



POLICY: TAKING PUBLIC POSITIONS ON ISSUES (INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL)

Date of Board Approval: 09/2025

POLICY STATEMENT

The Midwest Sociological Society (MSS) may take public positions, including signing statements and letters written by other organizations, on matters that:

- Have substantial support within sociological scholarship, or
- Concern the wellbeing and integrity of the discipline and profession of sociology.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- **Mission and Values Alignment**

All statements must align with MSS's [mission](#) and values to advance sociological knowledge and promote public understanding of social life.

- **Member Impact**

We are committed to ensuring we are taking into consideration the views and experiences of our members. Members will be informed about all decisions made related to signing public statements.

- **Legal Compliance**

As a nonprofit, MSS may speak on public issues and will abide by all local, state, and federal laws when doing so.

- **Timeliness**

When possible, writing and signing position statements and outside organizational letters should be considered through the Society's normal governance processes. When timing is critical, the review may be expedited.

INTERNAL REQUESTS

Any active MSS member may submit a request for the Society to take a public position on a current issue. Requests must be submitted via the secure portal on the MSS website, accessible through member login.

Submissions must include:

- A description of the issue
- A direct connection to the MSS [mission](#) and/or [strategic plan](#)
- A draft statement or call to action, including preferred distribution methods (e.g., MSS website, membership email, press release, etc.)
- Anticipated impact, should MSS issue a statement—both positive and negative
- Evidence of sociological relevance or scholarly consensus (please include references)
- A justification for urgency, if applicable (including relevant dates or deadlines)

I. Review of Submissions

All submissions will undergo an initial review by the Social Action Committee (SAC). The SAC will determine:

- Whether the issue falls within MSS's mission and scope
- Whether the proposal is grounded in sociological research or relevance
- Whether the matter requires expedited review due to time sensitivity

If the submission lacks required information or falls outside MSS's purview, SAC will contact the submitter with requests for clarification or revision.

Once complete, the proposal will be forwarded to the Executive Committee along with SAC's recommendation regarding potential MSS action. The Executive Committee will determine:

- What the consequences of signing or not signing might be to our organization and membership

II. Review Timelines:

- **Standard review:** Submissions will be reviewed by SAC within 30 days.
- **Expedited review:** Submissions that include clear deadlines or demonstrate urgency will receive a response from SAC within 7 business days, pending confirmation of time sensitivity.

III. Decision-Making Process

The **Executive Committee** will evaluate complete submissions forwarded by SAC and determine next steps. For issues not requiring urgent attention, proposals will be reviewed by the MSS Board of Directors during their next scheduled quarterly meeting. Time-sensitive proposals will be reviewed directly by the Executive Committee, which will decide whether a public statement should be issued. In exceptional cases requiring immediate action, the MSS President—in consultation with relevant experts and the Executive Director—may draft and sign statements on behalf of the organization.

IV. Signatures

The MSS President is the authorized signature on all public statements. If the President is not available or unable to sign the statement, the line of appropriate signatures will be the President-Elect, the Past President, then the Executive Director.

Questions regarding submissions can be directed to the current chair of the Social Action Committee.

EXTERNAL REQUESTS

I. Receiving Requests

Requests to sign letters and statements may be received by any member of the MSS Board of Directors. Upon receipt of request, the request should be sent directly to the MSS Executive Director and President, who will confer and determine next steps. The request will be considered for signature by the Executive Committee and the decision and justification will be shared with the Board of Directors.

II. Review of Requests

All requests will undergo an initial review by the MSS President and Executive Director. They will review the request with the following parameters in mind:

- Whether the issue falls within MSS's mission and scope
- Whether the request is grounded in sociological research or relevance
- Whether the matter requires expedited review due to time sensitivity
- What the consequences of signing or not signing might be to our organization and membership
- Whether MSS can provide feedback and request edits to the statement

If the request falls outside MSS's purview, the President and ED will contact the submitter with requests for clarification or revision.

If signing the statement appears to have negative consequences to the organization or its members, the President and ED will confer with the Executive Committee and communicate with the organization that MSS will not sign the statement.

If the request meets the above parameters with favor, it will be forwarded to the Executive Committee for further review.

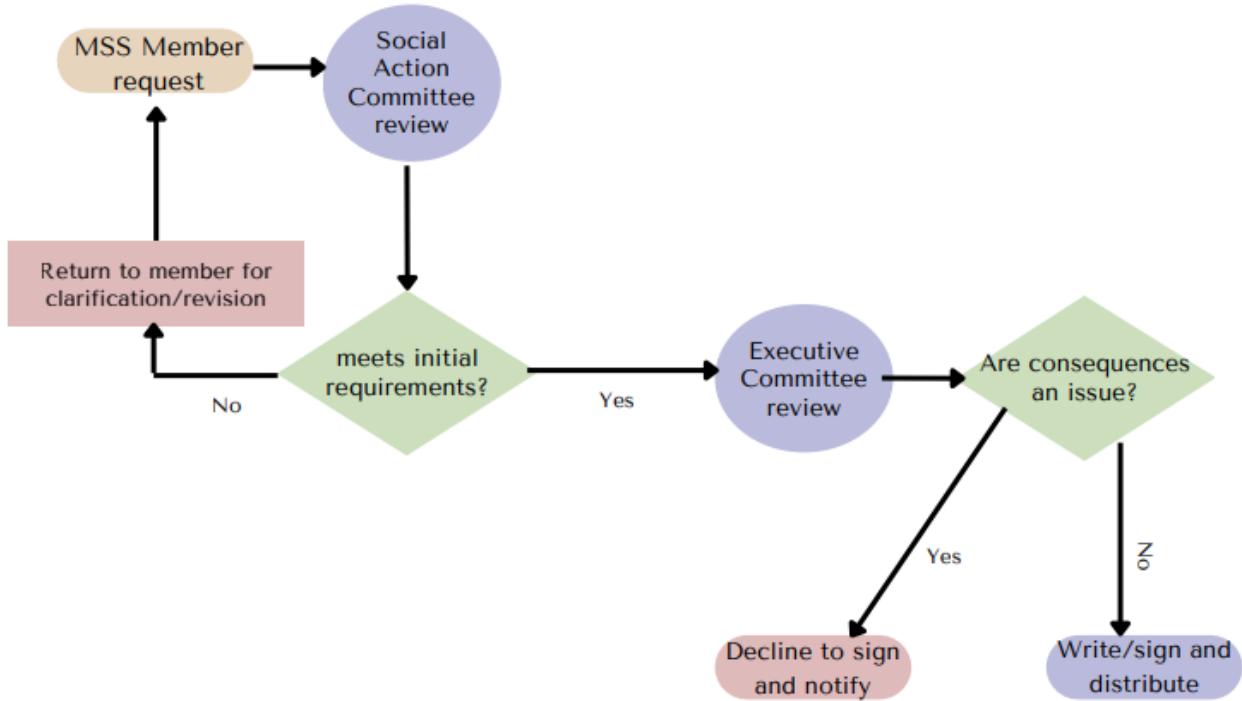
III. Expected Timeline for Communication:

Requests will receive a response **within 30 days** of receipt, depending on the urgency and complexity of the issue. In exceptional cases, expedited decisions may be made to ensure timely response to pressing matters.

IV. Signatures

The MSS President is the authorized signature on all public statements. If the President is not available or unable to sign the statement, the line of appropriate signatures will be the President-Elect, the Past President, then the Executive Director.

INTERNAL REQUEST



EXTERNAL REQUEST

