

# Constitution of Monroe County Young Democrats

## **PREAMBLE**

To foster the active citizenship, civic engagement, and political empowerment of young people in Monroe County, we establish this Constitution to create the Monroe County Young Democrats.

## **ARTICLE I: Name and Affiliation**

The name of this organization will be the Monroe County Young Democrats (MCYD).

Section 1. Monroe County Young Democrats will be chartered with and affiliated with the New York State Young Democrats, and by and through the New York State Young Democrats, will be affiliated with the Young Democrats of America.

Section 2. Monroe County Young Democrats will be chartered with the Monroe County Democratic Committee and work as closely as possible with all levels of the Democratic Party.

## **ARTICLE II: Membership**

The NYS Young Democrats control standards for membership of Monroe County Young Democrats.

Section 1. A Member of the Monroe County Young Democrats is anyone who:

- A. Is no younger than sixteen (16) and has yet to reach the age of thirty-six (36).
- B. Is enrolled or pre-registered with the Democratic Party.
- C. Resides, works, or is a student in Monroe County.
- D. Has volunteered their name and personal information for addition to the membership roll by the Secretary and Membership Committee.
- E. Has paid their dues for the current year, as prescribed in the bylaws.

Section 2. Voting membership and candidate eligibility for officer, committee, and liaison positions shall be prescribed in the bylaws.

Section 3. Membership will not be affected by race, sex, color, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, marital status, or disability.

### **ARTICLE III: Leadership Team**

The Leadership Team will consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Each member of the Leadership Team will be elected by the voting members of the Monroe County Young Democrats, as prescribed in the bylaws. The Leadership Team will be the chief policy-making body of the chapter.

Section 1. The four (4) officers will be President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Section 2. The roles, duties, and powers of each committee chair shall be prescribed in the bylaws.

### **ARTICLE IV: Officer Duties**

The officers of MCYD are responsible for the administration and final decision-making of the organization. Officers shall always strive to represent the values of the organization.

Section 1. President.

The President will be the chief executive officer of the organization. They will preside over all meetings. The President will have all of the following duties and powers. The absence of a specific power or duty from this list is not necessarily a denial of its existence.

- A. Establish administrative procedures not otherwise provided for
- B. Act for and on behalf of MCYD when it is not in session.
- C. Establish the agenda for each MCYD meeting.
- D. Serve as delegation chair to the State Young Democrats state convention. When the attendance of the President is not possible, they will appoint a suitable replacement and give said person their voting proxy.
- E. Collaborate with the Treasurer and the Leadership Team regarding all expenses and revenues.
- F. Be an ex-officio member of all committees.
- G. Name and remove anyone from any appointed or vacant position with the approval of the Leadership Team.
- H. Conduct an annual review and prepare a report on the state of MCYD, including its activities and plans.
- I. The President will act as the MCDC Liaison, attend MCDC Executive Committee meetings on behalf of MCYD, and act as an intermediary between MCYD and the local Democratic Party. The President will serve as the MCDC Liaison
- J. The President will act as the NYSYD Liaison and is responsible for maintaining communications with the New York State Young Democrats and for attending NYSYD meetings.

Section 2: Vice President. The Vice President will have all of the following duties:

- A. Oversee standing and adjunct committees and coordinate organizational growth and membership retention.
- B. Act as President Pro Tempore in the absence of the President. In a case where the President's office becomes vacant, the Vice President will automatically become the President and will assume all powers, duties, and responsibilities associated with that position. The office of the Vice President then is vacant and will be filled by an appointment by the new President, pending the approval of the Leadership Team.

- C. The Vice President will serve as the College Liaison and is directed to foster relationships with local College Democrat chapters and, where no chapter exists, to conduct direct outreach to students at local schools.

Section 3: Secretary. The Secretary shall have the following duties and powers:

- A. Keep accurate minutes and attendance of all meetings.
- B. Assure proper notice of all meetings.
- C. Keep an accurate mailing list and phone directory of all members.
- D. See to all correspondence as directed by the President.
- E. Chair the Membership Committee.

Section 4: Treasurer. The Treasurer will be the chief financial officer of the organization and shall have all of the following duties:

- A. Oversee fundraising and collection of dues.
- B. Be responsible for developing fundraising ideas and soliciting donations.
- C. Maintain accurate financial records for the organization.
- D. Coordinate all financial activities, including any tax responsibilities, with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).
- F. File all Campaign Finance Reports
- G. Conduct all financial transactions as directed by the Leadership Team. The Treasurer will not have the right to make expenses without the approval of the Leadership Team.
- I. Act as a signatory to all accounts, records, and financial transactions.

## **ARTICLE V: Elections**

Elections of officers, committee chairs, co-chairs, and liaisons will be at least every other year at a time set by the President. All terms are for two (2) years or until the officer resigns, whichever happens first. The process of elections will be prescribed in the bylaws, and the president will notify the membership at least two (2) weeks prior to any

election.

## **ARTICLE VI: Number of Offices**

No one (1) person may hold more than one (1) officer position in MCYD.

## **ARTICLE VII: Impeachment**

Only an elected position may be subject to impeachment. The President reserves the right to remove anyone from an appointed position with the approval of the Leadership Team. Procedures for impeachment will be as follows:

- A. Any person holding an elected office within MCYD may be impeached if found guilty of failure to perform their duties adequately.
- B. The person shall be notified of the charges against them no less than thirty (30) days prior to the meeting in which the impeachment will be discussed.
- C. Members of the Leadership Team who are not charged with negligence of their duties shall appoint a committee and chairperson to hear the testimony of the person or persons charged. The findings of the committee shall be final.

## **ARTICLE VIII: Meetings and Events**

Most meetings and events will happen at the same time. Anytime official business is discussed, the President or Presiding Officer will specify what business is being done and who is eligible to participate in the decision-making process.

Section 1: The Leadership Team will convene meetings for MCYD members and participants at least six (6) times during the course of one (1) year.

Section 2: Everyone should be welcomed at all meetings and events. Membership should only be considered if deemed necessary by the Leadership Team for meetings and discussions on official proceedings. Attendance at MCYD can be limited to Members by a majority vote of the Leadership Team. When attendance is limited, the

Leadership Team may invite others to the meeting following the standards in Article IX Section 4.

Section 3: An MCYD event shall be defined as any event planned with or by the MCYD and announced/discussed during an MCYD meeting.

Section 4: Candidates of a primary election shall not be extended special invitations while a primary is happening unless every candidate is invited simultaneously and provided with the same opportunity to attend. No candidate attending may use it to solicit donations, staff, or volunteers unless every candidate running in the primary is present and soliciting for the same reasons as agreed to by the candidates and leadership team.

### **ARTICLE IX: Working Groups**

The President can form working groups at any time to complete ad hoc projects and assignments as needed. The President, with the approval of the Leadership Team, shall appoint the leader of any Working Group. The Leadership Team may form working groups to carry out actions they deem necessary for MCYD.

### **ARTICLE X: Supporting Candidates and Endorsements**

As an organization, MCYD will always strive to support Democratic candidates for political office during the General Election. MCYD will not prohibit its membership from individually supporting any candidate of their choosing. The Monroe County Young Democrats will not endorse any candidate for office if they have a contested Democratic primary. The prohibition of political endorsements defined above does not apply to the dissemination of candidate information to the organization's members, and all candidates will be given equal opportunity to do so.

### **Article XI: Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws**

This Constitution shall be viewed as a living document and amended as necessary by the Leadership Team and Membership.

Section 1. Amendments to this Constitution must be submitted in writing to the President and Secretary at least two weeks (14 days) prior to the meeting at which the amendment will be considered. The President is obligated to email the constitutional amendment to anyone on the committee's email list at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting. The amendment will be approved if two-thirds (2/3) of the membership, with a quorum present, vote in favor.

Section 2. Amendments to the bylaws must be submitted in writing to the President and Secretary in advance of the meeting at which the amendment will be considered. The amendment will be approved if two-thirds (2/3) of the Leadership Team and two-thirds (2/3) of the general body (in attendance) vote in favor.

## **ARTICLE XII: Dissolution**

In the event of the dissolution of the Monroe County Young Democrats, all funds in the treasury and other assets and records shall go to the Monroe County Democratic Committee after all obligations have been met to be safeguarded for the use of a future Young Democrat-focused organization.

## **Bylaws**

### **BYLAW I: Membership Dues**

Lack of MCYD membership should not be used as a basis to exclude anyone from participating in any event or activity.

Section 1. Dues for general membership shall be set at a minimum of fifteen dollars (\$15) per year.

Section 2. If any member joins the Monroe County Young Democrats after October 1st of any given year, the paid dues for the respective member will be credited for both the current and following year.

Section 3. Prorated membership dues are prohibited.

Section 4. All membership dues will be deposited into the organization's bank account.

Section 5. The President and Treasurer shall have the power to waive membership dues for anyone requesting financial assistance to join the organization.

#### **BYLAW IV: Eligibility Requirements for Voting**

To foster an open and democratic election process, the only requirement a member must meet to be eligible to vote at any meeting is participation in at least one (1) MCYD event during the past 365 days. The Leadership Team may waive this requirement to increase membership and participation.

#### **BYLAW V: Quorum at Meetings**

A quorum at general meetings of MCYD is ten percent of the (10%) of the voting members as defined in Bylaw IV.

#### **BYLAW VI: Officers to be Elected and Eligibility Requirements for Running**

Requirements for running for office can be imposed if there are multiple candidates for an office. However, if there are not enough eligible candidates for the Leadership Team, these requirements will be waived.

Section 1. No one (1) person may hold multiple positions on the Leadership team. One (1) person may hold multiple chair/liaison positions.



Section 2. President. To be eligible to serve as President, a candidate must have either

- (1) served as an MCYD officer,
- (2) served as an MCYD committee chair,
- (3) participated in at least three (3) MCYD events in the preceding year, or
- (4) served in an official capacity for a Democratic campaign or the Democratic Party in the preceding year.

Section 3. Vice President. To be eligible to serve as Vice President, a candidate must have either

- (1) served as an MCYD officer,
- (2) served as an MCYD committee chair,
- (3) participated in at least two (2) MCYD events in the preceding year, or
- (4) served in an official capacity for a Democratic campaign or the Democratic Party in the preceding year.

Section 4. Secretary. To be eligible to serve as Secretary, a candidate must have either

- (1) served as an MCYD officer,
- (2) served as an MCYD committee chair,
- (3) participated in at least one (1) MCYD event in the preceding year, or
- (4) served in an official capacity for a Democratic campaign or the Democratic Party in the preceding year.

Section 5. Treasurer. To be eligible to serve as Treasurer, a candidate must have either

- (1) served as an MCYD officer,
- (2) served as an MCYD committee chair,
- (3) participated in at least one (1) MCYD event in the preceding year, or
- (4) served in an official capacity for a Democratic campaign or the Democratic Party in the preceding year.

## **BYLAW VII: Committee Chairs to be Elected and Eligibility Requirements for Running**

The Leadership team shall establish and operate any committee deemed necessary.

Section 1. Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs. To run for a Committee Chair or Co-Chair position, a candidate must either

- (1) served as an MCYD officer,
- (2) served as an MCYD committee chair, co-chair, or liaison,
- (3) participated in at least one (1) MCYD event in the preceding year,
- (4) served in an official capacity for a Democratic campaign or the Democratic Party in the preceding year, or
- (5) previously been an active member of that committee. Committees may have co-chairs but do not require more than one chairperson.

## **BYLAW VIII: Organizational Meeting and Internal Elections**

Organizational Meetings and Internal Elections will be held as necessary to ensure the continuous operation of the organization.

Section 1. The current President will act as Presiding Officer unless they must recuse themselves because they are a candidate. They will designate the next highest-ranking current officer to act as Presiding Officer at that time. In other cases where a recusal is necessary, the Presiding Officer will designate a replacement for the recusal period. If no other officer is available, the Presiding Officer will ensure their actions are unquestionably fair and unbiased towards their or anyone else's candidacy.

Section 2. Electing Officers and Chairs/Co-Chairs.

- A. The Presiding Officer (PO) will call for nominations for the position.
  - i. The PO and Secretary (or their designee) can verify that each nominee

meets the eligibility requirements specified for the office.

B. When the PO sees that there are no further nominations, they will call for a motion to close the nomination process.

i. The motion must be seconded.

ii. The motion must be approved by a majority of those voting members present.

C. The PO will direct each duly nominated candidate for President to take two (2) minutes to speak on behalf of their candidacy.

D. After each nominee has spoken, the PO will facilitate a ten (10) minute question and answer period for the officer candidates or a five (5) minute period for the chair, co-chair, and liaison candidates, ensuring that all candidates have equal opportunities to speak.

E. At the close of the question and answer period, the PO will:

i. Direct the Secretary (or their designee) to ensure each eligible voter has one paper ballot.

ii. Direct each eligible voter to write the name of one (1) duly nominated candidate on the ballot.

iii. Direct the Secretary (or their designee) to collect and count the ballots.

iv. Announce the results.

F. In cases where only one (1) eligible candidate is running for a position, the PO will direct the Secretary (or their designee) to cast one (1) unanimous ballot for that candidate.

## **BYLAW IX: Vacancies**

In case of a vacancy of any position within the Leadership Team, the President is directed to appoint a replacement by and with the advice and consent of the Leadership Team. If an officer, chair/co-chair resigns or is removed from their position during their term for any reason, they are directed to notify the President or the rest of the Leadership Team as soon as possible so that an orderly transition may be carried out.

Section 1. If the President vacates their office, the Vice-President will immediately become President, and the office of Vice President will filled by as outlined above.

Section 2. If two (2) or more offices of the Board are vacant at any point throughout the year, the President will promptly schedule and hold elections for the entire Board. All currently serving officers are allowed to run for reelection and must do so to continue to hold the office they are serving in.

### **BYLAW X: Communications and Editorial Policy**

When various issues which may be of significance to the philosophies and political fortunes of the Democratic Party – whether at the local, state, or national level – rise to the forefront of public dialogue, it may become necessary that the Monroe County Young Democrats should grasp at the opportunity to chime in. If a member of the Monroe County Young Democrats wishes to have the views of the organization published in such a way as they relate to current events – implying that the individual simultaneously wishes to identify the Monroe County Young Democrats in the piece either as part of their by-line or in the body of the piece itself – the individual should be obliged to follow this set of rules.

Section 1. When writing an opinion editorial (op-ed), the piece should be signed by specific people or a specific person (officers, leaders, general members, etc.) rather than by the organization as a whole. Doing so leaves room for the idea that whatever opinions expressed in the piece are not necessarily representative of the overarching views of the entire organization and its membership, although a comprehensive cross-membership “stamp of approval” is a goal.

A. Editorials intended for submission to a local newspaper or any news outlet by any MCYD member in which the organization is mentioned should first be submitted for review by the following subsets, in this order:

- i. Communications Committee
- ii. Leadership Team
- iii. General Membership

B. After the piece is approved by the first two (2) subsets and does not generate significant objections from the third (3rd), it can be submitted to the local newspaper. The author(s) of the piece should utilize email for these checks and balances and present their deadline for suggested edits.

Section 2. An MCYD member who will be identified in the press as a Monroe County Young Democrat may give quotes and other statements to the press. The member will send the proposed statement to the Leadership Team as a "high priority" email (i.e., one that is flagged or exclamation-pointed or contains "URGENT" in its subject), and Leadership Team members will have such time as may be needed to respond with their approval, objections, and revisions. Nothing herein shall be construed as prohibiting a member of the Leadership Team from speaking with the press at a public event; however, such Officer must be mindful of the stated mission and rules of MCYD and clarify when speaking as an individual.

Section 3. Press releases to be sent out by MCYD in coordination with a campaign will be circulated among the Leadership Team as a "high priority" email. Leadership Team members will be given appropriate time to respond with their approval, objections, and revisions.

## **BYLAW XI: Judicial Review Board**

Judicial Review should be the final step taken. Every attempt to resolve the dispute should be made prior to a Judicial Review Board being formed.

Section 1. The objective of the Judicial Review Board shall be to provide a forum and method for resolving any violations of the rules governing the MCYD.

Section 2. Any member may allege a violation of MCYD's Constitution and By-Laws by another member by submitting a written complaint to the President via email. If the President is the member being complained about, the email shall be sent to the Vice President. Allegations of sexual harassment may be made via this process or directly to the New York State Young Democrats via its anonymous electronic reporting system.

Section 3. Timing: a Judicial Review Board must be assembled within two (2) weeks of receipt of the complaint.

Section 4. Membership: The Judicial Review Board will be comprised of five (5) persons: one (1) Leadership Team Member and four (4) Members.

A. All members must be in good standing with the MCYD as defined in Article 2.

B. The Leadership Team member will be the President unless the President is under review or they have delegated the position to another Leadership Team Member. If the President is under review, the Vice President will fulfill this role.

C. The Leadership Team Member shall call for volunteers for the Judicial Review Board.

a. If more than four (4) members volunteer, four will be selected at random.

Section 5. Deliberation and Results

A. The Judicial Review Board shall meet outside of the General Meeting. Such a meeting should happen within two (2) weeks of being formed.

B. The Judicial Review Board must interview or gather a statement from the accused person or persons.

C. The Judicial Review Board may contact any other persons involved as they see fit.

D. The Judicial Review Board shall decide on sanctions or actions by the next General meeting of the MCYD. It will be decided by a simple majority of those serving on the Judicial Review Board.

- E. Results may include but are not limited to, impeachment, return of funds, and removal from MCYD.

## Section 6. Appeals

- A. The accused person may appeal the decision of the Judicial Board should they feel it unfair or inaccurate.
  - a. To appeal a decision of the Judicial Review Board, the accused person or persons must notify the Leadership Team within one (1) week of receiving the original decision.
  - b. At the General Meeting, the accused person or persons will make a motion to appeal the decision.
  - c. Once the motion is made, the Judicial Review Board shall have the opportunity to present the decision and the reasons it was made. The General Membership will have an opportunity to ask questions.
  - d. After the Judicial Review Board is finished, the accused person or persons shall have the opportunity to present their reason for appeal. The General Membership will have the opportunity to ask questions.
  - e. The accused person will be asked to leave the room for the General Membership to have a discussion.
  - f. Upon completion of the discussion, a vote will take place.
  - g. A Judicial Review Board will be considered appealed if two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) of the General Membership in attendance vote in favor of an appeal.
- B. An appealed decision will be considered null in its entirety.