

# Bylaws of the Norfolk City Democratic Committee

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*Drafted April 2026  
Adopted 15 Jul 2026*

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## **Article I – Name and Purpose**

### **§1 – Name**

The name of this organization shall be the Norfolk City Democratic Committee (herein called the "NCDC" or the "Committee"). The organization may do business under other names under the prerogative of the Chair, such as "Norfolk Democrats".

### **§2 – Purpose**

The Committee is organized for the following purposes:

- To do all within its power to aid in the victory of the Democratic Party's nominees in all elections.
- To promote the growth and success of the Democratic Party at the local, state and national levels.
- To promote efforts to register all qualified voters in the City of Norfolk and to encourage such voters to participate in the political process.
- To promote harmonious relationships among all members of the Committee and to cooperate wholeheartedly with local, state and national Democratic committees.
- To recognize the diversity of our society and the belief that our Party will be strengthened by these differences. We encourage full, timely and equal opportunity for all segments of the population to participate in Party affairs. Particular concern should be undertaken to include youth, women, Black, indigenous, and other persons of color, persons with disabilities, LGBTQIA+, and other constituent groups.
- Such other legal purposes that may, from time to time, be determined by the Committee.

## **Article II – Membership**

### **§1 – Qualifications of Membership**

Each voting member of the NCDC shall be a qualified voter under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia, duly registered to vote in the City of Norfolk, and (in the case of precinct committee members) shall be a resident of and be registered to vote in the precinct which they represent.

### **§2 – Classes of Membership**

Membership shall be broken into three classes: Associate, General, and Ex-Officio.

- A. Associate Membership: Associate members may be appointed by any member of the executive committee and shall be confirmed by a majority vote of the executive

committee. Associate members may include those who are registered to vote in other jurisdictions, but reside, work or attend school in Norfolk and those who reside in Norfolk, but are not eligible to vote due to age. Associate members are expected to assist the Vice Chair and the Area Chairs, and to provide support to the Committee's other operations. Associate members are encouraged (but not required) to attend meetings.

- B. General Membership: General members include all persons who apply to join the committee that are both eligible to vote and have registered to vote in the City of Norfolk. General Members may serve on committees, be appointed to serve in a precinct-level or area-level capacity, or run for any office created by the Committee. General members are empowered to vote on all Committee matters.

General Members are expected to assist the Precinct Captains and the Committee's efforts and programs.

- C. Ex-Officio Membership: Ex-officio members shall consist of the following individuals:
- Elected officials elected as Democrats
    - Nonpartisan elected officials who are aligned with NCDC
  - Members of the Democratic State Central Committee
  - President(s) of Virginia Young Democrats Chapter(s) serving Norfolk
  - the Immediate Past Chair of the NCDC
  - Democratic member(s) of the Norfolk Electoral Board
  - local Presidents or Chairs of Democratic affiliate organizations as recognized by the Democratic State Central Committee

After each biennial reorganization of the Committee and election of new officers, each Ex-Officio member shall sign the membership application form required of other members and is considered supplemental to either associate or general membership.

## **Article III – Meetings**

### **§1 – Meeting Types**

Executive and General Body Meetings shall be of two types: Regular and Special. The general body shall meet in a hybrid format, unless special circumstances require that the committee meet exclusively in person or exclusively virtual as determined by the Executive Committee.

The Committee is required to hold a formal business meeting at least once each quarter on a consistent day, time, and location as determined by the Executive Committee. In the event that the day, time, and/or location require a change, all best efforts will be made to communicate such change.

Special meetings may be called from time to time as determined by the Chair, by motion of the Executive Committee, or (in the case of Special Public Meetings) by motion of the Committee as a whole. Additionally, a special meeting is required to be held within 14 days of the receipt of a written request of ten percent of the membership of the Committee by the Chair. No special meeting may be called without a purpose, which must be communicated to the Committee when the announcement is made.

## **§2 – Notice Requirements**

For regular meetings, not less than five (5) days written notice shall be given to all members of all regular meetings either by mail or electronic mail. Said notice shall include the date, time, address, and agenda for the forthcoming meeting.

For special meetings, the Secretary shall notify the entirety of the NCDCC of the date, time, and location of the special meeting as soon as possible after those selections are made. Special meetings may not be called with less than 14 days notice, unless a 2/3rds supermajority of the Executive Committee agrees to a shorter timeline.

## **§3 – Attendance Requirements**

Attendance to meetings and committee functions are an expectation of general members; associate and ex-officio members are strongly encouraged to attend meetings and committee functions. Members should strive to notify the Executive Committee that they are not able to attend.

Failure to attend four meetings as a general member in one reorganization cycle may result in the member reverting to associate membership by vote of the Executive Committee.

## **§4 – Quorum**

In general, a quorum is assumed to be present. Should any member suggest the absence of a quorum, 30% of the membership shall be considered a quorum pursuant to §10.5 (or whichever relevant section applies to local committee quorum) of the Democratic Party of Virginia (DPVA) Party Plan.

## **Article IV – Officers, Chairs, and Captains**

The Officers shall consist of a Chair, a Vice Chair, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

The Chairs shall consist of the Area Chairs, and the Chairs of the various named Standing Committees. Chairs of ad-hoc committees do not qualify under this definition.

The Captains shall consist of every Precinct Captain, or in their vacancy the Assistant Precinct Captain.

## **Article V – Committees**

### **§1 – Executive Committee**

There shall be an Executive Committee, which will consist of the Officers, the Chairs as defined in Article IV, and the Immediate Past Chair of the Committee. This Committee shall be empowered to:

- Plan the regular meetings
- Draft the call for the reorganization of the Committee
- Supervise an annual audit of the books of the Committee
- Handle other matters which may come before the Committee

The Executive Committee shall have the entire charge and full control of all party matters arising between meetings of the Committee. All powers that are inherent in the NCDC shall be vested in the Executive Committee at such times, as the NCDC is not meeting. The following actions are exceptions to this rule:

- The Executive Committee may not amend the Bylaws, barring an emergency requiring such amendment. Such amendment must be ratified at the next meeting, special or regular, and shall proceed any other business.
- The Executive Committee may not determine the method of nominating Democratic candidates for any public office, except in cases when the nominated candidate dies, withdraws, refuses candidacy or if the nomination is set aside for any reason or in the case of a special election and there is insufficient time for the full Committee to act.
- The Executive Committee may not confirm any applicant to general membership.

### **§2 – Standing Committees**

The following standing committees may be created and empowered as described:

#### **A. Finance**

- To raise funds for such purposes as may be approved by the members of the NCDC.
- To prepare an annual budget for the NCDC which includes a plan for payment of the annual state assessment.
- To conduct an annual audit of the books of the NCDC, the results of which shall be made available to any member upon request.
- To organize at least one major fund-raising event each year in collaboration with the Membership Committee.

- To perform such other duties as normally incident to a Finance Committee.
- B. Membership
  - Plan membership engagement events beyond the post-meeting social and monthly breakfast
  - Recruit and recommend qualified persons to fill any vacancy that shall occur on the NCDC.
- C. Outreach
  - Develop and implement a program for the Committee that will reach out to all segments of the population for participation in Democratic affairs.
    - Particular concern should be undertaken to include youth, women, Black, indigenous, and other persons of color, persons with disabilities, LGBTQIA+, and other constituent groups.
- D. Voter Registration
  - Coordinate voter registration events, inform the members of voter registration training, and assist with applications for restoration of voter rights.

### **§3 – Special Committees**

The Chair shall appoint members to serve on the following committees, which shall meet only upon the referral of business to such committee, and may choose to not meet when no such business has been referred to them:

- A. Resolutions
  - Receive, debate and recommend resolutions to the membership.
  - Details regarding resolutions can be found under Article IX.

### **§4 – Ad-hoc Committees**

The Chair may, from time to time, establish ad-hoc committees with notice to the Executive Committee. The committees must have a termination date by which it must complete its business, and shall deliver a report to the Chair. The named chairs of any ad-hoc committee may attend meetings of the Executive Committee, but shall only do so in a non-voting capacity.

### **§5 – Precinct Committees**

All precincts shall be afforded a Precinct Committee, which shall consist of a Precinct Captain, an Assistant Precinct Captain, and all General Members that live within that Precinct. Exceptions to this rule shall exist for precincts consisting entirely of a college or university campus, in which case the Committee shall liaise with the recognized Young Democrats on campus to ensure that turnout is maximized on the campus.

In the event of there being no chartered Young Democrats chapter on either college campus, the Committee will support operations for the precinct in concert with other partners.

## **Article VI – Elections, Term Length, and Duties**

### **§1 – Officers**

The Officers shall be elected on a biannual basis by a majority of the members of the committee in the month of December, pursuant to §§8.1 and 8.2 of the DPVA Party Plan. Duties of each office are as follows:

- Chair
  - Preside over all meetings of the NCDC, which meetings shall be called as provided in Article II.
  - Approve the membership of all standing and special committees.
  - Appoint a parliamentarian to advise the Chair as to proper procedure under Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised, and the DPVA Party Plan.
  - Appoint a Sergeant-at-Arms to maintain the general order of all meetings and to oversee the conduct of any caucuses.
  - Sign all regular and expected contracts, notes, and leases in the name of the Committee. New or unexpected contracts, notes, and leases for more than \$1,000 will be approved by the voting membership. The Chair may also sign drafts, checks or orders for the payment of money.
  - Approve and/or agree to the participation in collaborative relationships with organizations that have goals aligning with the national Democratic Party, DPVA and NCDC.
  - Serve as an ex-officio member of all committees.
  - Enforce these By-Laws, perform all the duties of the office required herein, by the DPVA Party Plan or by statute, and generally to supervise and conduct the business and affairs of the NCDC.
- Vice Chair
  - Serve as Chair when the Chair is absent or unable to perform the duties.
  - Coordinate the activities of the Area Chairs, including the area map in coordination with the Chair.
  - Oversee precinct organization and activities to include working with the Area Chairs in filling all vacant Precinct Captain and Assistant Precinct Captain positions.
  - Coordinate and oversee all Election Day precinct operations.
  - All such other duties and accept such other powers and responsibilities as the Chair of the Committee may from time to time prescribe.

- Secretary
  - Maintain an accurate and permanent record of all the proceedings of the NCDC.
  - Serve as custodian of the records of the NCDC, except those financial records retained by the Treasurer.
  - In concert with the chair of the Membership Committee, maintain a roster of the names, addresses, phone numbers and voting precincts of the members and a list of the Committee's officers which shall be forwarded within ten days of the election to the state headquarters of the Democratic Party of Virginia.
  - Give notice of NCDC meetings as required in Article II, and to transmit with such notice (except for notice of emergency meetings) a copy of the minutes of the preceding meeting.
  - Conduct and retain copies of all correspondence and to advise the Chair of official communications received.
  - Maintain the attendance roll at all meetings.
  - Enforce the attendance requirements pursuant to Article IX, and notify the executive committee members when attendance requirements have not been met.
  - All such other duties and accept such other powers and responsibilities as the Chair of the Committee may from time to time prescribe.
- Treasurer
  - Have charge of and be responsible for all the funds of the NCDC and to deposit said funds in the name of the NCDC in such banks or savings and loan companies as the officers of the Committee shall direct.
  - Deposit all received funds within five (5) business days
  - Satisfy all bills incurred in the ordinary course of business and, upon the approval of a majority of the members present and voting, to resolve any other expenses incurred.
  - Make, sign and endorse in the name of the NCDC all checks, notes, drafts or other orders for the payment of money as authorized in the preceding two paragraphs
  - Maintain accurate books of account of all business and transactions of the NCDC, and to report therein to each regular meeting of the membership and to the Chair upon request.
  - Collaborate with the Finance Committee as co-chair to prepare an annual budget and to assist with the Finance Committee in conducting budget reviews, which should be performed at least annually.
  - Cooperate fully in all audits.
  - Receive, record and transmit all funds, and provide the Secretary with a record of all funds received.
  - Prepare and sign all State Board of Elections required Financial Reports. Reports should be accurate and filed timely.

- All such other duties and accept such other powers and responsibilities as the Chair of the Committee may from time to time prescribe.

## **§2 – Chairs**

The Chairs consist of the Area Chairs, and the chairs of the various standing and special committees. They shall be nominated by the Chair of the NCDCC from the general body and confirmed by a majority of the Executive Committee voting in the election. The chairs of the standing committee shall lead their committees and report to the Chair of the Committee the activities of the same.

Area Chairs shall be empowered as follows:

- Train, oversee and coordinate the activities of Precinct Captains and Assistant Precinct Captains in their areas.
- Recruit candidates to fill vacancies for Precinct Captain and Assistant Precinct Captain positions in their areas.
- Assist the NCDCC Vice Chair in planning and overseeing precinct organization activities.
- Oversee and coordinate Election Day precinct operations in their areas.
- Perform such other duties and accept such other responsibilities incident to the advancement of the Democratic Party in Norfolk as the Chair may from time to time prescribe.

## **§3 – Precinct Captains and Assistants**

The Captains shall be selected by the registered voters of the precinct should more than one person be registered. If there is only one person registered with the Committee from a precinct, the Vice Chair may offer the position to that person to either accept or decline. If there is no person registered with the Committee, another member may be appointed by the Chair in collaboration with the Vice Chair and Area Chair to serve as an Acting Precinct Captain. In the event that a precinct is dissolved, merged, or is otherwise no longer in existence, all efforts will be made to retain them in a similar role if possible. Precinct Captains are expected to be available for Election Day, or are committed to finding a replacement in the event of an inability to be available. Precinct Captains shall be empowered as follows:

- Organize the precinct represented so as to maximize the Democratic vote therein.
- Communicate at least once with newly registered voters in the precinct.

Assistant Precinct Captains shall be elected alongside the Precinct Captain and must aid them in their duties. Assistant Precinct Captains are expected to be available on Election Day, or are committed to finding a replacement in the event of an inability to be available. In the event the Precinct Captain is absent or unable to perform the duties, the Assistant shall discharge the duties until such inability is removed.

## **§4 – Terms**

Terms shall be for two years, and shall begin at midnight on January 1st of the year following their election, or upon their election should a reorganization take place after January 1st.

## **Article VII – Vacancies**

In the event the Chair becomes vacant, the Vice Chair shall ascend and become Chair. Should an inability to serve exist within the Vice Chair, the following persons shall serve as Acting Chair until such inability no longer exists for the Vice Chair in the listed order:

1. Secretary
2. Treasurer
3. Chair of Membership
4. Chair of Outreach
5. Chair of Finance
6. Chair of Voter Registration
7. Chair of Resolutions

Should this list be exhausted, the Committee may convene and elect an Acting Chair pursuant to §8.10 of the DPVA Party Plan (or other requisite section).

In the event the Vice Chair is vacant, the Area Chairs shall coordinate amongst themselves to ensure that precinct operations continue unaffected. The Committee shall convene and elect a new Vice Chair pursuant to §8.10 of the DPVA Party Plan at the next regular meeting. Should a vacancy arise in the Secretary or Treasurer, the same shall apply.

The Vice Chair, in conjunction with the Area Chair for the precinct, shall work to ensure all precincts have captains to the best extent possible. Any vacancies that exist shall default back to the Area Chair or the Vice Chair to ensure coverage, with the Membership Committee searching to fill the vacancy. Should a vacancy occur within a precinct in its Captain, the Assistant shall ascend and become the Precinct Captain.

## **Article VIII – Reorganization**

As prescribed by the Democratic Party of Virginia, a caucus to elect Officers shall occur during the period between December 1 in odd numbered years and the 15th of the following January. The date of the reorganization meeting must be determined by and communicated to the State Party by November 15 of each odd numbered year. The caucus may be held on week night or on Saturday. At this caucus, after the election of officers, the Precincts may organize and elect their Captains.

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The Executive Committee shall draft the call for the reorganization of the Committee, which shall prescribe, among other things:

1. The procedure to be followed in the reorganization process.
2. The date, time, agenda, place and address of the caucus.
3. All filing deadlines, fees, forms, filing place(s) and instructions with respect to declarations of candidacy as required by the State Party Plan. The filing fee will be the amount prescribed for Members and will be considered dues paid for the following year.
4. The date, time and place of the reorganization meeting to elect officers.
5. The establishment of the Rules Committee, the Credentials Committee and the Arrangements Committee.
6. That every Democrat who is a registered voter in the City of Norfolk is urged to attend and participate in the election.

A copy of the Executive Committee's report, including a copy of the proposed call, shall be sent to every member of the NCDC in the mailing containing the notice of and agenda for a regular meeting of the NCDC.

The Executive Committee shall report to the NCDC, which shall adopt the call in a timely manner. Upon adoption of the call, the Chair shall appoint three members to each of the Arrangements, Rules, Credentials and Balloting committees. Within seven days after its adoption, a copy of the adopted call shall be mailed to every member of the NCDC and the Chairs of the appropriate Congressional District Democratic Committees.

Should any race be uncontested, the election for that position will be cancelled, and the caucus will proceed on to the next order of business.

## **Article IX – General Provisions and Parliamentary Authority**

### **§1 - Dues**

There shall be an annual voluntary assessment of each member. The Executive Committee shall set the dues amount for the following classes of members:

- High School Students and Full-Time College Students
- Associate Members
- General Members
- Ex Officio Members

### **§2 – Voting**

Only general members (and ex-officio members who reside in and are registered to vote in the City of Norfolk) have parliamentary authority at NCDC meetings and may vote on matters that may come before the committee. No voting member shall be permitted to vote by proxy; members attending virtually must be given the opportunity to vote via electronic means in a manner determined by the Chair.

Any General Member who fails to attend two consecutive business meetings without notice shall be declared inactive upon the close of business of the second, and shall not be counted for the purposes of quorum, and their voting privileges shall be suspended, along with the process for returning to active membership. Any general member may be restored to active status with attendance of two consecutive meetings, with their status restored at the beginning of the second meeting. The Secretary shall mark attendance and notify members that their voting privileges have been suspended. Such notice must refer to this section of the bylaws.

Members may occupy two or more positions on the Committee, but shall only be entitled to one vote.

### **§3 – Resolutions**

The process for resolutions are as follows:

1. Any resolution must be submitted in writing to the Executive Committee by noon on the day of the business meeting to be added to the agenda.
2. The resolution shall be read by title and referred to the Resolutions Committee.
3. The Resolutions Committee shall convene and discuss the resolution, and may modify it as it sees fit. The committee may choose to report it to the Committee in its original form, report it to the Committee with amendments, or it may fail to report the resolution.
  - a. Should a resolution fail to be reported, the committee may, by a majority vote, choose to discharge it from the committee and bring it to the floor for a vote.
4. Any resolution reported by the committee shall be adopted via majority vote. Any resolution discharged from the committee by motion shall only be adopted via 3/5ths supermajority. Under no circumstances may this provision be suspended.

### **§4 – Supremacy Clause and Parliamentary Authority**

These Bylaws, when not in conflict with law or the Virginia Democratic Party Plan shall be considered valid and binding.

In instances where these Bylaws are silent, the Committee shall defer to Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

## **Article X – Grievances and Discipline**

### **§1 – Procedure**

An officer shall be removed from office or the membership of any member shall be revoked only by the following procedure, which must be followed with strict compliance and shall not be suspended:

1. Any alleged infraction shall be presented to the NCDC in the form of a complaint. At a minimum, the motion must specify an overt act or acts which constitute the infraction. The maker of the motion must support the claim with appropriate evidence.
  - a. In the event a person feels the need to report anonymously, the motion may be submitted in writing to the Executive Committee
2. The Executive Committee shall have sixty (60) days from the date of receipt of the complaint to investigate the infraction and present its recommendation to the NCDC. The Executive Committee shall schedule a hearing on the charges within fourteen (14) days. They shall notify the accused of the date, time and place of the hearing and nature of the charges.
  - a. Notice shall be given by registered or certified letter, with a return receipt. The letter shall be mailed within three (3) days of the date on the letter.
  - b. The hearing shall not be earlier than fourteen (14) days after the date on the letter.
  - c. The letter shall offer the accused the opportunity to present their defense, either in person or via a written rebuttal in lieu of their appearance. The accused must notify the Executive Committee of their decision by regular or electronic mail within ten (10) days of receiving the letter. Absent such notice, the Executive Committee shall assume that the accused has waived their right to appear and shall be tried *in absentia*.
  - d. The written rebuttal shall be provided to the Executive Committee no later than forty-eight (48) hours prior to the date and time of the hearing.
3. The NCDC shall vote on removal upon hearing the report of the Executive Committee. Removal shall require a 3/5ths majority of the voting members present.

Reasons for disciplinary action include:

1. Malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance of duties
2. Conduct injurious to the good name of the Democratic Party or the Committee, or unbecoming of a member thereof
3. Breach of Loyalty
  - Use or implication of the name or resources of the Committee to promote a contested candidate for office who is not endorsed by the Democratic Party at any level
  - Supporting candidates running against any candidate nominated by the Democratic Party

4. A conviction of any violation of Title 24.2 of the Code of Virginia, or any felony under Title 18.2 of the Code of Virginia.
  - The Committee reserves the right to suspend the membership of anyone accused once the committee becomes aware of such charges.

## **Article XI – Amendments**

These Bylaws can be amended at any regular meeting of the NCDC by a majority vote of members present and voting, provided that:

1. The proposed amendment has been submitted to the Secretary, read and discussed at the previous regular meeting; or,
2. The text of the proposed amendment has been sent to the members with the notice of the regular meeting at which the amendment is to be adopted; except that clause (1) shall not apply to any amendments necessitated by a revision in the Virginia Democratic Party Plan.

From time to time, the Chair (or their designee) may review the Bylaws and may make such changes and updates as to correct typographical errors and improve syntax. There shall be no modifications to the intent or the spirit of the text, which shall be addressed via amendment.

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| Log of Changes to the Bylaws of the Norfolk City Democratic Committee |      |      |                                                 |            |     |
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| #                                                                     | Art. | Sec. | Description                                     | Date       | By  |
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