

1. Member in good standing

Meaning

A member in good standing is a national social work organisation that:

- Has paid its membership dues
- Is not under suspension or expulsion
- Observes the Constitution, By-Laws and Ethical Standards

Such members have full rights to:

- Receive communications and publications
- Vote in elections and General Meetings
- Participate in committees
- Nominate and be nominated for positions, including in commissions and the executive

This is the “full membership rights” status

How to remain in good standing

Simply maintain dues payments and comply with constitutional and ethical obligations.

2. Censure

Meaning

Censure is a formal disciplinary measure for:

- Violations of the Constitution or By Laws
- Acting against the basic interests, aims or policies of IFSW or its members

It is decided by a majority vote of the Executive Committee after a Steering Committee recommendation

Importantly, censure is not suspension. The Constitution and By-Laws do not remove voting or participation rights. It is best understood as a formal warning and political signal that conduct is unacceptable.

Membership status under censure:

- Still a member
- Still in principle in good standing unless dues issues or additional sanctions apply
- Signals risk of escalation if behaviour continues

Path back to full good standing

The By-Laws do not define a formal reinstatement because membership is not removed. Practically, this requires:

- Ending the problematic conduct
- Demonstrating alignment with IFSW policies and principles
- Reinstatement by Executive Committee majority or by General Meeting majority

3. Suspension

Meaning

Suspension is a temporary removal of membership rights.

It can occur due to:

A. Non-payment of dues

- Initiated after two consecutive years unpaid
- Decided by majority vote of the Executive Committee

B. Violations of Constitution, By Laws or acting against IFSW interests

- Requires 75% majority of the General Meeting for this type of suspension

Members must be given an opportunity for explanation and defence.

Membership status under suspension

- Not in good standing
- No voting rights
- No eligibility for elections or committees
- Essentially paused membership rights

Path back to good standing

If for dues:

- Make satisfactory arrangements to repay outstanding fees
- Reinstatement by Executive Committee majority

If for violations:

- Apply for reinstatement in writing
- Executive Committee recommendation
- Majority vote of General Meeting
- Conditions may apply

There is no set timeframe for suspension

4. Expulsion

Meaning

Expulsion is the most severe sanction. It fully removes the organisation from membership.

Grounds:

- Violations of Constitution or By-Laws
- Acting against IFSW interests, aims or policies

Requires:

- Opportunity for defence
- 75% majority of the General Meeting

Membership status under expulsion

- No longer a member
- No rights, no representation, no participation
- Must re-enter through reinstatement or fresh admission

Path back to good standing

- Written application for reinstatement
- Executive Committee recommendation
- Majority vote of General Meeting
- Conditions may apply

Summary

A simple ladder of severity:

- Good standing
- Censure
- Suspension
- Expulsion

Censure is corrective and symbolic.

Suspension is temporary exclusion.

Expulsion is removal.

Each step upward requires stronger justification and higher voting thresholds, which protects due process and organisational fairness.