



CHARTERING PACKET 2025

CHARTERING WITH THE VIRGINIA YOUNG DEMOCRATS

Club charters are subject to renewal at the annual VAYD State Convention. All club charters that have not been renewed by the close of the VAYD Convention shall be terminated at that time. Clubs that do not charter at Convention can apply for an interim charter at any point during the year.

The process for completing your charter application does require some paperwork and preparation, but you have help. If you have questions at any point during the process, you may contact Malena Llanos president@vayd.org.

Included in this packet:

- [VAYD Chartering Checklist](#);
- [FAQ](#), including how to max your votes for Convention;
- Sample Club Constitutions (1) (2);
- Sample Outreach Plans (1) (2);
- [Sample Membership-Officer-Advisor Roster](#) (*Be sure to review what's required in this document [HERE](#).*);
- [Sample Campaign/Charitable Activity Letter](#).

These and other samples of required documents, such as the Membership, Officer Lists, and Advisor Lists (in Excel format), are available online at <https://vayd.org/charter/>.

Be sure to let us know if you have any questions or need any assistance from us. We're looking forward to having you on our team and we want to make the charter application process as simple as possible for you. Feel free to contact us at any time with questions!

Malena Llanos
President
president@vayd.org

Emma Slayton
Membership Director
membership_director@vayd.org

CHARTERING CHECKLIST

Do you have everything you need to charter? This checklist will help make sure that you've submitted all the required documents.

Required Items:

1. **Copy of Chapter Constitution & Bylaws** (the primary governing document of your club, whatever it may be.) Here are some sample constitutions: ([Version 1](#); [Version 2](#)).

2. **Copy of Chapter's Outreach/Affirmative Action Plan**
(This must conform to the guidelines issued under [Article VI, Section 1 of the VAYD Constitution](#).)
Here are some sample outreach/affirmative action plans: (Version 1; [Version 2](#)).

3. **Chapter Membership Roster**
Clubs must have at least 6 members to be considered for a club charter.¹ It must include the following for each member:

- ☐ First and Last Name
- ☐ Email address
- ☐ Date of birth (must be between the ages of 13-35 to be counted towards VAYD membership.)
- ☐ Telephone number (including area code)
- ☐ Mailing Address (not required, but strongly encouraged)

[\(Here is a template you can use for this.\)](#)

4. **List of Chapter Officers**
(This can be included as a separate tab on the Membership Roster.)

- ☐ First and Last Name
- ☐ Mailing address
- ☐ Phone numbers
- ☐ Officer position held
- ☐ Date of term expiration
- ☐ Date of birth

[\(Here is a template you can use for this.\)](#)

5. **(High School/College/University clubs only)**: A list of any and all faculty or staff advisors with current contact information, including email address and telephone number.
(This can be included within the Membership Roster.)

¹ The required number of members is lower for HS/Teen chapters meeting certain requirements. Please see [VAYD Constitution \(Article II Section 3\)](#) for more information..

Please note that the Chapter Membership Roster, List of Chapter Officers, and the Faculty/Staff advisor contact information can all be compiled and submitted as one file. Most VAYD chapters submit this information in a combined format and [HERE is an example Membership-Officer-Advisor roster spreadsheet template that does this.](#)

Optional Items*

**(including these within your chartering application can provide your chapter with additional votes at convention. Please see our [FAQ section](#) for more details.)*

- ☐ Club Website. (This can also be a Facebook Page.)
- ☐ Campaign and/or Charitable Activities Letters. (Example available [HERE](#).)

Reminder: Sample documents are online and downloadable in Word/Excel format at <https://vayd.org/charter/>. If other file formats are required, please contact the Membership Director and/or the Credentials Chair.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHY DOES VAYD NEED ALL OF THIS INFORMATION?

The Virginia Young Democrats serve as a liaison between all of our charter members and the leadership of the Democratic Party of Virginia and all of our statewide campaigns, but in order to make sure that all of our campaigns are aware of the strength of all of our chapters and to make sure that our statewide organizations and campaigns can easily connect with local chapters, our information needs to be up to date. Additionally, the information provided to us in your charter application is used to determine how many votes each chapter will receive at the annual convention (more below).

HOW DOES MY CHAPTER RECEIVE VOTES FOR CONVENTION?

This can be the most confusing part of Convention preparation. Luckily, your trusty Chartering Team is here to help with an easy-to-understand chart (these are allotted votes prior to any sanctions the Credentials Committee may order):

FACTOR	DESCRIPTION	NO. OF VOTES
Club Size	Divided into five groups of 20%, based on membership totals in the approved report of the Credentials Committee	Largest 20% = 20 votes Next 20% = 15 votes Next 20% = 10 votes Next 20% = 7 votes Smallest 20% = 5 votes
Council of Presidents Participation	3 votes per COP meeting/call your club President attended	1 Meeting: 3 votes 2 Meetings: 6 votes 3 Meetings: 9 votes
Campaign/Charitable Activities	Official club participation in campaign activities for a Democratic nominee or endorsee for public office; official club participation in charitable events. Must be certified. Refer to VAYD Constitution for requirements, VII.16.iii.	6 votes per campaign activity 4 votes per charitable activity (There is a 24-vote maximum)
Club Website	Maintaining an up-to-date online information center (website, Facebook page/group, etc.). The VAYD Secretary will recommend the number of votes to the Credentials Committee.	5 votes (max)

Centralized Membership Database	Maintaining your club's membership in a central database (i.e. excel spreadsheet). The VAYD Secretary will make recommendations on any reductions in votes under this section.	5 votes (max)
Past Chartering	Votes are granted for each of the last two immediate past annual Conventions at which the club was granted a charter and attended.	1 Convention = 2 votes 2 Conventions = 4 votes (There is a 4 vote maximum)
Newly Chartered Clubs	If a newly chartered club has not been chartered in any of the previous four calendar years, as certified by the Secretary, they will receive four votes. <i>You may not receive votes under both this and "Past Chartering" provisions.</i>	4 votes
On-Time Submission	Submit all required documents by Friday, March 21, 2025 at 11:59 PM.	5 votes

WHAT IS THE MINIMUM NUMBER OF DELEGATES MY CLUB NEEDS TO CAST OUR VOTES?

For clubs within the hosting club's region, delegates can cast a maximum of five votes each. For clubs from any other region, delegates can cast a maximum of ten votes each. ***For 2025, clubs from the Valley Region ([see IV.6.vii of the VAYD Constitution](#)) are at a 5-to-1 ratio; all other clubs are at a 10-to-1 ratio.***

HOW DO I BECOME A DELEGATE TO CONVENTION?

Each club shall have the authority to determine the manner in which its delegates and delegation chair are chosen, consistent with its bylaws and with the VAYD Constitution. If a prospective delegate is not eligible to be a member of any chartered club within 50 miles of his/her residence, s/he may become an accredited at-large delegate, having submitted the information required by [II.5.iv of the VAYD Constitution](#) with an at-large fee of one dollar.

WHAT ARE SOME MISTAKES THAT CAN CAUSE MY CLUB TO LOSE VOTES?

1. **Not submitting a charter application on time.** If your charter is duly submitted by 11:59 pm on March 21, 2025, you get five votes for on-time submission. Probably the easiest five votes to get. However, if a chapter submits a late charter application, the chapter, at the discretion and recommendation of the credentials committee, may lose votes at the rate of up to four percent of total voting strength for each calendar day a portion of a charter application is late. All other recommended sanctions by the credentials committee shall be limited to censure, denial of charter application, or a reduction of not more than 75 percent of voting strength.
2. **Not submitting one of the required documents.** It happens to the best of us! This is why we've created the checklist. We recommend submitting the documents early and confirming receipt of all required documents with the Membership Director.
3. **Incomplete required information on the required documents.** Again, checklist!
4. **Not bringing enough delegates to cast your allotted number of votes.** Is your club in the Valley Region? Divide your expected vote total by 5. Is your club outside the Valley Region? Divide your expected vote total by 10. Bring at least that many eligible delegates to be able to cast all of your votes.

WHEN WILL WE RECEIVE WORD FROM THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE ON OUR VOTING STRENGTH?

One week prior to the Convention, the chair of the Credentials Committee submits the preliminary Credentials report to the members of the VAYD Executive Committee and to the presidents of each club named in the report. The Credentials Committee may revise its report until it is adopted by the annual Convention.

IF I BELIEVE THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE HAS MADE AN ERROR OR WOULD LIKE TO CONTEST THE COMMITTEE'S FINDINGS FOR MY CLUB, HOW CAN I DO SO?

The Credentials Committee will discuss charter applications shortly after the initial chartering period has closed. In any discussions, a representative of the club has the right to be present and offer a defense. The Credentials Chair will publicize the meetings of the Credentials Committee so that members of clubs with sanctions pending may be present. Such deliberations may be held in executive session unless the accused otherwise desires.

SAMPLE CLUB CONSTITUTION

Constitution of the XXXX Young Democrats

Article I: Name, Objects

Section 1: The name of this organization shall be the XXXX Young Democrats.

Section 2: The objects of the XXXX Young Democrats shall be:

- I. To support and elect Democratic candidates for public office;
- II. To widen and increase the interest and knowledge of young people in government and the political process;
- III. To train and develop young people for positions of leadership; iv. To increase the role of under-represented people in our Party, government, and society; and
- IV. To serve those in need in our community.

Article II: Membership and Dues

Section 1: Membership in the XXXX Young Democrats shall be open to any [resident of the city/county of YYYY] [student or employee of ZZZZ School] who is age 13 to 35 and who believes in the principles of the Democratic Party. No person shall be denied membership on the basis of race, gender, religion, economic status, national origin, or sexual orientation.

Section 2: Each member shall be obligated to pay such dues and other fees as the Club shall set for the membership from time to time.

Section 3: An honorary member may be elected by a majority vote at any meeting of the Club. Honorary members shall have none of the obligations of membership in the Club, but shall be entitled to all of the privileges except those of making motions, of voting, and of holding office.

Article III: Officers

Section 1: The officers of the XXX Young Democrats shall be a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and any other officers designated by the Club. These officers shall perform the duties prescribed by this Constitution and by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Club. No person shall hold more than one office at a time, except that the offices of Secretary and Treasurer may be held by the same person.

Section 2: Each officer shall be elected by a majority vote of the Club. Each officer shall serve until his or her successor is elected, and each officer's term shall begin upon the adjournment of the meeting at which he or she was elected.

Section 3: Any dispute regarding the election of an officer may be submitted to the Executive Committee of the Virginia Young Democrats. The Executive Committee may take any action it deems necessary to resolve the dispute.

Section 4: In the event of a vacancy or temporary absence or disability in the office of President, the Vice President shall assume the office. In the event of another vacancy, the Club may elect a replacement.

Section 5: The Secretary shall maintain a list, as applicable, of the first name and last name, phone number, email address, and mailing address of each member of the Club. Each member shall be responsible for promptly reporting any new contact information to the Secretary, who shall then promptly update the list.

Section 6: Written notice, whenever required by this Constitution, by any other applicable rule, or by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Club, and unless otherwise restricted thereby, may be provided by email, text, or postal mail sent to the appropriate address or number submitted to the Secretary by each member.

Section 7: The Treasurer or his or her designee shall present a report at each Club meeting. Such report shall include, but is not limited to, the balance of funds in the Club's financial accounts. The Club's financial account shall be open for inspection by any member of the Club at any reasonable time.

Article IV: Meetings

Section 1: The regular meetings of the Club shall be held on the [first/second/third/fourth] [day of week] of each month [from September through April] unless otherwise ordered by the club.

Section 2: Special meetings of the Club may be called by the President and shall be called upon the written request to the President and the Secretary of any 10 members of the Club. Except in an emergency, the President or the Secretary shall provide at least three days written notice to each member of the Club prior to any special meeting thereof.

Section 3: Ten percent of the club's members shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting business.

Section 4: The Club shall not act in any manner not consistent with this Constitution, the Constitution of the Virginia Young Democrats, any applicable rule, or the Democratic Party Plan of Virginia.

Article V: Committees

Section 1: Such committees, standing or special, shall be appointed by the President as the Club shall from time to time deem necessary to carry on the work of the Club. The President shall be ex officio a member of all committees.

Article VI: Disciplinary Proceedings

Section 1: The parliamentary authority adopted by the organization shall govern all disciplinary proceedings, subject to the provisions for disciplinary proceedings found in the Constitution of the Virginia Young Democrats as made applicable to the Club.

Article VII: Parliamentary Authority

Section 1: The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the Club in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with this Constitution, the Constitution of the Virginia Young Democrats, any applicable rule, or the Democratic Party Plan of Virginia.

Article VIII: Amendment of Bylaws

Section 1: This Constitution may be amended by a three-fourths vote of any meeting of the Club, provided that the text of the amendment has been distributed in writing to all members at least three days prior to adoption.

SAMPLE OUTREACH PLAN

Virginia Young Democrats Affirmative Action/ Outreach Plan

In order that the Virginia Young Democrats at all levels be an open Party organization that includes rather than excludes people from participation, a policy of effective affirmative action is hereby adopted by the Virginia Young Democrats. All public meetings and programs at all levels of the Virginia Young Democrats shall be open to all who consider themselves members of the Democratic Party regardless of race, sex, age, color, creed, national origin, religion, ethnic identity, sexual orientation, economic status or physical disability (hereinafter collectively referred to as status). Discrimination on the basis of status in the operating of organizational affairs is prohibited.

In order to continue the Virginia Young Democrats' ongoing efforts to include groups historically under-represented, the Virginia Young Democrats has developed outreach programs. Such programs include recruitment, education and training, in order to achieve full participation by such groups in all organizational business and programs.

An Outreach Committee shall be responsible for formulating outreach guidelines for the Virginia Young Democrats and local chapters. The Chair of this Committee shall serve on the Executive Committee of the Virginia Young Democrats and report on the progress of all efforts toward this goal. The committee shall be comprised, to the extent practicable, of one resident of each congressional district in Virginia (not including the chair). Chartered chapter's outreach chair shall be ex officio members.

The Virginia Young Democrats will identify progressive organizations with which to partner for programs and will cosponsor events to encourage its members to become more involved. The leadership and staff of the VAYD will initiate contact with these organizations to develop new and strengthen existing relationships and establish ways in which we can work together to achieve our common goals.

Some of these organizations are, but are not limited to: the Democratic Party of Virginia, its local committees, and its constituency groups, The Virginia Partisans Gay and Lesbian Democratic Club, Equality Virginia, Planned Parenthood, the League of Women Voters, the Farm Team, Virginia NOW, Virginia NARAL, the Sierra Club, the League of Conservation Voters, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the Nature Conservancy, the Virginia AFL-CIO and its Regional Labor Councils, the Virginia Education Association, NAACP, the Urban League, the ACLU, the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy, America Votes, the ARC of Virginia, and the Young Farmers of Virginia.

SAMPLE CAMPAIGN/CHARITABLE ACTIVITY

LETTER

NOTE: The VAYD Constitution provides six votes per campaign and four votes per charitable event. Certification of letters must come from one of the following: campaign/charity official, voting member of the Virginia Young Democrats executive committee who was also in attendance, or the chair of the region in which the event was held. Candidates must be the Democratic nominee or endorsee.

DATE

To whom it may concern,

This letter is intended to serve the XXXX Young Democrats with a written record of their help on the XXXX campaign.

This chapter participated in ACTIVITY on DATE at LOCATION, and we were honored to have them assist us. The group should be commended for their work across Virginia.

Sincerely,

SIGNATURE
POSITION