

Portage County Young Democrats



Portage County Young Democrats

Constitution and Bylaws

Portage County Young Democrats

This document supersedes all prior publications of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Portage County Young Democrats as of February 13, 2023. Corrections to this document should be submitted via email to the Portage County Young Democrats at info@portageyd.org.

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**The Official Constitution and Bylaws
of the Portage County Young Democrats**

Portage County Young Democrats

Article I: Name

The name of this organization shall be the Portage County Young Democrats (abbreviated "PCYD"). The headquarters for this organization shall be the Portage County Democratic Party Headquarters in Ravenna, Ohio.

Article II: Purpose

- I. The purpose of this organization shall be to provide meaningful opportunities for young democrats in Portage County to engage the political process through active participation in activities that support issues and candidates that matter to young people at the local, state, and federal levels.

Article III: Membership

- I. Any individual—regardless of age, race, creed, national origin, gender, gender identity/expression or sexual orientation, ethnic identity, economic status or disability—who professes and demonstrates allegiance to the philosophy, principles, and goals of the Democratic Party shall be eligible to become a member of the Portage County Young Democrats.
- II. There shall be three (3) classes of membership for individuals in this organization. They are as follows:
 - a. **Voting** - Any person who has attained their fourteenth (14) birthday, but has not attained their fortieth (40) birthday, completed a membership application, and paid annual dues, shall be eligible for full membership in the Portage County Young Democrats, with all rights and privileges pertaining thereto.
 - i. A Voting Member automatically becomes an Honorary Member upon the attainment of their fortieth (40) birthday.
 - ii. Membership dues shall be valid for a period of one (1) calendar year (January - December).
 - a. Renewal of membership shall be the responsibility of the individual member.
 - b. Dues submitted prior to December 15th of the current calendar year shall be applied to the current year.
 - c. Dues submitted on December 15th or later shall be applied to the following calendar year.

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- d. Any contribution exceeding the established annual dues rate will not be applied to the following calendar year or subsequent calendar years.
 - iii. Annual dues shall be established by the Executive Committee on an annual basis, and announced no later than December 14th prior to the year in which the dues take effect.
 - iv. In order to vote at any meeting of the Portage County Young Democrats, voting membership status must be verified by the Sergeant-At-Arms no later than seven (7) days prior to the scheduled meeting.
 - b. **Regular** - Any person who has attained their fourteenth (14) birthday, but has not attained their fortieth (40) birthday, completed a membership application, but has not paid annual dues shall be eligible for regular membership in the Portage County Young Democrats, with all rights and privileges pertaining thereto, but will not be eligible to cast a vote in general membership meetings or elections.
 - i. Regular members of the Portage County Young Democrats will remain on the rolls of the organization each subsequent year, unless they otherwise request to be removed in writing.
 - c. **Honorary** - Any person who has attained their fortieth (40) birthday shall be eligible for a non-voting Honorary Membership upon the completion of a membership application.
 - i. The President may also name individuals as permanent Honorary Members, with a simple majority vote of the Executive Committee.
- III. Any person who elects to become a member of this organization shall be deemed to have accepted this Constitution and Bylaws and other Standing Rules the organization may establish, and shall be bound by them in all respects as if they had been a member at the time of their adoption.
- IV. Any individual residing in, employed in, registered to vote in, or attending school in Portage County, or permanently residing in an adjacent county, shall qualify for Membership.
- V. No Member of the Portage County Young Democrats shall affiliate with any other Chartered Unit within the Ohio Young Democrats, as outlined in the Ohio Young Democrats Constitution and Bylaws.

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- VI. The process through which individual membership certification occurs by the Portage County Young Democrats shall be outlined in the Standing Rules of this organization.

Article IV: Elected Officers

- I. The Elected Officers of this organization shall be the President, Treasurer, Vice Chair of Chapter Building, Vice Chair of Communications, and Sergeant-At-Arms.
- II. The President, with the approval of Elected Officers, shall name members to become Directors or Committee Chairs by majority vote. These Appointed Officers will become Members of the Executive Committee.
 - a. Appointments shall be considered and approved by the Elected Officers and announced to the Voting Members.
 - b. In the absence of the duly elected President, no other Officer of the organization will be permitted to make a lasting and/or binding appointment to the Executive Committee.
- III. The term of Elected Officers shall be two (2) years.
 - a. An officer of this organization shall not concurrently serve two (2) or more offices.
- IV. The election of Officers shall be held on a yearly basis as determined by these Constitution and Bylaws in Article VI.
- V. In the event of resignation, removal or permanent incapacity of the President of the Portage County Young Democrats, a Special Election to fill the vacancy is required.
 - a. Notice of the Special Election will be communicated to the Voting Membership no more than fourteen (14) days following the vacancy.
 - b. The Special Election shall take place no more than thirty (30) days, and no sooner than fourteen (14) days, following the announcement of the vacancy.
 - c. All candidates for the office of President must communicate so, to the Vice Chair of Communications via email, no less than seven (7) days

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prior to the Special Election.

- d. The procedures governing the Special Election shall be the same as those for annual Officer Elections, as outlined in Article VI of the Constitution and Bylaws.
- VI. In the event that an officer other than the President resigns, is removed or is permanently unable to perform their duties, or if a vacancy exists on the Executive Committee, the President shall appoint a Voting Member or fulfill the duties for the remainder of the unexpired term.
- a. Such an appointment requires a simple majority approval of the Elected Officers.
 - b. All individuals considered for appointment to fill a vacancy for an Elected Office must meet the same criteria as if they were candidates.

Article V: Duties of Elected Officers

- I. The duties of the Elected Officers shall be as follows:
 - A. The **President** shall direct and be responsible for programs and the development of this organization; be the presiding officer at all regular meetings; create, in conjunction with the Executive Committee, an administrative policy; and, by virtue of the position, chair the organization's Executive Committee; chair the organization's Campaign Committee; act as the spokesperson of the organization; act as liaison to the Democratic Party; have the power to create ad hoc committees; approve the annual budget; be empowered to assign Honorary Membership; and assign other duties to members of the Executive Committee as necessary.
 - B. The **Treasurer** shall prepare and execute the annual budget; receive and deposit monies due to the organization; oversee the payment of obligations; maintain records of such funds and individual membership status; give a statement of finances at every regular meeting; chair the organization's Finance Committee; serve as executor of the Portage County Young Democrats PAC; complete and file all necessary financial documentation to local, state and federal entities; and shall perform any other responsibilities deemed appropriate by the President.
 - C. The **Vice Chair of Chapter Building** shall chair the organization's Committee for Chapter Building; work to recruit and retain active

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members, develop recruitment and engagement driven programming, and shall perform any other responsibilities deemed appropriate by the President.

- D. The **Vice Chair of Communications** shall possess and maintain a list of all Executive Committee Officers; notify members of regular meetings as outlined in Article X; keep a record of all scheduled events; secure copies of individual committee reports; maintain a roster of committee members; produce meeting minutes; and shall perform any other responsibilities deemed appropriate by the President.
- E. The **Sergeant-At-Arms** shall assist the President in ensuring an orderly environment for all meetings; call the roll at all meetings; work with the Treasurer to ensure the proper credentials of each member of this organization; maintain the governing documents of this organization; and shall perform any other responsibilities deemed appropriate by the President.

Article VI: Elections

- I. The Elected Officers of this organization shall be duly elected by those Voting Members in good standing.
- II. All candidates for office shall be Voting Members in good standing and remain so throughout their term of office upon election, as well as meeting any and all requirements set forth by this organization's Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules.
- III. All individuals seeking election in the organization must have been a Voting Member in good standing, and have been verified as such by the Sergeant-At-Arms no less than fourteen (14) days prior to the date of the current election.
 - a. Candidates seeking election to the Portage County Young Democrats must communicate their intention to do so to the Vice Chair of Communications in writing (email) no later than seven (7) days prior to the scheduled date of election.
- IV. An Elections Officer, which shall be appointed by the President and approved by a majority of Voting Members present on the day of the election, will oversee elections.
 - a. The Elections Officer may not be an individual who is running for office in the organization concurrently.

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- b. The Elections Officer is responsible for overseeing the elections proceedings, including the authentication of Voting Members.
 - c. Authentication includes ensuring that all those who vote are Voting Members in good standing, and that not more than one vote is cast per eligible Voting Member.
 - d. A paper ballot, including a space for printed name and signature, will be provided to each voting member to cast their ballot for each individual officer.
 - e. Following the casting of ballots, the ballots will be collected and certified by the Elections Officer and the results of the election will be announced to the voting membership.
 - f. Scanned copies of every ballot cast will be stored by the Portage County Young Democrats for a minimum of two years, and can be requested by any member at any time.
 - g. Officers elected by the Portage County Young Democrats shall assume the office to which they have been elected immediately following the adjournment of the elections meeting.
- V. Elections for President, Vice Chair of Communications and Sergeant-At-Arms shall take place in even numbered years, to be scheduled no earlier than the seventh (7th) of January and no later than the twenty-first (21st) of January.
- VI. Elections for Treasurer and Vice Chair of Chapter Building shall take place in odd numbered years, to be scheduled no earlier than the seventh (7th) of January and no later than the twenty-first (21st) of January.
- VII. The President of the Portage County Young Democrats **must** be a voting and permanent resident of Portage County.
- a. Candidates for President must have been a member in good standing for a minimum of one calendar year prior to the election, and have attended a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the meetings of Voting Membership during the previous calendar year.
- VIII. Any individual who has not yet attained their eighteenth (18th) birthday by the date of the election shall be prohibited from seeking office.
- IX. Any individual who has attained their thirty-eight (38th) birthday on or before the date of the election shall be prohibited from seeking office.

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Article VII : Appointed Officers

- I. The duties and responsibilities of Appointed Officers shall be defined at the time of appointment, and automatically codified in the Standing Rules.
- II. Appointed Officers must be Voting Members in good standing at the time of their appointment, and must remain so throughout the term of their appointment.
- III. Appointed Officers shall serve on a yearly basis, and may be considered for re-appointment following the annual election of Officers.
- IV. Appointed Officers may be considered for removal by Elected Officers at any time.

Article VIII: Executive Committee

- I. The Portage County Young Democrats Executive Committee shall formulate, propose, and implement projects that supervise the activities of this organization; propose and execute recommendations to, of, and for this organization; and review the annual budget and means to obtain necessary funding.
- II. The Elected Officers of this organization shall compose the Voting Membership of the Executive Committee. All Appointed Officers, as outlined in Article IV, shall be non-voting Members of the Executive Committee.
- III. The President will convene no less than three (3) meetings of the Executive Committee annually.

Article IX: Standing Committees

- I. In addition to the Executive Committee, there shall be three (3) permanent Standing Committees of this organization.
 - A. Campaign Committee: This Committee shall identify and oversee candidate, referendum, or initiative campaigns; and will oversee the endorsement process.
 - B. Chapter Building Committee: This Committee shall plan and oversee the recruitment and retention of Membership, and programming thereto.

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- C. Finance Committee: This Committee shall plan and oversee fundraising opportunities and initiatives.
- II. The President shall affirm or deny all appointments to each Committee as recommended by Committee Chairpersons, and shall reserve the right to remove Members from any Committee at any time.

Article X: Meetings

- I. The President shall call to order meetings of the Executive Committee.
 - a. Notice for meetings of the Executive Committee, including time and location, will be given with a minimum of forty-eight (48) hours notice.
 - b. Quorum for meetings of the Executive Committee shall consist of no less than three (3) Elected Officers present.
- II. The President shall call to order meetings of the organization's Voting Membership.
 - a. Notice for meetings of the Voting Membership, including time and location, will be given with a minimum of seven (7) days notice.
 - b. Quorum shall consist of Voting Membership present and must include no less than three (3) Elected Officers.
- III. The President shall call to order special meetings of the Elected Officers.
 - a. Notice for special meetings of the Elected Officers, including time and location, will be given with a minimum of forty-eight (48) hours notice.
 - b. Quorum shall consist of a simple majority of Elected Officers.

Article XI: Parliamentary Authority

- I. The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, shall govern in all cases to which they are applicable, and where they are not inconsistent with this Constitution, all meetings of the organization.

Article XII: Affiliations

- I. This organization shall be affiliated with, and seek the advice and cooperation of, the Ohio Young Democrats, the Young Democrats of America, the Portage County Democratic Party, the Ohio Democratic Party,

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and the Democratic National Committee.

- II. In recognition of the benefits and services available to this organization and its members through its affiliations with the Ohio Young Democrats, this organization shall exercise its rights and privileges of participation in the governance and activities of the Ohio Young Democrats.
 - a. Any person who elects to become a member of this organization shall be deemed to have accepted the Constitution and Bylaws of the Ohio Young Democrats, and shall be bound by them in all respects as if they have been a member at the time of their adoption.
 - b. This organization shall provide for its proper representation at all meetings and conventions of the Ohio Young Democrats, and be in good standing.
 - c. The President and Treasurer shall provide for the prompt payment of all dues and other obligations to the Ohio Young Democrats, and shall submit all properly completed reports required by the Ohio Young Democrats.
 - d. A copy of this document and any amendment(s) shall be filed with the Ohio Young Democrats by this organization's Vice Chair of Communications and/or President within forty-eight (48) hours of their adoption.

Article XIII: Impeachment and Removal from Office

- I. Any Elected Officer may be removed for malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance.
 - a. A petition for impeachment of an Elected Officer shall be signed by at least one-third (1/3) of the Voting Members of this organization, or be signed by four Elected Officers not charged.
 - b. The officer being considered for impeachment (henceforth referred to as "the accused") will be temporarily suspended from office, and barred from participating in functions of the organization for the duration of these proceedings.
 - c. The petition shall be submitted, in writing, to any Elected Officer, who shall convene a special session of the Executive Committee within seventy-two (72) hours.

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- d. The highest ranking Elected Officer, excluding the accused, shall chair this meeting (henceforth referred to as the "Adjudicating Officer").
- e. Signatures submitted in the petition shall be reviewed and certified by the Executive Committee at this meeting.
 - i. Should certification of the required signatures necessary not be met, the petition for impeachment will be denied.
 - ii. Impeachment cannot be submitted for the same incident twice.
- f. Should certification of signatures be met, the Executive Committee shall then have a period of no more than fourteen (14) days to investigate claims lobbied against the accused.
- g. By the fourteenth (14th) day, the Elected Officers shall consider the findings of the investigation at a special meeting of the Executive Committee, and may consider an action of censure, suspension, removal from office, or a dismissal of all charges against the accused.
- h. In the case of a censure or suspension, the Executive Committee shall be empowered to take direct corrective action against the accused.
- i. In the case of a recommendation for removal from office, or the dismissal of charges, the recommendation shall be forwarded to the Voting Membership for consideration.
 - i. A meeting of the Voting Membership must be held within fourteen (14) days.
 - ii. At this meeting, the Adjudicating Officer shall present the findings and recommendations of the Executive Committee.
 - iii. The accused will have equal opportunity to defend themselves.
 - iv. Should a recommendation of removal be forwarded, the accused shall only be removed from office upon an affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) majority of the total Voting Membership present.
 - 1. Should a two-thirds (2/3) majority not be met, the accused will immediately be reinstated with full rights and privileges.

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- v. A recommendation for dismissal of charges may be approved with an affirmative vote of a simple majority of Voting Members present.
 - 1. Should a simple majority of voting members present not be met in the consideration of a dismissal of charges, the accusation at hand will be returned to the Executive Committee for a corrective action.
- II. Should an Elected Officer be impeached and removed from office, that individual will not qualify for Elected or Appointed Office in this organization for a minimum of three (3) years.

Article XIV: Temporary Emergency Powers

In the event that an emergency declaration has been made at the local, state and/or federal level, and said emergency creates conflicts between the governing documents of the organization and its ability to keep members safe and/or regularly conduct business, the President shall be granted limited authority to temporarily suspend portions of the governing documents through the following procedures:

- 1. The President shall communicate with the Executive Board their intention to suspend specific section(s) of the governing documents, why said section(s) should be suspended, and for how long each section(s) should be suspended.
 - a. A Majority of the Executive Board must provide written support of the suspension proposed within 24 hours for said suspension to take effect.
- 2. The President shall communicate electronically to the Voting Members which section(s) of the governing documents have been suspended, why said section(s) have been suspended, and for how long each section(s) will be suspended.
- 3. Any/All suspension(s) exceeding sixty days in length will be re-evaluated for necessity by the Executive Board no less than once every sixty days, or said

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suspension will be nullified immediately following that period.

4. 50% of the Executive Board may overturn any suspension at any time in writing to the President/Executive Board.
5. 75% of the of Voting Members may overturn the suspension at any time in writing to the President/Executive Board.

Article XV: Amendments

- I. Amendments to this Constitution and Bylaws must be proposed at a regular meeting by a Voting Member, and must be provided in writing.
 - a. Notice of the consideration of an amendment shall be submitted in writing to the Voting Membership at least fifteen (15) days prior to the amendment's consideration.
 - b. Consideration of an amendment shall take place no later than forty-five (45) days following the submission of the amendment.
- II. The constitution shall be amended at a regular meeting of this organization's membership by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those Voting Members present.
- III. Amendments will become effective upon the adjournment of the meeting at which they are approved.

Article XVI: Standing Rules

- I. All other policies and procedures shall be documented in the Standing Rules.
- II. The Standing Rules will be considered a governing document of this organization.