



Maine Democratic Socialists of America Chapter Bylaws

Last Updated and Ratified on 2021-01-24

Article I. Name

Article II. Object

Article III. Members

Article IV. Steering Committee

Article V. Steering Committee Subcommittees

Article VI. Nominations & Elections

Article VII. Membership Meetings

Article VIII. Committees

Article IX. Branches

Article X. Parliamentary Authority

Article XI. Restrictions

Article XII. Amendments

Bylaws of the Maine Democratic Socialists of America

Article I. Name

The name of the Chapter shall be the Maine Chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA).

Article II. Object

The object of the Chapter is to facilitate the transition of Society to a democratic socialist one in which the means and resources of production are democratically and socially controlled to provide a fair political and economic system in which the class system is abolished to allow all people to thrive.

Article III. Members

Section 1. Membership. Members of the Chapter will be those individuals whose dues to the national DSA are paid in full and who reside or work in Maine.

Section 2. Removal of Members.

- A. Members may be removed for cause.
- B. Removals shall require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Chapter.
- C. Removal votes shall be held at a membership meeting called for that purpose.
- D. Written notice shall be sent thirty (30) days prior to a removal vote.
- E. Removed members may appeal to the National Political Committee of the DSA.

Section 3. Resignation of Members. Members may resign at any time.

Section 4. Reinstatement of Members. Removed or Resigned Members may be reinstated by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Chapter.

Section 5. Dues. The Chapter may set voluntary dues.

Section 6. Code of Conduct. The Chapter shall adopt a public Code of Conduct (The Code) by majority vote. The Code shall define a standard of behavior and a grievance process. The Code may be amended by a majority vote of the Chapter.

Article IV. Steering Committee

Section 1. Membership

- A. The leadership body for the chapter shall be called the Steering Committee (SC).
- B. Voting members shall consist of two (2) Agenda Co-Chairs, two (2) Communications Co-Chairs, two (2) Finance Co-Chairs, and two (2) Membership Co-Chairs.

Bylaws of the Maine Democratic Socialists of America

- C. Voting at-large seats may be created to fulfill Diversity Requirements
- D. Non-voting members shall consist of the chairs of any standing committee or branch.

Section 2. Duties and Powers

- A. The SC shall handle critical chapter business between membership meetings.
- B. The SC shall settle recommendations from the Harassment and Grievance Officers.
- C. The SC may approve expenses per the chapter's expense policy.
- D. The SC may make recommendations to the chapter.

Section 3. Diversity Requirements.

- A. The makeup of the Steering Committee shall consist of:
 - 1. At least three non-cisgender-men.
 - 2. At least one minority with respect to race, sexual orientation, and/or country of origin.
- B. *Fulfilling requirements.* During the calculation of results for *any* election of Steering Committee Members, the Election Committee will **repeat the following process as necessary** (i.e. it may be necessary to do this more than once):
 - A. The Election Committee will analyze the potential makeup of the Steering Committee as it will exist after the election.
 - B. If it is determined that the diversity requirements will not be met by the SC voting members after the election and the electorate has willing members available who, if added, would allow them to meet the requirement:
 - A. The Election Committee will inform the existing Steering Committee of its determination that the diversity requirements have not been met.
 - B. An additional temporary Steering Committee position will be created, its term to expire according to VI.5.c. and be *eliminated* at said expiration.
 - C. The Election Committee will hold an immediate single-winner special election for this newly-created position with the candidate pool restricted to only those candidates who would help to fulfill the unfulfilled diversity requirements.

Section 4. At-Large Role and Responsibility

- A. Participate in deliberation and voting of the Steering Committee
- B. Choose one sub-committee to support.
- C. At-large seats may change which sub-committee they support during their term.

Section 5. Resignation, Recall, and Vacancies

- A. Members of the SC may resign by written notice. Resignation shall be instant unless the notice sets some other date.
- B. Co-Chairs may be recalled by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Chapter. The Chapter must be sent notice of a recall vote at least thirty days in advance.
- C. Vacancies shall be filled at the next membership meeting for which at least seven (7) days notice can be given.

Section 6. Meetings

Bylaws of the Maine Democratic Socialists of America

- A. The SC shall meet at least once a month.
- B. Additional meetings may be called by petition of at least three (3) voting members.
- C. Members shall receive three (3) days notice of all SC meetings.
- D. Meetings and votes of the SC may be held remotely.
- E. A quorum shall consist of four (4) voting members.

Article V. Steering Committee Subcommittees

Section 1. Membership

- A. SC Subcommittees shall be coordinated by their two (2) Co-Chairs.
- B. SC Subcommittees shall be open to active members.

Section 2. Finance Subcommittee

- A. The Committee may sign checks and drafts on behalf of the Chapter.
- B. The Committee may approve expenditures per the chapter's expense policy.
- C. The Committee shall keep the Chapter's financial records.
- D. The Committee shall make financial reports at all Chapter meetings.
- E. The Committee shall handle merchandise sales and distribution.

Section 3. Membership Subcommittee

- A. The Committee shall request membership lists from National DSA at least monthly.
- B. The Committee shall work on membership mobilization, engagement, and development.
- C. The Committee shall be responsible for event data.

Section 4. Agenda Subcommittee

- A. The Committee shall lead all membership and SC meetings.
- B. The Committee shall create the agendas for membership and SC meetings.
- C. The Committee shall fix the time and location of membership and SC meetings.
- D. The Committee may change the date of membership and SC meetings as needed.

Section 5. Communications Subcommittee

- A. The Committee shall be the Chapter's external spokespersons.
- B. The Committee shall record the minutes of all membership and SC meetings.
- C. The Committee shall keep the Chapter's non-financial records.

Article VI. Nominations & Elections

Section 1. Applicability. This article applies to all elections for Steering Committee, delegates to conventions, and any other election where there is at least a one (1) month notice.

Bylaws of the Maine Democratic Socialists of America

Section 2. Nominations.

- A. Eligibility shall be limited to members.
- B. Nominations may be made by any member.
- C. Members may nominate themselves.
- D. Members may be nominated for multiple offices.
- E. Nominations shall close at least ten (10) days prior to election.

Section 3. Election Committee. For each and every election, a three-person ad-hoc Election Committee shall be appointed at least one week prior to the applicable election by the SC. The Election Committee shall include exactly one member of the Steering Committee and two other members in good standing. The purpose of the Election Committee is to administer the election by preparing the ballots, coordinating with absentee voters, and calculating the election's outcome.

Section 4. Elections.

- A. Elections shall be by majority vote unless some other method is approved by members.
- B. Contested Elections shall be determined by ballot.
- C. Uncontested Elections shall be determined by hand vote to seat all candidates at once.

Section 5. Terms of Office.

- A. Members may only hold one office at a time.
- B. Members shall assume office immediately upon election.
- C. Terms shall be served until the next annual membership meeting.
- D. There is no limit on the number of terms a member may serve in any elected position.

Article VII. Membership Meetings

Section 1. Regular Membership Meetings. The regular membership meetings of the Chapter shall be held on the second Monday of each month. The Chapter may vote to change this date. Written notice of a change of date shall be sent to the Chapter at least seven (7) days in advance.

Section 2. Annual Membership Meeting. The regular membership meeting held in January shall be known as the Annual Meeting. The business of the Annual Meeting must include election of the SC and reports from the Standing Committees, Branches, and the outgoing SC.

Section 3. Special Membership Meetings. Special membership meetings shall be called either by the SC or by petition of at least ten (10) members. Notice of a special meeting shall include the specific items of business to be considered. Only items stated in the notice may be considered.

Section 4. Notice of Membership Meetings. Members shall be sent written notice at least seven (7) days before all meetings.

Bylaws of the Maine Democratic Socialists of America

Section 5. Accessibility & Remote Participation.

- A. All Membership and SC meetings shall, when possible, be held in places that conform to the Americans with Disability Act priority 1 standards for accessibility.
- B. The Chapter may provide for remote participation in meetings. Participants shall be able to communicate in real time. Remote participation shall count as presence at a meeting.

Section 6. Quorum. A quorum shall consist of seven (7) members.

Article VIII. Committees

Section 1. Definition. Committees are subgroups of the Chapter focused on an interest, issue, or work site. Ad Hoc Committees exist only for the duration of a measurable task. Standing Committees have no definite end.

Section 2. Motions to Form.

- A. Committees may be formed by motion at any membership meeting.
- B. Motions shall define a mission statement.
- C. Motions shall define one (1) convener and at least two (2) other members.
- D. The convener shall lead members until a chair is elected.

Section 3. Standing Committee Chairs.

- A. Standing Committees must elect a chair within ninety (90) days of formation.
- B. Chairs may resign at any time.
- C. Chairs may be recalled by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of committee members.

Section 4. Meetings.

- A. Committees shall meet at least once per quarter.
- B. Meetings shall be confirmed by minutes or quarterly reports.

Section 5. Dissolution.

- A. Committees may be dissolved if they fail to meet the requirements of this Article.
- B. Committees may be dissolved at any time by a majority vote.

Article IX. Branches

Section 1. Definition. A branch is a regional subgroup of the Chapter.

Section 2. Chartering.

- A. Branches may be chartered by a petition.
- B. Petitions must define the region of the Branch.
- C. Petitions must be signed by five (5) members from the defined region.
- D. Petitions shall be approved by majority vote at a membership meeting.

Bylaws of the Maine Democratic Socialists of America

Article X. Parliamentary Authority

The current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the Chapter where these Bylaws or any standing rules of the Chapter do not apply.

Article XI. Restrictions

Section 1. Nonprofit Status. The Chapter shall not engage in any activity prohibited by the IRS guidelines for 501(c)(4) organizations or similar rules established by the state of Maine.

Section 2. DSA National. The Chapter shall not engage in any activity prohibited by resolutions adopted by DSA's National Convention or DSA's National Political Committee.

Article XII. Amendments

Members may submit amendments to these Bylaws in writing at any membership meeting. Amendments require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Chapter at either the next membership meeting or at a meeting defined by the submitting members.