

# Democratic Socialists of America

**Los Angeles**

2018

**NEW MEMBER** HANDBOOK



*We are socialists because we reject an economic order based on private profit, alienated labor, gross inequalities of wealth and power, discrimination based on race and sex, and brutality and violence in defense of the status quo. We are socialists because we share a vision of a humane social order based on popular control of resources and production, economic planning, equitable distribution, feminism, racial equality, and non-oppressive relationships. We are socialists because we are developing a concrete strategy for achieving that vision, for building a majority movement that will make democratic socialism a reality in America. We believe that such a strategy must acknowledge the class structure of American society and that this class structure means that there is a basic conflict of interest between those sectors with enormous economic power and the vast majority.*

DSA Constitution Article II. Purpose

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# Who We Are

## What DSA Is

Democratic Socialists of America is a grassroots, multi-tendency\*, socialist organization committed to the radical deepening of democracy and freedom in every aspect of our lives. Our goal is a society liberated from oppression, using tactics rooted in a realistic understanding of how to build political power and challenge entrenched structures. With over 30,000 members, DSA is the largest socialist organization in the United States and poised to be a significant force in the resurgence of a popular socialist movement.

## What DSA Is Not

Democratic Socialists of America is not a political party, nor is it a movement that has a narrow, unchanging view of how to achieve our collective political goals.

## Our Goal

The principal goal of DSA is the complete elimination of capitalist modes of economic organization and all interrelated forms of oppression. DSA members typically believe that capitalism is inseparable from racism, misogyny, ableism, anti-LGBTQ+ violence, classism, and the myriad intersecting forms of oppression we experience and witness on a daily basis.

Democratic socialists believe that our economy and society should exist not to make profits for a few, but to meet human needs and foster true equality.

## Our Members

All of our chapter's members are volunteers. We are workers, students, and retirees. We are various ages, races, and genders. We have diverse backgrounds, interests, and skills. We engage with the work, contributing our time and labor each as we are able. Some are veteran activists and some of us are just beginning. We share a vision of a just and equitable society, and we are building power across Los Angeles (and beyond!) to achieve that vision.

### \* Multi-tendency

The “multi-tendency” aspect of DSA means a willingness to accept people holding a wide variety of political views (tendencies) as allies and members. In other words, DSA is a “big tent” organization: within the context of political action in the United States, DSA may make common cause with leftists and progressives of all stripes.



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## DSA Values

We believe that real freedom, not just the appearance of freedom, can be achieved in our lifetimes if we work together to create political power. Political power is more than just the ballot box—**political power is created whenever people organize together**, and it can be expressed in many different ways. Direct action, mutual aid, protest, and education are some ways we can build power together. We believe many different tactics, including but not limited to electoral politics, will be required to create a truly free and liberated society.

**We regard democracy as both a means and an end.** DSA sees democratic modes of social, political, and economic organization as a good in itself, and regards democratic decision-making (e.g., through the building of popular consensus and genuinely free elections with full enfranchisement) as the most legitimate means of obtaining those ends. In practice, this means we are a deeply participatory organization, and encourage any and all levels of involvement.

**Through radical democracy we challenge and resist the systemic oppression of capitalism, sexism, racism, heteropatriarchy, and xenophobia, and begin imagining radical alternatives for a new social, economic, and political reality.**

Los Angeles has been fractured by capitalism along deep regional, racial, and class lines that offer significant challenges to building strong Left unity. It is our goal to challenge and transcend these divisions by rebuilding a strong Left for everyone, not just members of our organization. To be clear, we do not aim to offer a singular solution to organizing on the Left. Powerful and important organizing has been taking place in LA for decades, and it's important we approach our work with humility and respect for the ground others have laid. With that in mind, **we aspire to build strength through solidarity, and offer a compelling alternative to capitalism for everyone.**



IS

**WE HAVE THE FREEDOM TO WORK WHEREVER WE WANT**

as long as it can pay the interest on our debt... and our skyrocketing rents... and our healthcare costs... and our rising costs of living.

THIS

**WE HAVE THE FREEDOM TO RECEIVE A QUALITY EDUCATION**

as long as we are born in the right neighborhood, with enough money to afford it, and as long as our families aren't depending on us for material support.

REALLY

**WE HAVE THE FREEDOM TO LIVE WHEREVER WE WANT**

as long as we can inherit the wealth to do so, and as long as we don't get priced out of our homes by gentrifying developers.

FREEDOM

**WE HAVE THE FREEDOM TO SAY WHATEVER WE PLEASE**

but our individual speech will never compare in magnitude to that of billionaires and the politicians they own.

?

# DSA-LA Code of Conduct

We often, and enthusiastically, organize and discuss topics in large groups of people, with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and viewpoints. Learning how to do this without reproducing the oppressive structures we've inherited from a dysfunctional society can be daunting and uncomfortable, but it is vitally necessary. If we are going to build a social order that prefers equality to oppression, we need to build it first in the spaces in which we organize. The following are not only useful guidelines for respectful discussion, they are also fundamental building blocks for creating a social movement capable of broad and meaningful solidarity.

## **PROGRESSIVE STACK**

Progressive Stack is a form of leading discussions which involves a facilitator keeping a list of names of people who wish to speak. The facilitator scans the group during discussion and if someone wishes to speak, they raise their hand and catch the facilitator's eye. The facilitator nods and makes eye contact to indicate the person is now put on the list to speak, and then the person can put their hand down so it does not distract other discussion participants. However, the facilitator does not simply write a list of names in the order that people raise their hand. Rather, if someone who has not spoken raises their hand, they go to the top of the list. If someone who is of an oppressed group or identity, or of a group or identity that is unrepresented in the conversation raises their hand, they go to the top of the list unless they have already contributed significantly to the discussion.

## **ASSUME BEST INTENTIONS, BUT CHALLENGE**

Give people the benefit of the doubt, but don't be afraid to challenge others when they say something you disagree with. Assume **good faith** in each other. We all come from different backgrounds which inform our mannerisms and communication, so try to understand differences rather than assume hostility or bad intentions. Ask clarifying questions like "did you mean X" or "what makes you say that" to get more information. Encourage yourself and others to maintain a positive attitude, honor the work of others, avoid defensiveness, be open to legitimate critique and challenge oppressive behaviors in ways that help people grow. We want to "call each other in" rather than calling each other out — in other words, if you are challenging someone's ideas or behavior, do it respectfully, and if you are being challenged, receive it respectfully.

## **STEP UP STEP BACK**

When you speak, after you make your point, let others speak. Please respect others by recognizing how often, much, and loud you're speaking and whether or not you're dominating conversation. Step back to leave space for others to voice their opinions and feelings. If the facilitator of the meeting asks you to wrap up, recognize that you should step back. This especially applies to participants from privileged backgrounds. On the other hand, if you don't often speak up, try to make an attempt to participate. In many respects the discussion would greatly benefit from your point of view.

## **ONE DIVA, ONE MIC**

One person speaks at a time. While many of us will have different opinions on matters, speaking while others are talking or adding comments when they cannot respond appropriately does not build a respectful community. If you have a disagreement, wait for your turn to address it. This ensures a productive and clear discussion.

## **WHY AM I TALKING?**

When in discussion, please ask yourself "Why am I talking (WAIT)?" We have a limited amount of time for discussion and often limited time to accomplish the tasks before us. When in discussion, please ask yourself "Why am I talking (WAIT)?" Consider whether or not what you want to say has already been said, whether what you want to say is on topic or if there's a better time and place to say it, and other methods for showing how you feel about the conversation (nodding your head, etc.)

## **USE "I" STATEMENTS**

Speak from your perspective, rather than assuming those of other people. Your experiences are valuable but the conclusions drawn from them or even the experiences themselves are not necessarily universal. We don't want to assume that everyone or even a "we" agrees with everything you are saying.

## **LISTEN ACTIVELY (DON'T WAIT TO TALK)**

Genuinely pay attention to what others say. Actively listen to others. If necessary, when someone makes a point, repeat what you heard, and summarize.

## **OOPS, OUCH**

Acknowledge when you make a mistake. Remember, mistakes will be made, nobody is perfect and recognize an opportunity to forgive others for their mistakes.

# A National Organization

## DSA Los Angeles

DSA is a national organization made up of over 200 local chapters. DSA-LA is one of the largest DSA chapters in the country, and the home chapter for most of Los Angeles County. We have over one thousand dues-paying members who organize in committees, campaign working groups, and caucuses. (For a list, see pages 16–19.)

**We participate in a variety of tactics with the aim of winning measurable gains and dismantling oppressive structures in quantifiable ways.** Our members plan events, actions, day schools, and much more to create the broad solidarity necessary to challenge out-of-touch political structures. We're not here to posture or make empty signals. We're not interested in moral grandstanding. We're interested in building a more just society, and we work hard to do it.

## DSA National

A group of sixteen democratically elected members called the National Political Committee (NPC) guides and leads the implementation of DSA's major political and organizational goals, which are broadly defined every two years by delegates at the National Convention. The DSA Constitution requires that eight seats on the NPC be reserved for women, and that at least five of the NPC seats be reserved for people of color. Elections for the NPC occur every two years.

The NPC helps to facilitate coordination between members and chapters across the country in order to provide a more efficient framework in which to organize nationally. The NPC also directs a small staff, headquartered in New York City, that provides administrative support for chapters and accomplishes the day-to-day affairs required to sustain a large and rapidly expanding organization.

There are also several national caucuses and working groups, including:

- **Afrosocialist and Socialists of Color Caucus**
- **Climate and Environmental Working Group**
- **Democratic Socialists for Medicare for All**
- **Democratic Socialist Labor Commission**
- **Disability Caucus & Working Group**
- **Queer Socialists Working Group**
- **Socialist Feminist Working Group**
- **Veterans' Working Group**

And many more that can be found here: [dsausa.org/get\\_involved](https://dsausa.org/get_involved)

## Dues: What It Means to Be Member-Funded

Many political organizations rely on grants or huge sums of money from wealthy donors. We don't roll like that. Those kinds of arrangements inevitably end up as a tit-for-tat relationship, and even with public grants, accepting that kind of money would make us beholden to certain political actors, which would limit the kinds of protest and agitation we could perform. Most importantly, it would undermine the radical democracy that we hold central to our mission.

We are a completely member-funded organization. That means our vision and our work are guided only by our members and our shared vision of socialism—our vision of a more just society. No establishment politician, corporation, or NGO can dictate what we do or how we organize, or threaten to cut our funding. In fact, through our independence and solidarity, it is we who threaten them.

Many members pay monthly local dues. We then use those funds for actions, agitations, education, and events.

**Absolutely no one is turned away from DSA for lack of funds.** We're socialists, after all. For information on having your membership sponsored, please contact [steeringcommittee@dsa-la.org](mailto:steeringcommittee@dsa-la.org)

	DSA NATIONAL DUES	DSA-LA LOCAL DUES
WHAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>DSA membership</b></li> <li>• A vote on local chapter matters</li> <li>• Access to DSA National teleconferences and webinars at <a href="https://dsausa.org">dsausa.org</a></li> <li>• A subscription to <i>Democratic Left</i> magazine</li> <li>• An official DSA “socialist organizer” card</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A well-funded and effective chapter</li> <li>• The ability to plan and accomplish long-term political goals (via monthly dues)</li> <li>• Sustained local actions and organizing</li> <li>• The chance to change politics and challenge power in Los Angeles.</li> </ul>
WHY	Fund DSA's national campaign efforts chosen democratically at the biennial national convention; pay for national staff and traveling organizers	Pay for communal services, such as meeting space for general membership meetings, website maintenance, and committee resources (e.g., DSA-LA's Zoom conference account)
HOW	Pay national dues (required for membership) by filling out a membership form, or at DSA National: <a href="https://dsausa.org/monthly">dsausa.org/monthly</a>	Support local organizing with local dues by filling out a membership form, or at DSA-LA: <a href="https://dsala.nationbuilder.com/membership">dsala.nationbuilder.com/membership</a>

# DSA in Los Angeles

## Meetings & Decision Making

### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

DSA-LA usually has a General Membership Meeting (aka Chapter Meeting) once a month, where we discuss policies, decisions, and important chapter matters. All are welcome, and there are **New Member Orientations** before every meeting. It's a great way to meet other new members and get plugged into the work that interests you!

At the 2018 Annual Convention, we voted to have more localized versions of the General Membership Meetings, called Branch Meetings\*, to build better geographic representation within the larger chapter.

### LOCAL ANNUAL CONVENTION

Once a year DSA-LA holds an Annual Convention to vote on proposed bylaws amendments, modifications to DSA-LA's Mission Statement and Organizational Priorities, and year-long Chapter Resolutions. It is an opportunity to democratically shape our governing documents as a political collective, and an important part of the way we center democracy in our work throughout the year.

To read the DSA-LA bylaws in their splendorous entirety, check here: [dsa-la.org/bylaws](http://dsa-la.org/bylaws)

#### \* Branch Meetings

As a result of the 2018 Annual Convention, hundreds of dues-paying members in areas like the San Fernando Valley, Westside and beach cities, and the San Gabriel Valley (to mention only a few) will begin to organize in local branches, emphasizing their local communities and issues while still contributing to our citywide actions and goals. The intent is to enable members who have faced prohibitive constraints of distance and geography to participate and build power with comrades in every part of the county.



## Roles & Responsibilities

### MEMBERS

Members are not merely the core of our organization, they are the entirety of our organization. We make no distinction between “core” and “periphery” within our membership; our political strength comes because we are a group operating in solidarity with one another, each contributing time and labor as we are able. True to the “socialist organizer” card every member receives after joining DSA, we are committed to creating a space where our campaigns, projects, and actions come from the rank and file.

### STEERING COMMITTEE

[steeringcommittee@dsa-la.org](mailto:steeringcommittee@dsa-la.org)

The Steering Committee is a 9-person body of democratically elected officers, selected in annual elections from within our membership. They include:

- **At-large officers (6)**
- **Communications Director (1)**
- **Recording Secretary (1)**
- **Treasurer (1)**

The Steering Committee approves the use of chapter resources towards member-led projects, initiates and executes internal policies to help the chapter run smoothly, helps maintain a larger political vision, and ensures that the chapter is operating in line with our democratically ratified Mission Statement and Organizational Priorities.

### YDSA COORDINATOR

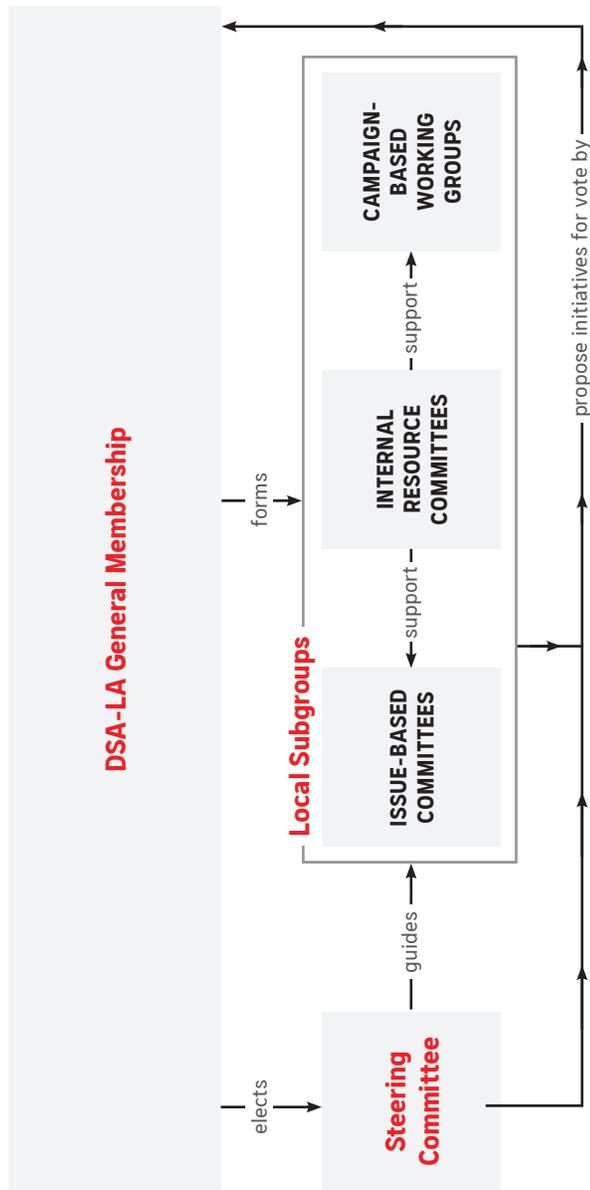
[ydsa@dsa-la.org](mailto:ydsa@dsa-la.org)

The YDSA (Young Democratic Socialists of America) Coordinator organizes and maintains contacts in YDSA chapters at colleges, high schools, or any other place where they may form. The Coordinator assists these chapters as they self-organize, and ensures their ability to participate in the work done by DSA-LA across the county.

### LOCAL SUBGROUPS

Local subgroups are where the bulk of our political work is planned and executed, and are detailed on pages 16–19. Local subgroups establish their own platforms, which are ratified by the chapter, and determine the chapter's political stances on various local and national issues. They initiate projects and campaigns to advance our political goals at local, regional, and national levels.

## Organizational Structure



# Local Subgroups

## Issue-Based Committees

Issue-based Committees organize around a core political issue by creating discrete campaigns, events, and projects related to that issue. Issue-based Committees are one of the primary ways we structure our work in DSA-LA and they each define their own platforms and mission statements in keeping with the overall goals of the chapter.

### CLIMATE JUSTICE

*climatejustice@dsa-la.org*

The Climate Justice Committee recognizes the current moment as a historical apex; one that must end with the dismantling of capitalism as well as the reconstitution of society and its relationship to the Earth. The committee is dedicated to a politics that places people and the planet before profit, and works to agitate, educate and organize on the local, state and national levels for an ecosocialist future in which democracy and equity are united with sustainability.

### ELECTORAL POLITICS (EL-POL)

*electoralpolitics@dsa-la.org*

The Electoral Politics Committee of DSA-LA exists to help the chapter gain the power and knowledge necessary to work towards and realize its goals using the existing power of the state as channeled through elected office.

### HEALTHCARE

*healthcare@dsa-la.org*

The Healthcare Committee seeks to achieve a socialist health care system, clear from profit motives, as a human/moral right for all. In addition to providing educational forums and events, the committee agitates elected officials and organizes canvassing efforts in support of universal healthcare.

### HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS (H&H)

*hnh@dsa-la.org*

The Housing & Homelessness Committee fights for unhoused people's rights, tenant power, affordable housing, and community self-determination. Ultimately, housing must be de-commodified, under democratic control and accessible to all. We are committed to an intersectional approach to housing justice and ending homelessness, which is connected to decriminalizing poverty, anti-racist struggle, abolition of borders and policing, and environmental justice. The committee is focused on strengthening rent control and organizing Streetwatch to defend unhoused people's rights.

### IMMIGRATION JUSTICE (IJC)

*immigrationjustice@dsa-la.org*

The Immigration Justice Committee works to support the self-organization of immigrant communities as a central struggle in the larger fight against capitalism. In addition to organizing and supporting campaigns to abolish ICE, the committee works with partner organizations to oppose and ultimately dismantle the US deportation machine.

### LABOR

*labor@dsa-la.org*

The Labor Committee is dedicated to developing worker consciousness and solidarity, both within our chapter and among the greater Los Angeles community. At the national level, the committee also works in conjunction with the Democratic Socialist Labor Commission (DSLCL), a network of DSA committees, working groups, and other bodies that formally interacts with other organizations that belong to or support the labor movement.

### PRISON ABOLITION

*prisonabolition@dsa-la.org*

The Prison Abolition Committee works toward a future of total prison abolition, which entails the abolition of all forms of the carceral state, including policing as well as public and private prisons. The committee works toward building well informed and researched alternatives that foster a fair and equal society that come in many forms: rehabilitation, medical and mental care, health care in the form of food, housing, physical and community support. It works to collectively demystify the idea of prison abolition and work toward a future void of punitive and vindictive justice where every person's humanity is realized.

### RELIGIOUS SOCIALISM

The aim of the Religious Socialism Committee is to foster democratic socialism along existing faith networks by connecting religious leaders and communities with organizers and activists. By doing good works in the company of those of differing faith with unifying purpose, the committee seeks to engender broad solidarity among communities that might otherwise remain divided.

## Internal Resource Committees

Internal Resource Committees organize around a particular skill set, trade, set of local goals, or area of knowledge or study. Their primary activities are focused on strengthening our chapter by: providing resources, tools, and training materials to DSA-LA members, as well as assistance and expertise to campaigns, projects, and events for Issue based Committees and Campaign-Based Working Groups.

### AGITATION & PROPAGANDA (AGITPROP)

[agitprop@dsa-la.org](mailto:agitprop@dsa-la.org)

The Agitation and Propaganda (Agit-Prop) Committee is dedicated to furthering the goals and work of DSA-LA and its committees and working groups. AgitProp creates physical and digital media to help support our campaigns and actions, and leverages our abundance of media professionals to provide support to other DSA chapters. Their work is key to countering the narrative of the capitalist hegemony and reaching communities with a message of solidarity.

### ANTI-OPPRESSION

[antioppression@dsa-la.org](mailto:antioppression@dsa-la.org)

The Anti-Oppression Committee works to make our chapter and all work carried forth by DSA-LA just, representative, and liberatory. The committee addresses the myriad ways workers are pitted against one another through ideologies of racism, sexism, transphobia, heterosexism, and xenophobia. They research anti-oppressive resources, develop workshops, and convene Quarterly Chapter Culture Forums to address chapter-based and societal issues related to systemic oppressions.

### MEMBERSHIP (MEMCOM)

[membership@dsa-la.org](mailto:membership@dsa-la.org)

Internally, the Membership Committee works to retain and activate existing members to contribute their time and skills to committee work, campaigns, direct actions and other DSA efforts. Externally, our mission is to develop and implement strategies, processes and resources (like this handbook) that will lead to growth in membership, particularly with regard to organizing new members not well-represented in the current membership.

### MUTUAL AID

[mutualaid@dsa-la.org](mailto:mutualaid@dsa-la.org)

Mutual aid is a voluntary exchange of resources and services for the mutual benefit of all people involved. It involves comrades coming together to work as equals for the common good by assessing what people need and what people can provide. Mutual aid projects come from and are run by the community rather than nonprofit workers, foundations, or charity programs. As a committee, Mutual Aid organizes events like Free Brakelight Clinics, childwatch, and self-defense classes.

### POLITICAL EDUCATION (POL-ED)

[politicaleducation@dsa-la.org](mailto:politicaleducation@dsa-la.org)

Capitalism has taught us that a society structured around an endless quest for profit and the pursuit of individual self interest is natural; as socialists, we identify capitalism as the artificially imposed set of relations that it is. The Political Education Committee challenges what is understood to be “common sense” under capitalism and offers ongoing opportunities to expand our collective understanding of socialist concepts, histories, and strategies.

## Campaign Working Groups

Campaign-based Working Groups organize around a single campaign or goal, with a defined strategy, purpose, and endpoint, and whose work does not fall squarely under the purview of any single Issue-based Committee. Working Groups build external partnerships and emphasize coordination and engagement with Issue-based and Internal Resource Committees, as appropriate.

### NOLYMPICS WORKING GROUP

[nolympics@dsa-la.org](mailto:nolympics@dsa-la.org)

The NOlympics LA Coalition is changing the conversation on an LA 2028 Olympics, because the Olympics destroy communities and kill cities. Our campaign looks at the effects of mega sports on immigration, housing, homelessness, policing, and local democracy. Regardless of how successful they are, these games will further expose Angelenos to the problems which are devastating our communities, benefiting the wealthy elite while depriving us of the resources needed to make our city livable.

## Caucuses

Caucuses organize independently around shared interests and identities. Their activities are far more varied than Committees and Working Groups, and may take on a number of different projects or functions in relation to chapter, committee, and working group goals, including but not limited to promoting certain policies or actions, planning independent events, and challenging existing chapter policies.

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# Get Started!

DSA-LA survives and thrives because it is a deeply participatory organization. This means our members don't wait around to be told what to do—we seek out ways to improve ourselves, our organisation, and our whole society. One of the most powerful parts of organising with DSA is that you aren't working for your boss or volunteering for a distant politician who will never know your name. **The work we do is for others and for ourselves.** We build our communities, economy, and society together. So come join us! *Do something!*

## Ways to Get Involved

### ATTEND A DSA EVENT

DSA organizes and participates in dozens of events, marches, protests, educational teach-ins, and much more. The best way to feel like you can do something to change society is to do something to change society! Check our calendar for upcoming events: [dsa-la.org/calendar](https://dsa-la.org/calendar)

### GO TO A NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

Neighborhood meetings happen all across Los Angeles, on the first Saturday and third Tuesday of every month. At the meetings we discuss and organize around work we can accomplish in our local regions and neighborhoods. These are relaxed events and are great places to ask questions or just hang out with like-minded folks. For a list of the upcoming neighborhood meetings, check [dsa-la.org/calendar](https://dsa-la.org/calendar)

### ATTEND A COMMITTEE MEETING

The majority of DSA-LA organizing happens in committee meetings. Where and when they meet depends on the committee, but most meet several times a month. For a list of each committee and their individual focuses, check back to pages 16–19. Each committee has a dedicated Membership Liaison to help new members connect with the work and hit the ground running. Interested in attending a particular committee meeting? Check [dsa-la.org/calendar](https://dsa-la.org/calendar)

### ATTEND A GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

General Membership Meetings (aka chapter meetings) are held around once a month and are a great way to get an overview of what the chapter and individual committees are up to. There's a new member orientation before every meeting, which is a great way to get your bearings and meet other new members. To find out when the next meeting is, check: [dsa-la.org/calendar](https://dsa-la.org/calendar)

### JOIN US ON SLACK

Slack is an online tool we use to organize, share ideas, and communicate quickly between groups. It's a great place to get a feel for the work being done by DSA-LA around the city. For information on how to be added to our Slack workspace, email [membership@dsa-la.org](mailto:membership@dsa-la.org).



### Help! I'm new to all of this!

DSA is a great space to learn new ideas and skills. You don't need experience organizing or in politics. And you'll be surprised by how much you already know from living under capitalism. We all know the stress of rising rents, the fear of an expensive medical bill, the feeling of alienation at work. We've all seen what racism, patriarchy, and imperialism at home and abroad has done to our communities. We need all kinds of skills in our movement. We need people to read, write, teach, analyze, debate, carpool, make calls, take to the streets, provide child watch, bring snacks, make banners, design spreadsheets and everything in between. All that's necessary is a willingness to show up and work democratically. We hope you'll join us!

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# Appendix: Conflict Resolution

## Conflict Resolution Team

DSA-LA is committed to building and maintaining structures that strengthen our ability to meet our political goals by ensuring our organizing spaces do not reproduce the systems of oppression we collectively seek to dismantle. The DSA-LA Conflict Resolution team is integral to this commitment, and their democratically determined mandate is to ensure members have the support they need to constructively work through organizational conflict, and that our chapter addresses misconduct thoughtfully and consistently.

### WHAT IS THE DSA-LA CONFLICT RESOLUTION TEAM?

The Conflict Resolution team is comprised of 5 volunteer comrades—3 Ombudspeople and 2 Harassment Grievance Officers. Ombudspeople and Harassment Grievance Officers fulfill complementary but distinct roles on the Conflict Resolution Team:

- **The Ombudspeople are available for voluntary appointments with members to provide support, coaching, and mediation aimed at navigating conflict within DSA-LA and organizational concerns.**
- **The Harassment Grievance Officers (HGOs) intake and collect initial information aligned with reports of misconduct outlined in the DSA-LA Misconduct Policy and harassment outlined in the National Harassment Policy (Resolution 33). They are also tasked with liaising with the third-party Investigative Commission.**

### WHAT TYPES OF SUPPORT DO THE OMBUDSPEOPLE OFFER?

Individual members can request appointments with Ombudspeople for the following purposes:

- **Experiences:** talking through an experience within DSA-LA that left members feeling confused, uncomfortable, frustrated, or upset.
- **Interactions:** helping to reflect, clarify and process an interaction members had, and/or an ongoing interpersonal issue members are dealing with in DSA-LA.
- **Boundaries:** receive support communicating boundaries to other members or to develop a plan regarding boundary-setting with other members.
- **Communication:** better understanding your own communication style and how to best communicate with other members in organizing spaces and forums.
- **Conflicts:** thinking through possible next steps regarding a conflict (e.g. coaching on how to productively engage in hard conversations with comrades, information on how to request mediation with other members, and/or to receive support and guidance for understanding DSA-LA's formal misconduct procedures).

To request informal support navigating organizing challenges or interpersonal conflict, or to formally report a serious grievance (including harassment) go to [dsa-la.org/dsala\\_conflict\\_resolution\\_team](https://dsa-la.org/dsala_conflict_resolution_team)





# **SOLIDARITY FOREVER**



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[DSA Los Angeles](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)

DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS OF AMERICA **LOS ANGELES**