

Q&A about the Law on the Regulation of Nursing  
Professions Syndicate

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National Community for  
Human Rights and Law




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# What is a syndicate?




It is a legal entity organizing members of the same profession, with the aim of giving them the chance to manage their own affairs and pursue their common interests, such as the Medical Syndicate, the Bar Association, the Engineers Syndicate, and of course the Nursing Professions Syndicate.






## Is there a syndicate for Nursing Professions?





By the way, the Nursing Professions Syndicate is one of most important syndicates in Egypt. It was founded by Law 155/1976, published in the Official Gazette on November 9th, 1976. It is the entity that represents Egyptian male and female nurses, with a headquarters is in Cairo, and branches across the governorates.





# What are the objectives of the Nursing Professions Syndicate?

The syndicate had six goals at the time of its foundation:

- Advancing the scientific and professional standards of members of the syndicate through trainings and conferences to keep them up- to- date with the latest developments in the profession; maintaining the dignity and traditions of the profession; protecting nurses against abuse, which is unfortunately frequent (by the way, the nursing profession dates back to the time of the Ancient Egyptians and has been one of the most important professions ever since); developing and monitoring compliance with the rules regulating the practice of the profession and ensuring that members fulfill their duties in serving the country.
  - Unifying our opinions and giving voice to our viewpoint on national, social, and professional issues, as well as pursuing the legitimate interests of the members and working towards providing jobs for them.
  - Uniting and organizing our efforts in the service of the community to achieve national objectives; confronting any difficulties in application and suggesting suitable solutions for them; and active participation in national work.
  - Contributing to developing nursing education policy, and enhancing programs and curricula, in order to meet society's needs; as well as studying and disseminating the issues that could improve the nursing service; and following up with research and scientific and practical innovations in the field.
  - Working with nursing syndicates, associations, authorities, organizations and unions in other countries to advance nursing standards, as well as exchanging information and expertise.
  - Providing medical, social, economic, and cultural care for the members and their families, such as providing them with health care, pensions, and necessary training courses.
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# What are the requirements for me to be a member of the Syndicate?


It's very simple, there are 5 requirements to be a member:

1. To be of Egyptian nationality, but you should note that the Council of the Syndicate may admit nurses from Arab Countries who meet the other requirements, provided that their countries would do the same for Egyptian nurses. 2. To be of good reputation and commendable conduct. 3. To have never been sentenced in a felony or misdemeanor (for a custodial penalty in a crime involving moral turpitude or breach of trust, unless rehabilitated in either case). In short, not to have a criminal record. 4. To have attained one of the following academic degrees:

- A Bachelor's of Science in Nursing from one of Egypt's high institutes, or an equivalent degree.
- A Diploma from a healthcare institute affiliated with the Ministry of Health (nursing division) or an equivalent degree.
- A Nursing and Obstetrics Diploma from schools affiliated with faculties of medicine in universities (old system) or an equivalent degree.
- A three- year nursing diploma or an equivalent degree.
- A technical nursing high school diploma or an equivalent degree.
- An assistant nurse or assistant obstetrics nurse certificate.


5. To be licensed by the Ministry of Health to practice the profession.

Schools, institutes and other institutions must notify the syndicate of the names, grades and addresses of their graduates, within 60 days of the announcement of examination results.






## If I meet the 5 requirements, where do I apply for membership in the syndicate?




Excellent, if you meet the 5 requirements, you submit your documents and certificate at Nursing Professions Syndicate to something called the Registration Committee, which will charge you a fee of 3 pounds. The committee will review the documents and verify that you meet all conditions imposed by the syndicate Statute, then accept your application.




In the case of rejection, the Syndicate is obliged to state the reason for the rejection in writing and provide you with a copy of the rejection decision in person or by registered mail within a week of the decision's date. Also, the decision must be issued within two months from the date of submission of all documents.



## What do I do if my application is rejected?




You have the right to file an appeal against the rejection of your application to the Council of the Syndicate within thirty days of being notified of the rejection. The Council of the Syndicate decides on the appeal after requesting the attendance of the appellant for a hearing, via registered mail, and provided that none of the members of the committee that rejected you will be there. If 60 days pass from the submission of the appeal with no reply from the Council, it will be considered rejected.







## And that's it?




No, you still have the right to appeal the rejection before the Administrative Court within thirty days of being notified of the decision, or on the expiry of the mentioned 60 days period.








## What happens if I don't apply for the Syndicate membership?





You should know that the law prohibits the practice of the nursing profession without unless you are already a member of the Syndicate. However, the Syndicate can give exceptional and specific permits to foreigners, according to the conditions stated in the very beginning.






## What is the organizational structure of the Syndicate?

The Syndicate consists of the following:


1. The General Assembly
  2. The Council of the Syndicate
  3. The General Assembly of each Division
  4. A Council for each division
  5. Local Syndicates, each of which consists of:
    - The General Assembly of the Local Syndicate
    - The Council of the Local Syndicate
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## What does the General Assembly consist of?




It consists of all registered members who pay their annual Syndicate subscriptions.






## What are the competencies of the General Assembly...What does it do?




The General Assembly has many functions, and several important competencies, including:




1) Electing the Chairman and other members of the Council of the Syndicate. 2) Discussing and approving the policy of the Syndicate. 3) Proposing amendments to the Law on the Regulation of the Nursing Professions Syndicate. 4) Adopting the Statute and Professional Code of Ethics. 5) Approving the balance sheet of the preceding year after reviewing the auditor's report. 6) Hiring auditors and determining their remuneration. 7) Approving the Annual Budget of the Syndicate and affiliated Local Syndicates for the upcoming year. 8) Approving the Annual Report on the Syndicate's activities. 9) Proposing the rules for granting relief allowances and pensions, subject to status of the Pension and Relief Fund. 10) Considering all matters of interest to the Syndicate which are referred by the Council of the Syndicate or which are included in the convocation letter of an extraordinary session of the General Assembly. 11) Considering the matters referred to it by the Minister of Health. 12) Considering member suggestions. 13) Other competencies stipulated in the Law on the Regulation of the Syndicate. Generally, the General Assembly has the final say in the syndicate.



## When does the General Assembly convene?




The convocation of the General Assembly session is published in two daily morning newspapers, selected by the Council, fifteen days prior to session date. The General Assembly convenes in three ways:




1) For its annual session, which takes place during March of every year at the Syndicate's headquarters or any other place decided by the Council, this is a fixed annual session. 2) The Council of the Syndicate can call for an extraordinary session of the General Assembly if they deem it necessary. 3) A request to convene the General Assembly may be submitted by two hundred members to the Council of the Syndicate.



## Are there conditions for the General Assembly session to be valid?




For the session to be valid, a quorum of at least 1,000 members must be present. If the quorum is not met, the meeting is postponed for two weeks and the second meeting shall be valid if the number of members present is no less than three hundred members. If not, the meeting is postponed and the convocation shall be repeated until this quorum is achieved.






## What is the composition of the Council of the Syndicate?




The Council of the Syndicate is made up of the Chairman of the Syndicate and 16 to 30 members who have been registered with the Syndicate prior to January 1<sup>st</sup> of the year of the session. The Council of the Syndicate must include representatives from each Division as stipulated in Article 33; half of the board must consist of members who have been practicing the profession for a minimum of 15 years, while the other half must be for less than that. The meeting must be attended by the Chairmen of the Local Syndicates. A meeting of the Council of the Syndicate is not valid unless attended by the majority of elected members.






## How are the Chairman and members of the Council of the Syndicate elected?




The Chairman and the members of the Council of the Syndicate are elected by the members eligible to attend the General Assembly on a date determined by the Council, provided that elections are held simultaneously at the Syndicate headquarters in Cairo and at the premises of the Local Syndicates and other major assembly points for members in the governorates, pursuant to the conditions set forth by the Statute. The Chairman's term is 4 years and can't be reelected more than once consecutively. The Chairman must be elected from members who graduated 15 ago or more. The Chairman presides over the Council of the Syndicate, and is deputized by the oldest Deputy, or in his absence by the other. If both are absent, the Council will be presided over by the oldest member. The Chairman represents the syndicate in court and in dealing with administrative entities, as well as in its relations with others; the Chairman is in charge of executing the decisions of the General Assembly and the Council, and has the right to delegate some of his competencies to his Deputies.








# How are syndicate elections conducted?




Candidacy applications for vacant syndical positions on all levels are submitted at a date set by the Council during December of each year, which is announced in two daily newspapers as per the conditions stipulated in the Statute. Elections are conducted via direct secret ballot at the Syndicate's headquarters, the Local Syndicates and at other major assembly points for members in the governorates, provided that each is assigned an electoral subcommittee and had separate ballot boxes, all of which pursuant to the conditions and procedures stipulated in the Syndicate's Statute. All members are required to execute their electoral duty unless they have an excuse accepted by the Council of the Syndicate or the Local Syndicate, or will be required to pay an additional subscription fee (1 pound), to the Pension and Relief Fund. The collection and payment of that additional fee are subject to the same conditions governing the original subscription. A member's voting ballot is invalid if he votes for a number of candidates higher or lower than required. In all circumstances where no special text stipulates otherwise, the seats are awarded to the members who receive the majority of valid votes, and in the case of a draw, the candidate with more years in the Syndicate wins.






## What comes after the elections and the formation of the Council of the Syndicate?




Every year, the Council elects two deputies from its members, one of which must be a graduate of the High Institute for Nursing, a secretary, a treasurer, an assistant treasurer, and an assistant treasurer; who constitute, along with the Chairman, the Bureau of the Council of the Syndicate.







## How long is term of membership in the Council?




The Council serves a 4-year term. Midterm elections for half the Council are held every 2 years, and at the end of the first two-year term the membership of half the Council, selected by the drawing of lots, expires, after which mid-term elections are held in turn and sequence every 2 years. A member continues in office until her successor is elected even after expiry of his two years term, and can't be reelected more than twice in a row.






**Does the Council of the Syndicate meet at specific times or is it left open?**




The Council of the Syndicate convenes, upon the call of the Chairman, at least once a month, or upon the call of no less than 5 members in a reasoned letter of convocation.







## Does the Council of the Syndicate have competencies similar to the General Assembly?

Of course it has competencies, and it is precisely elected to take them over, namely:




- 1) Pursuing the goals of the Syndicate, and developing the means to undertake and monitor the implementation of these goals.
- 2) Drafting the Syndicate Statute and the regulations for practicing the profession, and amending them as necessary, provided that each amendment is promulgated by the Minister of Health after the approval of the General Assembly, and monitor compliance with them.
- 3) Call for the convocation of the General Assembly and execute its decisions.
- 4) Select the syndicate representatives in councils, entities, committees and conferences across the country and internationally.
- 5) Managing and investing the Syndicate's funds; receive grants, donations, subsidies and other funds, and overseeing the accounts of the Syndicate, as well as collecting registration fees and subscriptions.
- 6) Drafting the Syndicate's annual financials.
- 7) Considering complaints regarding the conduct of members.
- 8) Organize the Syndicate's registries and supervise registration.
- 9) Give voice to the opinion of the members on social and national issues.
- 10) Considering member suggestions.
- 11) An amicable settlement of any dispute that may arise between members, or between members and their employers with respect to the profession.
- 12) Settle grievances filed by stakeholders against the decisions of the Pension and Relief Fund.
- 13) Hire the Syndicate's employees and decide their remuneration, as well as discipline and dismiss them.
- 14) Communicate with government entities, public institutions and bodies, and the various entities and individuals regarding any matter that pertains to the affairs of the Syndicate or the implantation of the Law.
- 15) Other competencies stated in the Law.






## Where does the money for all the Syndicate's activities, services, pensions, health insurance, etc., come from?




The syndicate has financial resources that fund these services, which are: 1) Members registration fees. 2) Annual members subscriptions (15 pounds). 3) Government subsidies. 4) The bequests, grants and donations accepted by the Council of the Syndicate. 5) Proceeds from nursing duty stamps (2.5 pilasters) which must be attached to all graduation certificates and their copies, licenses granted by the Ministry of Health, and applications submitted to nursing schools and institutes. 6) Proceeds from publications and bulletins issued by the Syndicate. 7) Returns on investment of syndical funds. 8) All other legitimate resources. Also, the fiscal year of the Syndicate begins in January and ends in December of each year.






## Concerning the syndical pension, why is it so small?




Currently, the pension stands at 50 pounds a month. There is a specific fund for pensions, as well as temporary and regular relief. It has six main sources: 1) 70% from the revenue of registration fees and subscriptions. 2) Annual government contributions to support the fund. 3) Grants, donations and bequests favor the fund as well as other resources. 4) Interest on the balance of the fund. 5) Revenue from the syndical publications. 6) A portion of the proceeds from duty stamps, to be determined by the General Assembly.






## What can we do to increase the pension?



Many things. As a General Assembly, we can call for a General Assembly session and request the increase of the fund's resources and monitoring of the budget.









## What are the divisions of the Syndicate?


There are several divisions:




- 1) Division of graduates of high nursing institutes and holders of equivalent degrees.
  - 2) Division of graduates of technical health institutes and holders of equivalent degrees.
  - 3) Division of graduates of nursing and obstetrics schools affiliated with faculties of medicine in universities and hospitals affiliated with the Ministry of Health (old system); graduates of 3-year nursing schools; graduates of nursing technical high schools.
  - 4) Division of graduates of assistant-nurse schools (eighteen months certificate in nursing), assistant-obstetrics nurses (eighteen months certificate in obstetrics).
- The General Assembly may, upon proposal from the Council, merge two divisions or establish new ones. The Syndicate Statute determines which division includes which technical specialty, and the rules governing their representation at the various levels of syndical organizations. Also, each division has an elected Chairman and Council.
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## What is the difference between the Syndicate and a Local Syndicate?




Local Syndicates are part of the Syndicate we discussed earlier, but located across the country's governorates, not Cairo where the Syndicate headquarter is. They have the same structure as the Syndicate; a Council, a Chairman, and their own General Assembly.






## Do Local Syndicates have elections and Councils as well?




Of course they do. Local Syndicates have Councils that are elected by their respective General Assemblies every four years.







## Can the General Assembly of a Local Syndicate call for an extraordinary session?




Of course it can. The only difference is that the quorum required to call for an extraordinary session is different... only fifty members of a Local Syndicate are required to call for it.







## Do the competencies of the General Assembly of the Local Syndicate vary from those for the Syndicate?




They are not different, only slightly less. Specifically, it has competency in:

- 1) Electing the Chairman and Council of the Local Syndicate.
  - 2) Reviewing the work of the Local Syndicate and approving its financials.
  - 3) Consider members suggestions ten days prior to the General Assembly session date at least.
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## Do Local Syndicates have their own financial resources?


Of course they do, which are: 




1) The share of the Local Syndicate's fund from members annual subscriptions, as well as the registration fees for members in the Local Syndicate's area. 2) A share of the subscription fees in municipal clubs affiliated with the Local Syndicate, as decided by its General Assembly. 3) Grants, donations and bequests received by the Council of the Local Syndicate. 4) Subsidies determined by the Council of the Syndicate favor the Local Syndicate. 5) Subsidies granted by the government to The Local Syndicate. The Local Syndicate is subject to the provisions of Articles 47 and 48 of the Law.



## We heard there is an Investigations Committee, what does it do?



The Investigations Committee consists of a Chairman, who is one of the Council of the Syndicate deputies, chosen by the Council, a member of the Administrative Prosecution Office in whose jurisdiction the Syndicate is located, chosen by the Administrative Prosecutor, and the general secretary of the Syndicate or the Local Syndicate.







## Does the Investigations Committee have the authority to impose penalties?

Off course it can, the forms of which are regulated by the law, such as:

- Censure
- Warning
- Fine of no more than 20 pounds
- Suspension for no more than one year

Revocation of membership, in which case the member is not allowed to practice the profession unless reregistered with the Syndicate, having paid the registration fees all over again.







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