

By-laws of the Huron Valley Michigan Democratic Socialists of America

Adopted June 8th, 2017

As Amended November 16th, 2018

ARTICLE I. Name

The name of this Local Chapter will be the Huron Valley MI Democratic Socialists of America. Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) is a national organization operating as a not-for-profit corporation. Huron Valley MI Democratic Socialists of America (HVDSA) is an unincorporated association affiliated with DSA as a Local Chapter under the terms of DSA's national Constitution and its Bylaws.

ARTICLE II. Purpose

The Huron Valley Chapter of 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 on private profit, alienated labor, gross inequalities of wealth and power, systematic 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 Huron Valley DSA will be those individuals whose dues to national DSA are paid in full and who reside and/or work in our Local Chapter's area, which will be the Michigan counties of Jackson, Lenawee, Livingston, Hillsdale, and Washtenaw. Individuals may not be members of the Local Chapter without being members of national DSA. It will be the responsibility of members to approve policies and guidelines for the operation of the Local Chapter, to elect 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, the Local Chapter may vote to expel them from Huron Valley MI 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 Steering 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. 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 4. Privacy

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

ARTICLE IV. Local Chapter Meetings

Section 1. General Meeting

The Local Chapter will hold a minimum of one (1) 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 at least three (3) weeks in advance. 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 is the highest legislative body of the Local Chapter. The General Meeting may coincide with a Regular Meeting.

Section 2. Regular Meetings

The Local Chapter will hold Regular 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 Steering Committee. The Regular Meetings will set Local Chapter policy and work priorities, and they will include political education sessions.

The Local Chapter Steering Committee will set the agenda for General and Regular Meetings. In general, the Regular Meeting is the operating legislative body of the Local Chapter and the membership of the Local Chapter will have democratic control over the operations of the chapter.

Section 3. Emergency Meetings

The Local Chapter Steering Committee may call an Emergency Meeting of the Local Chapter on five (5) days' notice when an urgent and important matter requires deliberation prior to the next scheduled Regular or General Meeting.

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 and Terms

The eight (8) officers of the Local Chapter will be two Co-Chairs, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and four At-Large officers. Once elected, the At-Large officers will decide among themselves who will fill the following roles: Social Media Coordinator, Political Education Director, Membership Coordinator, and Minister of Fun. No more than half of the officers may be self-identified men. Their terms of office will be one year, and will run from January 1 to December 31 or until their successors are elected.

Section 2. Vacancies

In the event of a vacancy in any Local Chapter office or Steering Committee position, the Local Chapter Steering Committee will appoint a replacement for the remainder of the term, subject to approval at the next Regular or General Meeting. Should any vacancy result in more than half of the officers being self-identified men, the officer position will remain open until the Steering Committee can appoint a suitable replacement. If an officer or Steering Committee member misses three (3) consecutive Steering Committee or Membership Meetings, or a combination of these; or fails to carry out any responsibilities for a period of 40 days, this will constitute a vacancy in that office or position. In the event of a resignation by an Officer or Steering Committee member, a vacancy will exist.

Section 3. Co-Chairs

- a. The Co-Chairs will preside over Local Chapter and Steering 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. At most one Co-Chair may be a self-identified man. 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 in conjunction with the Steering Committee.
- c. The Co-Chairs will report to Local Chapter Regular Meetings on the business of the Steering Committee Meetings, at which time a copy of the minutes of those meetings will be available for inspection.

Section 4. Secretary

- a. The Secretary will be responsible for answering all correspondence and queries 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 Steering Committee Meetings, and will have custody of these minutes, and the resolutions, reports and other official records of the Local Chapter. The Secretary will transfer official records in good condition to their successor. Official records will include meeting minutes.

Section 5. 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 will deposit them in a bank account under the name of the Local Chapter. The Treasurer may, in their discretion and with the approval of the Steering Committee, hold a portion of Local Chapter funds in an online payment system, such as PayPal. In cooperation with the Secretary, the Treasurer will be responsible for ensuring that membership dues are paid up-to-date. The Treasurer will deliver the Local Chapter financial report to the General Meeting of the Local Chapter, as well as periodic progress reports as requested by the Steering Committee of the Local Chapter. The Treasurer shall be responsible for authorizing all expenditures in accordance with the wishes of the Steering Committee (in the case of expenditures over \$100, prior approval must be sought from the Steering Committee). The Treasurer shall be responsible for fulfilling any tax reporting requirements at the local, state and federal level.

Section 6. Social Media Coordinator

The Social Media Coordinator will be responsible for managing the social media communications of the Local Chapter. They will also be responsible for managing internal online discussion platforms such as Slack.

Section 7. Political Education Director

The Political Education Director is responsible for the educational work of the Local Chapter. Their responsibilities include:

- a. Organizing internal educational activities to develop Local Chapter members as political organizers, activists, and theorists;
- b. Organizing external educational activities to raise political consciousness and understanding of socialism in the Local Chapter's geographic area
- c. Organizing workshops, study and discussion groups, forums, and other educational activities in the name of the Local Chapter.

Section 8. Membership Coordinator

The Membership Coordinator is responsible for onboarding new members, conducting organizing trainings, membership renewals, and coordinating internal organizing activities of the Local Chapter. They will be responsible for maintaining an up-to-date membership list of the Local Chapter.

Section 9. Minister of Fun

The Minister of Fun is responsible for planning the Local Chapter's social events. These may include, but are not limited to potlucks, coffee hours, picnics, and fundraisers. There will be at least one such event per month.

ARTICLE VI. Steering Committee

Section 1. Composition

The Local Chapter Steering Committee will be composed of the eight (8) officers of the Local Chapter and the chair(s) of any Local Chapter branches.

Section 2. Duties

a. The leadership and membership of Huron Valley DSA will strive to ensure that its Steering Committee reflects representation from the range of constituencies and allies we seek in the fight for democratic socialism, including people of color, women, LGBT individuals, and union members as well as the geographic diversity of our Local Chapter's area. The Steering Committee will make it a continuing priority to ensure that succeeding leaders in Huron Valley DSA make up a diverse group and that the chapter's activities and political program address white supremacy, patriarchy, class privilege and exploitation, as well as both systematic and individual discrimination on the basis of race, disability, sexual orientation, and gender expression.

b. The Steering 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 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 Steering Committee is the regular Steering body of the Local Chapter, and thus subordinate to its Legislative bodies, the General and Regular Meetings.

c. The Local Chapter Steering 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, for supporting the work of the officers of the Chapter, and for acting on the organization's behalf between Local Chapter meetings.

Section 3. Meetings

The meetings of the Steering Committee will be held at the call of one of the Co-Chairs at such 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 (ordinarily) be given two (2) days oral, written, or email notice of regular Steering Committee Meetings; a 24-hour notice may be given under special emergency circumstances. Steering Committee meetings shall be open to all chapter members in good standing unless the Committee goes into executive session by two-thirds vote of the committee.

Section 4. Quorum

A quorum of five (5) members of the Steering Committee is required for the transaction of Steering Committee business.

ARTICLE VII. Branches

Section 1. Definition

For the purposes of facilitating ongoing activity and member involvement, HVDSA may establish branches in municipalities with substantial concentrations of HVDSA members. Branches may be established by a

majority vote at a General Meeting, Regular Meeting, or Emergency Meeting called for that purpose. The chairs of branches will hold membership on the Local Chapter Steering Committee in addition to any members selected under Article V.

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 Steering Committee.

ARTICLE VIII. Committees

Section 1. Duration

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 vote of members in good standing at a Regular Meeting of the Local Chapter.

Section 2. Duties

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

Section 3. Standing Committees

The Steering Committee can create permanent Standing committees to work on specific issues. Such committees must be ratified by a majority vote at a Regular, General, or Emergency meeting. Standing Committees will have a Chairperson approved by the Steering Committee. Abolishing a Standing committee requires a majority vote at a Regular, General, or Emergency Meeting.

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 will be held on the schedule announced by the national organization.

ARTICLE X. Prohibited Activity

The Huron Valley Democratic Socialists of America will not engage in activity prohibited by IRS guidelines established for 501(c)(4) organizations or similar rules established by the state of Michigan. 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 and Recalls

Section 1. Nominations Committee

A three (3)-person Nominations Committee will be established at least one (1) month prior to every election by vote of a Regular Meeting. It will solicit and receive nominations for the positions to be elected, including Local Chapter officers and Steering Committee members.

Section 2. Nominations Process

Nominations for Local Chapter officers and delegates to the National Convention will be opened at least 10 days before and closed at the election meeting. The call for nominations will be announced to all members in good standing of DSA as soon as nominations are open.

Section 3. Uncontested Positions

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

Section 4. Recalls

- a. A vote to recall a member of the Steering Committee shall be initiated upon the Steering Committee's receipt of petition by one-tenth of chapter membership (as defined by Article III Section 1) or branches of the chapter (as defined by Article VII, Section 1) representing one-third of chapter membership.
- b. The Steering Committee shall provide written notice of the recall vote to the chapter membership no more than seven (7) days after receipt of a recall petition meeting the guidelines provided in part a of this section. The written notice shall provide the date and time for the in-person vote.
- c. The in-person vote shall occur on a date no fewer than twenty-one (21) days and no more than forty-five (45) days from the date the written notice was issued to the chapter membership.
- d. If a scheduled general meeting occurs during the period of time defined in part c of this section, then the in-person vote shall take place at the general meeting. If there is no general meeting scheduled within this period of time, then the Steering Committee shall schedule a special meeting to ensure the in-person vote takes place before this period of time expires.
- e. Members shall vote on the matter of the recall by secret ballot. The Steering Committee shall administer an electronic vote for members unable to attend the in-person meeting. The electronic vote shall be closed within

twenty-four (24) hours of the in-person vote. The Steering Committee shall make final vote totals available to chapter membership.

f. A majority of those voting in favor of recall with a quorum of at least 20% of chapter membership shall immediately remove the Steering Committee member.

g. A member of the Steering Committee subject to a recall petition or recall vote may review the petition for recall any time before the recall vote occurs.

h. The Steering Committee may, with a two-thirds majority, vote to suspend some or all of the duties or powers of the Steering Committee member subject to the recall petition or recall vote until the conclusion and totaling of the vote. The Steering Committee may not revoke the right of the member defined in part g of this section.

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 Steering Committee one (1) month in advance of a General or Regular Meeting. The Steering Committee is required to provide the Local Chapter membership with two (2) weeks' written notice of the proposed amendments. The amendment must be approved by a two-thirds vote of Members present at a General or Regular Meeting.

ARTICLE XIII. Rules of the Local Chapter

Section 1. Rules

The Rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 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 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.