

# **Bylaws of the Southeast Idaho Chapter of Democratic Socialists of America**

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## **ARTICLE I. Name and Territory.**

### Section 1. Name.

The name of the Chapter will be the Southeast Idaho Chapter of Democratic Socialists of America, hereinafter referred to as “Southeast Idaho” or “Chapter” DSA. Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) is a not-for-profit corporation.

### Section 2. Territory.

The Chapter shall conduct activities in the Southeast of Idaho within the territory defined by the charter granted by the national Democratic Socialists of America to the Chapter.

## **ARTICLE II. Purpose.**

The Southeast Idaho Chapter of Democratic Socialists of America seeks to facilitate the transition to a truly democratic and socialist society, one in which the means and resources of production are democratically and socially controlled. The Chapter is organized primarily to promote social welfare.

DSA rejects an economic order based solely on private profit, alienated labor, gross inequalities of wealth and power, discrimination based on race, ability, gender or sexual orientation, and brutality and violence in defense of the status quo.

DSA envisions a humane social order based on popular control of resources, production, and economic planning; economic and environmental sustainability; equitable distribution; gender, racial, and ethnic equality; and non-oppressive relationships.

Our conception of socialism is a profoundly democratic one. It is rooted in the belief that human beings should be free to develop to their fullest potential, that public policies should be determined not by wealth but by popular participation, and that individual liberties should be carefully safeguarded. It is committed to a freedom of speech that does not recoil from dissent, to a freedom to organize independent trade unions, women’s groups, political parties, and other formations—recognizing these as essential bulwarks against the dangers of an intrusive state. It is committed to a freedom of religion that acknowledges the rights of those for whom spiritual concerns are central.

We are socialists because we are developing a concrete strategy for achieving that vision. In the present, we are building a visible socialist presence within the broad democratic Left. In the long run, we hope to build a majority movement capable of making democratic socialism a reality in the United States. Our strategy acknowledges the class structure of the U.S. society. This class structure means that there is a basic conflict of interest between those sectors with enormous economic power and the vast majority of the population.

## **ARTICLE III. Membership.**

### Section 1. Definition.

Membership of the Chapter shall be defined as being a member in good standing of National DSA and residing in the territory described by the charter granted by National DSA. Individuals may not be members of the Chapter without being members of National DSA.

## Section 2. Authority.

Members shall be responsible for proposing and deliberating questions of Chapter business at Chapter Meetings, electing Chapter officers, electing delegates to the National Convention, and volunteering for Chapter activities and duties.

## Section 3. Resignation.

A member may resign from the Chapter to become an at-large member of DSA by written notice to the Chapter Secretary and National DSA. A member may resign from DSA by notifying the national office of DSA.

## Section 4. Removal of Members.

If a member in good standing is found to be in substantial disagreement with the principles or policies of National DSA, or if they are found to be consistently engaging in undemocratic, disruptive behavior, or if they are found to be under the discipline of any democratic centralist organization, the Chapter may vote to expel them from the Chapter of DSA. In order for such a finding to be made, another DSA member shall formally submit written charges against the member in question to the Chapter Steering Committee, which will set the date of a Chapter meeting for deliberations on the charges. The member in question must receive a copy of the written charges and notice of the meeting a minimum of two (2) weeks before that meeting takes place. Expulsion of a member requires a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote of the Chapter meeting. An expelled member in good standing must appeal first to the National Political Committee of DSA. Decisions on expulsion by either the Chapter or National Organization may be appealed to the National Convention.

## Section 5. Voluntary Donations.

As mandated by the National Constitution and Bylaws, the Chapter may establish a Chapter pledge system of voluntary donations for its members. The payment of a Chapter donation shall not be a requirement for voting or for holding Chapter office.

## Section 6. Data Security.

The Steering Committee shall create and maintain policy and procedures to secure all member data, including but not limited to contact and billing information.

# **ARTICLE IV. Chapter Meetings.**

## Section 1. Definition.

Chapter Conventions, General Meetings, and Special Meetings shall represent the general will of the membership and shall have the highest authority of decision-making power over all matters within the Chapter.

## Section 2. Chapter Convention.

The Chapter shall hold a Chapter Convention each calendar year to accept reports, consider questions of Chapter business, and elect Chapter Officers and may adopt an annual budget.

The Steering Committee shall electronically or physically send written notice of the convention to all members no less than twenty-one (21) days prior to the convention. The Steering Committee shall publish the agenda to the membership no less than ten (10) days prior to the convention.

If the Chapter Convention elects to consider special standing rules, the question of their adoption will be the first order of business and upon adoption will apply to that convention only.

The Chapter Convention may coincide with a General Meeting.

### Section 3. General Meetings.

The Chapter shall hold a minimum of four (4) General Meetings each calendar year to address any Chapter business within the guidelines set by the Chapter Convention.

The Steering Committee shall publish the time and place to the membership no less than fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting. The Steering Committee shall set and publish the agenda to the membership no less than five (5) days prior to the meeting.

### Section 4. Special Meetings.

The Chapter Steering Committee may call a Special Meeting of the Chapter on five (5) days' notice when an urgent and important matter requires deliberation.

### Section 5. Rules.

The Chapter may elect to adopt standing rules, which shall not be inconsistent with these bylaws, to administer the process and procedures of Chapter Meetings.

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern all Chapter Meetings to which they apply. If *Robert's Rules* are inconsistent with these bylaws or standing rules, then these bylaws or standing rules will apply.

Any action taken by a Chapter Meeting in contravention of these bylaws is null and void.

### Section 6. Quorum.

A quorum of ten (10) percent of the members (but not fewer than six (6) persons) is required for a Chapter Convention, General, or Special Meeting to transact business.

## **ARTICLE V. Chapter Officers.**

### Section 1. Officers and Terms.

The officers of the Chapter shall be the two Co-Chairs, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Membership Coordinator. Each officer must be a member of the Chapter and be current in their dues at the time of election and throughout the duration of their term. The term of office

shall be one year or until their successors are elected. The officers shall not all be cisgender men. No member shall hold more than one office at any given time.

## Section 2. Elections.

Elections for officers shall be held at the Chapter Convention unless otherwise stated in these bylaws. The Steering Committee shall open nominations no less than thirty (30) days prior to the election and call for nominations to the membership. Uncontested elections may be decided by acclamation without objection, otherwise elections will be determined by instant-runoff voting. Elections shall be governed by any rules and procedures under Article IV Section 5.

## Section 3. Co-Chairs.

The Co-Chairs shall be the Chief Executive Officers of the Chapter. They shall preside over Chapter and Steering Committee Meetings or shall appoint a substitute to assume the powers and duties of the presiding officer as specified in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*.

The Co-Chairs shall be the official public spokespersons for the Chapter and shall initiate such actions and policies as the Chapter's general welfare may demand. The Co-Chairs shall be responsible for coordinating the day-to-day operations and political work of the Chapter's Branches, Committees, and other formations. The Co-Chairs shall report to Chapter Meetings on the business of the Steering Committee.

## Section 4. Secretary.

The Secretary shall be responsible for answering all correspondence and queries of the Chapter and for maintaining an up-to-date membership list of the Chapter. They shall ensure effective communication with National DSA. They shall temporarily assume the responsibilities of the Co-Chair, if neither Co-Chair is able to do so.

The Secretary shall be responsible for the taking of minutes of all Chapter and Steering Committee Meetings and shall have custody of these minutes, and the resolutions, reports, and other official records of the Chapter. Minutes will include attendance of officers.

The Secretary shall transfer official records, such as meeting minutes and membership lists, in good condition to their successor. The Secretary is responsible for storing and ensuring members' access to the latest versions of these bylaws, meeting minutes, agendas, resolutions, standing rules, and all other materials in the interest of the membership.

## Section 5. Treasurer.

The Treasurer shall be responsible for the funds and financial records of the Chapter. All funds collected by the Chapter shall be turned over to the Treasurer, who will hold these funds in a secure place until it is possible to deposit the funds in a credit union or bank account under the name of the Chapter. The Treasurer shall prepare budgets and financial reports for consideration at Chapter Meetings and as requested by the Steering Committee, and ensure the Chapter's regulatory compliance. In cooperation with the Membership Coordinator, the Treasurer shall be responsible for ensuring that membership dues are current.

The Treasurer shall create and document policies and procedures for carrying out their duties and for maintaining healthy Chapter finances. The Treasurer shall transfer to their successor the documented policies and procedures, financial records and reports, and access to financial accounts securely.

#### Section 6. Membership Coordinator.

The Membership Coordinator shall be responsible for the overall health and growth of the Chapter membership by coordinating the outreach, recruitment, and engagement activities of the Chapter. The Membership Coordinator shall oversee initiatives concerning membership growth, retention, engagement, participation, and leadership development.

The Membership Coordinator shall organize their activities to be inclusive, culturally competent, and non-oppressive to marginalized groups. Special attention shall be devoted to the recruitment of members from marginalized groups.

#### Section 7. Additional Duties and Actions Out of Order.

The Chapter Steering Committee may assign additional temporary duties to an officer of the Chapter, so long as such assignments do not conflict with the designation of responsibilities outlined in these bylaws.

Any action taken by an officer in contravention of these bylaws is null and void.

#### Section 8. Resignation.

Any officer of the Chapter may electronically or physically submit their resignation to either the Steering Committee or Chapter Meeting. Upon resignation, the Steering Committee shall fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term either by scheduling an election no less than thirty (30) days away from a Chapter General Meeting or by appointment via simple majority vote of the Steering Committee.

#### Section 9. Suspension.

Any officer of the Chapter may be temporarily suspended for thirty (30) days at a Chapter Meeting as defined in Article IV. Any member may motion to recall and shall state with particularity the acts of malfeasance, nonfeasance, gross negligence, or undemocratic or uncomradely behavior comprising the grounds for removal and must be seconded. The Chapter Meeting may adopt such a motion by a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote.

#### Section 10. Recall.

Any officer of the Chapter may be recalled for malfeasance or failure to fulfill their duties or obligations as an officer.

##### a. Recall by Vote of the Membership.

In order to recall or remove an officer, a member in good standing must formally refer a request to the Steering Committee to remove said officer, which will set a date of a Chapter Meeting for deliberations on the accused officer's removal. The officer in question must receive written documentation of the specific reasons for the removal request and notice of the meeting

a minimum of two (2) weeks before the meeting takes place. The accused officer will be given a chance to speak in their own defense at this meeting. Removal of an officer requires a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote of the Chapter Meeting.

b. Recall by Vote of the Steering Committee.

An officer may be recalled by vote of the Steering Committee only under narrow circumstances for failure to do their duty. If an officer misses three consecutive Steering Committee meetings without excuse and fails to respond to attempts by Steering Committee members to communicate, that officer may be removed from office by a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote of the Steering Committee. This action must be reported at the next Chapter Meeting, at which time members in good standing may overturn the vote.

## **ARTICLE VI. Steering Committee.**

### Section 1. Composition.

The Steering Committee shall be composed of the five (5) officers of the Chapter.

### Section 2. Duties.

The Steering Committee administers the affairs of the Chapter and oversees the implementation of the decisions of Chapter Meetings; it may also propose policy to Chapter Meetings. It shall have the power to receive reports of any Branch, Committee, or formally created Working Group, and advise thereon, to call Special Meetings of the Chapter, and to act on any matter that requires immediate and urgent action. The Steering Committee is the regular executive body of the Chapter, and thus subordinate to its Legislative bodies, the Chapter Convention and General Meetings.

The Steering Committee shall be responsible for establishing program activities for the Chapter, for proposing guidelines and policies that shall subsequently be voted on by members in good standing, and for acting on the organization's behalf between Chapter meetings.

The Steering Committee is responsible for ensuring that the following responsibilities are assigned to Steering Committee members or other individuals: communications, internal and external; development of any standing rules; and preparation of an annual report to be presented to the membership at the beginning of the new fiscal year or at the Chapter Convention.

### Section 3. Meetings.

The meetings of the Steering Committee shall be held at the call of one (1) of the Co-Chairs at such regular intervals as may be determined by a prior Steering Committee Meeting or by consultation with any three (3) members of the Steering Committee. All members of the Steering Committee must be given three (3) days oral, written, or electronic notice of Steering Committee Meetings unless all members of the Steering Committee accept shorter notice. The Steering Committee shall give notice of its meeting schedule to Chapter members. Meeting minutes shall be recorded and accessible to the membership.

Steering Committee Meetings may be held electronically by any means acceptable to all the members of the Steering Committee.

Any member in good standing of the Chapter may observe Steering Committee Meetings. The Steering Committee shall allow for a question and answer period and a comment period if capacity permits.

The Steering Committee may go into executive session by simple majority vote in order to discuss any sensitive matters.

#### Section 4. Quorum.

A quorum of a simple majority, including at least three (3) of the five (5) officers, is required for the transaction of Steering Committee business.

#### Section 5. Rules.

The Steering Committee may elect to adopt standing rules to administer the process and procedures of Steering Committee Meetings that are not inconsistent with these bylaws.

Any action taken by the Steering Committee in contravention of these bylaws is null and void.

#### Section 6. Voting.

The Steering Committee may make decisions on business by vote of a simple majority of the committee at a Steering Committee Meeting or through other means unanimously approved by all Steering Committee members at a Steering Committee Meeting. Any vote that occurs between Steering Committee Meetings shall be reported at the next meeting.

#### Section 7. Board of Directors.

For the purposes of meeting the requirements of local and state incorporation laws, the Chapter shall have a "Board of Directors" consisting of members of the Steering Committee assigned for the purpose as logical and required by law.

### **ARTICLE VII. Branches.**

#### Section 1. Definition.

A Branch is a subgroup chartered by the Chapter consisting of at least five (5) members in good standing for the purpose of expanding the reach and accessibility of the Chapter. Branches shall be defined by geography, identity, language, belonging to a particular institution, or sharing a common interest.

#### Section 2. Creation.

A charter application must be made by written resolution, endorsed by five (5) members in good standing of the Chapter who would be members of the Branch, and submitted according to the same procedure as defined in Article XIV of these bylaws.

A charter application must define the purpose of the Branch, the nature of its leadership, the scope and nature of its membership, and how the Branch makes decisions. Membership by

geography shall not overlap with another Branch defined by geography. The Chapter Meeting may approve a charter application under this article by a simple majority vote.

A charter application may include an amendment to these bylaws for the purpose of Branch representation on the Steering Committee. The Chapter Meeting may approve this proposed amendment by a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) majority vote.

### Section 3. Dissolution.

A motion to dissolve a Branch must be made by written resolution, endorsed by five (5) members in good standing of the Chapter, and submitted according to the same procedure as defined in Article XIV of these bylaws. The Chapter Meeting may dissolve a Branch under this article by a simple majority vote.

A motion to dissolve a Branch may include an amendment to these bylaws for the purpose of removing Branch representation on the Steering Committee. The Chapter Meeting may approve a motion to dissolve a Branch with a bylaws amendment under this article by a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) majority vote.

## **ARTICLE VIII. Young Democratic Socialists of America Chapters.**

Young Democratic Socialists of America (YDSA) chapters within the geographic area defined by a DSA Chapter may affiliate as a Branch of that Chapter, in which case the local YDSA chapter may send a representative to the Chapter Steering Committee.

## **ARTICLE IX. Committees.**

### Section 1. Definition.

A committee is a group of Chapter members tasked with specific functions and authority related to the work and administration of the Chapter.

### Section 2. Creation.

A committee may be established by a Chapter Meeting by a simple majority vote. The Steering Committee may also establish a committee solely for purposes of carrying out responsibilities already assigned to the Steering Committee in these bylaws. The motion to establish a committee must define the purpose of the committee, the nature of its leadership, the nature of its membership, how the committee makes decisions, a deadline for either its dissolution or renewal, and any Chapter resources it may need. The committee may be subject to additional rules of the Chapter.

### Section 3. Dissolution.

Any committee created under this article may be dissolved by a Chapter Meeting at any time by a simple majority vote. If a committee was established by the Steering Committee, that committee may be dissolved by the Steering Committee at any time by a simple majority vote.

## **ARTICLE X. Working Groups and Other Formations.**

### Section 1. Definition.

Other formations may exist within the Chapter when they do not need to represent the will of the membership, but otherwise offer a beneficial purpose. Such formations shall have no authority on behalf of the Chapter beyond the authority provided to Chapter members individually. Such formations may be subject to additional rules of the Chapter.

### Section 2. Formal Creation.

Such formations may be recognized or established by decision of the Steering Committee or Chapter Meeting for the purpose of utilizing Chapter resources not otherwise offered to Chapter members, including funds and communication resources.

### Section 3. Formal Dissolution.

The recognition or establishment of such formations may be revoked by simple majority vote of the Steering Committee or Chapter Meeting at any time.

## **ARTICLE XI. Delegates to National, Regional, and State Organizations.**

### Section 1. Eligibility to Vote on Delegates.

Members in good standing of the Chapter shall elect Chapter delegates and alternates to the National Convention, as well as to any regional or state organizations.

### Section 2. Schedule of Elections to National, Regional, or State Organizations.

Elections for the National Convention delegation will be held on the schedule announced by National DSA. Elections to regional or state organizations will be held on the schedule announced by those organizations.

### Section 3. Method of Voting.

Following Article V, Section 5 of National DSA's Constitution, delegates to the National Convention must be elected by secret ballot. And, "No election for delegates to the National Convention shall be held more than four months, or less than forty-five days, prior to the opening of the National Convention. No election for delegates shall be conducted before the apportionment of delegates."

Following Article VI, Section 3, of National DSA's Bylaws, Chapters "may determine their own method of election of delegates to the Convention except that a petition from 10% of a Chapter's membership or a motion supported by 15% of those present and voting at the Chapter meeting which determines the method of election will require the use of the Hare system in that Local's election of delegates to the National Convention."

## **ARTICLE XII. Grievance Procedure.**

The Chapter will follow the [Harassment Policy of National DSA](#).

## **ARTICLE XIII. Prohibited Activity.**

The Southeast Idaho Chapter will not engage in activity prohibited by the IRS guidelines established for 501(c)(4) organizations or similar rules established by the state of Idaho. Nor will the Chapter engage in any activity prohibited by resolutions adopted by DSA's National Convention or DSA's National Political Committee.

#### **ARTICLE XIV. Amendments.**

Proposed amendments to these bylaws must be made by written resolution, endorsed by five (5) members in good standing of the Chapter, and submitted to the Steering Committee at least twenty-one (21) days in advance of a Chapter Meeting as defined in Article IV. The Steering Committee is required to provide the Chapter membership with at least ten (10) days physical or electronic notice of the proposed amendments. The Chapter Meeting may adopt amendments to these bylaws proposed under this article by two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote.

No amendment to these bylaws may be in conflict with the National DSA Constitution and Bylaws. The Chapter will provide the amended bylaws to the DSA national office.

#### **ARTICLE XV. Chapter Dissolution.**

A proposal to dissolve the Chapter must be made by written resolution, endorsed by five (5) members in good standing of the Chapter, and submitted to the Steering Committee at least twenty-one (21) days in advance of a Chapter Meeting as defined in Article IV. The Steering Committee is required to provide the Chapter membership with at least ten (10) days physical or electronic notice of this resolution. The Chapter Meeting may adopt a resolution to dissolve the Chapter under this article by a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote.

Upon dissolution of the Chapter, any residual assets shall become property of the national organization of Democratic Socialists of America.