

Constitution of the Arlington Young Democrats

As adopted by the Arlington Young Democrats Membership, August 19, 2025

Article I: Mission and Vision

Section 1: Name of Chapter

The name of this organization shall be “Arlington Young Democrats” and may be abbreviated to “AYD.”

Section 2: Chapter Mission

The mission of AYD shall be:

- To further advance the ideals and principles of the Democratic Party
- To support and elect Democratic Party candidates for public office
- To develop, strengthen, and expand young people’s interest, knowledge, and participation in government and the political process, and to promote civic involvement generally
- To provide a forum in which young people may freely and openly discuss, debate, and educate one another about ideas and policies affecting the Democratic Party, Arlington County, the Commonwealth of Virginia, the United States of America, and the world
- To provide opportunities and resources to young people so that they may grow and develop skills for positions of leadership
- To provide opportunities for young people to network and socialize

Section 3: Chapter Vision

The Vision Statement for AYD shall be:

“The Arlington Young Democrats envision a vibrant, inclusive, and civically engaged community where young people lead the change in shaping progressive policy, electing Democratic leaders, and building a more just, equitable, and democratic future.”

Section 4: General Body Meeting Cadence

The regular meetings of AYD will be held at least once a month unless otherwise ordered. Special meetings of AYD’s general membership may be called by the President, a majority of the Executive Committee, or by the written request to the President and the Secretary of ten percent (10%) of AYD’s active members.

Article II: Policy

Section 1: Party Policy

AYD shall positively contribute to the activities, growth, and influence of the Democratic Party.

AYD shall actively support the candidates and the platform of the Democratic Party at all levels. However, nothing in this Constitution shall be interpreted to preclude AYD or its members from advocating for amendments to the Democratic Party platform at any level, or from taking a position on any issue affecting the Democratic Party.

Section 2: Supporting and Endorsing Candidates

In a general election, AYD shall support and endorse only those candidates for public office who have been nominated or endorsed by the Democratic Party.

In accordance with the rules and regulations provided by the Young Democrats of America and the Virginia Young Democrats (VAYD), AYD shall not endorse candidates in any contest in which candidates are seeking the nomination or endorsement of the Democratic Party, and shall maintain its neutrality until after such contests are settled.

AYD shall provide an equitable forum, in a manner determined by the Executive Committee, for all candidates seeking the nomination or endorsement of the Democratic Party to solicit its members' support. However, nothing in this article shall be interpreted to preclude individual members of AYD from endorsing candidates seeking the nomination or endorsement of the Democratic Party in their individual capacity, provided that no Officer of AYD shall cause their affiliation or title with AYD to be used in connection with such an endorsement.

Section 3: Additional Considerations

AYD shall act in a manner consistent with this Constitution and shall endeavor to act with consideration of the Virginia Young Democrats, the Young Democrats of America, the Arlington County Democratic Committee, the Democratic Party of Virginia, and the Democratic National Committee.

Article III: Membership

Section 1: Membership Requirements

Section 1.1: Membership Dues

All voting members of AYD shall pay annual dues to be considered active members. The exact cost of dues shall be determined by the executive committee in accordance with procedures established by the bylaws.

Section 1.2: Voting Membership

- A. All Voting Members must primarily reside within Arlington County and be at least thirteen years (13) old and younger than thirty-six (36) years old.
- B. No person will be considered an active Member of AYD until a membership form, as approved by the Executive Committee, has been completed in writing or online, and annual dues have been paid (or waived by the President because of economic hardship or any other compelling reason(s)).
- C. Membership shall be valid for one calendar year from the date that the member paid their dues.
- D. Membership renewal and collection of appropriate dues will occur as established in the Bylaws.

Section 1.3: Associate Membership

- A. Associate Membership is open to all individuals who do not primarily reside within Arlington County or fall outside the membership age requirements.
- B. Dues for Associate Membership cannot exceed the cost of a Voting Membership.

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- C. No person will be considered an active Associate Member of AYD until a membership form, as approved by the Executive Committee, has been completed in writing or online, and annual dues have been paid (or waived by the President because of economic hardship or any other compelling reason(s)).
- D. Membership shall be valid for one calendar year from the date that the member paid their dues.
- E. Membership renewal and collection of appropriate dues will occur as established in the Bylaws

Section 1.4: Non-Discrimination Clause

No person shall be denied membership on the basis of race, gender, religion, economic status, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or disability.

Section 1.5: Benefits of Membership

Members are entitled to the benefits of membership as prescribed in the bylaws.

Article IV: Chapter Officers and the Executive Committee

Section 1: Chapter Officers

The elected officers of the Arlington Young Democrats (AYD) shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership & Diversity Director, Programming Director(s), Political Director, and Communications Director.

All officers must be voting members of AYD. No associate member can be an elected officer.

Section 2: Restriction of Offices Held

No person may hold more than one elected officer position at a time.

Section 3: Appointed officers

Chapter officers listed above shall have the power to appoint a deputy at their discretion with the approval of the president.

The President shall have the ability to create and dissolve any necessary appointed positions upon a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

Section 4: Office of President Emeritus

The President Emeritus shall be filled by the most recent, dues-paying past President of AYD. The President Emeritus shall serve as the tie-breaking vote for the executive committee.

Section 5: Executive Committee

Section 5.1: Composition of the Executive Committee

The collective of chapter officers is known as the “Executive Committee.” Only elected officers shall be voting members of the Executive Committee, with the President Emeritus able to cast a tie-breaking vote if needed. Appointed deputies shall be ex officio members

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Section 5.2: Standing Rules

The Executive Committee shall have the power to establish standing rules for the operation of the Executive Committee by a simple majority vote at its annual retreat.

Section 6: Aging Out Exemption for Officers

An officer who will age out (reach 36 years old) during their term may still run for and serve the full term, provided they are eligible to be a member for at least six months of the term.

Section 7: Residency Requirement

All officers elected to serve as part of AYD must primarily reside and be a registered voter in Arlington County of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Section 8: Declaration of Vacancy

Section 8.1: Declaration by the Officer

Officers who seek to vacate their position must properly notify the President (or designee) immediately upon their decision. The President (or designee) will then notify the Executive Committee and shall follow the procedures prescribed by *Article V, Section 4* of this constitution.

Section 8.2: Declaration by the Executive Committee

Officers who miss more than 3 scheduled Executive Committee meetings, without an excused absence from the President, shall be vacated from their office upon a 2/3rd vote of the Executive Committee at the discretion of the President.

The president shall provide notification of unexcused absences to the Officer and the Secretary.

Section 9: Duties and Responsibilities of Officers

President

- Presides over meetings of the Executive Committee and Membership of AYD
- Exercises general managerial tasks with respect to the operation of the organization
- Approve the appointment of deputy positions and additional roles as proposed by officers
- Establishes and terminates special committees as needed, appoints a chair to such special committees, and shall be notified of each committee meeting
- Serves as the primary liaison between AYD and the Arlington County Democratic Committee, of which they are a voting member of the Steering Committee
- Serves as the primary liaison between AYD and the Virginia Young Democrats, of which they are a voting member of the Council of Presidents
- Shall have access to an annual discretionary fund of \$1,500
- Shall have the authority to take emergency actions necessary to guide the organization during times of rapid response, internal or external crises, or other urgent situations.
- Shall exercise other powers and duties as may be assigned to the Office of President by other provisions of the Constitution and under the Bylaws.

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Vice President

- Presides over the organization in the absence of the President;
- Assists the Programming Director(s) in organizing and developing meetings of the general membership and other programmatic offerings;
- Appoints and removes caucus chairs and supervises the activities of such caucuses created pursuant to constitutional and bylaw procedures;
- Serves as a liaison to the Arlington County Democratic Committee, of which they are a voting member of the Steering Committee;
- Shall become President in case of the removal of the President from office or of their death or resignation; and
- Shall exercise such other powers and duties as may be assigned to the office of Vice President by other provisions of the Constitution, under the Bylaws, and as delegated by the President.

Secretary

- Prepares and disseminates the agenda and a written report of meetings of the Executive Committee and the general membership;
- Prepares and disseminates AYD weekly membership newsletter in partnership with the Communications and Programming Director(s); and
- Shall exercise such other powers and duties as may be assigned to the office of Secretary by other provisions of the Constitution, under the Bylaws, and as delegated by the President

Treasurer

- Drafts proposed AYD yearly budget;
- Establishes procedures to handle disbursements and expenditures;
- Tracks and reports all receipts and disbursements;
- Maintains all financial records;
- Prepares filing reports to the State Board of Elections;
- Ensures financial records are open to inspection by any active Member at any reasonable time; and,
- Shall exercise such other powers and duties as may be assigned to the office of Treasurer by other provisions of the Constitution, under the Bylaws, and as delegated by the President.

Membership & Diversity Director

- Plans and coordinates recruitment, retention, and renewal of members, including outreach to local high schools, colleges, and community groups;
- Maintains the official membership list, Historical Contact Sheet, and other documents as deemed necessary by the President;
- Works with AYD and fellow officers to improve opportunities for a more inclusive membership related to race, ethnicity, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, faith, and immigration status, and seeks to identify and reduce barriers to participation;
- Serves as a liaison to the Arlington County Democratic Committee, of which they are a voting member of the Steering Committee; and,
- Shall exercise such other powers and duties as may be assigned to the office of Membership Director by other provisions of the Constitution, under the Bylaws, and as delegated by the President.

Programming Director(s)

- There may be up to two Programming Directors who serve as Co-Chairs if there is sufficient interest. While responsibilities may be divided at their discretion, the roles are generally organized around two focus areas: (1) Social Events and (2) Service & Fundraising;
- Plan and manage logistics for monthly general body meetings, social events, and other programs;
- Shall document event plans and post-event feedback and prepare an annual report for the succeeding executive committee.
- Coordinate event promotion in collaboration with the Communications Director and Secretary;
- Identify and manage partnerships with charitable organizations and volunteer opportunities;
- Develop and execute fundraising opportunities in partnership with the President and Vice President;
- Support overall programming strategy and ensure events are inclusive, accessible, and aligned with AYD's mission; and
- Shall exercise such other powers and duties as may be assigned to the office(s) of Programming Director by other provisions of the Constitution, under the Bylaws, and as delegated by the President or Vice President

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Political Director

- Oversees political advocacy of the organization as it relates to local, state, and federal issues, including day-to-day activities of the political interest of AYD;
- Oversees electoral activity of AYD, including canvassing, phone and text banking, and voter registration;
- Coordinates efforts with the campaigns of local, state, and federal Democratic candidates;
- Coordinate with Beyond Arlington and other political organizations to elect Democrats up and down the ballot;
- Prepares AYD general election campaign strategy;
- Serves as official liaison to the Arlington County Democratic Committee, of which they are a voting member of the Steering Committee;
- Coordinates relationships with other recognized Democratic organizations;
- Manages the AYD resolution process; and
- May appoint a non-voting deputy to assist with tasks as necessary and subject to approval by the President and Vice President; and
- Shall exercise such other powers and duties as may be assigned to the office(s) of Political Director by other provisions of the Constitution, under the Bylaws, and as delegated by the President or Vice President

Communications Director

- Oversees the construction, editing, and regular updating of the website of AYD;
- Oversees AYD's presence on social media and other digital platforms;
- Oversees the drafting of statements as deemed necessary by the President
- Creates and distributes promotional materials, including graphics, flyers, and event announcements;
- Works with the Secretary to distribute information in AYD's weekly newsletters; and
- Shall exercise such other powers and duties as may be assigned to the office of Communications Director by other provisions of the Constitution, under the Bylaws, and as delegated by the President or Vice President.

President Emeritus

- Advises and assists the President and other officers as needed and requested in the exercise of their duties;
- Cast tie-breaking votes when needed;
- Serves as the primary Alumni Liaison by maintaining alumni contact list, inviting alumni to major events, and identifying opportunities for alumni involvement (e.g., mentorship, donations, speaking); and
- Shall exercise such other powers and duties as may be assigned to the office of President Emeritus by other provisions of the Constitution, under the Bylaws, and as delegated by the President.

Section 10: Line of Succession

Section 10.1: Activating Line of Succession

In the event that the President is unable to fulfill the duties of their office, including but not limited to incapacity, resignation, or death, a line of succession shall be enacted.

Notice of activating the line of succession must be communicated by the highest ranking officer to the general body within twenty-four (24) hours.

Section 10.2: Line of succession

The line of succession is as follows:

1. Vice President
2. Political Director
3. Secretary
4. Treasurer

However, the President has the ability to alter positions 2, 3, and 4 at the beginning of each term, including elected positions not listed above. Notice of alteration must be provided to the full voting membership prior to the 30th day of a new term.

Section 10.3: Additional Procedures

In the event that the line of succession exceeds the 4th position on the line, an emergency election shall be held within 45 days. All procedures listed in Article V shall be followed

Article V: Elections, Eligibility, and Vacancies

Section 1: Election Procedures

Elections shall be conducted annually using ranked-choice instant runoff voting (IRV), and each officer shall be elected by a majority of the votes of active AYD members, present and voting, as well as those voting by absentee ballot.

Each officer shall serve a period of one year (or the remainder of the term in the event of a vacancy), and each officer's term shall begin upon the adjournment of the meeting at which they were elected and shall conclude upon the adjournment of the following meeting during which annual elections are held.

The President, in consultation with the Executive Board, shall make necessary arrangements for active AYD members to vote in any election by absentee ballot.

Section 2: Voter Eligibility

Individuals shall be eligible to vote in AYD elections and run for office if they meet all of the following requirements: they must be between the ages of 13 and 36, primarily reside in Arlington County, have completed a membership form, and have paid their annual dues before the start of the meeting at which the election is held.

Section 3: Election Rules

Election rules shall be passed no less than 60 days prior to the election at the discretion of the current/outgoing executive board and shall be disseminated to candidates no later than 24 hours after passage.

Section 4: Vacancies

In the event of a vacancy of an officer, with the exception of the office of the vice president, the president may elect to form a search committee to find a replacement upon agreement or have the sole authority to temporarily fill the vacant position until an election is held.

A meeting to elect and fill any vacancy shall occur no later than fifty (50) days after the position becomes available. However, no interim election shall be necessary if the next annual election will take place within ninety (90) days from when the position became available.

Article VI: Standing Committees and Caucuses

Section 1: Standing Committees

Standing committees may be formed in accordance with the bylaws; however, two standing committees shall exist at all times: the Resolutions Committee and the Communications Committee.

All committees develop policy and recommend passage or non-passage to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee considers the policy and recommends passage or non-passage to the general membership as required by this Constitution or in the Bylaws.

Section 1.1: Resolutions Committee

Considers and votes whether to forward resolutions to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee then considers all resolutions sent by the Resolutions Committee and recommends adoption or non-adoption to the general membership. Resolutions of AYD are adopted by the vote of the general membership. Resolutions may be proposed to the Committee by any member of AYD. The President, as elected, serves as the chair of the Committee. Voting members of the Committee include the Committee chair and any other voting member of AYD present at the meeting.

Section 1.2: Communications Committee

Plans and coordinates the dissemination of information regarding AYD and the maintenance of the organization's media. The Communications Director, as elected, serves as the chair of the Committee, and the Secretary, as elected, serves as the vice-chair of the Committee. Voting members of the Committee include the Committee chair, Committee vice-chairs, and any other members of AYD present at the meeting.

Section 2: Caucuses

Any group of 5 active members of AYD may form a caucus by providing written notice to the president and vice president and demonstrating the ability to forward ideas, advance an issue or propose resolutions. Caucuses must have 5 active members each year to be considered an active caucus within AYD.

Section 3: Special Committees

There will be those special committees as established by the President, who will also appoint the chair. The special committee shall meet at the call of its chair, and its meetings shall be publicized to the general membership. As with standing committees, voting members of any special committee, other than those created pursuant to Article VI, Section 2, include the Committee chair and any other members of AYD present at the meeting.

Article VII: Grievances and Discipline

Section 1: Grievances

Any active member of AYD may petition the Executive Committee with a grievance by submitting such a petition (electronic or otherwise) to both the President and Secretary (or any other member of the Executive Committee if both the President and Secretary are the subject of the grievance). Upon receipt of the grievance petition, the Executive Committee shall determine what action, if any, is appropriate. Any action taken by the Executive Committee, including deciding that no action is needed, requires a simple majority of the voting members of the Executive Committee. The individual who submits a petition shall be promptly notified of the action or inaction taken by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall address any grievance petition in a timely manner.

Section 2: Discipline & Removal

Any active member of AYD may petition the Executive Committee to initiate disciplinary proceedings against any other active member of AYD stemming from a violation of this Constitution, the AYD Code of Conduct, AYD's Anti-Discrimination Policy, or any local, state, or federal criminal laws. Such a petition shall be submitted to both the President and Secretary (or any other member of the Executive Board if both the President and Secretary are the subject of the petition). The petition must name the active member(s) to be disciplined and provide detailed information about why disciplinary action is necessary.

Upon receipt of a disciplinary petition, the Executive Committee shall determine what action, if any, is appropriate. Any action taken by the Executive Committee, including deciding that no action is needed, requires a simple majority of voting members of the Executive Committee. The individual who submits a petition and any person(s) named in the petition shall be promptly notified of the action or inaction taken by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall address any disciplinary petition in a timely manner.

If the Executive Committee determines that the charges, if true, would warrant suspension or removal, then the President (or the highest-ranking member of the Executive Committee, not the subject of the petition) may establish and oversee a five-person tribunal to hear the case. The tribunal shall consist of the three (3) highest-ranking members of the Executive Committee who are not the subject of the petition and two (2) active members of AYD to be agreed upon by the parties to the case. If there is no agreement among the parties, then any remaining tribunal position(s) shall be chosen by voting members of the Executive Committee who are not on the tribunal and who are not the subject of the petition.

The tribunal shall oversee a short trial lasting no more than two (2) hours, unless extended up to two times, with provided majority approval of the committee.

During the trial, the parties are permitted to make an opening statement, present witnesses and evidence, question one another, and make a closing statement. Time shall be divided as equally as possible during the trial.

Following the trial, the tribunal shall decide by a majority vote whether or not the accused is guilty or not guilty. If the tribunal finds the accused guilty, it shall present its findings and a recommendation as to what disciplinary action is appropriate to the Executive Committee. Should the accused refuse to appear at the tribunal, the tribunal will discuss the case in their absence and make a determination. The Executive Committee shall then vote on whether to adopt the tribunal's recommendation. A simple majority of those present and voting is needed to adopt the tribunal's recommendation.

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The tribunal's recommendation shall be communicated to the Virginia Young Democrats statewide organization within 72 hours of the decision.

Section 3: Appeal

Members are entitled to appeal the decision of the executive board if they so choose. During the appeal, a written record of the tribunal shall be provided. A member of the executive committee shall defend the decision of the executive board, and the accused shall have the chance to share with the full membership their defense. Upon conclusion of the appeal hearing, a vote by the entire membership shall be called, with a simple majority needed to uphold or overturn the decision.

Section 4: Recusal

Members tasked with addressing a grievance or overseeing a disciplinary proceeding shall determine whether they can do so fairly and impartially. Such members may recuse themselves for any reason, or no reason at all, but shall recuse themselves when it is necessary to avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interest.

Section 5: Referral

At the conclusion of the decision, and if required in the appeals process, the decision and fact-findings of the organization shall be shared in part or in whole with the wider VAYD officers upon approval of a majority of the Executive Committee. It is the prerogative of VAYD officers to determine if additional action, including but not limited to expulsion from VAYD, may be considered and applied.

Article VIII: Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern AYD in all cases to which they are applicable and when they are not inconsistent with this Constitution or the Bylaws.

Article IX: Constitutional Amendments

This Constitution may be amended, provided a quorum, by a two-thirds vote of active members present and voting. All proposed changes must be disseminated to the general membership in writing at least fourteen (14) days in advance of the vote.

Article X: Bylaws

Bylaws further governing AYD shall be passed as needed. Bylaws may be added, deleted, or amended by a majority vote of active members present and voting, provided, however, that all proposed changes have been provided to the general membership in writing at least Fourteen Days in advance of the vote.