



# **The Constitution and Bylaws of the Young Democrats of Arkansas**

**As amended by the State Convention  
April 6, 2019 in Little Rock, Arkansas**

# THE CONSTITUTION OF THE YOUNG DEMOCRATS OF ARKANSAS

## PREAMBLE

We, the Young Democrats of Arkansas, united in common purpose, hereby rededicate ourselves to the principles of the Democratic Party and the progressive movement. Recognizing that there is nothing wrong with America that cannot be cured by what is right with America, and in order to shape a more perfect future for ourselves and our peers, stimulate in young people an active interest in government and politics, close the gap between the promise of America and the reality of America, promote rights for all and privileges for none, encourage the highest degree of justice and general welfare for the citizens of this State and Nation, and rededicate ourselves to the proposition that *all* are created equal, we do hereby associate ourselves together and establish this Constitution.

## ARTICLE I General Provisions

### **SECTION 101 Name.**

The name of this organization shall be the Young Democrats of Arkansas (hereinafter referred to as YDAR). It shall be composed of all duly chartered chapters established by this Constitution, and at-large members as provided for in the Bylaws.

### **SECTION 102 Affiliation.**

YDAR is and shall remain affiliated with the Young Democrats of America (YDA) and the Democratic Party of Arkansas (DPA). College chapters are and shall remain affiliated with the College Democrats of America. High School chapters are and shall remain affiliated with the High School Democrats of America (HSDA).

### **SECTION 103 Non-discrimination.**

YDAR, and all members and units thereof, shall admit members without regard to any actual or perceived personal characteristic - including without limitation but not limited to religion, race, ethnicity, national origin, socioeconomic status, disability, sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation - to all the rights, privileges, programs, and other activities generally accorded or made available to members of this organization.

## ARTICLE II Membership & Chapters

### **SECTION 201 Eligibility.**

Any person not fewer than fourteen (14) years of age and not more than thirty-five (35) years of age who has openly and in good faith declared their dedication to the fundamental principles, objectives, and platforms of YDAR shall be eligible for membership in this organization.

### **SECTION 202 Active Membership.**

Active members shall be members in good standing of a duly chartered chapter of YDAR, given that no person shall be allowed membership in more than one (1) duly chartered chapter of YDAR at any given time.

**SECTION 203 Lifetime Membership.**

Any person who has reached the age of thirty-six (36) may be issued a lifetime membership in this organization upon nomination by the President and confirmation by a three-fourths majority ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of the State Convention. Lifetime members shall have demonstrated a commitment to the highest ideals of the Democratic Party and have performed extraordinary service to YDAR. A lifetime member shall have none of the obligations of membership in YDAR, but shall be entitled to all of the privileges except those of making motions, of voting, and of holding office.

**SECTION 204 Chapter Levels.**

**SECTION 204.1 Young Professional Chapters.**

Young Professional chapter units shall consist of not fewer than one (1) and not more than five (5) adjacent counties. Members shall reside, work, or receive an education within the chapter unit of which they are a member, and must not be eligible to become a member of an existing college or high school chapter.

**SECTION 204.2 College Chapters.**

College chapter units shall consist of all accredited colleges and universities in Arkansas. Members shall be registered students, faculty, or staff of the unit of which they are a member.

**SECTION 204.3 High School Chapters.**

High School chapter units shall consist of all high schools, public and private, in Arkansas. Members shall be registered students, faculty, or staff of the unit of which they are a member.

**SECTION 205 Charter Issuance.**

Charters shall be issued by the State Convention subject to the requirements set forth in the Bylaws, and are subject to renewal by each succeeding State Convention. Interim charters may be issued between State Conventions in accordance with the Bylaws. All charters not renewed by the adjournment of the State Convention shall be immediately terminated at that time.

**SECTION 206 Charter Revocation.**

**SECTION 206.1 Cause.**

Charters may be revoked for chapter inactivity or non-compliance with the YDAR Constitution or Bylaws.

**SECTION 206.2 Authority.**

The revocation of a charter shall be considered at the next regular meeting of the Local Presidents Assembly upon the submission of a petition of a simple majority ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) of Executive Committee members to the Executive Vice President. A two-thirds majority ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote of the

Local Presidents Assembly shall be required to revoke a charter.

SECTION 206.3 Notice.

All elected officers of a chapter whose charter is being considered for revocation shall be notified not fewer than thirty (30) days prior to the meeting. Said notice shall include the cause for revocation, and the date, time, and location of the Local Presidents Assembly meeting.

**ARTICLE III**  
**State Convention**

**SECTION 301 Authority.**

The State Convention shall be the highest decision making authority of YDAR, subject to the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws, assembling annually for the purpose of electing officers; considering charter applications, resolutions, a platform, and amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws; and to conduct other business that may properly come before the State Convention.

**SECTION 302 Time & Place.**

The State Convention shall be held during the month of April in Little Rock on a date to be determined by the Convention Committee.

**SECTION 303 Officers.**

Not less than three (3) months prior to the State Convention, the President shall appoint a temporary Convention Chair and a temporary Convention Secretary. A permanent Chair and Secretary shall be elected at the State Convention immediately following the adoption of the program and temporary standing rules and credentials reports.

**SECTION 304 Arrangements.**

SECTION 304.1 Convention Committee.

The Convention Chair, Convention Secretary, all Standing Committee Chairs, and one (1) representative from each congressional district appointed by the appropriate district directors shall compose the Convention Committee, which shall be responsible for the general planning and management of the State Convention before it is called to order.

SECTION 304.2 Call to Convention.

Not less than two (2) months prior to the State Convention, the Convention Committee shall approve and the Convention Secretary shall distribute to all Chapter Presidents the official Call to Convention, which shall contain information pertaining to the time and place of the State Convention, suggested accommodations, delegate registration procedure, chapter chartering procedure, and candidate filing procedure.

SECTION 304.3 Preliminary Reports.

Not less than one (1) month prior to the State Convention, the Convention Committee shall approve and the Convention Secretary shall distribute to all Chapter Presidents preliminary versions of the platform, standing rules, and program of the State Convention.

## **SECTION 305 Standing Committees.**

### **SECTION 305.1 Officers.**

Not less than three (3) months prior to the State Convention, the President shall appoint a Chair and a Secretary for each Standing Committee. In the absence of the Chair, the Secretary shall preside over meetings of the Standing Committee. Standing Committee officers are not entitled to a vote in Standing Committees.

### **SECTION 305.2 Composition.**

All chapters that have applied for a charter shall be entitled to one (1) vote on each Standing Committee. If a credentials challenge is raised against a chapter, that chapter shall not be eligible to vote in any Standing Committee until the challenge is resolved by the Credentials Committee.

### **SECTION 305.3 Meetings.**

Standing Committees shall meet at the call of the Chair. The attendance of not less than one-third ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) of voting chapters shall constitute a quorum of a Standing Committee.

### **SECTION 305.4 Credentials & Charters.**

The Convention Standing Committee on Credentials & Charters shall review and recommend action on chapter charter applications and credential registered delegates. No sooner than the close of the chapter chartering application period and no later than the day preceding the opening of the State Convention, this committee shall convene to consider chapter charter applications and a preliminary credentials report.

### **SECTION 305.5 Platform & Resolutions.**

The Convention Standing Committee on Platform & Resolutions shall recommend to the State Convention a platform for YDAR and shall consider any resolutions submitted. No resolution shall be considered by the State Convention until and unless it has been reported favorably out of this committee.

### **SECTION 305.6 Rules & Bylaws.**

The Convention Standing Committee on Rules & Bylaws shall recommend rules to govern the conduct of the State Convention and shall review and propose amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws. No rule, special rule, standing rule, rule amendment or amendment to the Constitution or the Bylaws shall be considered by the State Convention until and unless it has been reported favorably out of this committee.

## **SECTION 306 Delegations & Voting.**

### **SECTION 306.1 Vote Allocation.**

Chartered chapters shall be eligible for votes at the State Convention equal to the number of members on that chapter's official membership roster at the time of the submission of their charter application.

### **SECTION 306.2 Voting Preference.**

The unit rule, or any rule or practice whereby all members of a chapter or delegation may

be required to cast their votes in accordance with the will of a majority of the body, shall not be used at any point.

SECTION 306.3 Delegate Selection.

Each chapter may adopt rules governing the process for the selection of delegates and alternates. If no such rules exist, all registered delegates shall be credentialed, subject to the decision of the Credentials Committee.

SECTION 306.4 Standing Committee Designates.

Chapter Presidents may designate a delegate or alternate to cast that chapter's vote on any Standing Committee. In the absence of the designate, any delegate or alternate may cast their chapter's vote in a Standing Committee.

**ARTICLE IV  
Officers**

**SECTION 401 Statewide Officers.**

SECTION 401.1 Defined.

The statewide officers of YDAR shall be the President, the Executive Vice President, the Vice President of Young Professionals, the Vice President of Colleges, the Vice President of High Schools, the National Committeewoman, and the National Committeeman.

SECTION 401.2 Eligibility.

Any member who has not yet reached the age of thirty-four (34) shall be eligible for election to the offices of President, Executive Vice President, National Committeewoman, and National Committeeman. Any member belonging to the appropriate chapter level as described in Constitution § 204 shall be eligible for election as Vice President of Young Professionals, Colleges, or High Schools, given that they will meet the requirements of this section for the entirety of their term.

SECTION 401.3 Election.

The President, Executive Vice President, National Committeewoman, and National Committeeman shall be elected by a majority vote of the State Convention. The Vice Presidents of Young Professionals, Colleges, and High Schools shall be elected by a majority vote of State Convention delegates of the appropriate chapter level. In the event that no candidate receives a majority of votes cast, the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall enter a run-off election to be contested immediately.

SECTION 401.4 Terms.

The President and Vice President shall be elected to serve for two (2) years or until their successors are elected, and all other statewide officers shall be elected to serve for one (1) year or until their successors are elected. The term of office of statewide officers shall begin at the adjournment of the State Convention at which they are elected. No member shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office, except those of National Committeeman and National Committeewoman.

## **SECTION 402 District Directors.**

### **SECTION 402.1 Defined.**

There shall be two (2) district directors, one man and one woman, for each congressional district of the state of Arkansas.

### **SECTION 402.2 Eligibility.**

Any member who has not yet reached the age of thirty-five (35) shall be eligible for election to the office of District Director, given that they are a member of the appropriate congressional district.

### **SECTION 402.3 Election.**

District directors shall be elected by a majority vote of delegates from the appropriate district the State Convention and Annual Conference. In the event that no candidate receives a majority of votes cast, the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall enter a run-off election to be contested immediately.

### **SECTION 402.4 Terms.**

District directors shall be elected to serve for six (6) months or until their successors are elected, and their term of office shall begin at the adjournment of the session during which they are elected.

## **SECTION 403 Appointed Officers.**

### **SECTION 403.1 Defined.**

The Bylaws may provide for the appointment of additional officers to assist with the functioning of YDAR.

### **SECTION 403.2 Eligibility.**

Except as provided for in the Bylaws, any member shall be eligible to be an appointed officer.

### **SECTION 403.3 Election.**

Appointed officers shall be nominated by the President and approved by the Executive Committee.

### **SECTION 403.4 Terms.**

Appointed officers shall serve at the pleasure of the President, and may be removed from office by the President at any time for any reason. Their term of office shall begin at the adjournment of the meeting in which they are approved, and end at the adjournment of the State Convention. Appointed officers may be renominated at will.

## **SECTION 404 Removal & Vacancy**

### **SECTION 404.1 Cause.**

Statewide officers and district directors may be removed from office for malfeasance or nonfeasance of duties, or for violation of any provision of the Constitution or Bylaws of YDAR, the Charter or Bylaws of YDA, or DPA Rules. Removal procedures may be initiated by

a simple majority (½) vote of the Local Presidents Assembly.

SECTION 404.2 Judicial Board.

Upon the initiation of removal procedures, a Judicial Board shall be appointed to consider the accusations. The Chair of the Judicial Board shall be selected by the Local Presidents Assembly. The Vice Chair of the Judicial Board be selected by the Executive Committee. The Secretary of the Judicial Board shall be the Legal Director. One (1) member shall be selected from each congressional district by the appropriate district directors to serve on the Judicial Board.

SECTION 404.3 Hearing.

Not more than seven (7) days following the initiation of removal procedures, the Judicial Board shall approve and the Chair shall distribute to the accused the time, place, and cause of the Judicial Board hearing. The hearing shall be held not fewer than one (1) month and not more than two (2) months following the initiation of removal procedure. The accused shall have the right to be accompanied by Counsel, to present and cross-examine witnesses, and to present evidence in their defense. The Judicial Board may dismiss the removal, or recommend the removal from office of the accused. Such recommendation shall be accompanied with the Judicial Board's findings of fact.

SECTION 404.4 Removal.

If the Judicial Board recommends the removal of an officer, the Executive Committee shall consider such removal at the next regular meeting of the Executive Committee. A simple majority (½) vote of the Executive Committee shall be required to remove an officer.

SECTION 404.5 Vacancy.

A vacancy shall be declared when a member of the Executive Committee dies, resigns, or is removed from office. A vacancy in the office of President shall be filled by the Executive Vice President. A vacancy in any other office shall be filled by the nomination of the President and the approval of the Local Presidents Assembly.

**ARTICLE V  
Organization**

**SECTION 501 Executive Committee.**

SECTION 501.1 Authority.

Except for powers reserved to the State Convention and at such times as the State Convention is in adjournment, the authoritative and governing body of YDAR shall be the Executive Committee.

SECTION 501.2 Composition.

All elected statewide officers and all district directors shall be members of the Executive Committee. All appointed officers shall be non-voting, ex-officio members of the Executive Committee.

SECTION 501.3 Meetings.



The Executive Committee shall meet at least one (1) time every month at the call of the President, or upon the submission of a written request of a simple majority (½) of the current membership of the Executive Committee to the Executive Vice President. The Executive Committee will meet immediately following the adjournment of both the State Convention and the Annual Conference.

## **SECTION 502 Local Presidents Assembly.**

### **SECTION 502.1 Composition.**

All Presidents of chapters duly chartered at the State Convention shall be members of the Local Presidents Assembly. The President shall be the chair of the Local Presidents Assembly, and all Vice Presidents shall be ex-officio members. All Presidents of chapters with an interim charter shall be non-voting members of the Local Presidents Assembly. In the absence of the chapter President, the highest ranking chapter officer present at a Local Presidents Assembly meeting may cast the vote of that chapter.

### **SECTION 502.2 Meetings.**

The Local Presidents Assembly shall meet quarterly at the call of the President, or upon the submission of a written request of a simple majority (½) of the current membership of the Local Presidents Assembly to the Executive Vice President.

### **SECTION 502.3 Quorum.**

The attendance of not less than one-third (⅓) of voting members shall constitute a quorum of the Local Presidents Assembly.

## **SECTION 503 DPA State Committee.**

One male and one female member of YDAR from each congressional district shall be nominated to serve on the DPA State Committee in compliance with DPA Rule 11 (c). Representation will be granted first to statewide officers in the order listed in Constitution § 401.1, then to district directors. Any member who is elected to the State Committee by any other means shall not be eligible under this section. The President may fill any vacancy in the DPA State Committee delegation.

## **SECTION 504 Judicial Council**

### **Section 504.1 Definition**

504.1 a. The judicial power of the Young Democrats of Arkansas shall be vested in one Judicial Council. The Judicial Council shall serve to resolve disputes over the nature and interpretation of the YDAR Guiding Documents and of the rules and regulations established by the YDAR Executive Committee. The YDAR Membership and the YDAR Executive Committee shall be bound by the decision of the Judicial Council. The Judicial Council's review powers, quorum and rules of order are detailed in the Bylaws.

504.1 b. The Judicial Council may also arbitrate disputes between a chapter and YDAR, between multiple chapters. Any ruling must be based on and take into consideration any

applicable chapter, YDAR, YDA, DPA, or DNC rules, and the decision shall be final. The judicial council may only overturn precedent set by the prior council for compelling reason or interest.

504.1 c. The Judicial Council may also oversee investigations into misconduct, criminal activity, and malfeasance by officers, chapter leaders, and members in the official conduct of their duties or in election campaigns for YDAR office. The Judicial Council shall have full access to YDAR's books, and any chapter's books that they may request. The Judicial Council shall make final determination in the disposition of these matters and may make criminal referrals by a three-fifths majority vote.

504.1 d. The Judicial Council shall also meet quarterly (January, April, July, and October) to review the books of YDAR, and shall make a report to Convention and Conference regarding the fiscal health of YDAR.

#### Section 504.2: Composition, Selection, and Term Limits

504.2 a. The Judicial Council shall be composed of one member elected by secret ballot in each Congressional District Caucus at Annual Convention for a term of one year. The District Members shall have been an active member of YDAR in good standing for one year prior to election. The Chair of the Council is to be elected by the Annual Convention for a period of one year. The Chair shall have been an active member of YDAR in good standing for two years as evidenced by attendance at one annual convention prior to election. The Council shall elect its own Vice Chair from among its membership who shall also serve as Secretary

504.2 b. The President, Executive Vice President, section Vice Presidents, and District Directors may not serve as Judicial Council members, if a member is elected to any of these offices, they will be considered to have vacated their seat on the Judicial Council.

504.2 c. No person shall serve on the Judicial Council for more than four years.

504.2 d. Should a vacancy occur in the district membership of the Council the Chair may appoint a successor until the next election subject to the approval of the remaining council members. Should the Chair become vacant the Vice Chair will immediately become Chair, and will appoint their successor according to the above process.

## **ARTICLE VI Miscellaneous Provisions**

### **SECTION 601 Amendment.**

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote of the State Convention. This Constitution may also be amended by a unanimous vote of the Executive Committee and a two-thirds majority ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote of the Local Presidents Assembly, given that such amendments will be subject to a vote of the next State Convention.

### **SECTION 602 Bylaws.**

YDAR may adopt such Bylaws as deemed necessary for the effective functioning of the organization. The Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds majority ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote of the Executive Committee or a simple majority ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) vote of the State Convention.

**SECTION 603 Parliamentary Authority.**

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern YDAR in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the Constitution and Bylaws, or any special rules of order YDAR may adopt.

**SECTION 604 Liability.**

YDAR members shall not be liable for the debts or actions of YDAR, nor shall YDAR be liable for the unauthorized acts of its members or chapters unless so ratified by a two-thirds majority ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote of the Executive Committee. Where gross misspending or unauthorized spending occurs, the responsible officer or officers shall be personally liable for any and all debts incurred.

**CERTIFICATION OF CONSTITUTION**

The undersigned hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the Constitution of the Young Democrats of Arkansas as ratified by the State Convention and certified by the Chair of the State Convention on April 30, 2016 in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Bailey Sexton  
President

Ezra Smith  
Convention Chair

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Adopted April 30, 2016 by Convention in Little Rock, Arkansas