

Our Revolution Massachusetts (ORMA) Representative Council Structure

As ratified and amended.

Contact transition@ourrevolutionma.com with questions.

Model Summary

The organizational structure (see Figure 1 below) was designed to maximize the potential of ORMA to develop a grassroots movement dedicated to achieving the broad goals of Our Revolution. This structure recognizes that ORMA's power lies in its membership base and the people who gather together in ORMA affiliates and caucuses to organize on the ground and in the streets every day. Affiliates are the engine of political movement building because they help create community and promote a more thorough understanding regarding issues of great importance in our lives.

The Representative Council Structure promotes member engagement by conducting votes on major decisions (e.g., endorsements of statewide campaigns) while minimizing the daily burden on members by having a Representative Council (RC) that helps implement and directs the work we do as mandated by the base--the General Assembly-- and a Coordinating Committee (CC) that handles time-sensitive decisions and daily operations. The RC has two elected co-chairs who ensure that (a) decisions can be made and executed; (b) votes taken and implemented, (c) timelines adhered to; and (d) ethical behavioral agreements followed.

Much of ORMA's work will be done by issue based committees that harness the skills and interests of ORMA members to organize and mobilize. Coordination and integration of ORMA committee work is achieved through the Representative Council which sends at least one RC member to every ORMA committee. Although ORMA encourage affiliation, both affiliated and unaffiliated members have representation on the Representative Council. In this document we describe the model components and its processes.

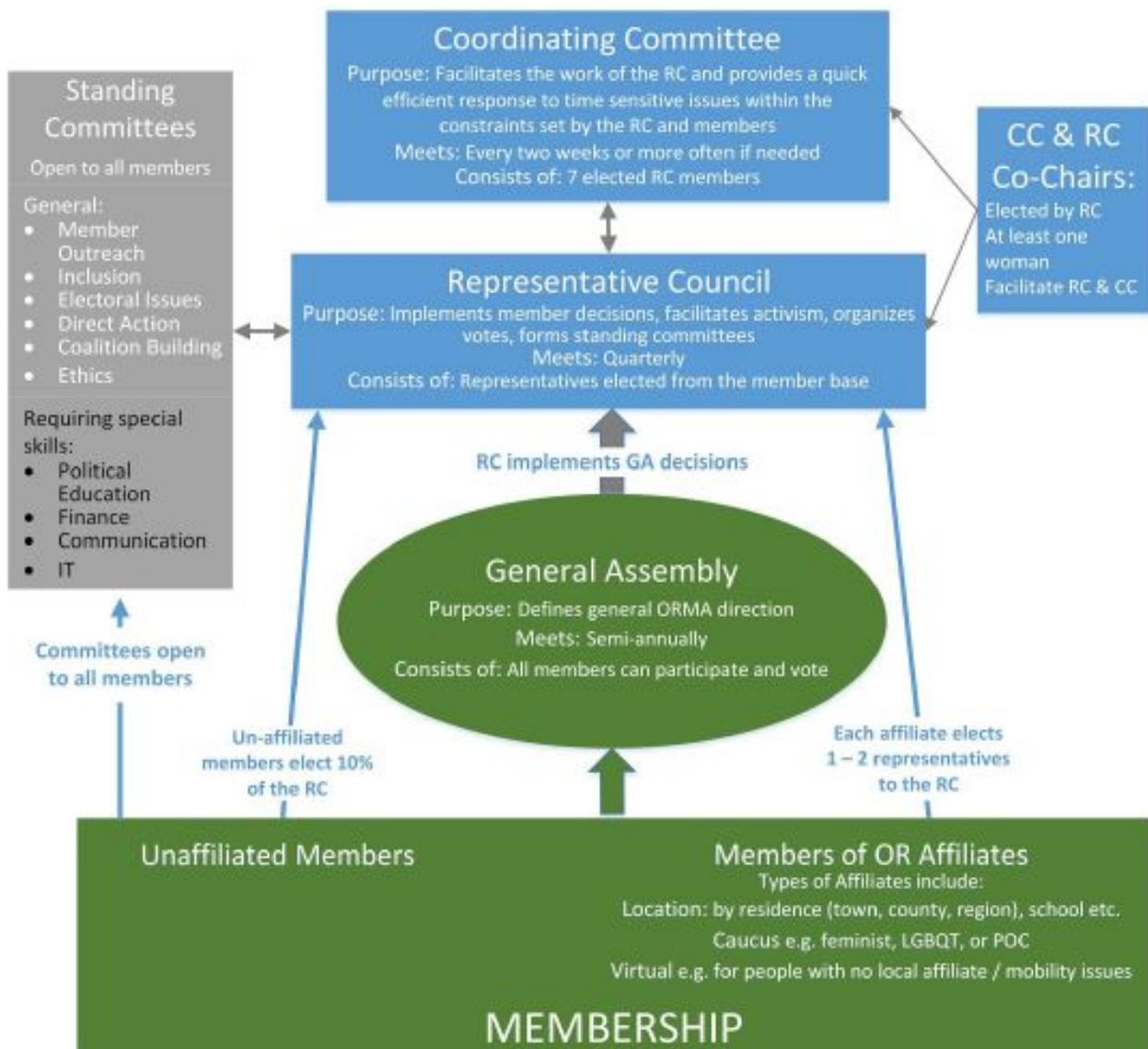


Figure 1: Representative Council Model

The organizational structure (Figure 1 above) was developed to maximize the potential of ORMA to achieve the broad goals of Our Revolution in a manner that encourages organizing and building an expanding grassroots movement. Toward that end, it has the following components and processes:

Membership and Affiliates

a. **Members:** Individuals who identify as Massachusetts residents and who participate in one OR affiliate or state level meeting and/or donate money to the national, state, or local OR organizations, and who affirm that they want to be ORMA members. This definition is compatible with OR National's definition of a member.

b. **Affiliates :**

i. Affiliates are the basic unit of organization.

1. All members are encouraged to join or start an affiliate, but they are not required to do so. We recognize that individuals may want to participate to different degrees. ORMA will meet them where they are but provide ample opportunity for them to increase their involvement.

2. Affiliates are especially important because they

a. Encourage growth and create community

b. Promote opportunity for a thorough understanding of issues through collective discussions.

c. Promote member coordination and activism so OR can make the largest possible impact.

ii. To qualify as an OR Affiliate in MA, a group must have:

1. At least ten members

2. Hold regular meetings, at least quarterly

3. Maintain a membership list

iii. There are three types of affiliates:

1. Geographically based by area of residence, school, workplace, etc.

2. Caucus based (e.g., Ethnic minority caucus, Feminist caucus, LBGQT+ caucus, etc.)

3. Virtually based affiliates serve members who:

a. Live in areas where an in-person affiliate has not been established or there are not sufficient numbers to develop an in-person affiliate

b. Are not able to participate in in-person meetings due to mobility issues, etc.

Note: If members are in more than one affiliate (e.g, a caucus and a geographically based one) for state election purposes they may only vote with one affiliate; for local elections they may vote in both if allowed by both affiliates.

iv. All members may:

1. Participate in the General Assembly; (see below)
2. Participate in State level elections for endorsements for statewide candidates/legislation/ballot initiatives and non-electoral campaigns and initiatives (e.g., direct action) and other issues where the Representative Council seeks guidance; see below.
 - a. Although statewide votes are cast individually, Affiliates will be encouraged to hold discussions prior to each statewide vote in order to increase political understanding of issues, and encourage collective discussion and analysis prior to voting. The RC will arrange for online forums for un-affiliated members to have a similar opportunity to discuss issues prior to votes.
3. Apply for standing committee positions (e.g., Member Outreach, Direct Action, Inclusion, etc.)
4. Run for membership in the Representative Council in accordance with certain criteria; see below.

Elected Representative Council (RC)

a. *Representative Council member responsibilities :*

- i. Electing two Co-Chairs; at least one of these individuals must be a woman.
 1. Chairs/co-chairs of the Representative Council (RC) and Coordinating committee (CC) will be allowed to initiate binding votes on matters being discussed by those bodies. The chair would have the authority to determine when such a vote is necessary (within the constraints of the organization's by-laws) and facilitate the voting process.
 2. The Co-Chairs will guarantee that decisions can be made and executed by ensuring that:
 - a. Votes are taken and implemented

- b. Timelines are adhered to
 - c. Ethical behavior is followed.
- ii. Establishing and participating in standing committees; see below for description of possible standing committees
 - 1. The RC sends at least one member to each Standing Committee
 - 2. Each RC member must participate in at least one committee and not more than two
- iii. Sharing information across standing committees, the CC and affiliates
- iv. Drafting materials and framing questions for statewide votes. Issues that should 1 be submitted for statewide votes include:
 - 1. Endorsements for statewide candidates/legislation/ballot initiatives, and non-electoral campaigns and initiatives (e.g., petition drives, direct action, etc.)
 - a. Where a campaign has been endorsed by the members, the RC can endorse specific associated actions without a vote (e.g., if membership endorses an educational ballot initiative, the RC can endorse specific relevant rallies)
 - 2. Prioritizing which issues ORMA will commit efforts and resources
- v. Facilitating the founding and development of affiliates and voting discussions (see above)
- vi. Attending a quarterly meeting held in varying locations around the state
- vii. Forming a **Coordinating Committee (CC)**
 - 1. Membership: The RC will elect a 7 person body from its members. Maximum of 3 cisgender male members and minimum of 1 Inclusion committee representative
 - a. The RC Co-Chairs will also serve as co-chairs for this body to provide continuity
 - 2. CC members serve one year terms staggered by six months
 - a. During the first year only, half of the CC members would be limited to a six month term.
 - 3. The CC will meet approximately every two weeks based on need. They will also hold emergency meetings when necessary. Duties include:
 - a. Facilitating the work of the RC (e.g. compiling agendas, chairing meetings, polling RC members, orienting new RC members, etc.)

- b. Referring inquiries to appropriate committee spokespersons
 - c. Coordinating the day to day functions of the organization (e.g., organizing polls and elections, ensuring that meetings take place, maintaining records)
 - d. Helping to resolve disputes within the organization
 - e. Making decisions on issues that are very time constrained and urgent (e.g., endorsing and mobilizing for a large demonstration for an urgent issue that will occur within a matter of days). See below for how other decisions are made.
- 4. The RC will supervise the CC's work and ensure that it does not overstep its mission.
 - 5. In the event that Our Revolution Massachusetts (ORMA) hires a staff organizer, the hiring process and authority to make a hiring decision should rest with the Coordinating Committee (CC).

b. Representative Council decision-making process

- i. All decisions involving political activity and commitments must require a 60 percent majority, and all administrative decisions would require only a simple majority. The co-chairs of the Coordinating Committee will determine which category a particular decision might fall into, using the following descriptions.
 - 1. **Decisions involving political activity or commitments:** Those decisions involving political direction and commitment of the organization. Decisions, such as; committing ORMA's resources to a particular stance on an issue, or establishing formal alliances with other organizations. NOTE: Formal statewide office endorsements of candidates and ballot initiatives will be handles as a separate process.
 - 2. **Administrative Decisions:** Operational/functioning type decisions which are oriented toward supporting already established organizational Directives. Administrative decisions, such as; Making purchasing decisions, approving a communications plan or funding request, whether to set up an issue exploratory

committee, who to invite to speak at a conference, issuance of press statements, etc.

- ii. If decisions fail to meet the 60 percent threshold (for or against):
 - 1. If the RC is able to discuss and vote a second time during the same session it may do so; if that is not possible then the decision must be submitted for a membership vote
 - 2. If the RC holds a second vote and it fails to reach the 60% threshold, then the decision must be submitted for a membership vote
 - 1 Affiliates are responsible for local issues, such as endorsing and/or prioritizing local campaigns and endorsing local candidates
 - 3. The RC may also elect to send decisions out for a membership vote if they believe that they require further direction for any reason.

c. Representative Council Composition

The RC is comprised of both affiliated and non-affiliated members; see above for definition of members and affiliates

i. Affiliate-based RC members:

- 1. Each recognized affiliate, regardless of size, will have only one vote on the Representative Council.
- 2. Affiliates determine voting-rights within their affiliate. ORMA rules govern voting rights on statewide issues only.
- 3. Each affiliate is required to prove that their delegates to the Representative council were democratically elected, and that good faith efforts were made to engage affiliate members in the election process.

ii. Unaffiliated RC Members: Unaffiliated members can elect a number of representatives equal to no more than 10% of the number of affiliate representatives in the RC.

- 1. Unaffiliated representatives will serve for a maximum of 1 year.
- 2. Unaffiliated members will be encouraged to join an affiliate; the majority council members will be affiliated so that they can maintain a connection to the grassroots.
- 3. Each unaffiliated election is required to prove to be democratic, and that good faith efforts were made to engage unaffiliated members in the election process.

- iii. Inclusion: Affiliates will be strongly encouraged to consider inclusionary factors when selecting representatives, such as, preference towards underrepresented ethnic groups, gender, and class groups. The inclusion committee will evaluate the composition of the council and recommend remediation to increase diversity (e.g., increasing the number of representatives from Caucus-based affiliates that represent marginalized groups).

d. Representative Council Elected Terms:

- i. Affiliated RC members would serve two year terms, staggered for continuity, with half the RC selected each year
 - 1. For the first year only and based on a random lottery, half of the affiliate representatives will serve for one year, 2 year terms for all representatives will begin during the second year elections.
 - 2. To encourage affiliates to develop new leadership, RC members may not serve for more than 2 consecutive terms.

General Assembly (GA)

The GA is comprised of all ORMA members who convene no less than twice a year to discuss major issues facing the organization, the state, and the nation.

- a. The General Assembly sets a broad general agenda for the RC.
- b. Members of allied organizations will be invited to participate but may not vote unless affiliated individually with ORMA.

Standing Committees

Standing Committees are composed of both RC and non-RC members. Each standing committee will have an RC member who serves as a liaison to the RC as a whole in addition to a chair who may or may not be an RC member. Likely standing committees will include but are not necessarily limited to:

- a. Committees that anyone can join based on interest
 - i. **Member Outreach (e.g, member/new affiliate support)**: This will include running a new member group which orients new members and helps them find an in-person or virtual affiliate home; this committee will also help with the formation of new affiliates
 - ii. **Inclusion**: A committee comprised of primarily underrepresented individuals responsible for

ensuring our processes, events, etc will be of an inclusive nature to all.

- iii. **Electoral Issues (state and national level elections/ballot measures/legislative Issues)** : in some instances may work closely with the Coalition Building Committee and Inclusion. One of the central functions of this committee will be to conduct research regarding the nature of OR endorsements with an eye towards seeking out and nurturing electoral candidates from marginalized groups.
- iv. **Direct Action** : Works on direct actions such as rallies, guerilla theater (e.g., die-ins), etc. In many instances may work closely with the Coalition Building Committee
- v. **Coalition Building** : Sole purpose is to foster and develop connections and coordinate work with other organizations whose mission and activity align with our own. Over time this committee would explore options and create a plan for formally including the voice, participation, and mission of other like-minded organizations. Such collaborative relationships with our allies might entail participation on an ally organization advisory council, formal participation and/or votes on the RC, sharing membership lists, etc. All options will be explored by this committee and recommendations will be made to the RC by report submitted by February 15th, 2018. This committee will include up to 9 ORMA members, other members of ally organizations may be added to this committee as consultants to this process. Will work with ii and iv
- vi. **Ethics** : Responsible for establishing processes required to solve internal and external ethical issues including but not restricted to:
 - 1. Representing the interests of the individual member by investigating and addressing complaints of mal-administration and/or violations of rights (e.g. racial or gender discrimination).
 - 2. Mediating in disputes between two individuals, between an individual and an entity (Affiliates, RC, GA and SC) or between entities
 - 3. Investigating and addressing issues pertaining to financial malfeasance.
 - 4. The ethics committee may choose to appoint individuals, such as ombudspersons and/or mediators, to adjudicate these complaints provided that such individuals possess the appropriate skill sets for such work as determined by the Ethics

Standing Committee.

- b.** Committees that require specific skill-sets as determined by the RC. The RC will develop skills list and are responsible for the review of applications:
- i.** IT, Communication Technology, and Graphic Support.
 - ii.** Fundraising and Finances.
 - iii.** Communications support (e.g. social media and press releases etc. maintain a speakers bureau; do not provide but can edit content which comes from the relevant committees).
 - iv.** Political Education and Training (e.g., run reading groups, organize training on particular areas such as lobbying, canvassing, non-violent civil disobedience, organize lectures)