

Constitution and By-Laws of the Chicago Democratic Socialists of America

Adopted, June 2018

Amended, December 2023

ARTICLE I NAME, TERRITORY, OFFICE

Section 1 Name. The Name of this organization is the Chicago Democratic Socialists of America, Inc., an Illinois not-for-profit corporation, hereinafter referred to as "CDSA" or "The Organization."

Section 2 Territory. The Organization shall conduct activities in the greater Chicago area within the territory defined by the charter granted by the national Democratic Socialists of America to the CDSA.

Section 3 Office. The principal office of The Organization shall be in Chicago, Illinois. This office shall direct CDSA activities and be the repository for all CDSA records.

ARTICLE II PURPOSE

The purpose of The Organization shall be to organize the activities of the members of the Chicago Chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America. Its activities shall include education and advocacy.

We share a vision of a humane social order based on popular control of resources and production, economic planning, equitable distribution, feminism, racial equality and non-oppressive relationships. We are Socialists because we reject an economic order based on private profit, alienated labor, gross inequalities of wealth and power, discrimination based on race, sex or any other factor, and brutality and violence in defense of the status quo. We are Democratic Socialists because we believe that both the economy and society should be run democratically to meet human needs, not to make profits for the few.

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 Definition. All members in good standing of the national Democratic Socialists of America, as defined by the national Democratic Socialists of America, who reside in the greater Chicago area within the territory defined by the charter granted by the national Democratic Socialists of America, shall be members of CDSA.

Section 2 Rights and Privileges. All members in good standing of the Democratic Socialists of America in the greater Chicago territory defined above shall have a vote on the election of CDSA delegates to national DSA bodies, CDSA officers, resolutions, and questions. Any



member in good standing for at least four (4) months prior to nomination deadlines may stand for CDSA Chapter office.

Section 3 Local Dues. CDSA may establish local dues by a majority vote of the membership of CDSA called together for the purpose of establishing such dues. Such dues shall be for financial support only and shall not confer additional rights or privileges.

Section 4 Removal of Members. If a member is found to be consistently engaging in undemocratic, disruptive, or uncomradely behavior, the Local may vote to expel them from Chicago DSA. In order for such a finding to be made, no fewer than five (5) DSA members must formally proffer written charges against the member in question to the Executive Board, which shall discuss the matter in closed session at the next Executive Committee meeting after receipt of the charge. If the Executive Committee votes by a majority to take these charges to the membership, the charges will be discussed at the next membership meeting. The member in question must receive a copy of the written charges and notice of the meeting no less than two weeks before that meeting takes place. Expulsion of a member requires a two-thirds vote of the membership meeting. An expelled member may appeal to the National Political Committee of DSA.

ARTICLE IV LOCAL MEETINGS

Section 1 Membership Convention. CDSA shall hold its membership convention annually in the month of June. Written notice of the membership convention shall be electronically or physically mailed to all members no less than twenty-one (21) days in advance of the convention. The membership convention shall elect officers, and debate and pass resolution(s). The Executive Committee shall set the agenda for the Membership Convention. The Secretary shall cause to be published to the membership, electronically or physically, as well as posted to the CDSA website, the agenda of the Membership Convention no less than ten (10) days prior to the Convention.

Section 2 Membership Meetings. Membership meetings are the highest policy-making body of the CDSA. CDSA shall hold membership meetings at least three times annually, not inclusive of the Convention, the time and place of which shall be set in a schedule published and distributed by the Executive Committee no less than fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting. Membership meetings will set CDSA policy and work priorities within the guidelines set by the membership convention and shall include political education sessions. The Co-Chairs and Secretary, or a subcommittee created for this purpose, shall set the agenda for membership meetings, and cause the agenda to be published no less than seven (7) days prior to the meeting.

Members may submit items for inclusion on the agenda no less than ten (10) days prior to the meeting.

Section 2(a) Special Meetings. A simple majority of the Executive Committee, or a simple majority of members at a Membership Meeting or Convention, may call for a Special Membership Meeting. The motion for such meeting shall state the purpose of the meeting, and any business conducted at the Special Meeting must be germane to this purpose.

Section 3 Quorum. Ten percent (10%) of CDSA members in good standing constitutes a quorum, and is required for the transaction of business at a CDSA Membership Meeting and the Membership Convention.

Section 4 Accessibility and Class Consciousness. The Executive Committee shall strive to ensure that the membership convention and membership meetings are held in facilities that are accessible under the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) and shall strive to make all of its meetings, forums, and actions accessible and safe spaces for all. This consideration will extend to such matters as privacy for members, the accessibility and safety of the venue, type of food offered (if any), accommodations for differences in sight, hearing, mobility and stamina, child care offerings, and religious and other identity considerations. The Executive Committee shall be considerate of the time constraints and capacities of CDSA members. Socialism is historically built on class consciousness, specifically on working class participation. CDSA will take care not to exclude or censor viewpoints of any traditionally disempowered group.

ARTICLE V LOCAL OFFICERS: POWERS AND DUTIES

Section 1 Definition. The officers of CDSA shall be the two Co-Chairs (at least one of whom shall not identify as a cis-male), the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Communications Coordinator, the Campaigns Coordinator, and the Political Education Coordinator. Only one person may serve as an officer at any given time.

Section 2 Co-Chairs. There shall be two Co-Chairs, Co-Chair 1 and Co-Chair 2. Co-Chairs shall be the chief executive officers of CDSA. They shall prepare agendas for and preside over membership and Executive Committee meetings, and shall assume the powers and duties of the presiding officers as specified in Robert’s Rules of Order. The Co-Chairs shall be the official public spokespersons for CDSA and shall initiate such actions and policies as the membership may demand. The Co-Chairs shall be directly elected according to the procedures defined in these Bylaws. Co-Chairs shall serve one-year terms.

Section 2(a) Incumbents. The incumbent “Female Co-Chair” under the previous Bylaws shall be considered “Co-Chair 1” and the current “Male Co-Chair” shall be considered

“Co-Chair 2.” Co-Chair 1 and Co-Chair 2 shall be up for reelection in 2019.

Section 3 Secretary. The Secretary shall be responsible for the recording of minutes of the membership conventions and meetings and the Executive Committee meetings, and shall maintain supervision over these minutes, resolutions, reports, other official records and seal. The Secretary is responsible for ensuring that adequate notice is given to the membership prior to Executive Committee meetings, membership meetings and the membership convention. The Secretary shall also be responsible for the security and maintenance of CDSA’s membership roster. The Secretary shall be directly elected according to the procedures defined in these Bylaws to a one-year term.

Section 3(a) Incumbent. The currently-serving Secretary shall be up for election in 2019.

Section 4 Treasurer. The Treasurer is responsible for maintaining the funds and financial records of CDSA. All funds collected shall be turned over to the Treasurer, who shall deposit them in a bank account under the name of “Chicago Democratic Socialists of America”. The Treasurer prepares an annual fiscal-year budget for approval by the membership convention and delivers the annual financial report to the Membership Convention. The Treasurer prepares and submits financial statements to the Executive Committee for their review at least quarterly. The Treasurer shall be directly elected according to the procedures defined in these Bylaws to a one-year term.

Section 4(a) Incumbent. The currently-serving Treasurer shall be up for election in 2020.

Section 5 Political Education Coordinator. The Political Education Coordinator shall be responsible for the membership and public educational work of CDSA, including coordinating and assisting in the research needs of the Project and Standing Committees. The Political Education Coordinator shall arrange CDSA formal political discussions, study groups within CDSA, and forums. The Political Education Coordinator shall be directly elected according to the procedures defined in these Bylaws to a one-year term.

Section 5(a) Incumbent. The “Political Education Director” elected in 2018 under the previous bylaws shall be converted to the Political Education Coordinator with a term ending in 2019.

Section 6 Communications Coordinator. The Communications Coordinator shall be an *ex officio* Co-Chair of the Communications Committee, and shall be responsible, in cooperation with the Communications Committee, for coordinating the public and internal communications functions of the Chapter, including without limitation: (a) preparation of printed and digital materials; (b) production of newsletters, magazines, and other digital content; (c) management of

the Chapter's social media presence; (d) coordination of the Chapter's relationships with the news media; and (e) promoting and publicizing the Chapter's projects, campaigns and events. The Communications Coordinator shall be directly elected by membership according to the procedures defined in these Bylaws to a one-year term.

Section 6(a) Initial Election. Should these bylaws be adopted at or after the 2018 Membership Convention, an election for this office shall be held at a special membership meeting within 60 days from adoption of these bylaws, with a term ending June 30, 2019.

Section 7 Campaigns Coordinator. The Campaigns Coordinator shall be responsible for coordinating the activity of the Projects Committees. They shall assist in the operations of the Project Committees, including assisting in the organizational structure, ensuring meetings of the committees operate according to principles of transparency, accessibility, and full participation, and reporting back to the Executive Committee on the progress and operations of the Project Committees. The Campaigns Coordinator shall be elected by the membership to a one-year term. The Executive Committee may, by majority vote, appoint the Campaigns Coordinator to be one of two co-chairs of a Projects Committee.

Section 7(a) Initial Election. Should these bylaws be adopted at or after the 2018 Membership Convention, an election for this office shall be held at a special membership meeting within sixty (60) days from the adoption of these bylaws, with a term ending June 30, 2019.

Section 8 Term of Office. Elected Officers terms are defined in Sections 2 through 7 above. The terms of office begin July 1 and end June 30. No person may serve more than three (3) consecutive terms as an Officer after adoption of these bylaws.

The process for the future election of officers shall be proposed by the Internal Elections Committee and adopted by the Executive Committee within ninety (90) days after the election of the Co-Chairs, Treasurer and Secretary.

Section 9 Multiple Offices. No person shall hold multiple officer positions on the Executive Committee, or serve as both a Branch Representative and an officer of the Executive Committee, or hold any officer position on the Executive Committee or as a Branch Representative if they are also serving on the National Political Committee ("NPC") of the national DSA.

ARTICLE VI EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1 Composition. The Executive Committee shall consist of the elected officers of CDSA as defined in Article V above, and representatives of each Branch of CDSA. Each Branch shall be entitled to one (1) representative to the Executive Committee, except for Branches defined by

territory. Branches defined by territory (“Territorial Branches”) shall collectively be entitled to twenty-two (22) total representatives, which shall be fixed irrespective of the size of membership. The representatives will be apportioned proportionately according to branch membership as a percentage of total chapter membership. All Territorial Branches shall be entitled to a minimum of one (1) representative with seat allocations of each branch rounded as necessary to match the total allocation for all branches. Should the total number of seats on the EC, including officers, territorial branch representative, and non-territorial branch representatives, be an even number, there shall be one (1) additional territorial branch representative apportioned, for a total of twenty-three(23). For purposes of apportionment, the Secretary shall conduct the census of the membership of each Territorial Branch. The census shall be derived from membership rolls as of June 30 of each year. No individual member may represent more than one Branch or Commission. The Executive Committee shall strive for a balance of identities reflective of the working class of Chicago.

Section 1(a) Territorial Branch Representatives. The elected Steering Committee members of the territorial branches shall *ex officio* serve as Branch Representatives to the Executive Committee for one-year terms. The elected Steering Committee members of the territorial branches shall *ex officio* serve as Branch Representatives to the Executive Committee for one-year terms beginning August 1 and ending July 30 of the following year. Branches shall elect their new Steering Committee between June 30 and July 30 of each year. Should there be more or fewer steering committee members than required branch representatives the elected steering committees shall appoint by no less than majority vote, according to their quorum rules, branch representatives.[2]

Section 2 Function, Powers and Duties. The Executive Committee is the executive body of CDSA. All actions taken by the Executive Committee are subject to ratification or amendment by the membership at the next membership meeting at which quorum is reached, or at the membership convention if it constitutes the next membership meeting. The Executive Committee administers the affairs of CDSA and oversees the implementation of the decisions of the membership convention and membership meetings. In between Executive Committee meetings, the Committee may vote via electronic means on items brought to it by Committee members.

Electronic votes shall be managed by the Secretary and held open for no longer than 72 hours. It proposes and adopts policies, campaigns, and activities; receives reports from committees and Branches; advises committees and Branches on policy issues; assigns temporary duties to Executive Committee members or Project or Standing Committees; calls emergency meetings of the membership; has sole authority to create, certify, and regulate Branches and Working Groups; and acts on any matter requiring immediate attention by CDSA.

Section 3 Executive Committee Meetings. The Executive Committee shall meet at least once

each month, or more frequently if determined by a prior Executive Committee meeting or the call of the Chairs upon consultation with any five (5) other members of the Executive Committee. All members of the Executive Committee must be given four (4) days written notice

of regular Executive Committee meetings. Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be open to CDSA members, and the Executive Committee shall hold the meetings in locations which can accommodate observers.

Section 3(a) Extraordinary Meetings. Under extraordinary circumstances, either Co-Chair may, with twenty-four (24) hour notice, convene an Extraordinary Meeting. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated in the written instrument convening such Extraordinary Meeting. Only the matters described in the convening instrument may be acted upon in such Extraordinary Meeting. Examples of an extraordinary circumstance include but are not limited to: a legal summons or legal threat to the Organization; a pressing financial decision or obligation; an emergency situation involving a threat to a member or membership.

Section 4 Quorum. Fifty percent (50%) of the members of the Executive Committee constitutes a quorum and is required for the transaction of business by the Executive Committee.

Section 5 Agendas and Meeting Minutes. The Secretary shall cause to be published to the general membership agendas of all Executive Committee meetings, either by electronic mail, posting on the Chapter website, or both, no less than forty-eight (48) hours prior to each Executive Committee meeting, except Extraordinary Meetings.

Minutes of all Executive Committee meetings shall be approved by the Executive Committee at the subsequent Executive Committee meeting, and shall be delivered by mail or electronic mail, or both, to all Executive Committee members, and published on the Internet within ten (10) days of approval, with notice of such publication to all Members.

Minutes of all Membership Meetings or the Membership Convention shall be approved by the membership at the subsequent Membership Meeting, and published to the membership via mail, or electronic mail, and by posting on the Internet, no more than thirty (30) days from the date of such meeting. Copies of unapproved meeting minutes shall be made available for inspection no less than fourteen (14) days prior to the subsequent meeting at which they will be approved.

Section 6 Removal and Vacancies. Any officer or branch representative may be removed by the Executive Committee for violation of the articles or bylaws of the Organization, or for conduct prejudicial to the best interests of DSA or CDSA, including malfeasance, nonfeasance, gross negligence, or undemocratic behavior.

The Executive Committee must notify said member of its intention to vacate their position no less than five (5) business days prior to the meeting at which such action will be voted on. The removal of the officer shall be made by motion and require a two-thirds majority of the Executive Committee. The motion shall state with particularity the reason for removal, with reference to specific acts. In the event of a vacancy of a Branch representative, the vacancy shall be filled by the relevant Branch no later than forty-five (45) days from the vacancy. If the


vacancy is an Executive Committee officer of CDSA, an acting successor may be appointed by the Co-Chairs until a new officer is elected at the next regularly scheduled membership meeting, or, if the next regularly scheduled membership meeting is less than thirty (30) days from the date of removal, at a special meeting called for the sole purpose of election for that officer position, held no less than thirty (30) days but no more than sixty (60) days from the date of the vacancy. The Membership at the next Membership Meeting or a Special Meeting called for that purpose may rescind the removal by majority vote of the quorum present at that meeting.

Should any member of the Executive Committee miss three (3) or more consecutive Executive Committee meetings, exclusive of Extraordinary Meetings, the Executive Committee shall declare that position vacant, or excuse one or more absence by majority vote.

Section 7 Recall of Officers. Elected and appointed officers of the Executive Committee may be recalled by the membership at a membership meeting or membership convention. Recall shall be by motion and second, and a two-thirds vote of the membership at a meeting at which quorum has been established. The motion shall state with particularity the acts of malfeasance, nonfeasance, gross negligence, or undemocratic or uncomradely behavior comprising the grounds for removal.

ARTICLE VII BRANCHES

Section 1 Definition. A Branch is a sub-division of CDSA consisting of members in good standing residing within a defined territory, belonging to a particular institution, or sharing a common interest. A Branch defined by a common interest may be referred to as a Commission. Membership in Branches defined by interest or by institution may overlap with other Branches, but Branches defined by territory may not overlap with other Branches defined by territory.

Section 2 Recognition and Dissolution. A Branch may be chartered by majority vote of the Executive Committee upon petition of at least twenty (20) members residing within a defined territory, belonging to a particular institution, or sharing a common interest. Substantively similar Branches may be merged by the Executive Committee rather than granted separate representation. A Branch may be dissolved by the Executive Committee if it has not met for at least three (3) months, failure to conduct their internal affairs according to the Branch's or CDSA bylaws, or if it has been promoting policies contrary to those of CDSA or national Democratic Socialists of America. The Executive Committee shall consider the matter of dissolution of a Branch at an Executive Committee meeting upon receipt of a petition signed by no less than 20% of the full membership of the Branch in question. The representative(s) from said Branch must  be informed that dissolution is on the agenda when notified of the meeting. The decision to dissolve a Branch shall be ratified or rejected at the next Membership Meeting of CDSA, during which time said Branch may be continued or re-established.

Upon dissolution, all property and records of a Branch will be surrendered to the CDSA Executive Committee.

Section 3 Young Democratic Socialists of America (“YDSA”) Chapters. All YDSA chapters within the territory of CDSA and recognized by the national Democratic Socialists of America shall together be represented by a representative, selected by the YDSA chapters according to their rules. Representatives from YDSA branches shall have full rights of Executive Committee membership.

Section 4 Non-Territorial Branch Representatives. Representatives from non-territorial Branches shall be elected from among their own membership between June 30 and July 30 to a one- (1) year term beginning August 1 and ending July 30 of the following year. Representatives from non-territorial branches shall have full rights of Executive Committee membership.

Section 5 Branch Responsibilities and Governance. Branches are responsible for promoting and implementing CDSA policies and programs, conducting their internal affairs in a democratic manner, abide by the processes and policies of CDSA, and shall promote diversity of participation and leadership that reflects Chicago’s working class. Branches shall hold regular meetings and encourage democratic participation in the operations of the Chapter. Failure to meet these responsibilities shall be grounds for intervention by the Executive Committee to the extent necessary.

ARTICLE VIII COMMITTEES

Section 1 Project Committees. The Executive Committee may establish and appoint members of temporary committees for the purpose of operating specific projects, campaigns, or other functions (“Project Committees”) at its discretion and by majority vote of the Executive Committee at any Executive Committee meeting at which there is a quorum. The Committees shall operate according to democratic principles and elect their leadership. The Campaign(s) Coordinator shall be an *ex officio* member of Project Committees. The Executive Committee may by majority vote appoint the Campaigns Coordinator to be one of two co-chairs of a Projects Committee. Project Committees shall abide to the extent possible by feminist process in their operations, as defined in Addendum 1 of these Bylaws.

Section 1(a) Project Committee Initial Membership. The Executive Committee shall appoint the initial membership of a Project Committee from amongst its own membership, or volunteers of the general membership, or both, by majority vote. There shall be no fewer than

two members of the Executive Committee, exclusive of the Campaign(s) Coordinator, on a Project Committee. After this initial appointment, the Project Committee shall solicit volunteers from amongst the membership.

Section 1(b) Project Committee Purpose. The Executive Committee shall define the purpose of the Project Committee in the motion by which the Project Committee is created.

Section 1(c) Project Committee Duration. The Executive Committee shall define the duration of the Project Committee in the motion by which the Project Committee is created, and may extend the duration of the Project Committee by majority vote at any time prior to the expiration of that duration.

Section 1(d) Project Committee Standards. The Executive Committee shall create standards and criteria for creation of Project Committees, with criteria for a Project Committee and instructions for the form of proposals for their creation.

Section 1(e) Membership Initiation or Dissolution of a Project Committee. Members may initiate the creation or dissolution of a project committee for a specific purpose and duration by presenting a petition of 2% of CDSA members at least ten (10) days in advance of a membership meeting or convention, at which point the resolution will be considered for a vote

Section 2 Standing Committees. Standing Committees are permanent subcommittees of the Executive Committee. The Committees shall be comprised of volunteers from amongst members and operate according to democratic principles and elect their leadership. Where applicable, certain Executive Committee officers shall hold *ex officio* seats. The Standing Committees shall have no fewer than three members, except where otherwise indicated. Members of Standing Committees shall serve no longer than one-year terms. Standing Committees shall abide to the fullest extent possible by feminist process in their operations, as defined in Addendum 1 of these Bylaws. The following Standing Committees are created:

Section 2(a) Fundraising Committee. The Fundraising Committee shall be responsible for managing fundraising for the Chapter, and coordinating and/or assisting the fundraising activities of the Chapter's sub-entities, including assisting Branches, working groups, and committees in their fundraising activities. The Fundraising Committee shall have two co-chairs, at least one of whom shall be the Treasurer of the Chapter.

Section 2(b) Communications Committee. The purpose of the Communications Committee is to build and maintain the various lines of communication, both external and internal, of CDSA. The composition of the initial Communications Committee shall be that of the Communications Working Group at the time of the adoption of these Bylaws. The Communications Committee shall have two co-chairs, at least one of whom shall be the Communications Coordinator.

Section 2(c) Internal Elections Committee. The Internal Elections Committee shall consist of no fewer than two (2) members. One member of the Internal Elections Committee shall be the Secretary of the Chapter. Formal sub-entities of the Chapter shall report the results of elections to this Committee.

The Internal Elections Committee shall manage the elections of the Executive Committee, and for votes on the repeal or adoption of the Chapter Bylaws. It may manage the elections of the Territorial Branches, and for elections of Special Delegations, e.g., to the national Convention or to such regional DSA bodies or conventions that may be formally constituted.

The Committee shall include in its best practices and in its plans for direct management of elections provisions for election security, including privacy, certification and registration of voters, and electronic voting. The Committee shall include in its best practices and in its plans for direct management of elections nomination procedures, timing of announcements for elections and distribution of candidate statements, and considerations for privacy of members.

Section 2(c)(i) Minimum Timing Requirement. No election for the Executive Committee or Territorial Branches shall be held without a minimum of twenty one (21) days between announcement of nominees and the date of the vote.

Section 2(d) Education and Policy Committee. The Education and Policy Committee shall be composed of no fewer than two (2) members, and shall be responsible for the political education and policy research of the Chapter, including, without limitation, (a) organizing educational events; and (b) coordinating policy and research tasks of the Project Committees and the Working Groups at their request; and (c) developing educational processes for use by the Project Committees and working groups. This Committee shall have two co-chairs, at least one of whom shall be the Political Education Coordinator of the Chapter.

Section 2(e) Logistics and Planning Committee. The Logistics and Planning Committee shall be responsible for planning logistics of Membership Meetings and the Membership Convention, and shall create and implement best practices for management of CDSA office supplies and materials. At least one of the two Co-Chairs shall serve on this Committee. The membership of the Committee shall be comprised of volunteers from amongst the Executive Committee and the general membership. The Committee shall have two co-chairs, elected by the membership of the Committee.

Section 2(f) Mobilizer Committee. The Mobilizer Committee shall be responsible for the oversight and implementation of a mobilizer system for purposes of onboarding new members, engaging membership with the projects and priorities of the Chapter, and such other initiatives

that tend to engage membership with each other. The Mobilizer Committee shall be comprised of at least one Branch Representative from each territorial Branch as well as volunteers from amongst the general membership. The Mobilizer Committee shall have two co-chairs, elected by the membership of the Committee.

Section 3 Ad Hoc Committees. The Executive Committee or the Co-Chairs may create and appoint members to ad hoc committees to handle specific administrative tasks of the Executive Committee. Ad hoc Committees shall have at least two (2) and no more than nine (9) members. The Co-Chairs or the Executive Committee shall set the specific purpose and duration of the ad hoc committees in a written statement or in the motion which creates the ad hoc committee, except that in no case shall an ad hoc committee operate for more than four (4) months.

Section 4 Working Groups Generally. Working Groups are bodies essential to the character of the Chapter, and may be organized around common interests, institutions, or substantive areas. Working Groups may be self-organized and certified by the Executive Committee, or established at the initiation of Executive Committee. The Executive Committee may establish best practices and procedures for the creation and democratic operation of Working Groups, and provide support to the operations of Working Groups upon request of their members.

ARTICLE IX AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS

Section 1 Notice of Proposed Amendments. Members wishing to amend these bylaws must submit such draft amendments (a “Draft Amendment Petition”) to the Co-Chairs and Secretary twenty-one (21) days in advance of regularly scheduled membership meeting or the membership convention. The Draft Amendment Petition shall be signed by a Proponent plus ten (10) members of the Chapter. Discussion and a vote upon such amendments shall be listed on the membership meeting or membership convention agenda which is electronically mailed to the membership ten (10) days in advance of the meeting. The Co-Chairs and Secretary, or an ad hoc committee convened for this purpose, may consolidate substantively similar draft amendments. To ensure robust debate and economy of time, no more than five (5) proposed amendments, chosen by the Co-Chairs and Secretary or the ad hoc committee created for this purpose, may be considered in one meeting.

Section 2 Vote. These bylaws may be amended, repealed or altered in whole or in part by a two-thirds vote of the membership meeting at which there is a quorum, and where proposed amendments meet criteria in Section 1 above.

Section 3 Notification of Changes in Bylaws. CDSA members must be notified within thirty (30) days of any changes to these bylaws. This may be done by electronic or physical mailing of meeting minutes or by electronic or physical mailing of revised bylaws.

Article X Conflict Resolution and Harassment Policy

Section 1 Form. CDSA adopts the Grievance and Harassment Policy adopted by the national DSA at the 2017 National Membership Convention, Resolution #33, a copy of which is attached hereto as Addendum 2.

Section 2 Conduct of Members. All members of CDSA have a right to participation and enjoyment of the rights and privileges of membership without interference, harassment, bullying, or uncomradely behavior.

Section 3 Mediation and Conflict Resolution. Members may request, and where possible the Executive Committee may facilitate, mediation for conflict resolution between members or groups of members. Where feasible professional mediation may be sought.

Section 4 Incorporation. Resolution #33 of the 2017 National DSA Membership Convention is incorporated fully to this Section as the policy of CDSA and is included as Addendum 2 attached hereto.

ARTICLE XI HOUSEKEEPING

Section 1 Construction. If there is any conflict between the provisions of Illinois State law and the bylaws, provisions of Illinois State law shall govern.

Section 2 Fiscal Year. The Fiscal Year of the Organization shall be from January 1 to December 31. The Treasurer shall present a proposed budget for approval at the first membership meeting of the fiscal year.

Section 3 Conflict of Interest. A conflict of interest exists when a matter to be acted upon by the Executive Committee confers a direct, substantial benefit to any Executive Committee member. The Executive Committee Member shall disclose the conflict and abstain from voting on any matter before the Executive Committee which places them in a conflict of interest.

Section 4 Dissolution. This organization may be dissolved at a special meeting of the Executive Committee by a majority vote of the Executive Committee. Upon dissolution of the

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

Section 5 CDSA Rules of Order. The rules contained in *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* shall govern all CDSA meetings in cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws.

Section 5(a) Actions out of Order. Any action taken which violates these bylaws shall be considered out of order and of no force or effect.

Section 6 Social Media and Online Assets

Section 6(a) Definitions and Purpose. Social media is defined as all current platforms on the internet that allow for exchange of information between registered “accounts.” Online assets refers to organizational email accounts, websites, and opt-in mass email platforms, and other similar tools for using the internet, whether paid-for or free, that the CDSA may “own.”

Section 6(b) Ownership and Control. Social media accounts and online assets set up in the name of CDSA are the virtual property of CDSA and ,as such, the content of these assets will be under the control of the CDSA Executive Committee or its delegates. The co-chairs, the secretary, and the Communications Coordinator will hold the keys and passwords to all social media and online assets as a security measure. Membership or association with CDSA does not confer on any individual member the right to control or dictate online content. Officers of CDSA shall self-educate about libel laws, security, and privacy considerations in order to responsibly control online content.

Section 6(c) Adjunctive to legal notice requirements. Use of social media accounts and online assets are not a replacement for legal notice requirements. The Secretary, on behalf of the Executive Committee, shall use social media accounts and online assets to publicize membership meetings and program meetings and actions and events of CDSA.

Section 7. Prohibited Activity. CDSA shall not engage in any activity prohibited by resolutions adopted by DSA’s National Convention, state statute, or federal law, including IRS regulations.

[1] I.e., if a Territorial Branch has 99 members, they would have 1 representative. If they have 100, they would have 2.

[2] I.e., if a Territorial Branch Steering Committee has 9 members but five representatives to the EC, they shall choose by majority vote the five representatives; if they have 9 members but 11 representatives, they shall choose the additional two by majority vote.

ADDENDUM 1

FEMINIST PROCESS

The principles of feminist process for holding decision-making meetings and discussions includes the following principles:

1. Respect the Facilitator(s). Members should be aware of the facilitator(s) and their responsibility to ensure a comradely and productive meeting.
2. Identify Goals and Objectives for the Meeting. Friction is more likely where meetings do not have clear purposes and outcomes, so agendas should state with what the objectives and goals of a particular meeting are.
3. “Share the Air.” Members should be aware of how often they are speaking or interjecting, and make an effort to save their comments or questions if they are interrupting or dominating the conversation.
4. Make “I” Statements. Rather than objective assertions, statements framed as “I think...” and “I feel...” and “In my experience...” should be used in political discussions.
5. Address Behavior, Not Individuals. If the course of a conversation or discussion has become contentious, address the behavior causing the problem rather than attack the individual(s) involved.
6. Do Not Be Afraid to Apologize or Ask for an Apology. Comrades should be comfortable asking for resolution through apology, and comrades should freely offer apologies with the understanding that cooperation is built through mutual understanding and trust.
7. Do Not Assign Motives. Assuming good faith includes not assuming you understand other people’s motives for taking or supporting a particular position.
8. Mindfulness of Jargon. Everyone should feel comfortable expressing themselves, try to avoid use of jargon or in-group speak.

ADDENDUM 2

DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS OF AMERICA: HARASSMENT POLICY

Democratic Socialists of America is committed to creating a space that is welcoming and inclusive to members of all genders, races, and classes. The following policy provides guidelines to ensure that everyone is able to organize without fear of harassment, abuse, or harm.

1. Scope

- a. Prohibited behavior.** Members shall not engage in harassment on the basis of sex, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, physical appearance, disability, race, color, religion, national origin, class, age, or profession. Harassing or abusive behavior, such as unwelcome attention, inappropriate or offensive remarks, slurs, or jokes, physical or verbal intimidation, stalking, inappropriate physical contact or proximity, and other verbal and physical conduct constitute harassment when:
 - i. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a member's continued affiliation with DSA;
 - ii. Submission or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for organizational decisions affecting such individual; or
 - iii. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating a hostile environment interfering with an individual's capacity to organize within DSA.²
- b. Other protected classes.** Harassment based on categories not encompassed by those listed section (a) will be evaluated at the discretion of the HGO and Steering Committee representatives.

2. Reporting Harassment

- a. Complaints.** Members may follow the standard DSA complaint process as set out in the following sections if they believe they have been harassed by another member. There will be no time limits requiring the accuser to file a report within any amount of time after the alleged harassment has occurred.

¹ "Unwelcome" means in the sense that the member did not solicit or incite it, and in the sense that the member regarded the conduct as undesirable or offensive. *See Henson v. City of Dundee*, 682 F.2d 897, 903 (11th Cir. 1982).

² A "hostile environment" is one in which the harassment is sufficiently severe or pervasive as to alter the conditions of membership and create an abusive organizing environment. *See Meritor Sav. Bank, FSB v. Vinson*, 477 U.S. 57, 67 (1986). Whether harassment is severe enough to reach this level is determined by whether a reasonable person would be offended by the conduct. *See id.* at 77. Further, in evaluating the severity and pervasiveness of harassment under this standard, DSA representatives should focus on the perspective of the victim. *See Ellison v. Brady*, 924 F.2d 872, 878 (9th Cir. 1991). This means critically analyzing, among other things, the different perspectives of those in a protected class. *See id.*

- b. **Harassment Grievance Officers.** Members filing a formal complaint must contact a DSA harassment grievance officer (“HGO”).
- i. Each DSA chapter with over one hundred members will:
 - 1. Vet and appoint at least two members to serve as the designated HGO(s);
 - 2. Determine term limits for HGO(s) and develop methods for removing HGO(s) for cause.Chapters with one hundred or fewer members will direct all grievance complaints through the national HGO.
 - ii. DSA National will:
 - 1. Vet and appoint at least one staff member to serve as the designated national HGO;
 - 2. Determine appropriate training requirements for HGOs
 - 3. Determine term limits for HGO(s) and develop methods for removing HGO(s) for cause.
 - iii. Each DSA chapter with over one hundred members and DSA National will:
 - 1. Establish an email address to function as a confidential reporting “hotline” that is only accessible by the HGO(s); and
 - 2. Develop template forms both for reporting and responding to accusations of harassment that include:
 - a. The parties’ contact information
 - b. The names of the parties involved
 - c. A description of reported incident
 - 3. Develop template forms for appealing the form of relief determined by Steering Committee that include:
 - a. The grounds of the appeal
 - iv. Each DSA chapter and DSA National will have these structures in place no later than July 1, 2018.
- c. **Reporting procedure and timeline**
- i. After a written report has been submitted--whether through the email hotline or otherwise:
 - 1. The HGO(s) responsible for the reporting channel used by the accuser will contact the accused member within seven days to notify them that a report has been filed against them and request a written response to the report either affirming or denying its substance;
 - 2. The accused will submit their written response within seven days of being notified. If the accused does not meet this deadline, the

HGO will recommend the Steering Committee move to take appropriate disciplinary action;

3. If the accused denies the substance of the report, the HGO overseeing the dispute will have the option to investigate the report by:
 - a. interviewing other members with direct knowledge of the substance of the report;
 - b. requesting documentation from either the accuser or accused or any other parties directly involved; or
 - c. employing any and all other means deemed necessary, with the utmost respect for the confidentiality of the parties, within a time period not to exceed ten days.

- ii. The HGO(s) responsible for adjudicating the dispute will determine whether the report is credible and, if necessary, make a recommendation to Steering Committee of appropriate disciplinary action as soon as practicable, but ultimately within thirty days of the report being filed. This is to ensure the timely, efficient, accurate, and discreet adjudication of all reports. The HGO(s) may notify Steering of the accuser's report and its substance at any time after the report is filed, but must give written notice to both the accuser and the accused member before doing so.

d. **HGO responsibilities.** The HGO(s) will:

- i. Receive, acknowledge receipt of, and archive accuser reports;
- ii. Contact the accused to notify them of the accusations, request their written response, and archive any written response;
- iii. Conduct any necessary investigation of the claim; and
- iv. Present their findings to the Steering Committee with a written report and, if necessary, a recommendation for disciplinary action.
- v. If necessary, HGO(s) may recommend that parties do not contact each other for the duration of the investigative process.
- vi. Compile a yearly report that details:
 1. How many reports were made
 2. How many were taken to the disciplinary process
 3. How many disciplinary actions were taken
 4. Any recommended changes for making the reporting system more effective

This report will not include personally identifying information of any parties in any dispute. The local HGO(s) will send the yearly report to the national HGO(s) no later than January 1 of the new year.

3. Remedies and penalties

a. **Determinations**

- i. All reports will be assessed on a case-by-case basis by the HGO(s) and Steering Committee associated with the accuser's reporting channel. The ultimate disposition of each report will be made by the chapter's Steering Committee or, in the case of DSA National, the NPC, after that body reviews the written report and recommendation of the HGO(s).

b. **Standard for Determining if a Report is Credible**

- i. The chapter's Steering Committee or, in the case of DSA National, the NPC will find the factual allegation in a report is "credible" if it more-likely-than-not occurred.

c. **Remedies and Penalties**

If a chapter's Steering Committee or, in the case of DSA National, the NPC finds the report to be credible, they are authorized to carry out the following remedies and penalties:

1. A formal discussion between the accused and the Steering Committee to develop a plan to change the harassing behavior(s);
 2. Suspension from committee meetings and other chapter or organizational events;
 3. Removal from chapter committee(s);
 4. Removal from DSA; and
 5. Any and all other relief deemed necessary and just by the chapter or national leadership.
- ii. If a local chapter has established suspension or expulsion procedures, Steering Committee is authorized to enforce these remedies and penalties in accordance with those procedures.
 - iii. If the local chapter does not have established suspension or expulsion procedures, they will adopt the procedures outlined in Article III, Section 4 of the DSA Constitution and Article I, Section 3 of DSA bylaws.
 1. The NPC majority required in these procedures will instead be a Steering Committee majority
 2. Local chapters that lack these procedures shall have suspension and expulsion procedures in place by July 1, 2018.
 - iv. DSA national is authorized to enforce certain remedies and penalties in accordance with Article III, Section 4 of the DSA Constitution and Article I, Section 3 of DSA Bylaws
 1. Removal from DSA; and

2. Any and all other relief deemed necessary and just by the chapter or national leadership.
- v. The appropriate form of relief will be determined by, among other things:
 1. The request of the accuser;
 2. The severity of the offense;
 3. The response of the accused; and
 4. The accused's relevant behavioral histories.
- d. **Appeals process.** Either party may appeal the form of relief determined by Steering Committee by filling out appellate form created by the accuser's reporting channel. Appeals must be filed within thirty days of receiving written notice of the Steering Committee's decision. The limited grounds for appeal are:
 - i. Either party believes the behavior was not interpreted using the standards for harassment set out in Section 1a;
 - ii. Procedural errors, misconduct, or conflicts of interest affected the fairness of the outcome; and
 - iii. The remedy or penalty determined by Steering was grossly disproportionate to the violation committed
- e. **Retaliation.** This policy prohibits retaliation against any member for bringing a complaint of harassment pursuant to this policy. This policy also prohibits retaliation against a person who assists someone with a complaint of harassment, or participates in any manner in an investigation or resolution of a complaint of discrimination or harassment. Retaliatory behaviors includes threats, intimidation, reprisals, and/or adverse actions related to organizing. If any party to the complaint believes there has been retaliation, they may inform the HGO who will determine whether to factor the retaliation into the original complaint, or treat it as an individual incident.

ADDENDUM 3

CHAPTER SPENDING POLICIES

A copy of the full proposal passed in the December 2023 General Chapter Meeting [can be found here](#).

As a democratic, member-led and member-driven organization, where chapter funds are raised primarily through member dues and direct member donations, CDSA recognizes the responsibility to align chapter spending as much as possible with our values as a socialist organization. The Chicago Democratic Socialists of America commits to:

1. **Adhering to the demands of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement and their targeted consumer boycotts.** The BDS Movement's website is [linked here](#). For our chapter, this will be the most relevant when purchasing food for chapter events (including chapter wide events and branch events where there is an approved budget for food), spending chapter funds for mutual aid purposes, and purchasing technology and IT equipment for the chapter. The Chapter Treasurer, officers, and Executive Committee will review current BDS targeted boycott campaigns as listed by the BDS Movement ([linked here](#)) and communicate any relevant restrictions to persons tasked with making supply purchases. As the list of boycott targets changes from the BDS Movement, the officers will consult with the Treasurer and EC to ensure that spending decisions remain in alignment with the BDS Movement's demands. Due to ongoing attacks towards Chicago's large Palestinian community—including attacks on Palestinian's material well-being and livelihoods, the chapter will make every effort to purchase goods and supplies from Palestinian owned or run businesses whenever possible.
2. **Supporting union shops.** All commercial printing will be done through union print shops, and any time members are printing materials for CDSA events (fliers/donation pages/self produced buttons, etc) in an individual volunteer capacity, the phrase "Labor Donated" will be marked on these materials. When booking spaces for large events, such as General Chapter Meetings, Chapter Conventions, major social events, branch, working group, and priority campaign committee meetings, priority will be given to venues that are union halls or spaces with staff collective bargaining agreements, such as union hotels, public parks, and libraries. Whenever possible, chapter spending for food and supplies should be prioritized to union businesses—which includes businesses where staff are actively bargaining a first contract.
3. **Supporting and amplifying class-struggle boycotts.** Boycotts are a specific tool of nonviolent direct action and economic non-cooperation to take resources away from the ruling class. However, boycotts must be targeted, strategic, and driven by the rank-and-file in order to be successful. Untargeted calls for consumer boycotts that aren't led by the people most impacted by a loss of revenue can be counterproductive to organizing goals. In general, CDSA will participate in boycotts when they are targeted, led by mass action organizations, or explicitly endorsed by workers organizing in a labor campaign or involved in a labor dispute. Not all union or worker organizing drives demand consumer boycotts—but when these boycotts are announced the chapter will amplify them to our membership. Any promotional materials or graphic assets tied to a consumer boycott will only be shared by the chapter and our official channels (Slack, email, social media, etc) when they come from an identified mass action organization or labor union.

In cases where there is a conflict between purchasing something from a union business and adhering to the demands of a BDS targeted boycott, the Chapter officers and Executive Committee will first seek to identify a brand or vendor that is both union-produced and BDS compliant. If that is not possible, the CDSA leadership will review any local or international circumstances (ie, the existence of a targeted consumer boycott, current actions tied to a local union organizing campaign, etc) and make a determination on what to prioritize, with input or approval from the EC as needed.