

**Bylaws of the Santa Fe Local  
of the Democratic Socialists of America**  
[Amended July 29, 2018]

**ARTICLE I. Name.**

The name of the Local shall be the Santa Fe Local of the Democratic Socialists of America, a not-for-profit corporation.

**ARTICLE II. Purpose.**

The Santa Fe Local of the Democratic Socialists of America seeks to facilitate the transition to a truly democratic and socialist society, one in which the means/resources of production are democratically and socially controlled.

DSA rejects an economic order based solely on private profit, alienated labor, gross inequalities of wealth and power, discrimination based on race and sex, 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.

**ARTICLE III. Membership.**

**Section 1. Membership**

Members of the Santa Fe Local DSA will be those individuals whose dues to national DSA are paid in full and who reside and/or work in Santa Fe or surrounding areas. It will be the responsibility of members to approve policies and guidelines for the operation of the local chapter, to make all efforts to build a diverse membership reflective of our local community, to elect delegates to the national convention, to vote on matters related to national policy, and to make recommendations on issues and other matters to the National Political Committee of DSA.

**Section 2. Removal of Members**

If a full member is found to be in substantial disagreement with the principles or policies of national DSA, or if that member is found to be consistently engaging in undemocratic, disruptive behavior, then the Local may vote to expel that member from DSA. In order for such a finding to be

made, another DSA member must formally prefer written charges against the member in question to the Local Organizing Committee, which shall set the date of a Local meeting for deliberations on the charges. The member in question must receive a copy of the written charges and notice of the meeting a minimum of two weeks before that meeting takes place. Expulsion of a member or affiliate member requires a two-thirds vote of the Local meeting. An expelled full member may appeal to the National Political Committee of DSA.

### Section 3. Dues.

The Local chapter may establish a Local pledge system of voluntary donations for its members.

## **ARTICLE IV. Local Meetings.**

### Section 1. General Meeting.

The Local will hold a minimum of one General Meeting annually, and all members of the Local will receive two weeks written (or electronic mail) notice and an agenda of the General Meeting. The General Meeting will elect Local officers and may adopt an annual budget. In general, it is the highest legislative body of the Local.

### Section 2. Regular Meetings.

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

The Local Organizing Committee will set the agenda for Regular Meetings. In general, the Regular Meeting is the operating legislative body of the Local.

### Section 3. Convention Meetings.

The Local will hold a Convention Meeting two months before each National Convention, in order to discuss candidates to the National Political Committee, proposed Priority Resolutions, and proposed Amendments to the National Constitution and Bylaws. The time and place of this meeting shall be set in a schedule published and distributed by the Local Organizing Committee.

### Section 3. Emergency Meetings.

The Local Organizing Committee may call an Emergency Meeting of the Local on three days notice when an urgent and important matter requires deliberation.

### Section 4. Quorum.

A quorum of 20 percent of the members (but not fewer than six persons) is required for General, Regular, or Emergency Meetings to transact business.

## **ARTICLE V. Local Officers: Powers and Duties.**

### Section 1. Officers and Terms.

The officers of the Local will be the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. The term of office will be one year, and shall run from February 1 to January 31 or until their successors are elected. The chapter must select officers that represent the racial and gender diversity of our membership, and are committed to creating a numerical balance in the representation.

## Section 2. Vacancies.

In the event of a vacancy in the office of Chair, the Vice Chair will assume that office. In the event of a vacancy in any other Local office, the Local Organizing Committee will appoint a replacement for the remainder of the term.

## Section 3. Chair.

a. The Chair will be the chief executive officer of the Local. The chair will preside over Local and Organizing Committee meetings or will appoint a substitute to assume the powers and duties of the presiding officer as specified in Robert's Rules of Order. The Chair will be the official public spokesperson for the Local and will initiate such actions and policies as the Local's general welfare may demand. In the event that the Chair is unable to perform their duties for a single event or a longer period of time, the Vice Chair will serve as replacement.

b) The Chair will be responsible also for coordinating the day-to-day operations and political work of the Local's branches and committees.

c) The Chair will report to Local Regular Meetings on the business of the Organizing Committee Meetings, at which time a copy of the minutes of those meetings will be available for inspection.

## Section 4 Secretary.

a) The Secretary will be responsible for answering all correspondence and queries of the Local, and for maintaining an up-to-date membership list of the Local. The secretary will insure effective communication with the national DSA, and will temporarily assume the responsibilities of the Chair, if the Vice Chair is not able to do so.

b) The Secretary will be responsible also for the taking of minutes of all local and Organizing Committee Meetings, and shall have custody of these minutes, and the resolutions, reports and other official records of the Local. The secretary shall transfer official records in good condition to their successor. Official records shall include meeting minutes and member lists. The secretary shall also share non-confidential records and information to the general membership as needed or requested.

## Section 5. Treasurer.

The Treasurer will be responsible for the funds and financial records of the Local. All funds collected by the Local will be turned over to the Treasurer, who shall deposit them in a bank account under the name of the Local. In cooperation with the Secretary, the Treasurer will be responsible for insuring that membership dues are paid up-to-date. The Treasurer will prepare the annual Local budget, and deliver the Local financial report to the General Meeting of the Local, as well as periodic progress reports as requested by the Organizing Committee of the Local.

## Section 6. Additional Duties.

The Local Organizing Committee may assign additional temporary duties to an officer of the Local, so long as such assignments do not conflict with the designation of responsibilities outlined in these Bylaws.

## **ARTICLE VI. Organizing Committee.**

### Section 1. Composition.

The Local Organizing Committee will be composed of the four officers of the Local, the chair(s) of Local Youth Sections, and the chair(s) of any Local Branches.

#### Section 2. Duties.

a) The Organizing Committee administers the affairs of the Local and oversees the implementation of the decisions of the General and Regular Meetings; it may also propose policy to the General and Regular Meetings. It shall have the power to receive reports of any Committee or Branch, and advise thereon, to call emergency meetings of the Local, and to act on any matter that requires immediate and urgent action. The Organizing Committee is the regular executive body of the Local, and thus subordinate to its Legislative bodies, the General and Regular Meetings.

b) The Local Organizing Committee will be responsible for establishing program activities for the Local chapter, for proposing guidelines and policies that will subsequently be voted on by full members of DSA, and for acting on the organization's behalf between Local meetings.

#### Section 3. Meetings.

The meetings of the Organizing Committee will be held at the call of the Chair at such intervals as may be determined by a prior Organizing Committee Meeting or by consultation with any three members of the Organizing Committee. All members of the Organizing Committee must (ordinarily) be given three days oral or written notice of regular Organizing Committee Meetings; a 24-hour notice may be given under special emergency circumstances.

#### Section 4. Quorum.

A quorum of three members of the Organizing Committee is required for the transaction of Organizing Committee business.

### **ARTICLE VII. Branches.**

#### Section 1. Definition.

A branch is a subgroup of the Local consisting of at least five full members in good standing with national DSA. Branches may be defined by geography, work site, constituency (e.g., labor, minority, feminist), or area of political work (e.g., peace action, environmental movement). Branches will be established by a majority vote of a (Regular or General) Local meeting. Each branch will have one chair. The chairs of branches will be elected by a majority vote of a (Regular or General) Local meeting and will hold membership on the Local Organizing Committee. The term of office will be six months, and will run from February 1 to July 31, or from August 1 to January 31, or until their successors are elected.

#### Section 2. Youth Sections.

Branches established on high school or college campuses and consisting of students will be called Local Youth Sections. Youth Sections must have at least five full members in good standing with national DSA. The chairs of Local Youth Sections will hold membership on the Local Organizing Committee.

#### Section 3. Vacancies

In the event of a vacancy in the office of branch chair, a replacement will be elected for the remainder of the term by a majority vote at the next (Regular or General) Local meeting.

#### Section 4. Record-keeping

Each branch chair will keep an up-to-date list of branch members, which will be shared with the Secretary and made available to any member of the Local upon request.

#### Section 5. Dissolution

A branch may be dissolved by a majority vote of a (Regular or General) Local meeting.

### **ARTICLE VIII Committees.**

#### Section 1. Duration.

The Local will have Ad Hoc Committees, which will exist for a limited and explicit duration. Ad Hoc Committees may be established by a vote of full members at a Regular Meeting of the Local.

#### Section 2. Duties.

Chairs of Ad Hoc Committees will keep the Organizing Committee and the Regular Meetings of the Local informed on the activities of the committee.

### **ARTICLE IX. Delegates to National, Regional, and State Bodies.**

#### Section 1. Convention.

Local delegates and alternates to the National Convention will be elected by full members of the Local Chapter of DSA. Elections for the National Convention delegation shall be held on the schedule announced by the national organization.

### **ARTICLE X. Prohibited Activity**

Santa Fe Local shall not engage in activity prohibited by the IRS guidelines established for 501 (c) 4 organizations or similar rules established by the state of New Mexico. Nor shall the local engage in any activity prohibited by resolutions adopted by DSA's National Convention or DSA's National Political Committee.

### **ARTICLE XI. Nominations and Recalls.**

#### Section 1. Nominations Committee.

A three-person Nominations Committee shall be established at least two weeks prior to every election by vote of a Regular Meeting. It shall solicit and receive nominations for the positions to be elected. It is understood by all members that personal endorsement by members who happen to be on the Nominations Committee carries no additional weight and that the members of the Nomination Committee shall remain impartial as they carry out their duties.

#### Section 2. Nominations Process.

Nominations for Local officers and delegates to the National Convention shall be opened 7 days before and closed at the Annual Meeting. The call for nominations shall be announced to full members of DSA in advance of the General Meeting.

Section 3. Uncontested Positions.

If a position is uncontested, the nominee will be declared elected by acclamation.

Section 4. Recalls

If an officer, including committee chairs, branch chairs, or Local Youth Section chair, is found to be in substantial dereliction of the duties, or if that officer is found to be consistently engaging in undemocratic behavior, then the Local may vote to recall/remove that officer from their position in office. In order for such a finding to be made, a DSA member must formally proffer written charges against the member in question to the Local Organizing Committee or at any regular meeting of the Local DSA. The Organizing Committee shall set the date of a local meeting for deliberations on the charges. The officer in question must receive a copy of the written charges and notice of the meeting a minimum of two weeks before that meeting for a vote to take place. Removal of an officer requires a two-thirds vote of the Local meeting. A removed officer remains a member of the local DSA, subject to Article III Section 2.

**ARTICLE XII. Amendments.**

Proposed amendments to these Bylaws must be made by written resolution, endorsed by five members of the Local chapter of DSA, and submitted to the Organizing Committee a month in advance of a General or Regular Meeting. The Organizing Committee is required to provide the Local membership with two weeks' written notice of the proposed amendments. The amendment must be approved by a majority vote of two consecutive (Regular or General) Local meetings.

**ARTICLE XIII. Rules of the Local.**

Section 1. Rules.

The Rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern this Local in cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws. Consensus decision-making is desirable where feasible, but meetings must submit to Robert's Rules of Order upon the request of a member.

Section 2. Action Out of Order.

Any action taken by an officer or member of the Local in contravention of these Bylaws is null and void.