

Bylaws of the Colorado Springs Local Chapter
of Democratic Socialists of America

Adopted 01/21/2021; approved by the NPC in the current form mm.dd.2021.

ARTICLE I. Name.

The name of the Chapter will be the Colorado Springs Local Chapter of DSA. DSA is a not-for-profit corporation.

ARTICLE II. Purpose.

The Colorado Springs Democratic Socialists of America seeks to facilitate the transition to a truly democratic and socialist society, one in which the means/resources of production are democratically and socially controlled.

DSA rejects an economic order based solely on private profit, alienated labor, gross inequalities of wealth and power, discrimination based on race, 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, equitable distribution, gender and racial 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. Membership.

Members of the Colorado Springs DSA will be those individuals whose dues to national DSA are paid in full, who reside and/or work in the Pikes Peak region (to include El Paso, Teller, Pueblo and Fremont counties). Individuals may not be members of the Local Chapter without being members of national DSA.

A member may resign from the Local Chapter and national DSA by contacting DSA's national office.

Section 2. 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 Local Chapter may vote to expel them from the Local Chapter of DSA. In order for such a finding to be made, another DSA member must formally prefer written charges against the member in question to the Local Chapter Executive Committee, which will set the date of a Local 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 vote of the Local Chapter meeting. An expelled member in good standing may appeal to the National Political Committee of DSA.

Section 3. Additional Information.

Police, correctional officers, and prison guards work against the interests of the working class and therefore will not be welcome in local meetings and activities of Colorado Springs DSA.

Section 4. Voluntary Donations.

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

Section 5. Privacy Concerns.

Care will be taken to protect the privacy of each member's contact information.

ARTICLE IV. Local Chapter Meetings.

Section 1. Chapter Convention.

The Local Chapter will hold a minimum of one (1) Chapter Convention annually for purposes of electing officers. All members of the Local Chapter will be sent notice of, and an agenda for, the Chapter Convention. Notice may be sent by electronic means, but individuals who have not provided an email address must be sent a paper copy or contacted by phone or text. The Chapter Convention will be responsible for the election of Local Chapter officers and may adopt an annual budget. In general, it is the highest legislative body of the Local Chapter. The Chapter Convention may coincide with a General Meeting.

Section 2. General Meetings.

The Local Chapter will hold General Meetings at least four (4) times annually, the time and place of which will be set in a schedule published and distributed by the Local Chapter Executive Committee. The General Meetings will set Local Chapter policy and work priorities, and they may include political education sessions.

The Local Chapter Executive Committee will set the agenda for General Meetings. In general, the General Meeting is the operating legislative body of the Local Chapter.

Section 3. Emergency Meetings.

The Local Chapter Executive Committee may call an Emergency Meeting of the Local Chapter with 48 hours notice when an urgent and important matter requires deliberation.

Section 4. Quorum.

A quorum of 10 percent of the members (but not fewer than six (6) persons) is required for General, Regular, or Emergency Meetings to transact business.

ARTICLE V. Local Chapter Officers: Powers and Duties.

Section 1. Officers Terms and Duties.

The officers of the Local Chapter will consist of the Chapter Co-Chairs, General Secretary-Treasurer, and Membership and Outreach Coordinator. The term of office will be one year, and will run from Chapter Convention to the next Chapter Convention (January to January) or until their successors are elected. The officers may not all be of the same gender, race/ethnicity and sexual orientation.

Section 2. Vacancies

In the event of a vacancy in any Local Chapter office, the Local Chapter Executive Committee will carry out the duties until an election can be held.

Section 3. Co-Chairs.

a. The Co-Chairs will be the chief executive officers of the Local Chapter. They will preside over Local Chapter and Executive Committee meetings or will appoint a substitute to assume the powers and duties of the presiding officer as specified in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised 11th Edition. The Co-Chairs will be the official public spokespersons for the Local Chapter and will initiate such actions and policies as the Local Chapter's general welfare may demand.

b. The Co-Chairs will be responsible also for coordinating the day-to-day operations and political work of the Local Chapter's Branches and Committees.

c. The Co-Chairs will report to Local Chapter General Meetings on the business of the Executive Committee Meetings, at which time a copy of the minutes of those meetings will be available for inspection.

Section 4. General Secretary-Treasurer

a. The General Secretary-Treasurer (GST) will be responsible for the funds and financial

records of the Local Chapter. All funds collected by the Local Chapter will be turned over to the Treasurer, who will deposit them in a bank account under the name of the Local Chapter. The GST will prepare the annual Local Chapter budget and deliver the Local Chapter financial report to the General Meeting of the Local Chapter, as well as periodic progress reports as requested by the Executive Committee of the Local Chapter.

b. The GST will be also responsible for the taking of minutes of all Local Chapter and Executive Committee Meetings and will have custody of these minutes, and the resolutions, reports and other official records of the Local Chapter. They will transfer official records in good condition to their successor. Official records will include meeting minutes and member lists.

Section 6. Membership and Outreach Coordinator.

The Membership and Outreach Coordinator will be responsible for managing the social media communications of the Local Chapter and answering all correspondence and queries of the Local Chapter and for maintaining an up-to-date membership list of the Local Chapter. They will ensure effective communication with national DSA.

Section 7. Additional Duties.

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

ARTICLE VI. Executive Committee.

Section 1. Composition.

The Local Chapter Executive Committee will be composed of the four (4) officers of the Local Chapter and the chair(s) of any Local Chapter Branches.

Section 2. Duties.

a. The Executive Committee administers the affairs of the Local Chapter and oversees the implementation of the decisions of the General Meetings and Chapter Conventions; it may also propose policy to the General Meetings and Chapter Conventions. It will have the power to receive reports of any Committee or Branch, and advise thereon, to call Emergency Meetings of the Local Chapter, and to act on any matter that requires immediate and urgent action. The Executive Committee is the regular executive body of the Local Chapter, and thus subordinate to its Legislative bodies, the General Meetings and Chapter Conventions.

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

Section 3. Meetings.

The meetings of the Executive Committee will be held at the call of one (1) of the Executive Committee members at such intervals as may be determined by a prior Executive Committee Meeting or by consultation with any three (3) members of the Executive Committee. All members of the Executive Committee must (ordinarily) be given two (2) days oral, written,

or electronic notice of regular Executive Committee Meetings; a 24-hour notice may be given under special emergency circumstances.

Section 4. Quorum.

A quorum of a simple majority including at least two (2) of the four (4) officers, is required for the transaction of Executive Committee business.

ARTICLE VII. Branches.

Section 1. Definition.

A Branch is a subgroup of the Local Chapter consisting of at least five (5) members in good standing with national DSA. Branches may be defined by geography, language or purpose. The chairs of Branches will hold membership on the Local Chapter Executive Committee.

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

ARTICLE VIII. Working Groups and Subcommittees

Section 1. Working Groups

The Local Chapter will have Working Groups, which may exist for a limited and explicit duration. Working Groups may be established either by a vote of the General Membership, by the Executive Committee, or by the voluntary association of three (3) or more members, so long as the Working Group does not disagree with the principles and goals of DSA. Working Groups may petition to become a Branch once it has five (5) or more members.

Section 2. Subcommittees

The Executive Committee may establish subcommittees to assist in the responsibilities of an officer. Subcommittees will have a specific purpose and may be chaired by an officer in the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE IX. Delegates to National, Regional, and State Bodies.

Section 1. Eligibility to Vote.

Local Chapter delegates and alternates to the National Convention, as well as to any regional or state organizations, will be elected by members in good standing of the Local Chapter of DSA.

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 the national organization. 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, Local Chapters “may determine their own method of election of delegates to the Convention except that a petition from 10% of a Local’ Chapters membership or a motion supported by 15% of those present and voting at the Local 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 X. Prohibited Activity.

Colorado Springs Local Chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America will not engage in activity prohibited by the IRS guidelines established for 501(c)(4) organizations or similar rules established by the state of Colorado. Nor will the Local Chapter engage in any activity prohibited by resolutions adopted by DSA’s National Convention or DSA’s National Political Committee.

ARTICLE XI. Nominations, Elections, and Recall.

Section 1. Nominations Officer

By vote at a General Meeting, a Nominations Officer will be established at least one (1) month prior to every election. They will solicit, receive and confirm nominations for the positions to be elected.

Section 2. Nominations Process.

Any member in good standing may nominate any other member in good standing. Nominations for Local Chapter officers and delegates to DSA meetings will be opened at least 10 days before and closed at the meeting at which elections take place. The call for nominations will be announced to all members in good standing of Colorado Springs DSA as soon as nominations are open.

Section 3. Uncontested Positions.

If a position is uncontested, the nominee may be declared elected by acclamation.

Section 4. Local Chapter Branch Elections

Local Chapter Branch elections will be conducted by each respective branch. The terms of the chair shall be one (1) year.

Section 5. Recall

Any officer of the Local Chapter of DSA may be recalled for malfeasance or failure to fulfill their duties or obligations as an officer. In order to recall or remove an officer, a member in good standing must formally refer a request to remove said officer to the Local Chapter Executive Committee, which will set a date of a Local 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 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 vote of the Local Chapter meeting.

ARTICLE XII. Amendments.

Proposed amendments to these Bylaws must be made by written resolution, endorsed by five (5) members of the Local Chapter of DSA and submitted to the Executive Committee at least one (1) month in advance of a General Meeting or Chapter Convention. The Executive Committee is required to provide the Local Chapter membership with at least two (2) weeks' written or electronic notice of the proposed amendments. The amendment must be approved by a majority vote of two (2) consecutive General Meetings.

ARTICLE XIII. Rules of the Local Chapter.

Section 1. Rules.

The Rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised 11th Edition, will govern this Local Chapter in cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws. Consensus decision-making is desirable where feasible, but meetings must submit to Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised 11th Edition upon the request of a member.

Section 2. Action Out of Order.

Any action taken by an officer or member of the Local Chapter in contravention of these Bylaws is null and void.

Section 3. Harassment Policy.

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

ARTICLE XIV. Harassment Grievance Process and Officers

Section 1. Harassment and Grievance Process

The Local shall, at a minimum, adhere to all processes and guidance in Resolution 33 of the 2017 DSA National Convention (DSA Harassment Policy). Any updates to the DSA Harassment Policy shall supersede these bylaws. The duly elected harassment and grievance officers (HGO) may strengthen the DSA Harassment Policy processes and guidance as appropriate.

Section 2. Composition and Terms of Harassment Grievance Officers (HGOs)

a. Composition - There will be a minimum of one (1) HGO positions in the Local Chapter. HGOs shall be members of the Local Chapter in good standing. HGOs shall not be members of the Executive Committee or hold any other office, elected or appointed, in the Local Chapter. At least one HGO must not identify as cis-gender and male.

b. Election - The Executive Committee shall solicit applicants for HGO, and the

Executive Committee shall thoroughly vet the applicants back y investigation into their background and qualifications, and by soliciting feedback from the membership, including anonymously. Applicants shall be nominated as an HGO by a unanimous vote of the Executive Committee. Nominees shall be confirmed by a majority vote of the membership at a regular Local Chapter meeting.

c. Term of Office - The terms of each HGO will be one year starting from the date of their respective elections.

d. Removal from Office - The grievance officer may be removed by majority vote of members in good standing.

e. Vacancies - If the number of HGOs drops to below the minimum of one (1), the EC is tasked with finding replacements as soon as possible. Any replacements shall be approved as normal.

Section 3. Duties of Harassment Grievance Officers (HGOs)

a. Harassment Grievance Officers will adhere to all procedures and duties as outlined in the Policy.

b. All HGOs, whether appointed or elected, shall be trained in responding to sexual violence, at the Local Chapter's expense. Such training will preferably be recommended and/or provided by DSA's National HGO but may be selected by the HGOs and Steering Committee. If an HGO does not complete required training within 60 days of taking office, an automatic recall shall be triggered.

c. All HGOs should also receive mediation training, at the Local Chapter's expense, with such training to be identified and selected by the HGOs and Executive Committee.

d. HGOs shall adhere to major policy and guidance released by the National HGO, which shall take precedence in the event of a conflict with these bylaws.

ARTICLE XV. Distribution of assets.

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