
How Are Your LWV Dues Used?

The League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) receives \$32 of your dues payment to help finance its work as our “watch dog” at the national level. The League of Women Voters of West Virginia (LWVWV) receives \$8 to keep similar watch at the State Level. Since the League of Women Voters of Jefferson County, WV (LWVJC) works to keep dues as low as \$45, only \$5 per regular member is available for expenses at the local level. The League realizes most of the issues Leaguers are passionate about are either national or statewide in scope, so the bulk of your dues are focused there.

Dues meet no more than 25% of the costs of operating the national and state offices. The National and State Boards must raise additional money from grants or donations from members and other supporters.

LWVUS plays two essential roles. First, it deals with the national issues that concern League members. The staff of the national office and members of the National Board meet with key legislators and lobby when needed on our current legislative priorities. Besides lobbying directly on legislative priorities (voter protection, money in politics, environmental defense, health care defense, etc.) they prepare amicus briefs for the Supreme Court on select cases, support the DC area members of Lobby Corps, engage over 80,000 members of electronic Grassroots Lobby Corps through 26 Action Alerts and work in 12 coalitions. In addition LWVUS uses the <https://lwv.org/> and <https://www.lwv.org/league-management/> websites and social media such as Facebook and Twitter to communicate regularly with the public and the media to make sure the LWV’s message is heard. They issue press releases and letters to the editor, give interviews, respond to hundreds of media requests for information or comment, run paid TV and radio ads in selected states on clean air and money in politics, and distribute the monthly LWVUS newsletter. Second, National provides logistical support to local and state Leagues by offering webinars on a myriad of subjects, providing online training materials, and conducting workshops at state and national conventions. They participate in VOTE411, and hold conferences on national topics.

The portion of your dues that goes to the State League helps support its infrastructure, which includes the activities of the Board and Administrative Committees, the West Virginia Voter, and position support for committees such as Education, Election Laws, Health Care, Natural Resources, Social Policy, State Government, Taxation and Finance, National Government, International Relations, and Legislative Action/Advocacy. They also issue Stern/Lloyd Education Fund Grants to local leagues who apply for particular projects.

At the local level LWVJC pays for a PO Box, and an insurance policy so we may use county buildings. Most supplies are donated, and donations cover these and other expenses we may incur while putting on forums or other activities to educate the voters of Jefferson County. We are thankful for the Stern/Lloyd Education Fund Grants we have received to print materials for our voters. The work of our Board and members is all volunteer.

Dues payments and normal donations to LWV are not tax deductible because of the League’s lobbying activities. LWVUS, some state leagues, and some local leagues maintain a separate Education Fund that is used explicitly for voters’ service activities such as the voter’s guides and other election or voter related expenses. WV does not have an Education Fund, so the local Leagues can’t either. Contributions to the LWVUS Education Fund are fully tax deductible.