

BY-LAWS

The Women Parliamentary Caucus Rules, 2008

1. Preamble:

In recognition of the contributions to the cause of Pakistani women for political and social empowerment, the Women Parliamentary Caucus is to be established as a tribute to the pioneer women of Pakistan, namely Ms. Fatima Jinnah, Begum Rana Liaqat Ali Khan, Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto and all the women rights activists.

2. Short title and commencement:

- (i) These rules may be called the Women Parliamentary Caucus Rules, 2008.
- (ii) They shall come into force on such date as notified by the Patron.

3. Definitions:

In these rules, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context,-

- (a) "Assembly" means the National Assembly of Pakistan;
- (b) "Caucus" means the Women Parliamentary Caucus;
- (c) "General Assembly" means the General Assembly of the Caucus as provided for in rule 5;
- (d) "Member" means a member of the Assembly;
- (e) "Parliamentary Party" means Political Parties having women members in the National Assembly;
- (f) "Patron" means the patron of the Caucus as provided for in rule 4;
- (g) "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Caucus appointed under rule 8;
- (h) "Senate" means the Senate of Pakistan;
- (i) "Speaker" means the Speaker of the National Assembly;
- (j) "Sub-Committee" means a sub-committee constituted under rule 11;
- (k) "Treasurer" means the Treasurer of the Caucus to be appointed under rule 9; and
- (l) "Working Council" means the Working Council constituted under rule 6.

4. Functions and Objectives:

1. To attain a broad-based consensus among all women members of the Parliament on an agreed agenda for women development, empowerment and emancipation, enabling them to work beyond and above party lines for the uplift of the women of Pakistan;
2. To enhance the role of women parliamentarians in proposing gender sensitive legislation, reviewing and amending discriminatory laws and policies;
3. To ensure effective parliamentary oversight of implementation of international and regional commitments, national policies and programmes;
4. To facilitate exchange of views and information sharing on critical areas of concern, particularly social discriminatory practices, both nationally and internationally;
5. To liaise and build working relationship with key state and civil society institutions and organizations in order to contribute towards national and international efforts for promoting women's rights, empowerment and gender equality;
6. To make recommendation for amendment in the rules and procedures in order to ensure women's continued access to and participation in the National Assembly;

7. To jointly work for the achievement of the social indicators so that the Millennium Development Goals are within reach.

5. Patron:

1. There shall be a Patron of the Caucus who shall provide vision, guidance and direction.
2. The Speaker of National Assembly shall be the Patron of the Caucus for the life of the present National Assembly.
3. When the office of the Speaker is not held by a woman, then the Patron shall be the Chairperson of the Senate or the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly or the Deputy Chairperson of the Senate, whichever of these legislative offices is occupied by a woman.
4. In case the aforesaid offices are not held by a woman, the General Assembly shall choose the Patron from amongst its members.

6. General Assembly:

1. The General Assembly of the Caucus shall consist of the women members of all Parliamentary Parties. The membership may be extended to the women members of the Senate and the Provincial Assemblies as and when decided by the General Assembly.
2. The membership shall be voluntary.
3. The quorum of the meeting of General Assembly shall be one fourth of the total membership.
4. The General Assembly shall hold its meeting at least once during each session of the National Assembly. The meeting may also be convened as and when required.
5. The General Assembly shall fix the membership fee by agreement.
6. The decisions of the General Assembly shall be taken by consensus. In case consensus is not reached the decision shall be taken by the majority vote.
7. Subject to the decision of the Working Council the men Parliamentarians may be invited to General Assembly, without any voting right, as,-
 - (a) guests;
 - (b) friends of the Caucus;
 - (c) experts; and
 - (d) observers.

7. Working Council:

1. There shall be a Working Council, which shall aid, advise and act under the guidance of the Patron, the Patron shall nominate the members of the Working Council.
2. Each Parliamentary Party shall be represented in the Working Council through one member each. The Secretary and Treasurer shall also be the members of the Working Council.
3. The Secretary shall also be the secretary of the Working Council.

8. Secretariat:

1. There shall be a Secretariat of the WPC, consisting of a Secretary and a Treasurer from amongst the membership of the General Assembly, headed by the Patron.
2. The Secretary and Treasurer shall serve for one term of two years duration.
3. The Patron shall nominate suitable members of the General Assembly for the offices of Secretary and Treasurer in consultation with the Working Council and seek its approval from the General Assembly.

If any office falls vacant the Patron shall nominate a member of the General Assembly for the remainder term

of vacant office in consultation with the Working Council and seek the approval of the General Assembly for the nominee.

9. Secretary:

1. The Secretary shall be appointed by the Patron in consultation with the General Assembly.
2. The Secretary shall perform the following functions, namely:-
 - (a) The Secretary shall be responsible for the day-to-day working of the WPC Secretariat.
 - (b) Co-signatory on the cheques with the Treasurer.

10. Treasurer:

1. The Treasurer shall be appointed by the Patron in consultation with the General Assembly.
2. The Treasurer shall perform the following functions, namely:-
3. maintain all the records of donations, endowment, gifts and contributions made to the fund of the Caucus;
4. Submit a report to the Caucus at the end of each financial year; and
5. Prepare, present and get passed the annual budget of the Caucus from the General Assembly after approval from Working Council.

11. Focal persons:

1. The Caucus shall work through a net work of focal persons appointed in each Standing Committee of the National Assembly by the Patron.
2. The member of the General Assembly who is the member of Standing Committee shall be appointed as focal Person.
3. The focal persons shall work for the objectives of the Caucus within the scope of respective Ministry through the Standing Committee.
4. If any legislation, action or policy matter, concerning the women, is brought before the Standing Committee the focal person shall immediately bring it to the notice of the Caucus for seeking guidelines or technical assistance thereon.
5. The Focal Person shall also be responsible to place before the respective Standing Committee the view point of the Caucus on a given issue/subject.

12. Sub-committees:

1. The Working Council may constitute a sub-committee on any important issue, comprising at least three members and headed by a Chairperson who shall be appointed by the Patron from amongst the members of that sub-committee.
2. The sub-committee shall submit its report to the Working Council within a period of one month of its formation.
3. The Working Council shall place the report of the sub-committee before the General Assembly for information, consideration and debate.

13. Fact finding missions:

1. If the Working Council is of the opinion that an issue of grave concern has arisen, which requires impartial and objective investigation, it may constitute a fact finding mission comprising of not less than two and not more than four members to investigate, probe and analyze the given issue.
2. It shall submit its report to the Working Council.
3. The Working Council shall cause to place the report of the fact finding mission before the General Assembly for information, consideration and debate.

14. Power to make rules:

The General Assembly may amend or alter these rules with a majority vote.

15. Funding for the Caucus:

1. There shall be a membership fee, which shall be mutually agreed in the General Assembly and shall be reviewed from time to time.

2. The following shall be mode of funding for the Caucus:

i. Membership fee: one time on registration as Member.

ii. Monthly fee: To be paid, preferably on annual basis or minimum on quarterly basis.

iii. Donations.

iv. Programme Funding

If a Member of the Caucus fails to pay her dues for two consecutive quarters, her membership shall be suspended. Such member on payment of the arrears shall be registered as a new member.

16. Audit:

The accounts of the Caucus shall be subjected to annual audit by the Auditor General of Pakistan.
