

**Bylaws of the Savannah Chapter  
of Democratic Socialists of America, Inc.  
Adopted 2025-04-08; approved by the NPC 2025-04-15.**

## **ARTICLE I. Name and Territory.**

### **Section 1. Name.**

The legal name of the Chapter shall be the Savannah Chapter of Democratic Socialists of America, Inc., hereinafter referred to as “Savannah DSA” or “the chapter”. Savannah DSA and Democratic Socialists of America, hereinafter referred to as National DSA, are not-for-profit corporations.

### **Section 2. Territory.**

Savannah DSA shall conduct activities in the Savannah/Chatham, Bryan, Effingham, Beaufort, Jasper, Beaufort /Coastal Georgia within the territory defined by the charter granted by National DSA to Savannah DSA.

## **ARTICLE II. Purpose.**

Savannah DSA is organized for the promotion of social welfare within the meaning of Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as now enacted or hereafter amended. In pursuit of this purpose, Savannah DSA may engage in community education, organizing, and advocacy to advance economic democracy, worker self-management, and social equity through legally permissible means consistent with its nonprofit status.

Savannah DSA rejects an economic order based solely on private profit, exploited labor, gross inequalities of wealth and power, discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, religion or lack thereof and the brutality and violence in defense of the status quo.

Savannah DSA envisions a humane social order based on popular control of resources, production, and economic planning; economic and environmental sustainability; equitable distribution; gender, racial, and ethnic 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. Definition.**

Membership of Savannah DSA shall be defined as being a member in good standing of the Democratic Socialists of America, Inc. ("National DSA") and residing in the territory described by the charter granted by National DSA. Individuals may not be members of the Local Chapter without being members of National DSA.

### **Section 2. Authority.**

Members shall be responsible for proposing and deliberating questions of Savannah DSA business at local chapter meetings, electing Savannah DSA officers, electing delegates to the National DSA Convention, and volunteering for local chapter activities and duties.

### **Section 3. Resignation.**

A member may resign from the Local Chapter to become an at -large member of DSA by written notice to Savannah DSA Secretary and National DSA. A member may resign from National DSA by notifying National DSA directly.

## **Section 4. Removal of Members.**

If a member in good standing is found to be in substantial disagreement with the principles or policies of Savannah DSA or National DSA, found to be consistently engaging in undemocratic, disruptive behavior, or if they are found to be under the discipline of any democratic centralist organization, other members of Savannah DSA may vote to expel them from the chapter. In order for such a finding to be made, another Savannah DSA member shall formally submit written charges against the member in question to the Savannah DSA Steering Committee, which will set the date of a 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 chapter meeting. An expelled member in good standing must appeal first to the National Political Committee of National DSA. Decisions on expulsion by either Savannah DSA or National DSA may be appealed to the National Convention.

## **Section 5. Voluntary Donations.**

As mandated by the National Constitution and Bylaws, Savannah DSA may establish a local chapter pledge system of voluntary donations for its members. The payment of a local chapter donation shall not be a requirement for voting or for holding office within Savannah DSA.

## **Section 6. Data Security.**

The Steering Committee shall create and maintain policy and procedures to secure all member data, including but not limited to contact and billing information.

# **ARTICLE IV. Meetings.**

## **Section 1. Definition.**

Savannah DSA Conventions, General Meetings, and Special Meetings shall represent the general will of the membership and shall have the highest authority of decision-making power over all matters within the chapter.

## **Section 2. Savannah DSA Convention.**

Savannah DSA shall hold a Savannah DSA Convention each calendar year to accept reports, consider questions of chapter business, and elect Savannah DSA Officers and may adopt an annual budget.

The Steering Committee shall electronically or physically send written notice of the convention to all members no less than twenty-one (21) days prior to the convention. The Steering Committee shall publish the agenda to the membership no less than ten (10) days prior to the convention.

If the Savannah DSA Convention elects to consider special standing rules, the question of their adoption will be the first order of business and upon adoption will apply to that convention only.

The Savannah DSA Convention may coincide with a General Meeting.

## **Section 3. General Meetings.**

Savannah DSA shall hold a minimum of four (4) General Meetings each calendar year to address any chapter business within the guidelines set by the Savannah DSA Convention.

The Steering Committee shall publish the time and place to the membership no less than fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting. The Steering Committee shall set and publish the agenda to the membership no less than five (5) days prior to the meeting.

## **Section 4. Special Meetings.**

The Savannah DSA Steering Committee may call a Special Meeting of the chapter on five (5) days' notice when an urgent and important matter requires deliberation.

## **Section 5. Rules.**

Savannah DSA may elect to adopt standing rules, which shall not be inconsistent with these bylaws, to administer the process and procedures of chapter meetings.

The rules contained in the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern all Savannah DSA meetings where procedural disputes arise, unless otherwise specified in these Bylaws or adopted standing rules.

Any action taken by a chapter meeting in contravention of these bylaws is null and void.

## **Section 6. Quorum.**

A quorum of ten (10) percent of the members (but not fewer than six (6) persons) is required for Savannah DSA Convention, General, or Special Meetings to transact business.

# **ARTICLE V. Officers.**

## **Section 1. Officers and Terms.**

The officers of the Local Chapter shall be the two Co-Chairs, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Membership Coordinator. The term of office shall be one year or until their successors are elected. The officers shall not all be cisgender men. No member shall hold more than one office at any given time.

## **Section 2. Elections.**

Elections for officers shall be held at the Savannah DSA Convention unless otherwise stated in these bylaws. The Steering Committee shall open nominations no less than thirty (30) days prior to the election and call for nominations to the membership. Uncontested elections may be decided by acclamation without objection, otherwise elections will be determined by instant-runoff voting. Elections shall be governed by any rules and procedures under Article IV Section 5.

### **Section 3. Co-Chairs.**

The Co-Chairs shall be the Chief Executive Officers of Savannah DSA. They shall preside over local chapter and Steering Committee meetings or shall appoint a substitute to assume the powers and duties of the presiding officer as specified in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*.

The Co-Chairs shall be the official public spokespersons for the Local Chapter and shall initiate such actions and policies as the Local Chapter's general welfare may demand. The Co - Chairs shall be responsible for coordinating the day -to-day operations and political work of the Local Chapter's Branches, Committees, and other formations. The Co -Chairs shall report to local chapter meetings on the business of the Steering Committee.

### **Section 4. Secretary.**

The Secretary shall be responsible for answering all correspondence and queries of Savannah DSA and for maintaining an up-to-date membership list of the chapter. They shall ensure effective communication with National DSA. They shall temporarily assume the responsibilities of the Co -Chair, if neither Co-Chair is able to do so.

The Secretary shall be responsible for the taking of minutes of all chapter and Steering Committee meetings and shall have custody of these minutes, resolutions, reports, and other official records of the chapter. Minutes will include attendance of officer s.

The Secretary shall transfer official records, such as meeting minutes and membership lists, in good condition to their successor. The Secretary is responsible for storing and ensuring members' access to the latest versions of these bylaws, meeting minutes , agendas, resolutions, standing rules, and all other materials in the interest of the membership.

### **Section 5. Treasurer.**

The Treasurer shall be responsible for the funds and financial records of the Local Chapter. The Treasurer is responsible for:

- Maintaining and securing all financial records.
- Preparing budgets and financial reports for chapter meetings and Steering Committee review.
- Ensuring timely filing of IRS Form 8976 and any required financial reports.
- Overseeing financial transactions, including check signing and expense reimbursements.
- Maintaining compliance with all applicable state and federal financial regulations.

All funds collected by Savannah DSA shall be turned over to the Treasurer, who will hold these funds in a secure place until it is possible to deposit the funds in a credit union or bank account under the name of the chapter. The Treasurer shall prepare budgets and financial reports for consideration at chapter meetings and as requested by the Steering Committee, and ensure the Savannah DSA's regulatory compliance. In cooperation with the Membership Coordinator, the Treasurer shall be responsible for ensuring that membership dues are current.

The Treasurer shall create and document policies and procedures for carrying out their duties and for maintaining healthy Local Chapter finances. The Treasurer shall transfer to their successor the documented policies and procedures, financial records and reports, and access to financial accounts securely.

## **Section 6. Membership Coordinator.**

The Membership Coordinator shall be responsible for the overall health and growth of the Local Chapter membership by coordinating the outreach, recruitment, and engagement activities of the chapter. The Membership Coordinator shall oversee initiatives concerning membership growth, retention, engagement, participation, and leadership development.

The Membership Coordinator shall organize their activities to be inclusive, culturally competent, and non-oppressive to marginalized groups. Special attention shall be devoted to the recruitment of members from marginalized groups.

## **Section 7. Additional Duties and Actions Out of Order.**

The Savannah DSA Steering Committee may assign additional temporary duties to an officer of the chapter, so long as such assignments do not conflict with their responsibilities as outlined in these Bylaws.

Any action taken by an officer in contravention of these bylaws is null and void.

## **Section 8. Resignation.**

Any officer of the Savannah DSA may electronically or physically submit their resignation to either the Steering Committee or at the General Meeting. Upon resignation, the Steering Committee shall fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term either by scheduling an election no less than thirty (30) days away from a Local General Meeting or by appointment via simple majority vote of the Steering Committee.

## **Section 9. Suspension.**

Any officer of Savannah DSA may be temporarily suspended for thirty (30) days at a General Meeting as defined in Article IV. Any member may motion to recall and shall state with particularity the acts of malfeasance, nonfeasance, gross negligence, or undemocratic or uncomradely behavior comprising the grounds for removal and must be seconded. The General Meeting may adopt such a motion by a two-thirds vote.

## **Section 10. Recall.**

Any officer of Savannah DSA may be recalled for malfeasance or failure to fulfill their duties or obligations as an officer.

### **a. Recall by Vote of the Membership.**

In order to recall or remove an officer, a member in good standing must formally refer a request to the Steering Committee to remove said officer, which will set a date of a Special 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 (2) 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 Special Meeting.

### **b. Recall by Vote of the Steering Committee.**

An officer may be recalled by vote of the Steering Committee only under narrow circumstances for failure to do their duty. If an officer misses three consecutive Steering Committee meetings without excuse or fails to respond to attempts by Steering Committee members to communicate, that officer may be removed from office by a vote of three (3) of the five (5) members of the Steering Committee. This action must be reported at the next General Meeting, at which time members in good standing may overturn the vote.

## **ARTICLE VI. Steering Committee.**

## **Section 1. Composition.**

The Steering Committee shall be composed of the five (5) officers of Savannah DSA.

## **Section 2. Duties.**

The Steering Committee administers the affairs of chapter and oversees the implementation of the decisions of the chapter's meetings; it may also propose policy General Meetings. It shall have the power to receive reports of any Branch, Committee, or formally created Working Group, and advise thereon, to call Special Meetings of the Local Chapter, and to act on any matter that requires immediate and urgent action. The Steering Committee is the regular executive body of Savannah DSA, and thus subordinate to its legislative bodies, the Savannah DSA Convention and General Meetings.

The Steering Committee shall be responsible for establishing program activities for the chapter, for proposing guidelines and policies that shall subsequently be voted on by members in good standing, and for acting on the organization's behalf between chapter meetings.

The Steering Committee is responsible for ensuring that the following responsibilities are assigned to Steering Committee members or other individuals: communications, internal and external; development of any standing rules; and preparation of an annual report to be presented to the membership at the beginning of the new fiscal year or at the Local Chapter Convention.

## **Section 3. Meetings.**

The meetings of the Steering Committee shall be held at the call of one (1) of the Co-Chairs at such regular 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 be given three (3) days oral, written, or electronic notice of Steering Committee Meetings unless all members of the Steering Committee accept shorter notice. The Steering Committee shall give notice of its meeting schedule to Local Chapter members. Meeting minutes shall be recorded and accessible to the membership.

Steering Committee Meetings may be held electronically by any means acceptable to all the members of the Steering Committee.

Any member in good standing of the Local Chapter may observe Steering Committee Meetings. The Steering Committee shall allow for a question and answer period and a comment period if capacity permits.

The Steering Committee may go into executive session by simple majority vote in order to discuss any sensitive matters.

## **Section 4. Quorum.**

A quorum of a simple majority, including at least three (3) of the five (5) officers, is required for the transaction of Steering Committee business.

## **Section 5. Rules.**

The Steering Committee may elect to adopt standing rules to administer the process and procedures of Steering Committee Meetings that are not inconsistent with these bylaws.

Any action taken by the Steering Committee in contravention of these bylaws is null and void.

## **Section 6. Voting.**

The Steering Committee may make decisions on business by vote of a simple majority of the committee at a Steering Committee Meeting or through other means unanimously approved by all Steering Committee members at a Steering Committee Meeting. Any vote that occurs between Steering Committee meetings shall be reported at the next meeting.

## **Section 7. Board of Directors.**

For the purposes of incorporation and compliance with the Georgia Nonprofit Corporation Code, the Steering Committee shall serve as the Board of Directors of Savannah DSA. This designation applies only to comply with nonprofit laws and does not alter the Steering Committee's operational role as defined in these Bylaws.

# **ARTICLE VII. Branches.**

## **Section 1. Definition.**

A Branch is a subgroup chartered by the Local Chapter consisting of at least five (5) members in good standing for the purpose of expanding the reach and accessibility of the Local Chapter. Branches shall be defined by geography, identity, language, belonging to a particular institution, or sharing a common interest.

## **Section 2. Creation.**

A charter application must be made by written resolution, endorsed by five (5) members in good standing of the chapter who would be members of the Branch, and submitted according to the same procedure as defined in Article XIV of these bylaws.

A charter application must define the purpose of the Branch, the nature of its leadership, the scope and nature of its membership, and how the Branch makes decisions. Membership by geography shall not overlap with another Branch defined by geography. The General Meeting may approve a charter application under this article by a simple majority vote.

A charter application may include an amendment to these bylaws for the purpose of Branch representation on the Steering Committee. The General Meeting may approve this proposed amendment by a two-thirds majority vote.

## **Section 3. Dissolution.**

A motion to dissolve a Branch must be made by written resolution, endorsed by five (5) members in good standing of Savannah DSA, and submitted according to the same procedure as defined in Article XIV of these bylaws. The General Meeting may dissolve a Branch under this article by a simple majority vote.

A motion to dissolve a Branch may include an amendment to these bylaws for the purpose of removing Branch representation on the Steering Committee. The General Meeting may approve a motion to dissolve a Branch with a bylaws amendment under this article by a two-thirds majority vote.

# **ARTICLE VIII. Young Democratic Socialist of America Chapters.**

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 IX. Committees.**

## **Section 1. Definition.**

A committee is a group of Savannah DSA members tasked with specific functions and authority related to the work and administration of the chapter.

## **Section 2. Creation.**

A committee may be established at a General Meeting by a simple majority vote. The Steering Committee may also establish a committee solely for purposes of carrying out responsibilities already assigned to the Steering Committee in these bylaws. The motion to establish a committee must define the purpose of the committee, the nature of its leadership, the nature of its membership, how the committee makes decisions, a deadline for either its dissolution or renewal, and any chapter resources it may need. The committee may be subject to additional rules of the chapter.

## **Section 3. Dissolution.**

Any committee created under this article may be dissolved by a General Meeting at any time by a simple majority vote. If a committee was established by the Steering Committee, that committee may be dissolved by the Steering Committee at any time by a simple majority vote.

# **ARTICLE X. Working Groups and Other Formations.**

## **Section 1. Definition.**

Other formations may exist within the chapter when they do not need to represent the will of the membership, but otherwise offer a beneficial purpose. Such formations shall have no authority on behalf of the chapter beyond the authority provided to chapter members individually. Such formations may be subject to additional rules of the chapter.

## **Section 2. Formal Creation.**

Such formations may be recognized or established by decision of the Steering Committee or the General Meeting for the purpose of utilizing chapter resources not otherwise offered to chapter members, including funds and communication resources.

## **Section 3. Formal Dissolution.**

The recognition or establishment of such formations may be revoked by simple majority vote of the Steering Committee or General Meeting at any time.

# **ARTICLE XI. Delegates to National, Regional, and State Organizations.**

## **Section 1. Eligibility to Vote on Delegates.**

Members in good standing of Savannah DSA shall elect chapter delegates and alternates to the National Convention, as well as to any regional or state organizations.

## **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 National DSA. 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. Additionally, no election for delegates to the National Convention shall be held more than four (4) months, or less than forty-five (45) days, prior to the opening of the National Convention. No election for delegates shall be conducted before the apportionment of delegates.

In accordance with, Article VI, Section 3, of National DSA Bylaws, local chapters may determine their own method of election of delegates to the National Convention except that a petition from 10% of a local chapter's membership or a motion supported by 15% of those present and voting at the General 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 XII. Grievance Procedure.**

A chapter member in good standing may be appointed to the role of Harassment Grievance Officer by the General Meeting by a simple majority. The Grievance Officer will process all grievance reports in accordance with National DSA policy. If the chapter has no available Grievance Officer, the Steering Committee must direct the complainant to National DSA to file the grievance report.

Savannah DSA will follow the [Harassment Policy of national DSA](#).

## **ARTICLE XIII. Prohibited Activity.**

Savannah Local DSA Local Chapter will not engage in activity prohibited by the IRS guidelines established for 501(c)(4) organizations or similar rules established by the state of

Georgia. 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 XIV. Amendments.**

Proposed amendments to these bylaws must be made by written resolution, endorsed by five (5) members in good standing of Savannah DSA, and submitted to the Steering Committee at least twenty-one (21) days in advance of a General Meeting as defined in Article IV. The Steering Committee is required to provide the chapter membership with at least ten (10) days physical or electronic notice of the proposed amendments. The General Meeting may adopt amendments to these bylaws proposed under this article by two-thirds vote.

No amendment to these Bylaws may be in conflict with the national DSA Constitution and Bylaws. The Local Chapter will provide the amended Bylaws to the DSA national office. Any guidance or direction with Savannah DSA Bylaws that contradicts National DSA Bylaws will be null and void and must be amended.

## **ARTICLE XV. Local Chapter Dissolution.**

A proposal to dissolve Savannah DSA must be made by written resolution, endorsed by ten (10) members in good standing of the chapter, and submitted to the Steering Committee at least twenty-one (21) days in advance of a General Meeting as defined in Article IV. The Steering Committee is required to notify the chapter membership with at least ten (10) days physical or electronic notice of this resolution. The General Meeting may adopt a resolution to dissolve Savannah DSA under this article by a two-thirds vote.

Upon dissolution of Savannah DSA, and in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 14-3-1403 of the Georgia Nonprofit Corporation Code, the chapter shall first satisfy all liabilities and obligations. Any remaining assets shall be irrevocably distributed to the Democratic Socialists of America, Inc. (National DSA), or to another tax-exempt 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4) nonprofit organization as designated by National DSA, in compliance with IRS regulations.