

NCJW Resolutions 2020-2023

Frequently Asked Questions

How do NCJW's mission statement, priorities, resolutions, principles differ?

- **NCJW's Mission Statement** is a brief and succinct statement of who we are as an organization – our goals and activities. The current mission was developed and approved by the convention delegate body in 2007. The mission does not change unless NCJW redefines itself or its activities.
- **NCJW's Priorities** flow directly from the mission statement and state the issue areas on which NCJW's focuses. The priorities guide NCJW's work and use of national resources and provide a framework for the resolutions.
- **NCJW's Resolutions, including the Principles**, are adopted at NCJW's convention for the ensuing three years — the triennium. The resolutions direct and control the program and activities of NCJW at the local and national levels. Each resolution is linked to a priority and expresses the official position of NCJW on issues related to the mission of the organization.
- **NCJW's Principles**, a part of the resolutions, state the fundamental beliefs of NCJW and are the guiding tenets of the organization. Many of the principles state overarching positions that apply to all the resolutions (non-discrimination, need for coordinated and accessible human services, etc.).

How are our resolutions and principles used?

- NCJW's resolutions guide our social change work whether advocacy, community service, or otherwise in Washington, DC; Israel; state capitals; and in local communities. They help NCJW decide which issues to monitor, what positions to express on legislation and public policy, and what kind of community service work to support. Legislators, public officials, donors, and prospective members, among others, learn about our viewpoint by reading our resolutions.

Does NCJW need a resolution on every issue?

- No. NCJW's mission and priorities make clear the focus of the organization and indicate the kinds of issues on which NCJW takes a stand and takes action. Those are the issues that are covered in our resolutions. Even then, it is not necessary for every issue related to our priorities and mission to be specified. Our resolutions are drafted to be broad and enabling, expressing our views on the broad issues underlying legislation and public policy. In this way, we can be flexible and respond, should we choose, to any issue that relates to NCJW's concerns including new issues that might arise.

What happens when NCJW doesn't have a specific resolution on an issue?

- In some cases, even though there may be no specific mention of an issue in the resolutions, it is clear that NCJW is enabled to work on an issue. For example, we don't specifically mention the census, but resolution IV.I The enactment,

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enforcement, and preservation of laws and regulations that protect civil rights and individual liberties for all as well as principle 10, A democratic society must provide for the needs of those unable to provide for themselves, cover this issue. A fair and accurate census — and the collection of useful, objective data about our nation’s people, housing, economy, and communities generally — helps determine apportionment for representation in Congress; funding for health care, education, and more; and is among the most important civil rights issues of our day. In other instances, such as the issue of free trade, for example, there is no principle or resolution which would allow NCJW to take one position or another without further study.

Why are some resolutions more specific than others?

- Sometimes even though existing resolutions are sufficient to allow NCJW to work on a particular issue, the delegate body decides to approve a resolution that explicitly addresses the issue. This usually is done when the issue is of special interest to NCJW or is one with which we are closely identified. For example, several of our principles enable us to support equal rights for same-sex couples (Principles 3, 5, 6). A majority of our members felt that it was important to explicitly state our concern about this issue in a resolution (IV.5) because of the commitment of our sections and work they have done on this issue.

How much have our resolutions changed over the years?

- The resolutions are meant to be a flexible document that changes to reflect the activities and views of NCJW’s membership. This is why it is critical that every section participate and involve as many of its members as possible. The biggest change came in 1996 when NCJW went through the process of reviewing and focusing our resolutions. The delegate body approved new resolutions which have enabled us to make the most effective use of our resources and become recognized for our expertise in these focus areas.

Has NCJW ever changed its position on an issue?

- Yes. Our position on the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) is a good example. When the ERA was first proposed in 1923, NCJW joined many other organizations in opposing it because we were concerned that it would overturn legislation that specifically protected women in the workplace. At NCJW’s 1971 National Convention, the delegate body changed the resolutions making it possible for NCJW to support the ERA. At that point in time, “protective” legislation was being used to keep women out of jobs that offered a better pay scale. Times and circumstances change, often leading NCJW to change or adjust its positions on the issues.

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Why should sections participate in the resolutions process?

- NCJW's resolutions influence every aspect of the organization's work at every level. It is important that our positions on the issues reflect the views of our members. The resolutions process provides the best opportunity for members to make their views known to NCJW. Debate and voting on resolutions is, for many, a highlight of the NCJW National Convention experience. By participating in the resolutions process, sections learn about how their own members feel about issues and can help NCJW formulate its stands.

What is required of sections when they submit their resolutions worksheets?

- Every worksheet should include the information requested at the top: contact name, address, date of section board approval, etc. It is important to include a rationale for every change. The worksheets must be approved by the section board. The resolutions packet will be emailed after Washington Institute with a clear early September 2019 due date in to NCJW Inc.