

**Bylaws of Pioneer Valley Local Chapter of the Democratic Socialists of
America** Adopted September 27, 2017 Amended July 16, 2018 Amended September 16,
2019

**ARTICLE I. Name and
Affiliation.**

Pioneer Valley Democratic Socialists of America (“Local Chapter”) shall be the Local Chapter of Democratic Socialists of America (“DSA”).

**ARTICLE II.
Purpose.**

This Local Chapter of DSA 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 on private profit, exploitation of alienated labor, gross inequalities of wealth and power, discrimination based on race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, or gender 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 Pioneer Valley Local Chapter of DSA will be those individuals whose dues to national DSA are paid in full, who reside and/or work in the Pioneer Valley area. Individuals may not be members of the Local Chapter without being members of national DSA. It will be the responsibility of

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members to approve policies and guidelines for the operation of the Local Chapter, to elect Local Chapter officers and delegates to the national convention, to vote on matters related to national policy, and to make recommendations on issues and other matters to the National Political Committee of DSA.

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 direct discipline of any self-defined democratic centralist organization, the Local Chapter may vote to expel them from 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 shall 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 weeks before that meeting takes place. Expulsion of a member requires a two-thirds vote of the Local Chapter meeting. The Local Chapter must report an expulsion to the National Director. An expelled member in good standing may appeal to the National Political Committee of DSA.

Section 3.
Dues.

As permitted 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 4. Privacy
concerns.

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

ARTICLE IV. Local Chapter

Meetings.

Section 1. General Meeting.

The Local Chapter will hold a minimum of one General Meeting annually for purposes of electing officers. All members of the Local Chapter will be sent notice of and an agenda for the General Meeting. Notice may be sent by electronic means, but individuals who have not provided an email address must be sent a paper copy. The General Meeting will elect Local Chapter officers and may adopt an annual budget. The General Meeting may coincide with a Regular Meeting.

Section 2. Regular Meetings.

The Local Chapter will hold Regular Meetings at least four times annually, the time and place of which shall be set in a schedule published and distributed by the Local Chapter Executive Committee. The Regular Meetings will set Local Chapter policy and work priorities, and they will include political

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education sessions. The Local Chapter Executive Committee will set the agenda for Regular Meetings. In general, the Regular 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 at least five days' notice to the members when an urgent and important matter requires deliberation.

Section 4. Quorum.

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

Section 5. Voting

Each member shall have one vote. Whenever any corporate action is to be taken by vote of the members, it shall, except as otherwise required by law or by the Articles of Incorporation, be authorized by a majority of the votes cast at a meeting of members by the members entitled to vote thereon.

Section 6. Vote by Ballot

Any action that may be taken at a General, Regular, or Emergency meeting of the members may be taken without a meeting if the Local Chapter delivers a written ballot to every member entitled to vote on the matter. A ballot shall set forth each proposed action; provide an opportunity to vote for, or withhold a vote for, each candidate for election to any position; and provide an opportunity to vote for or against each other proposed action.

Section 7.

Proxies

No proxies shall be permitted. A proxy will be defined as a person designated to vote on another member's behalf.

ARTICLE V. Local Chapter Officers: Powers and Duties.

Section 1. Officers and Terms.

The officers of the Local Chapter will be two Co-Chairs, one Secretary, one Treasurer, and one Social Media Coordinator, with each to be a member of the Local Chapter who is initially elected by the membership as provided in Article XI. The term of office for each officer will be one year, and shall run from January 1 to December 31 or until their successors are elected. Both co-chairs will have the same executive power of the President listed on the articles of incorporation and/or annual report.

Section 2.

Resignation

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Resignations by any Local Chapter officer shall be effective upon receipt by the Secretary (or receipt by a Co-Chair or other officer if the Secretary is resigning) of written notification of the resignation or upon a later date if provided in the written notification.

Section 3.

Removal

One or more officers may be removed with or without cause by a vote of the membership at a General, Regular, or Emergency meeting for which notice of the removal vote was provided to the membership at least five days prior to the meeting.

Section 4.
Vacancies.

In the event of a vacancy in any Local Chapter office existing by reason of resignation, death, incapacity, or removal before expiration of a term, the Local Chapter Executive Committee will appoint a replacement for the remainder of the term, or the chapter may choose to hold a special election to fill the vacancy.

Section 5.
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. 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 Regular 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 6.
Secretary.

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

b. The Secretary will be responsible also for the taking of minutes of all Local Chapter and Executive Committee Meetings, and shall have custody of these minutes, and the resolutions, reports and other official records of the Local Chapter. They shall transfer official records in good condition to their

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successor. Official records shall include meeting minutes and member lists. The Secretary will also

notify national DSA in case of any change in leadership or contact information for the chapter in order to keep all records current. The Secretary will be responsible for checking local membership records with the national committee to establish a quorum for each meeting in which business is conducted. The Secretary will be responsible for sending an agenda for all voting meetings to members by email or if no email has been provided, by mail.

Section 7.
Treasurer.

The Treasurer 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 shall deposit them in a bank account under the name of the Local Chapter. In cooperation with the Secretary, the Treasurer will be responsible for ensuring that membership dues are paid up-to-date. The Treasurer 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.

Section 8. Social Media
Coordinator.

The Social Media Coordinator will be responsible for managing the social media communications of the Local Chapter.

Section 9. 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 five 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 and Regular Meetings; it may also propose policy to the General and Regular Meetings. It shall 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 and Regular Meetings.

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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 of the Local Chapter, 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 of the Co-Chairs at such intervals as may be determined by a prior Executive Committee Meeting or by consultation with any three members of the Executive Committee. All members of the Executive Committee must be given four days' oral, written, or email notice of regular Executive Committee Meetings, except that notice of only 24-hours shall be sufficient if two members of the Executive Committee determine that special emergency circumstances justifying a lesser notice requirement exist.

Section 4. Quorum.

A quorum of three members of the Executive Committee is required for the transaction of Executive Committee business.

Section 5. Participation in Meeting by Communications Technology

Any or all members of the Executive Committee may participate in a meeting by communications technology, so long as members of the Executive Committee participating in the meeting can hear one another simultaneously, and such participation shall constitute presence in person at the meeting.

ARTICLE VII. Branches.

Section 1.

Definition.

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

Young Democratic Socialists (YDS) 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 YDS chapter may send a representative to the Local Chapter Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VIII.

Committees.

Section 1.

Duration.

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The Local Chapter will have Ad Hoc Committees or Working Groups, which will exist for a limited and explicit duration. Ad Hoc Committees may be established by a simple majority vote of members in good standing at a General or Regular Meeting of the Local Chapter.

Section 2.

Duties.

Chairs of Ad Hoc Committees will keep the Executive Committee and the Regular Meetings of the Local Chapter informed on the activities of the committee.

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

Section 1.

Convention.

Local Chapter delegates and alternates to the National Convention will be elected by members in good standing of the Local Chapter of DSA. Elections for the National Convention delegation shall be

held on the schedule announced by the national organization.

ARTICLE X. Prohibited Activity

Pioneer Valley Local Chapter shall not engage in activity prohibited by the IRS guidelines established for 501 (c) 4 organizations or similar rules established by the state of Massachusetts. Nor shall the Local Chapter engage in any activity prohibited by resolutions adopted by DSA's National Convention or DSA's National Political Committee.

ARTICLE XI. Election of Local Chapter Officers and Delegates.

Section 1. Nominations Committee.

A three-person Nominations Committee shall be established at least one month prior to every election by vote of a Regular Meeting. It shall solicit and receive nominations for the positions to be elected, which shall include any Local Chapter officers for which the terms of current officers are due to expire and delegates to the National Convention and to any state or regional DSA bodies to which the Local Chapter may send delegates.

Section 2. Nominations Process.

Nominations for Local Chapter officers and delegates to the National Convention and any state or regional DSA bodies shall be opened 30 days before and closed 10 days before the election meeting. The call for nominations shall be announced to all members in good standing of DSA as soon as nominations are open.

Section 3. Elections Process.

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Elections for PVDSA leadership and delegate positions may be held at a General, Regular, or Special Meeting. All candidates shall be elected at the meeting through secret ballot by active members in good standing. Ballots must be counted immediately following the final ballot being cast. Ballots must be counted twice by a group between two and five active members in good standing in full unobstructed view of any interested Members acting as election observers. All reasonable efforts should be made to find counters that are acceptable to all candidates.

Section 4. Voting Method.

All elections in the chapter will use ranked choice voting. “Ranked Choice Voting” means a method of casting and tabulating votes that simulates the ballot counts that would occur if all voters participated in a series of runoff elections. In elections using the Ranked Choice Voting method, voters may rank the candidates in order of preference.

Elections that require proportional representation shall use Single Transferable Vote tallying (Scottish STV), modified to accommodate representation requirements. Such elections shall include (i) Chapter officers and (ii) Delegates to the DSA National Convention and any state or regional DSA bodies.

No more than sixty percent (60%, rounded to nearest whole number) of Executive Committee positions and of Delegate positions shall be held by men. However, if the gender makeup of the candidate pool is such that positions would go unfilled, the unfilled seats may be filled by men.

Section 5. Representation Requirements.

Representation requirements are based on self-identification only.

Section 6. Ballot Count.

Votes are tallied by the Scottish STV method. Candidates are elected according to this count procedure in the order that they receive the requisite votes.

Section 7. Uncontested Positions.

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

ARTICLE XII. Indemnification.

Except as may be prohibited by law, the Local Chapter may indemnify any person who was or is an officer of the Local Chapter against all liabilities and expenses reasonably incurred by such officer arising out of or in connection with any threatened, pending, or completed claims arising from or related

to the officer's service as an officer of the Local Chapter. The Local Chapter may adopt a resolution authorizing the purchase and maintenance of insurance on behalf of any agent of the Corporation against

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any liability asserted against or incurred by the agent in such capacity or arising out of the agent's status as such.

ARTICLE XIII.

Amendments.

Proposed amendments to these Bylaws must be made by written resolution, endorsed by five members of the Local Chapter of DSA, and submitted to the Executive Committee a month in advance of a General or Regular Meeting. The Executive Committee is required to provide the Local Chapter membership with two weeks' written notice of the proposed amendments. The amendment must be approved by a majority vote of two consecutive (Regular or General) Local Chapter meetings. No amendment to these Bylaws may be in conflict with the national DSA Constitution and Bylaws. The Local Chapter shall provide copies of all amendments to these Local Chapter Bylaws to DSA.

ARTICLE XIV. Rules of the Local Chapter.

Section 1.

Rules.

The Rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern meetings of the Local Chapter and all of its committees, working groups, and branches 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 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.

ARTICLE XV. Dissolution

In the event of the dissolution of this DSA Chapter, all remaining funds and assets are to be released to the national Democratic Socialists of America.

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