



Bylaws of the Snohomish County, WA Local Chapter
of Democratic Socialists of America

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Article I: Name and Jurisdiction

Section 1 – Name

The Snohomish County WA Local Chapter of Democratic Socialists of America, also known as SnoCo DSA, is the local organizing group (hereinafter known as “the Local Chapter”) of the national organization Democratic Socialists of America (DSA, hereinafter known as “the National Organization”). DSA is a not-for-profit corporation.

Section 2 – Jurisdiction

SnoCo DSA will act as the local organizing group of the Democratic Socialists of America for all ZIP codes located in Snohomish County, Washington, excluding ZIP codes that have been negotiated with the National Organization.

Article II: Purpose

The Snohomish County WA Local Chapter of Democratic Socialists of America seeks to facilitate the transition to a truly democratic and socialist society, one in which the means of production are democratically and socially controlled.

From the striking shingle weaver Wobblies to the Socialist Party of Washington headquarters in Everett, Snohomish County has a deep history of leftist activism and we aim to carry that forward. Today, many local governments in the county exist in large part to serve the interests of capital -- your local business owners, wealthy professionals, and police. We see this with the tendency to prescribe more police as the solution to the opioid crisis, or the naive ignorance of elected officials of a housing crisis rapidly pricing SnoCo residents out of their homes.

The Democratic Socialists of America rejects an economic order based on private profit, alienated labor, gross inequalities of wealth and power, discrimination based on race and gender, and brutality and violence in defense of the status quo.

DSA envisions a humane social order based on popular control of resources and production, 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.

To that end, we aim to transition Snohomish County into a place that champions DSA's values, by taking strides in decommodifying housing to give everybody shelter, ensuring that those who need it are able to access free quality healthcare, and that workers have a greater control over the means of the production. Bearing witness to the housing crisis in adjacent King County and Seattle, we know we must act quickly if we wish to avoid the same fate.

Article III: Membership

Section 1 – Membership

Members of SnoCo DSA will be those individuals whose dues to national DSA are paid in full, and who reside and/or work in Snohomish County. 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 Local Chapter policy, and to make recommendations on issues and other matters to the National Political Committee of the Democratic Socialists of America. Individuals may not be members of the Local Chapter without being members of national 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 the national DSA, if they are found to be consistently engaging in undemocratic or disruptive behavior, or if they are found to be under the discipline of any democratic centralist organization, the Local Chapter may vote as set forth in Article III, Section 4 of the National DSA Constitution to expel them from the Local Chapter. Only the National Political Committee may vote to expel a member from DSA.

In order for such a finding to be made, another DSA member must formally produce written charges against the member in question to the Local Chapter, which shall set the date of a

Local Chapter meeting for deliberations on the charges. The member in question must receive a copy via their preferred contact method of the written charges and notice of the meeting a minimum of two weeks before that meeting takes place.

Expulsion of a member requires two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote of the Local Chapter meeting. The Local Chapter will notify the national office of the expulsion. An expelled member may appeal the decision to the National Political Committee of the DSA.

Section 3 – Harassment Policy

SnoCo DSA is committed to creating a space that is welcoming and inclusive to members of all genders, races, and classes. Our policy and procedures for reporting and resolution of harassment follow those of National DSA's Resolution 33 and are found at: snocodsa.org/codeofconduct.

Harassment Grievance Officers will serve six-month terms. Whenever a term is ending or a vacancy opens up, the Steering Committee will solicit volunteers for the position to be voted on at a General Meeting.

At least one HGO must not be a voting member of the Steering Committee. If a voting member of the Steering Committee is an HGO they must recuse themselves of any vote involving an HGO investigation.

At least one HGO must not be a cis-gender man.

A member of the Local can bring forward a resolution to remove a Harassment Grievance Officer with cause if they submit a resolution to the Steering Committee at least ten (10) days prior to a General Meeting. Approval of the removal of a Harassment Grievance Officer by the membership requires a quorum as set forth above in Article IV, Section 4, and two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority.

Section 4 – Voluntary Donations

The Local Chapter may establish a Local Chapter pledge system of voluntary donations for its members. Any pledge system organized by the Local Chapter may not be used to determine levels of membership that correspond with greater permissions, rights, or responsibilities.

Section 5 – Privacy Concerns

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

Article IV: Meetings

Section 1 – General Meetings

The Local Chapter will hold General Meetings at least four times annually, the time and place of which shall be set in a schedule published and distributed by the Local Chapter. The General Meetings will set Local Chapter policy and work priorities, and will include political education sessions.

The Steering Committee will set the agenda for General Meetings, with versions available for public viewing and distribution to membership for comment no less than three (3) days before a General Meeting.

Section 2 – Emergency Meetings

The Steering Committee may call an Emergency Meeting of the Local Chapter on at least three (3) days notice when an urgent and important matter requires deliberation. The Steering Committee must ensure that notice of this meeting is distributed widely enough so that all members can be informed in a timely and accessible manner.

Section 3 – Reorganizing Meetings

The Local Chapter will hold a Reorganizing Meeting every year. All members of the Local Chapter will receive three (3) weeks' notice and an agenda of the Reorganizing Meeting. Notice may be sent by electronic means, but individuals who have not provided an email address must be sent a paper copy or contacted by phone or text. Reorganizing Meetings, and the election of new Local Chapter officers, shall be organized by the Elections Committee as detailed in Article VI.

Section 4 – Quorum and Rules

The quorum necessary to transact business shall equal five or the sum of the attendance of the last three General Meetings divided by fifteen, whichever is greater. Transacting business may include deciding expenditure of funds, election of officers, etc.

Meetings shall be conducted by consensus decision-making. If found to be an organizational need, the Steering Committee may recommend adoption of a set of parliamentary rules for meeting procedure.

Article V: Local Chapter Officers: Powers and Duties

Section 1 – Steering Committee

The SnoCo DSA shall be steered by a Steering Committee consisting initially of two Co-Chairs, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and three At-Large Members.

To scale appropriately with increasing membership size, the Steering Committee may recommend to the membership the addition of at-large members to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee must always be comprised of an odd-number of voting members. The membership may choose to approve of this recommendation at a General Meeting or Emergency Meeting by a quorum vote as set forth above in Article IV, Section 4.

Upon approval by the membership to expand the Steering Committee, an election shall be held at the following General Meeting to select the new Steering Committee members. Nominations for these positions shall open immediately upon the Steering Committee's approval for expansion by the membership. The nomination period will close one week prior to the next meeting, at which time the Internal Elections Committee will notify the membership via electronic mail of the nominees.

Nominations shall be collected by the Internal Elections Committee via electronic submission, mail, and/or personal delivery.

The process for creating new officers must follow the process for amending the SnoCo DSA Bylaws, as outlined in Article X, Section 1.

Section 2 – Steering Committee Responsibilities

The Steering Committee administers the affairs of the Local Chapter and oversees the implementation of the decisions of the General Meetings. It shall have the power to receive reports of any committee 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 will be responsible for establishing program activities for the Local Chapter, for proposing guidelines and policies that will subsequently be voted on by the membership, and for acting on the Local Chapter's behalf between General Meetings.

Section 3 – Co-Chairs

The Co-Chairs will be the principal steering officers and public spokespersons for the Local Chapter. They will preside over all Local Chapter meetings and Steering Committee meetings,

or will appoint a liaison to assume the duties and powers of the meeting's presiding officers. The liaison shall serve for only the duration of that meeting and may not vote on behalf of a Co-Chair.

The Co-Chairs will be responsible for coordinating the daily operations, political work, and priorities of the Local Chapter. They will be responsible for carrying out the decisions of the membership and initiate such actions and policies as the Local Chapter's general welfare may demand.

The Co-Chairs will report to General Meetings on the business of the Steering Committee, at which time a copy of the minutes of those meetings will be available for inspection.

At least one Co-Chair must be other than a cis-gender man.

Section 4 – Secretary

The Secretary will be responsible for maintaining an up-to-date membership list of the Local Chapter, ensure that there is regular communication with the National Organization, and recording minutes of all Local Chapter meetings, including Steering Committee meetings. They may appoint, but must oversee, a temporary substitute minutes-taker for any meeting. That substitute may not vote on behalf of the Secretary.

The Secretary shall have custody of meeting minutes and all other Local Chapter records and reports for preservation.

The Secretary will assume the responsibilities of the Co-Chairs, if both of them are unable to do so.

The Secretary will assume the role of a Social Media Coordinator or may delegate the role to another member of Local Chapter to be approved by the Steering Committee.

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 shall deposit them in a bank account under the name of the Local Chapter. They will ensure that membership dues are up-to-date, prepare a Local Chapter budget if requested, and deliver the Local Chapter financial report to the General Meetings.

Section 6 – At-Large Members

The Steering Committee shall also consist of at least three (3) At-Large Members as representatives of the Local Chapter and its diverse political views. At-Large Members will be

responsible for any additional duties and responsibilities that the Steering Committee determines are necessary, including participating in Local Chapter committees, fundraising, developing campaigns, planning educational programming, acting as representatives of the Local Chapter, networking with other organizations or activists, and any other duties not handled by the Co-Chairs, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Section 7 – Vacancies

In the event of a vacancy on the Steering Committee, the Steering Committee shall appoint someone to temporarily fill the vacancy until a replacement is elected. The membership must be informed within seven days via electronic submission, mail, and/or personal delivery, of a vacancy and nominations will be collected for at least two (2) weeks prior to the next General Meeting. If there are fewer than two (2) weeks to the next General Meeting when the vacancy occurs, then the membership will elect a replacement at the following General Meeting.

Section 8 – Steering Committee Member Removal

The Steering Committee may vote to remove a member from the Steering Committee in the event that the member is unable or unwilling to perform their duties. Enumerated grounds for removal include: missing more than three (3) consecutive Steering Committee meetings, missing more than three (3) consecutive General meetings, failure to participate in at least one (1) Local Chapter committee, and/or mismanagement of Local Chapter resources. The Steering Committee may recommend the removal of a member outside of the reasons enumerated in this section to the membership for approval at a General Meeting or Emergency Meeting. The subject of the complaint may not vote on this measure, and in the event of a tie vote by the Steering Committee, the issue will then be referred to the general membership for vote. Approval of the removal of a Steering Committee member by the membership requires a quorum as set forth above in Article IV, Section 4, and two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority.

The Steering Committee must immediately notify the member in question in writing (or via electronic mail) that the Steering Committee plans to call a vote among the general member for removal. The member in question may appeal the decision to the membership for reconsideration. Reinstatement of a removed Steering Committee member will require a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority vote.

Any member of SnoCo DSA, in good standing, may call for the removal of a member of the Steering Committee. The vote for the removal of the Steering Committee member in question will occur at a General Meeting or Emergency Meeting. The Steering Committee member in question must be given at least two (2) weeks notice prior to the meeting. The Steering Committee member's removal must be approved by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority vote. The Steering Committee member in question will be given a chance to speak in their own defense at this meeting.

Section 9 – Steering Committee Meetings

The meetings of the Steering Committee will be held at the call of the Co-Chairs at such intervals that are 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 four days notice of regular Steering Committee meetings, and a 24-hour notice may be given under Emergency Meetings.

The Steering Committee must have a meeting prior to every General Meeting or Emergency Meeting.

A majority of the Steering Committee is required to transact business during Steering Committee meetings.

Article VI: Elections, Nominations

Section 1 – Elections Committee

The Internal Elections Committee will have at least three members. New members will be approved by vote at a General Meeting as needed. Members of the Internal Elections Committee must not be a candidate in an upcoming election or a current officer.

A member of the Local can bring forward a resolution to remove an Internal Elections Committee member with cause if they submit a resolution to the Steering Committee at least ten (10) days prior to a General Meeting.

Section 2 – Voting

All members in good standing with the National Organization and SnoCo DSA may vote in Local Chapter elections. The Elections Committee must provide options for proxy voting.

The Elections Committee must announce the voting system that will be used for the Reorganization Meeting when the final list of nominees is reported to the membership.

Section 3 – Nominations

Nominations for Local Chapter officers will be opened at least two (2) weeks before the election. The call for nominations will be announced to all members in good standing of SnoCo DSA as soon as nominations are open.

Section 4 – Uncontested Positions

If a position is uncontested, the nominee may be declared elected by acclamation, giving members a chance to vote for or against each candidate via voice vote.

Article VII: Branches

Section 1 – Definition and Purpose

A Branch is a subgroup of the Local Chapter consisting of at least five members in good standing with the National Organization. Branches may be defined by geography (e.g., East Snohomish County). Branches may select one member to represent the Branch as a non-voting member of the Local Chapter Steering Committee.

SnoCo DSA will assist Branches in developing into full chapters of the DSA. Should Branches apply for chapter status with the National Organization, the SnoCo DSA Steering Committee will coordinate the transfer of ZIP codes to the Branch.

Section 2 – Youth Sections

Branches organized on academic campuses and consisting of students will be called Local Chapter Youth Sections. Youth Sections must have at least five full members in good standing with the National Organization. Youth Sections may select one member to represent the Youth Section as a non-voting member of the Local Chapter Steering Committee.

Section 3 – Growth

The Local Chapter Steering Committee will help Branches and Youth Sections gain official chapter recognition from the National Organization and the Young Democratic Socialists of America (YDSA), respectively.

Article VIII: Committees, Working Groups, and Caucuses

Section 1 – Committees

There shall be four standing committees, the Medicare for All Committee, the Activism Committee, the Bylaws Committee, and the Internal Elections Committee. Members may join or leave these committees at-will, and committees may vote to designate a chair or other forms of leadership. Committees may appoint chairs or selected representatives to be non-voting members of the Steering Committee.

The Medicare for All Committee will be tasked with organizing the Local Chapter in support of Medicare for All, a top priority of the National Organization as decided at the 2017 National Convention of the Democratic Socialists of America.

Committed to engaging Snohomish County's diverse communities, the Activism Committee will be tasked with organizing the Local Chapter in support of local, state, and regional issues. This includes, but is not limited to: public housing, affordable housing, drug policy, law enforcement, education, and helping advocate for unsheltered people.

The Bylaws Committee will be tasked with making recommendations to the membership on changes to the Local Chapter Bylaws to accommodate the Local Chapter's growth, or changes in the Local Chapter's priorities, as is further outlined in Article X, Section 2.

The Internal Elections Committee will be tasked with running the annual Re-Organization meeting, Steering Committee elections, National Convention delegate elections and any emergency vacancy elections. This includes but is not limited to soliciting nominations, announcing nominees, providing proxy voting means and counting and certifying ballots.

All committees, work groups and caucuses will be listed at snocodsa.org/committees with their name, goals and responsibilities.

Section 2 – Committee Formation and Dissolution

Committees may be formed at the recommendation of the Steering Committee, subject to approval by the membership at a General Meeting or Emergency Meeting. Creation of a committee requires the simple majority ($\frac{1}{2}+1$) approval of the membership by vote as set forth above in Article IV, Section 4. Similarly, the Steering Committee may submit to the membership for approval the dissolution of a committee when it has been deemed no longer necessary or relevant to the Local Chapter's priorities. Dissolution of committees require a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority vote of the membership at a General Meeting or Emergency Meeting as set forth above in Article IV, Section 4.

Section 3 – Working Groups

If it is necessary to address a specific operational need that is not being handled by any existing committee, the Steering Committee or membership may form a Working Group. These Working Groups may determine their own leadership and non-voting member of the Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee or membership may decide, at any time by simple majority vote ($\frac{1}{2}+1$) as set forth above in Article IV, Section 4, to dissolve a Working Group when its responsibilities are no longer relevant to the Local Chapter's operational needs.

Section 4 – Caucuses

Caucuses are independent, unofficial formations of members within the Local Chapter. The Local Chapter encourages the formation of Caucuses to promote a vibrant democratic culture within SnoCo DSA. With or without consent from or recognition by any official Local Chapter leadership or the Local Chapter itself, members may self-organize into temporary or permanent caucuses according to shared interests, affinities, and/or political goals. Caucuses may promote policies and actions for the Local Chapter to take on, and may challenge Local Chapter leadership and/or official Local Chapter policies.

Section 5 – Caucus Recognition

Caucuses will be formally recognized by the Local Chapter in one or more official media if no less than five members in good standing sign a mission statement that includes the name and purpose of the Caucus. This mission statement must be reaffirmed annually to retain formal recognition. The Steering Committee will be responsible for ensuring proper recognition.

Section 6 – Jurisdictional Disputes

The Steering Committee shall adjudicate any jurisdictional disputes between Committees, Working Groups, and Steering Committee members.

Article IX: Delegates

Delegates to national, regional, and state bodies shall be elected by the membership at a General, Reorganizing, or Emergency Meeting within ninety (90) days of the gathering at which delegates are needed. For the National Convention, which occurs in odd-numbered years, the election process will conform to National Organization bylaws and the National Convention calendar.

Article X: Amendments

Section 1 – Bylaws Amendments

Proposed amendments to these Bylaws must be made by written resolution, endorsed by five (5) members in good standing, and submitted to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee must then provide Local Chapter membership via their preferred contact method with four (4) weeks' notice of the proposed amendments. Bylaws require a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority as set forth above in Article IV, Section 4 to pass.

Section 2 – Chapter Recognition

These Bylaws shall be automatically reviewed by the Bylaws Committee in order to conform with the National Organization's standards for Local Chapter Bylaws once SnoCo DSA receives guidelines from the National Organization.

Article XI: Prohibited Activity

SnoCo DSA will not engage in activity prohibited by the IRS guidelines established for 501(c)(4) organizations or similar rules established by the state of Washington. 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 XII: Distribution of Assets

Upon dissolution of the organization, any residual assets shall become property of the national organization of Democratic Socialists of America.

Appendix A: Chronology of Significant Changes

This section of the bylaws is meant to record any significant changes to the document, when those changes were made and which committee, caucus or group drove the change. Whenever a bylaws amendment is made the Bylaws Committee will vote whether the changes are 'significant' or not. Committee members may define 'significant' as they see fit.

If a change is voted to be part of the record, the Bylaws Committee will draft the language to be added and submit it at a General Meeting within two months for approval.