

Charter of the Young Democrats of Massachusetts

Article 1: Organizational Structure and Statement of Purpose

Section 1-1: Organization

The name of this organization shall be Young Democrats of Massachusetts, hereinafter YDMA. Said organization shall be organized as a corporation recognized under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code, and/or as a state or federal political action committee organized under independent bylaws as its activities and applicable law allows. YDMA is an independent organization of Democrats in Massachusetts under the age of 36 years. The Young Democrats of Massachusetts is the official chartered unit of the Young Democrats of America (YDA) for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Section 1-2: Statement of Purpose

YDMA is the official umbrella organization for young Democrats in Massachusetts. Its purpose is:

1. To encourage young people to become involved in the democratic process,
2. To recruit young people into the Democratic Party by presenting the ideas and beliefs of the Party in an open and public manner,
3. To provide training and workshops to its members and other Democrats, so that they might be better able to involve themselves in electoral politics and the political process,
4. To stimulate discussion of important issues facing Massachusetts and the nation,
5. To support the electoral efforts of Democrats, particularly those who are young and those who share the values and beliefs of YDMA, and
6. To initiate and assist legislation and ballot initiatives which further the policy objectives of YDMA.

YDMA shall consist of the Board of Directors, regional chapters, chartered caucuses, and general YDMA membership.

Article 2: Membership

Section 2-1: Eligibility

All persons under the age of 36 years are eligible to be members of YDMA if they: 1) reside in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; 2) are a registered Democrat;; and 3) are pledged to support Democratic candidates . All YDMA members who are so eligible must be registered to vote within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and must be a registered Democrat. These conditions should not exclude permanent residents who are not eligible to register to vote within the United States,

temporary residents who choose to remain registered in another state, or Democrats not old enough to register to vote.

Section 2-2: Termination of Membership/Ineligibility

Any YDMA member changing their registration to that of another party or unenrolled (no party) or, after becoming a member, fails to register in the Democratic Party shall cease to be a member of YDMA. Members who temporarily leave Massachusetts for military service, education, political activity, or other endeavors of limited duration, may choose to remain members of YDMA, so long as they continue to be registered in the Democratic Party, where possible.

Section 2-3: Dues

Membership dues may be solicited, with the following conditions and restrictions: 1) any such requirement must be included as part of the Bylaws of YDMA; and 2) no person otherwise eligible for YDMA membership shall be denied membership on the basis of their ability to pay dues.

Section 2-4: Participation

YDMA members may be required to register in the organization no more than 30 days in advance of organizational meetings and open conventions to participate in a voting capacity at those events. Once a YDMA member has registered in the organization, he or she need not register again to participate in organizational meetings or open conventions, so long as he or she does not cease to be a member as described in Section 2-2 of this Article. Registration shall be defined in the bylaws. All YDMA members are required to have participated in a least two meetings or other gatherings of the organization.

Article 3: Chartered Regional Chapters and Caucuses

Section 3-1: Authority

1. Chartered Regional Chapters

YDMA may allow the organization of affiliated chapters in selected geographic regions of Massachusetts. Formal recognition of these chapters is contingent upon approval by majority vote of the Board of Directors. Approval entitles the chair of the Regional Chapter or their designee to a vote on the Board of Directors. The authority on the part of YDMA to recognize such chapters shall in no way interfere with the authority of the College Democrats of Massachusetts to establish campus chapters. Board members of chapters who have served at least one year on their respective boards, who become ineligible due to age shall be eligible to become exofficio nonvoting members of said chapter board until the individual reaches their 40th birthday.

2. Chartered Caucuses

YDMA may allow the organization of affiliated caucuses. Formal recognition of these caucuses must be approved by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. Approval entitles the chair of the caucus or their designee to a vote on the Board of Directors.

Section 3-2: Affiliation with YDMA

Chartered regional chapters and caucuses shall coordinate all fundraising, media, political, policy, and membership activities with YDMA. Regional chapters may be required to pay dues to YDMA if proscribed in the bylaws. Regional chapters and caucuses shall not violate this Charter or the Bylaws of YDMA.

Section 3-3: Organization

Each regional chapter and caucus shall elect its own officers and promulgate a charter under the authority of this Charter and send notice thereof to the board of YDMA. Members of regional chapters and caucuses shall be considered members of YDMA. All members of YDMA who reside in a region served by a chapter shall also be considered members of that chapter. Regional chapters and caucuses must re-submit their charters to the Secretary within 30 days following the YDMA Annual Convention to remain a recognized regional chapter or caucus.

Article 4: Officers of YDMA

Section 4-1: Eligibility

Any person serving on the Board of Directors must fit the qualifications of voting YDMA membership.

Section 4-2: Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of officers holding the positions of the President, Vice President, the Treasurer, the Secretary, and the Membership and Outreach Director. The Executive Committee of YDMA is charged with carrying out the Charter and Bylaws of the organization, executing the Platform and policy statements of the membership of YDMA, and performing the duties of their respective offices.

Section 4-3: Board of Directors

The Board of Directors shall consist of Officers holding the following positions:

1. Members of ***Executive Committee***;

2. the immediate past chair or '**Chair Emeritus**', providing he or she held the office of chairperson for the previous full term;
3. the **Chairperson** of each **Chartered Caucus**;
4. two representatives from the **College Democrats of Massachusetts**;
5. the **YDM Democratic State Committeepersons**;
6. the **YDA National Committee Persons**;
7. Four At-Large Directors
8. Communications Director
9. Political Director
10. Public Policy Director
11. Public Service Director
12. Diversity and Inclusion Director
13. Events Director
14. the **Chairpersons** of all Chartered Regional Chapters;

The Board of Directors may also choose to appoint an Executive Director, who shall be considered an officer for purposes of the restrictions placed on the activities of officers, but who shall not be a voting member of the Board of Directors and whose contract duration shall not exceed one (1) year, but may be renewed annually by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

Section 4-4: Elections

1. The officers of the Executive Committee shall be elected at YDMA's annual organizational meeting by a simple majority vote of secret ballots cast by eligible participating YDMA members. If a majority is not achieved on the first ballot, the candidate with the least number of votes shall be dropped from the balloting, and another round of ballots shall be cast until one person receives a majority of the vote.
2. The Political, Public Policy, Public Service, Diversity and Inclusion, Events and Communications Director shall be elected by a majority vote of eligible participating YDMA membership at the Annual Convention. Voting procedures shall follow those provided for in this charter and associated bylaws.
3. The four At-Large Directors shall be elected by a simple plurality vote of the eligible participating YDMA membership at the Annual Convention.
4. The College Democrats of Massachusetts shall choose their two Directors to serve one year terms, and convey their appointments to the Executive Committee.
5. Chairs of Regional Chapters shall be elected during a meeting of the members of the Regional Chapter in accordance to the rules in that regional chapter's charter.
6. Chairs of chartered caucuses shall be elected during a meeting of the members of the Caucus in accordance to the rules in that caucus' charter.
7. The YDMA Democratic State Committeeman and YDMA Democratic State Committeewoman shall be elected at a special election, within 30 days after the end of the 4year term of service held by the previous representative, by a simple majority of vote of the Board of Directors. If a majority is not achieved on the first ballot, the candidate with the least

number of votes shall be dropped from the balloting, and another round of ballots shall be cast until one person receives a majority of the vote.

Section 4-5: Term

All elected members of the Board of Directors shall serve a term of one year, except the YDMA State Committeeman and Committeewoman, whose term is defined by the Democratic State Committee. In the event that an officer or director ceases to hold his/her office, that vacancy shall be filled by temporary appointment of the Board of Directors until the next Annual Convention, except in the case of the vacancy of the office of YDMA President, in which case the office of President shall fall to the next officer in the following order of succession, with the ascending officer vacating their former office:

1. Vice President
2. Secretary
3. Treasurer
4. Membership and Outreach Director
5. YDA National Committeeman or Committeewoman, whichever person's birthday falls earlier in the year.

Section 4-6: Duties and Responsibilities

1. President

1. Chairing the meetings of the Board of Directors,
2. Overseeing the Operations of YDM,
3. Ensuring compliance with all state and federal laws, including filing all necessary documents,
4. Acting as the official spokesperson for YDM,
5. Sending official Board Meeting notices pursuant to Section 7-3.
6. Supervising the Executive Director and any other staff/consultants retained by YDM,
7. Serving as a representative to YDM on the YDA National Committee by attending all three National YDA Committee Meetings, or appointing a proxy to serve in their place.
8. Co-Chair the YDMA PAC Committee.

2. Vice President

1. Overseeing the Membership and Outreach, Public Policy, Political, and Diversity Directors
2. Assisting the Chair in the performance of his or her duties, and
3. Overseeing the activities of the chartered caucuses and regional chapters.

3. Treasurer

1. Maintaining clear and accurate records of YDMA income and expenditures,

2. Filing all required campaign finance, tax, and other fiscal information forms,
3. Reporting to the Board of Directors on the fiscal status of YDMA, and
4. Serving as Co-Chair of the YDMA Political Action Committee.

4. Secretary

1. Maintaining clear and accurate records of YDMA meetings and activities, and organization documents,
2. Contacting YDMA members concerning upcoming meetings, conventions, and other events in consultation with the Communications and Membership and Outreach Director,
3. Making all appropriate filings with the State Committee and government offices not the responsibility of the YDMA Treasurer, and
4. Maintaining a record of all YDMA members and their eligibility to vote in YDMA elections as stated in Section 2-4.
5. Assisting the President in ensuring compliance with all state and federal laws, including filing all necessary documents.

5. National Committeewoman and Committeeman

1. Serving as a representative to YDMA on the YDA National Committee by attending all three National YDA Committee Meetings, or appointing a proxy to serve in their place.
2. Representing YDMA on all YDA National Committee conference calls,
3. Serving as a liaison between YDMA and YDA.

6. At-Large Directors

1. Supporting and participating in the activities of the Board of Directors
2. Represent the membership of YDMA to the Board of Directors
3. Serve on at least one of the Committees.

7. Chairs of Chartered Regional Chapters

1. Facilitating communication between the Board of Directors and their regional chapters,
2. Serving as a member on the Board of Directors of YDMA, unless the Chapter Chair chooses a different representative by proxy,

8. State Committee Representatives

Recognizing the allotment of two seats on the Democratic State Committee (DSC), YDMA shall elect one male and one female representative to serve under the terms of the Charter of the Massachusetts Democratic Party,

1. Attending DSC meetings as well as DSC Youth Services SubCommittee meetings,

2. Reporting at each YDMA meeting any updates or correspondences from the Democratic State Party.

9. Directors

YDM shall recognize seven Directors. Each director shall form an ad-hoc committee to carry out the duties laid out below.

1. Political Director, who will coordinate electoral activities, facilitate endorsements of candidates, and provide support to Young Democrats running for public office.
2. Public Policy Director, who will advocate for the policies set forth in the Platform.
3. Membership and Outreach Director, who will work to increase YDM active membership and reaching out to new constituent groups. This Director will serve on the Executive Committee.
4. Diversity and Inclusion Director, who will coordinate the inclusion of vulnerable, and underrepresented populations through the support and development of policy, programs and protocols.
5. Communications Director, who will serve as Media Liaison, work with the Secretary to send out regular communications with the YDM membership, and maintain the official image of YDM through communications and branding.
6. Public Service Director, who shall serve as the YDMA's coordinator for all community service related activities and work with regional chapters and caucuses on integrating such efforts in their programming and day-to-day work.
7. Events Director who shall work with the Board of Directors on statewide event logistics and provide caucuses and chapters with support in consultation with other members of the Board.

10. Chairs of Chartered Caucuses

1. Facilitating communication between the Board of Directors and their caucus.
2. Serving as a member on the Board of Directors of YDMA, unless the Caucus Chair chooses a different representative by proxy.

Section 4-7: Removal of Officers

1. Grounds for Removal shall include:

1. Failing to meet the qualifications of membership.
2. Use of the position of YDMA officer, or the YDMA name to oppose the nominees of the Democratic Party for elective office.
3. Failure to attend three meetings without an excused absence. An excused absence is one that is conveyed to the President or Vice President prior to the meeting. In this case, the officer in question shall have twenty-one days to explain the absences in writing and the motion to remove shall automatically be placed on the agenda of the next board meeting.
4. Failure to perform the duties described in Section 4-6

5. Any other behavior or action unbecoming of an officer of YDMA.

2. Procedure

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2. Any member of YDMA may submit a notice of intent to vote to remove an officer. Notice of this intent must be issued through a Board email, at least 21 days in advance of a vote, in order to allow for due process. The notice must contain the name of the member proposing the removal, the name and title of the officer who is up for removal, and a statement describing the grounds for removal. Once the 21 advance days have passed, a vote must be taken at the next board meeting.
3. A member of the Executive Committee can be removed by a majority vote of the Executive Committee, followed by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors under the rules of quorum.
4. Any other officer of the Board of Directors may be removed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Directors under the rules of quorum.
5. In the case of removal of a State Committeewoman or State Committeeman, the officer removed must submit a letter of resignation to the Democratic State Committee Chair. The Board of Directors shall also author a letter requesting the removed officer be removed from his or her DSC seat, to be signed by the remaining Executive Board members, and submitted to the Democratic State Committee Chair.

Article 5: Charter Amendments

Section 5-1: Notice

Charter Convention may be called by the board of directors or by petition to the board bearing the signatures of at least 8 YDMA members who are otherwise eligible to vote at such a convention. Notice of such convention should be distributed to the YDMA membership at least 30 days prior to the Charter Convention.

Section 5-2: Consideration

Proposed amendments to this Charter must be submitted no less than twenty-one days prior to a Charter Convention and must be distributed to membership, unless the rules are suspended by a 3/4 vote of those members present and voting to consider a Charter amendment not previously before the convention.

Section 5-3: Quorum

A minimum of eight eligible voting members of YDMA shall constitute a quorum for holding a charter convention.

Section 5-4: Passage

Charter changes must be approved by 2/3 of those YDMA members present and voting at a Charter Convention.

Article 6: Platform

Section 6-1: Function

The Platform will serve as the official position of YDMA on policy matters, and may be supplemented, but not contradicted by other YDM policy statements.

Section 6-2: Structure

The YDMA Platform shall be the product of research and discussion at YDMA conventions.

Section 6-3: Amendments

YDMA's Platform can only be amended by vote of a convention open to the entire membership of YDMA or representatives of the membership elected at regional caucuses. Amendments can only be considered on the convention floor if a petition to do so has been signed by ten (10) YDMA members.

Section 6-4: Policy Statements

Policy statements on timely matters may be adopted by vote of the Board of Directors, so long as they are in agreement with YDMA's Platform and the standing positions of YDMA, as voted at its conventions.

Article 7: Conventions; Organizational Meetings; Board Meetings

Section 7-1: Conventions

YDMA shall hold a convention annually, to be organized and planned by the Board of Directors. Conventions may be of two varieties: open or representational. YDMA conventions shall be open to all YDMA members, unless specified otherwise in the Bylaws. Representational conventions shall require a fair and open delegate selection process in which all YDMA members are invited to participate on a regional level. Conventions shall be publicized no less than 30 days in advance and notice to a regional caucus or the convention itself must be sent to all YDMA members, such that no less than 30 days is allowed for the submission of items for discussion prior to the sending of a

detailed agenda. Conventions are empowered to amend the YDMA Platform, Charter, and Bylaws, as specified herein, as well as to author policy statements.

Section 7-2: Annual Convention

An Annual Convention must be held to elect those positions on the Board of Directors that are elected by general membership if the current term is set to expire, the position is vacant, or is occupied by an interim appointee. These meetings must be publicized at least 30 days in advance, at which time all YDMA members must be notified of their time and location. Organizational meetings may be combined with conventions, workshops and/or social gatherings. Special organizational meetings may be called to fill vacancies that occur during an officer's term, except during the 30 days previous to the annual organizational meeting.

Section 7-3: Board Meetings

The YDMA Board of Directors shall meet on a regular schedule to be specified in the Bylaws. Board meetings shall be open to all YDMA members, unless reasons of collective bargaining, privacy, or other considerations similar to those in the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law require the Board of Directors to vote to hold an Executive Session. All votes of the Board of Directors shall be recorded; no secret ballots shall be permitted, except when filling vacancies on the Executive Committee.

Section 7-4: Other Gatherings

YDMA may hold whatever workshops, parties, fundraisers, single-issue policy discussions, or other events the Board of Directors sees fit within the bounds of this Charter and the Bylaws.

Article 8: Bylaws

Section 8-1: Purpose and Scope

YDMA's Bylaws shall serve to supplement this Charter, but shall in no way contradict its substance or intent. The Bylaws are intended to address issues of process not stated in this Charter, but may not address policy questions.

Section 8-2: Passage and Amendment

Amendments to YDMA's Bylaws may be made by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Directors or by simple majority vote at a convention of YDMA members.

Article 9: Affirmative Action

Section 9-1: Principles

YDMA is committed to equality of opportunity for everyone, and is dedicated to working actively to involve people of all backgrounds in YDMA, the Democratic Party, and the political process.

Section 9-2: Hiring Policy

YDMA shall be an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity employer and will hire employees in accordance with the Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity policy described in state law.

Article 10: Quorum

Section 10-1: Quorum For the Purpose of Holding Board Meetings

Under the charter, if a notification of at least fourteen days has been given for holding a Board Meeting, no quorum attendance roll call shall be required for the purpose of holding the meeting and performing the active functions and duties of YDMA.

Section 10-2: Exception to Section 10-1

If fourteen days notice is not given, suspension of Section 10-1 of the charter may be obtained through a Board email notice which must be left open for 48 hours and must be completed by noon on the day of the proposed meeting. If a Board notice is not sent, then a roll call of at least half of the filled executive committee seats plus two other board members or any eight board members must be present to hold an official Board meeting.

Section 10-3: Quorum for the Purposes of Voting on Official Business

Matters which require a vote of the Board of Directors shall be brought to the floor for a vote by the Chair, and any of the three following quorums will be deemed acceptable:

1. Fifty percent roll call attendance of the entire Board of Directors, accounting only for seats which are filled, or
2. A majority of the Executive Committee, three At-Large and one other Board member, or
3. An email quorum vote. If the President decides to hold a vote of the Board of Directors via email, then the following guidelines shall be followed:
4. A Board email must be sent out detailing the vote in question and the vote must remain open for a 96 hours.
5. Email votes can only be opened on a weekday. If a weekend day falls during the 96 hour period required, the weekend hours shall not count toward the 96 hours required, but votes cast during this time shall be valid.
6. Votes, in order to be counted must be sent to the President and the Secretary in one email.

7. All votes taken over email are considered public. Votes requiring a secret ballot shall not be taken over email.
8. Votes must be preserved for inspection for thirty days following the close of voting.

This version of the Charter was passed unanimously at a Charter Convention on April 11, 2017 at Massachusetts Democratic Party Headquarters in Boston, MA.