Executive Officer

Affiliates facilitate communication and collaboration among member municipalities, special taxing districts and other units of local government

Our Combined Purpose

As the League looks back on 90 years of service and dedication to municipal governance and its officials, it's a good time to reflect on the many moving parts required for its success.

League affiliates were baked into the association's structure in 1979. At that time, the focus would have been on meetings held throughout the state to help equalize the burden of travel. The face-to-face convenings were a physical method of taking a breath from the daily grind and stepping back to look at the larger picture of municipal life and what cities and towns bring to its residents.

League staff is here to help you streamline management by providing the foundation and tools

Today, digital means allows us to expand that reach and make convening even more accessible to those who want to be engaged. No matter how you meet, the affiliate structure serves as a nucleus that shares a region, profession or special interest. And League staff is here to help you streamline management by providing the foundation and tools for effective affiliate operations.

We look forward to affiliates being an outlet for those shared commonalities for many years to come. Please look to this handbook for foundational information and to help you better understand how affiliates and the League serve one another's interest for the success of Maryland's incorporated cities, towns and special taxing districts.

Paula Chase Hyman

Managing Director, Leadership Development & Member Experience

Our Team

The success of the League/Affiliate relationship, lies in great part with communicating via the proper chain. All of our team members are equipped to manage member relations, however each affiliate has a specific team member or department to filter inquiries, concerns and questions through to help ensure the most efficient handling of issues.

Executive Office

Executive Oversight:

Board of Directors
Executive Committee
Audit Committee
Nominating Committee
MMIA
Annual Business Meeting
Bylaws and Board Governance
Maryland Mayors Association (MMA)

Staff Liaison:

Board Governance
Maryland Mayors Association
(MMA) - Primary Liaison



Leadership Development Team

Executive Oversight:

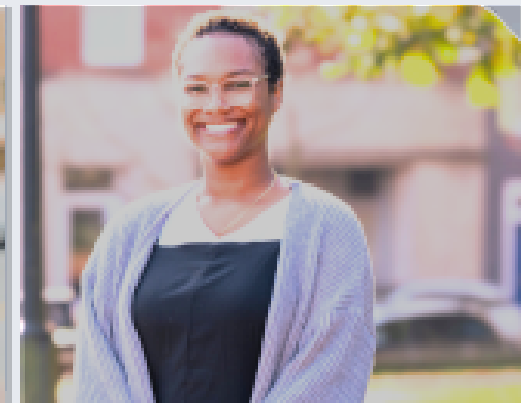
Chapters
Departments
Caucuses

Staff Liaison:

Chapters
Engagement & Outreach Committee
Maryland Asian Pacific American
Caucus
Maryland Black Caucus
Latinidad Caucus

Staff Liaison:

Departments
Maryland Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual,
Transgender, Queer Caucus
Maryland Women's Caucus
Maryland Young Municipal
Leaders



Current MML Affiliates

Through its Bylaws, the League has identified specific groups to acknowledge as an affiliate of the League. This includes:

- League chapters designed to bring elected officials from a region together
- Departments for professional municipal staffers across specific disciplines
- Constituency Groups for a subset of the League's membership (**Maryland Mayor's Association**)

In the spirit of representation, affiliates must abide by the mission and non-partisan nature of the League.

01

Proven Success

Affiliates have served as successful networking and education outlets for nearly 50 years. Affiliated share a common interest with the League to provide resources to elected and appointed municipal officials that help them to be effective leaders. There are a broad range of ways to do that under the umbrella of the League's professional association.

02

Chapters

Allegany/Garrett
Baltimore City
Carroll County
Cecil/Harford County
Eastern Shore Association
of Municipalities (ESAM)

Frederick County
Montgomery County
Prince George's County Municipal
Association (PGCMA)
Southern Maryland Municipal
Association (SMMA)
Washington County

03

Maryland Municipal Departments

Attorneys (MMAA)
City Town Administrators
Clerks Association (MMCA)
Code Enforcement & Zoning Officials
Association (CEZOA)
Emergency Management Officials
(EMOD)

Parks and Recreation Association
(MMLPRA)
Police Executive Association (PEA)
Public Works Officials Association
(MMPWOA)

04

Maryland Municipal Districts

District 1 Dorchester, Somerset,
Wicomico, Worcester
District 2 Caroline, Kent, Talbot, Queen
Annes
District 3 Baltimore City
District 4 Anne Arundel, Southern MD
District 5 Montgomery County

District 6 Frederick County
District 7 Allegany/Garrett
District 8 Washington
District 9 Prince George's
District 10 Cecil/Harford
District 11 Carroll

An affiliate's activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Disseminating information relevant to municipal governance
- Offering guidance and peer support to member municipalities
- Promoting effective, efficient, and transparent local government practices.

Affiliates facilitate communication and collaboration among member municipalities, special taxing districts and other units of local government

Maryland Municipal League Caucus Policy

The MML Caucus structure serves as special interest groups for members to engage within. A caucus will promote positive and effective relationships among all members and League constituency groups while ensuring the needs of all League members are both included and considered without bias.

As approved by the
Board of Directors
April 2023

All caucus members shall maintain support of the mission of the Maryland Municipal League and may include any elected, appointed or staff members of any city or town in good standing. The caucus will serve as a resource to the Maryland Municipal League in the formation of its policy agenda, leadership development and communications to all members at large.

To be a fully formed and recognized Caucus group, the members within must identify to which group it represents; notify in writing to the League the elected Chair and membership roster of the caucus each year by July 1st. The MML Board of Directors will approve each caucus submission annually.

Any caucus deemed to have been developed for the specific cause of being hateful and exclusionary in nature will not be recognized or acknowledged by the League. All League members shall be able to participate in any or all caucuses.

The Maryland Municipal League will provide each recognized Caucus group:

- Meeting space at MML annual summer and fall conferences
- Online platform to engage year-round.
- Caucus Chair will be invited to submit written or verbal reports at MML Board of Director meetings.

Affiliate Benefits

The Maryland Municipal League has maintained a high level of service to our affiliates. We continue to implement best practices of other municipal leagues and count among your benefits the national standard of:

01

Access to League staff

- Provision of staff liaison
- Guidance for accounting practices and bylaw maintenance
- Quarterly check-ins and periodic meetings of the affiliate leadership with MML staff to discuss relevant operational issues

02

State-wide Resources

- Statewide legislative and regulatory information and advocacy.
- Statewide public relations activities and information.
- Current information about universal municipal issues
- Member portal for engagement and information exchange

03

Exposure

- Active promotion of the affiliate to new and veteran officials
- Amplification of affiliates on MML's website, socials, digital publications and The Local magazine
- Ability to submit one affiliate member for each MML standing committee



Caucus Benefits

Caucuses receive assistance from the League, including:

- A location to convene at our two major conferences
- A digital outlet to help you maintain connection beyond your meetings
- The opportunity to report to the MML Board on your caucus activities
- Each caucus is highlighted during their nationally recognized month on MML's social media.
- Use the caucuses as a connection and distribution point for information and resources that come to our attention that could be useful to your caucus members

Affiliate Requirements

Affiliates were created as an extension of the League's mission. Therefore, certain infrastructure and policies are expected of all affiliates including, but not limited to:

01

Uniform Values

- May not adopt official positions in conflict with the League, its Board of Directors, legislative or regulatory goals and policies.
- Acknowledge receipt of the League's bylaws and agree to adopt bylaws consistent with the League's.
- Ensure that League has a copy of the affiliate's recent bylaws including submission of changes per Board approval.

02

Provision of Standardized Protocols

- Maintain a slate of officers tasked with ensuring the affiliate's viability and operation.
- Develop procedures that ensure the interests of its members.
- Municipalities that are members of the affiliate must be dues-paying members of the League and current on dues.
- Provide an affiliate representative at League-hosted meetings focused on affiliate operations and support League events year-round.

03

Administration of Operations

Provision of the following documents, to be uploaded via provided Dropbox link:

- Affiliate's member roster inclusive of official's name, title and municipality
- Calendar of meetings for affiliate year (July 1 - June 30)
- Minutes from each affiliate meeting July 1 - June 30*
- Minutes or reports from the affiliate's committees*
- Updated audit (if applicable per your bylaws)
- Treasurer's reports *
- Bank statements (upon request)
- Copy of most recent bylaws

Items with an * must be uploaded monthly by the 15th of each month

Communication Protocol

The League has created several sources of document management and communication:

- 1) File request links enabling any materials provided to the League will go directly into a folder associated with the affiliate
- 2) A members-only portal, MD CommUnity, specifically designed to provide a tool for crowd sourcing, streamlined communication year-round.

All affiliates are encouraged to use the portal for messaging with League staff and to use their specific areas to facilitate messaging with affiliate members.

01

Dropbox File Request Links

- A single link will be provided at the start of the fiscal year. This link can be used throughout the year to upload required and requested documents.
- The link will be provided by your MML staff liaison and located on the MML website's Chapter and Department page
- You do not need a dropbox to upload links via this file.
- Please **do not** email files. Doing so will risk your files not being accounted for.

02

Use of MD CommUnity

- Access using: **<https://mdcommunity.smallworldlabs.com/home>**
- This link can also be found under *Quick Links* on MML's home page
- Login is: first name, last name (all lower case, no spaces)
- Password is mmlpassword (until you change it)
- Every affiliate is listed under the Group category
- You are encouraged to use your Group forum to engage with members of your affiliate
- All messaging to affiliate leadership will take place via MD CommUnity

03

Affiliate Leadership Group

You will be invited to this new group. It will be used to communicate a myriad of information related to affiliate management. We prefer this to email. As indicated, due to email volume messages are too easily lost in the shuffle.

As an affiliate, you are
governed by policies set
by the MML Board of
Directors

Lobbyist Policy

No affiliate organization of the League shall hire an outside contract lobbyist to represent a League affiliate group in the state legislature, effective date September 30, 2025.

As approved by the Board of
Directors
May 3, 2025

Municipalities are authorized to retain a lobbyist independently or in collaboration with other municipalities. However, pursuant to the MML Bylaws, lobbyists are prohibited from representing MML affiliates.

As an affiliate, you are
governed by policies set
by the MML Board of
Directors

Sponsor Policy

With the passage of Maryland state ethics guidelines in 2021, and the changes to many local ethics guidelines, in order to comply with the law, all MML departments and chapters must immediately discontinue the use of direct financial sponsorships of chapter related activities.

As approved by the Board of
Directors
October 15, 2023

State legislation passed in 2017, and later clarified with SB 4 of 2021, has now specifically included MML and MACo to the list of entities from which a local official or employee may not accept a gift over \$20, subject to the exemptions. This has impacted several ways in which MML has acted with the membership.

MML will work with affiliates who have traditionally sought corporate support, to ensure a streamlined process that avoids any conflict with the legislation.

Several affiliate groups are currently working with the League to secure sponsorships.

As an affiliate, you are governed by policies set by the MML Board of Directors

Violation Policy

If a representative body of the League is in violation of a Board approved standing policy, the League will take the following steps.

An investigation will be properly conducted, led by the President, President-Elect, Immediate Past President, and the CEO. If any leader within this body is involved in the violation, or within the leadership structure of the group, a member of the Executive Committee will be chosen to serve instead.

As approved by the Board of
Directors
April 27, 2024

Effective July 1, 2024

The investigation will include the meeting between the two parties after an initial letter has been communicated to the leadership of the representative body. At the conclusion, the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors will be alerted to the initial complaint, findings, and recommended next steps. The Board of Directors will vote on the recommended next steps. The first violation serves as a warning, unless the issue remains unresolved to the Board's satisfaction, at which time a 90-day censure of the representative body leadership will be issued.

The leadership of the representative body in question is unable to serve in any leadership position on the Board of Directors including its Executive Committee and is unable to vote if it does not remain in good standing, for 90 days following the second violation. Any further violations by the same group or continued unresolved issues will result in the leadership losing its Board of Directors position and vote for the remainder of the current term and the suspension of the representative body from convening for the remaining of the current term.

This violation policy went into effect July 1, 2024. Following the election of a new Board each year, all leadership is required to participate successfully in orientation and ethics training prior to the convening of any representative body.

Compliance Guidelines

If a representative body of the League is in violation of a policy:

- The leadership of the body is unable to serve in any leadership position on the Board of Directors including its Executive Committee –and–
- Is unable to vote if it does not remain in good standing, for 90 days following the first violation.
- If a second offense occurs nor is the first issue unresolved, the affiliate will lose its Board of Directors seat for the remainder of the current term.
- At the third offense, the Maryland Municipal League Executive Committee will have in its purview to remove the representative body from continuing to operate as a group of the League.

Examples of violations: A department comes out against a position the legislative committee has taken. A chapter hosts an event and has sponsors for the event. Not submitting required documents for compliance. Entity is out of compliance with their approved bylaws.

Use of AI in MML Meetings

The use of artificial technology for any MML convening without express prior written approval by the MML Executive Committee is prohibited.

Must submit a request ahead of the convening of a MML meeting to allow the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, including but not limited to ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Microsoft Copilot, and similar generative or assistive technologies. Use of these tools to record a convening is strictly prohibited for any MML-related tasks, communications, content creation, data analysis, or decision-making without the prior written consent of the MML Executive Committee and appropriate staff.

Requests for approval must include:

- The purpose of the AI tool use
- The specific tool or platform intended
- The data or information that may be input or generated
- A review of any privacy, security, or ethical considerations

All approved uses must comply with applicable data protection, confidentiality, and organizational ethics policies.

Financial Guidelines

To: Affiliate Leadership Officers

From: Karen Wilbert, Controller

Subject: Financial Requirements for Affiliate Organizations of MML

Date: 10/10/2025

As requested in the September quarterly check-in, the below guidelines are the League affiliate financial practices and will be added to the League's affiliate handbook. These establish financial management, banking, and reporting requirements for all affiliates with bank accounts operating under the Maryland Municipal League (MML) umbrella as listed in the League's bylaws, the governing documents. The intended purpose is to ensure accountability, transparency, and compliance with MML's obligations as a 501(c)(4) membership organization. All affiliates must adhere to these policies as a condition of continued recognition by MML. Compliance protects both the affiliate and MML's collective tax-exempt status.

1. Bank Accounts

- Online Access:
 - MML requires read-only online access to all Affiliate members' bank accounts for viewing purposes only. Login credentials or account view access must be provided to MML's Controller or designee.
- Signers:
 - Each bank account must have a minimum of two authorized signers, neither of whom shall be from the same household. One signer should be an officer (President, Vice President, or Treasurer), and no checks may be signed by the payee.
- Annual Certification:
 - Annually, Treasurers must submit a certification form to MML confirming all accounts, signers, and EINs are current and that all required controls are in place. This must be submitted no later than July 31st of the current membership year.
- Debit Card Controls:
 - Debit cards should only be issued in rare, documented cases, and are highly discouraged. Any debit card activity must be preauthorized by both signers and included in monthly reporting. Both signers must initial each debit card activity and it must be reported to the membership body for approval and submitted to MML. Personal or cash withdrawal transactions are strictly prohibited.

Financial Guidelines

2. Financial Reporting Requirements

- Treasurers shall report to MML quarterly, no later than 30 days following the end of each quarter (October 31, January 31, April 30, and July 31). Reports must include:
- Current and prior quarter bank statements
- Updated accounting logs
- Treasurer's report as presented to members
- Documentation of board or membership approval of the Treasurer's report

3. Accounting and Recordkeeping

Accounting Logs

- Affiliates must maintain accurate accounting logs. It is strongly encouraged to incorporate the sample format provided into your process to ensure uniformity.
- Each transaction must include:
- Date, description, payee, and amount.
- Documentation such as invoices or receipts.
- Monthly reconciliations must be completed against bank statements.

1. Record Retention

- All financial records, including bank statements, receipts, and reports, must be retained for a minimum of seven (7) years and be made available to MML upon request.

2. Year-End Summary

- Affiliates must prepare a year-end summary of income and expenses for review by MML's Board of Directors.

Any concerns regarding financial mismanagement or misuse of funds may be confidentially reported to MML's CEO and President.

Each affiliate must ensure
that their bylaws follow
any current model
structure

[Link](#) to **Chapter*** Model
Bylaws

* As of 06/26 this model is for chapters only!

[Link](#) to **Bylaws Action
Request Form**

Affiliate Bylaws Amendment Guidelines

All affiliate Bylaws adhere to a model structure. With Board approval, articles and sections can be developed to meet the specific needs and culture of the individual affiliate organization.

Each affiliate must ensure that **1)** their bylaws follow any current model structure and **2)** any additional articles and sections are not out of compliance with MML's governing tool.

In accordance with MML Bylaws
Article III, Sections 3-102 and 3-202,
Departments and Chapters are
governed by bylaws approved by the
MML Board of Directors [*Adopted the
Standards for Affiliate Chapters and
model bylaws April 1979 Revised 1/83,
8/83, 4/84, 4/85, 5/85, 3/92, 7/93,
10/97*]

The MML bylaws review team will work with the affiliate's designated contact to keep the bylaw approval process moving. However, as these are essential governance tools, please allow for the proper amount of time for careful review and communication between League staff and affiliate contact.

The following, outlines protocol and procedures to submit affiliate bylaws amendments for MML Board approval:

1. Requests should be submitted via the [Bylaws Action Request form](#)

2. The MML Bylaws Review Team:

Paula Chase Hyman
Managing Director, Leadership Development & Member
Experience
Paulah@mdmunicipal.org

Felicia Banuelos
Director, Executive Operations and Board Governance
feliciab@mdmunicipal.org

Affiliate Bylaws Amendment Guidelines

3. Bylaws will be reviewed once MML team has received all of the following:

- Summary of bylaws changes to include the date the affiliate's membership body approved amendments, name and email address of an affiliate contact person who can speak to any questions or concerns (Bylaws Action Request Form provided by MML)

The following material via upload to the Dropbox link

- A red-lined version of the full bylaws in a Word document*
- A copy of the affiliate's minutes from the meeting that the amendments were accepted.
- Attendance roster (name, municipality) for the meeting, and vote count, which provides proof of quorum.

Incomplete information will not be processed.

4. Bylaws are reviewed by the above-mentioned MML staff team. If the team has no questions or concerns, the Bylaws will be passed on to the Board's Executive Committee.**

To ensure time for review, bylaws amendments must be provided to MML's review team at least 21 days prior to an Executive Committee meeting.

- The MML Board traditionally meets during the following months: January, April, June, September, and during the Excellence in Leadership Conference (October, November or December)
- Affiliate contact person is encouraged to inquire to establish which Board meeting agenda their amendment may make, based on their submission date.

5. All documents should be provided as a Word or PDF and uploaded via the provided Dropbox link. Information sent via email attachment or in the body of an email will not be processed.

6. Upon submission to MML, all bylaws amendments are subject to review against the current model bylaw structure. Revisions may be requested by the review team. The MML team will work with the designated affiliate contact person to ensure any revisions are communicated and provided back to the affiliate.

NOTES

* A red-lined version should clearly identify what has been changed via strikethrough's and highlighted new language. Please do not send a clean version with only the new accepted language.

** While the bylaws amendment may ultimately be presented to the Board of Directors, the request needs to be brought forward to the Executive Committee for approval first. MML staff submits all action items and requests 7 business days prior to the Executive Committee meeting, in order to ensure they can be considered for addition to the full Board agenda packet.

Contacts

For questions relating to Board of Directors schedule, Executive Committee schedule, or details surrounding Action Requests, please reach out to Felicia Banuelos at feliciab@mdmunicipal.org or (410) 295-9118.

For questions relating to affiliate bylaws amendments or operations, please contact Paula Chase Hyman at paulah@mdmunicipal.org