



The Constitution of the West Virginia Young Democrats

As adopted by the Annual State Convention
March 25, 2018, in Morgantown, WV

Neil Heard, President
Adam Strider, Constitutional Revision Committee Chair

Article I: Membership

Section 1: Qualifications

Membership in the West Virginia Young Democrats shall be open to any interested individual under the age of 36. Members must be a member of a chapter of the West Virginia Young Democrats, or register as a member of the at-large chapter.

Section 2: Categories of Membership

1. Chapter Member: Any member of a local chapter of the West Virginia Young Democrats will automatically be considered a member of the organization.
2. At-Large Member: This membership category is reserved for those who cannot participate in a local chapter, or wishes to continue involvement solely on the state level. An At-Large member must register with the West Virginia Young Democrats and pay yearly dues. At-large members participate and vote at state convention as an individual chapter in the same manner as chartered chapters.
3. Emeritus Member: An individual that has reached the age of 36 and is in good standing with the West Virginia Democratic Party shall be eligible for emeritus membership in the West Virginia Young Democrats. The State Executive Committee shall approve emeritus membership, and the West Virginia Young Democrats shall keep records of all emeritus members. An emeritus member cannot hold any office or position of responsibility, and may not vote in any chapter or state organization election.

Section 3: Non-Discrimination

WVYD will not condone or support discrimination in membership on the grounds of race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, color, creed, national origin, religion, ethnic identity, economic status, disability, veteran status, or any other classification protected by state, federal, or local law.

Article II: Chartered Units

Section 1: Chapters

Chapters shall fall under the following categories:

1. County Chapters: Chapters will be chartered in the County in which its membership resides, works, or attends school.
 - a. Regional Chapters: Two or more Counties may join membership to form Regional Chapters.
2. College Chapters: Students attending Colleges in West Virginia may organize chapters comprised of just students of that institution. College Chapters shall be considered independent units from any county chapters located within the same county.

- a. Graduate School Chapters: Graduate or professional schools inside larger Colleges or Universities may create their own chapters, separate from any county chapters located within the same county, or college chapters chartered at the same institution.
3. High School Chapters: Students attending High Schools in West Virginia may organize chapters comprised of just members of that institution. High School Chapters shall be considered independent units from any county chapters located within the same county.
4. Washington, DC Expatriate Chapter: West Virginia natives residing in the greater Washington, DC metro area (as defined by the US Census Bureau) may charter a chapter of the West Virginia Young Democrats located in this area.

Section 2: Chartering

1. Chartering New Chapters: Any newly formed chapter of the West Virginia Young Democrats must send a chartering packet to a member of the Executive Committee for review. If deemed completed, the Vice President of Membership will present the finished application to the State Executive Committee, and with an affirmative vote will be approved to be a full chapter.
2. Content of Chartering Packet: All chartering packet must have;
 - a. Current roster with all members, including name, email address, physical address and birthdate, containing at minimum 10 members.
 - b. A membership fee for each member of the chartering organization, as determined by the State Executive Committee.
 - d. Any other items deemed necessary by the Vice President or the State Executive Committee.
3. Re-chartering of Chapters: All chapters must re-charter during the Annual State Convention. All procedures for re-chartering will be covered in Article IV: Annual State Convention.

Article IV: Annual State Convention

Section 1: Authority

The annual meeting of the WVYD State Convention will serve as the highest authority of the organization.

Section 2: Convention Leadership

1. Convention Chair: The President, with the approval of the State Executive Committee, will approve a Convention Chair who shall be responsible for the planning and execution of the Annual State Convention.
2. Convention Leadership Team: This group shall be comprised of all members

of the State Executive Committee, Annual State Convention Committee Chairs, and the Annual State Convention Chair. Members of the Convention Leadership Team shall have respective duties as may be assigned by the Convention Chair.

Section 3: Types of Conventions

1. Officer Election Conventions: These conventions will be held on odd numbered years, and will be convened to elect the officers of WVYD for two-year terms.
2. Platform and Constitutional Revision Conventions: These conventions will be held on even numbered years, and will be convened to review and make any changes to the WVYD Platform or propose and ratify any amendments to the Constitution.

Section 4: Date, Location and Notification

1. The exact date of the State Convention will be decided by the State Executive Committee, and will be no less than ten months, or no more than fourteen months after the last State Convention.
2. Chapters of WVYD will offer bids to host the Annual State Convention, which shall be submitted to the Vice President of Programming by email. The winning bid shall be decided by the State Executive Committee by majority vote. The deadline for submission of convention host bids shall be established by the Vice President of Programming and communicated to all chapter presidents of chartered chapters at least 90 days prior to that deadline.
3. If no bids are submitted to the Vice President of Programming on or before the deadline, the State Executive Committee shall among themselves propose convention sites and decide the location and date of the convention by majority vote.
4. The date and location of the State Convention must be made public no less than sixty (60) days before the start of the Convention.

Section 5: Convention Committees

1. Committees Named: For each Annual State Convention there shall be established committees on Credentials, Rules & Constitution, and Resolutions & Platform, and such other ad hoc convention committees as the President deems proper.
2. Appointment of a Chair: The President will appoint a chair of all Convention Committees at least sixty (60) days before the Annual State Convention.
3. Composition of the Committees: Each chapter of West Virginia Young Democrats will be entitled to one voting delegate, who will be appointed by the President of the respective chapters. Each delegate must be a member of the chapter they are representing.
4. Committee Submissions: Proposed Resolutions and Platform changes are due to

the Resolutions & Platform Committee fourteen (14) and thirty (30) days before the start of the Annual State Convention, respectively. The Resolutions & Platform Committee may also accept submissions after the deadline with a 2/3rds majority approval of the Committee.

5. Quorum: Quorum of any committee will be one-half (1/2) of the appointed delegates.

Section 6: Chartering

1. All chapters wishing to re-charter with the West Virginia Young Democrats must submit a completed chartering packet to the Convention Leadership Team no less than two (2) weeks before the start of the Annual State Convention. Late submitted charter applications may be accepted by a majority vote of the Credentials Committee.
2. If a chapter misses the deadline for submission of the charter for any reason, and their application is not accepted late by vote of the credentials committee, their delegates shall not be entitled to vote at the Convention. However, their members shall be entitled to participate in all other aspects of the convention, and the chapter shall, going forward, be considered a chartered chapter of the West Virginia Young Democrats entitled to all rights and privileges thereof.
3. All charters shall be presented to the Credentials Committee for approval before being brought before the Annual State Convention.

Section 7: Votes

1. Vote Allocation: All chartered members of West Virginia Young Democrats of at least ten members will be entitled to four voting delegates during the Convention. For every five additional chartered members a chapter has, they shall be entitled to one additional delegate.
2. Convention Delegates: Delegates to the Convention must be pre-assigned by the chapter before attending the convention. Each chapter may decide their own manner of delegate selection, so long as it does not contravene any provision of this Constitution. The chapter may assign as many alternates up to their maximum number of delegates. Delegates (or their alternates) must be present during Convention proceedings to have their vote count. Proxies are not allowed.
3. Quorum: 75% of all registered delegates representing at least five (5) chapters constitute a quorum.

Section 8: Business Meeting Proceedings

1. Business Meeting Presiding Officer: During the convention business meeting, the President shall be the presiding officer, unless the President is running for an elected office in the West Virginia Young Democrats. If that is the case, nominations and elections will be conducted before the start of the Business Meeting to elect a presiding officer. The elected presiding officer may not be a

candidate for any office. The elected presiding officer is not considered an office or responsibility for purposes of this Constitution, and may be performed by an emeritus member.

2. **Committee Reports:** All convention committees will give a report during the business meeting. The convention will approve or disapprove of decisions brought forward by the committees when appropriate.
3. **Elections:** Elections for officers of WVYD will be conducted on odd-numbered years.
4. **Approval of Constitutional Amendments and Platform Amendments:** Approvals of amendments to the Constitution and approval of the West Virginia Young Democrats platform will be conducted on even-numbered years.
5. **Other Items:** The State Executive Committee is responsible for setting the agenda before the state convention, and may set the agenda to cover any items, when appropriate, in addition to necessary items.

Article V: Officers

Section 1: Officers Named

The elected officers of the West Virginia Young Democrats will be President, Executive Vice President, Vice President of Programming, Vice President of Membership, Vice President of Finance, Vice President of Communications, Secretary, Treasurer, and two National Committee Representatives.

Section 2: Election Procedures

1. **Eligibility:** Any member of WVYD who is in good standing and will be under the age of 36 for the duration of their term in office will be eligible to run for any office.
2. **Filing for Candidacy:** Any member wishing to run for an elected office must submit his or her intention to do so in writing to the President by 11:59pm on the Friday of the Annual State Convention. The State Executive Committee may also assign other documents for potential candidates to endorse before running for office.
3. **Nominations:** Nominations for any office may be made by any member of West Virginia Young Democrats in good standing, and require a second by an equally qualified member. Nominations for the office will be open until immediately before speeches commence. Only candidates who timely filed for candidacy for the office in question may be nominated, unless no candidates filed for the office in question.
4. **Order of Elections:** Elections will be conducted in this order: President, Executive Vice President, Vice President of Programming, Vice President of Membership, Vice President of Development, Vice President of Communications, Secretary, Treasurer, National Committee Man, and National Committee Representatives.

5. **Speeches:** After closing of nominations every nominated and seconded candidate will be able to give a two (2) minute speech in support for their candidacy.
6. **Balloting:** After speeches are finished, every delegation will be given up to five (5) minutes to discuss among themselves on the casting of their ballots. After the five (5) minutes as expired, or all delegations have signaled to the presiding officer they are ready to proceed, each chapter in alphabetical order will be called and they will announce their ballots cast.
7. **Conducting the Vote:** A nominee must receive a majority (one vote more than fifty percent) of the votes cast on a given ballot to be elected (abstentions do not count as votes cast). Where a majority is not achieved, another ballot is taken between the top two vote-getters in the initial round of balloting. If two ballots in succession result in tie votes, the balloting will be declared deadlocked.
8. **In Case of a Deadlock:** If an election is declared deadlocked, the candidates will be offered an opportunity to decide among themselves whether one of them will concede the election. If neither candidate will concede after deliberation, the presiding officer shall cast a vote to break the deadlock.

Section 3: Duties of the Officers

The officers of the West Virginia Young Democrats shall perform such duties as required by this document, the Bylaws, the President, and the Executive Committee.

Section 4: Appointed Officers

The President may at any time create and appoint executive offices to help fulfill the mission of West Virginia Young Democrats. Any executive appointment is subject to the same rules governing elected offices, except for removal from office.

Section 5: Parliamentarian

The Parliamentarian shall be the interpreter of the Constitution, Bylaws, and any other documents of West Virginia Young Democrats. Interpretations of the Parliamentarian may be overruled by a 2/3 majority of the Executive Committee. The Parliamentarian shall be nominated by the President and approved by the Executive Committee, and shall serve a term in office concurrent with the elected officers.

Section 6: Term in Office and Term Limits

1. **Term in Office:** An elected officer's term will last from the end of the convention they are elected at until the end of the next convention or a successor is elected, whichever comes later.
2. **Term Limits:** The office of President is limited to two consecutive terms. All other positions have no term limits.

Section 7: Vacancies

1. **Presidential Vacancy:** In the event of the President unable or unwilling to continue his duties, the Executive Vice President will fulfill the remainder of the outgoing President's term. If both the President and Executive Vice President are unable or unwilling to continue the duties of the presidency, the State Executive Committee will elect a member of the Committee to fulfill the term as President.
2. **Other Officer Vacancies:** If any other office becomes vacant, or no member of West Virginia Young Democrats runs for an elected office, the President shall appoint a member of West Virginia Young Democrats in good standing to fulfill the remainder of the term, with the advice and consent of the State Executive Committee.

Section 8: Removal from Office

1. **Criteria for Removal from Office:** An officer of the West Virginia Young Democrats may be removed from their office upon the following bases:
 - a. Failure to fulfill duties laid out in Article V, Section 3;
 - b. Maladministration;
 - c. Misuse of organizational funds;
 - d. Actions which go against the mission and spirit of the West Virginia Young Democrats, Young Democrats of America, West Virginia Democratic Party, or the National Democratic Party; or
 - e. Conduct which is otherwise unbecoming an officer of the West Virginia Young Democrats.
2. **Removal of an Appointed Officer:** Any members of the State Executive Committee may move for the removal of an appointed officer from his or her position. Once the removal of an appointed officer has been moved and seconded, the State Executive Committee shall deliberate on the removal and proceed to a vote. Appointed officers are not entitled to formal impeachment proceedings prior to removal. A simple majority vote of the State Executive Committee is required for removal of an appointed officer.
3. **Removal of an Elected Officer:** Any member of the State Executive Committee may move for the removal of an elected officer from his or her position. Once the removal of an elected officer has been moved for and seconded, the officer is impeached, and the President shall convene a special meeting of the State Executive Committee for the purpose of presiding over the removal proceeding. At the special meeting, the committee member who moved for the removal shall present the case for removal to the State Executive Committee. The officer subject to removal proceedings shall be entitled to present their defense as well. Once both parties have presented, the State Executive Committee shall proceed to a vote. A unanimous vote of all committee members except for the member whose removal has been moved for is required to remove an elected officer.

Article VI: Executive Committee

Section 1: Authority

The Executive Committee will serve as the administrative unit and governing body of WVYD and will conduct the affairs of the organization.

Section 2: Membership

1. **Voting Membership:** The voting members of the Executive Committee shall be the Executive Vice President, Vice President of Programming, Vice President of Membership, Vice President of Development, Vice President of Communications, Secretary, Treasurer, and two National Committee Representatives. The President may vote only in the event of a tie.
2. **Non-Voting Members:** The President, Parliamentarian, Executive Director, College Caucus Chair, and High School Caucus Chair, and all elected and appointed officials of the Young Democrats of America from West Virginia who are not otherwise members of the Executive Committee shall be non-voting members of the Executive Committee.

Section 3: Duties

The Executive Committee shall be responsible for conducting the regular business of the organization in a responsible manner, and carry out any duties expressly addressed or implied in the Constitution, Bylaws, or any other governing documents.

Section 4: Meetings

1. **Frequency:** A minimum of twelve (12) Executive Committee meetings must be held per year, with at least one (1) being an in-person meeting.
2. **Calling of Meetings:** The President or three (3) members of the Executive Committee may call a meeting.
3. **Presiding Officer:** The President shall serve as the presiding officer, and Executive Vice President will serve as an alternate presiding officer in the President's absence. In the event that both the President and Executive Vice President are absent, the President will designate another member of the Executive Committee to serve as presiding officer. A voting member may not vote if they are serving as presiding officer except in the event of a tie.
4. **Quorum:** One-half (1/2) of all voting members is required for a quorum.
5. **Event of a Tie:** In the event of a tie, the presiding officer will cast a deciding vote.
6. **Emergency Procedures:** In the extreme emergency that a quorum cannot be reached due to vacancies in office, the Presidents of the largest Chapters of West Virginia Young Democrats will be temporarily made members of the Executive Committee in descending order until new officers can be elected to fill vacancies,

and quorum can be reestablished.

Section 5: Approval of Expenditures

All expenditures totaling more than \$250 must have approval of the State Executive Committee. Any expenditures greater than \$20 but less than \$250 only require the approval of the Treasurer and the President. Any member of the Executive Committee may make expenditures of less than \$20 without preapproval.

Article VII: General Provisions

Section 1: Executive Director

The State Executive Committee may designate an Executive Director to assist in the operations of West Virginia Young Democrats. West Virginia Young Democrats may provide a stipend and/or salary, when appropriate, under the discretion of the State Executive Committee, to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will serve at the pleasure of the State Executive Committee. Approval for the hiring of the Executive Director and setting of the salary requires a 2/3rds affirmative vote.

Section 2: Endorsement of Candidates

West Virginia Young Democrats, or any chartered chapter, cannot endorse or oppose a Democratic candidate during a contested primary election, including potential candidates who have not yet filed, and elections for which additional primary candidates may still file. Any individual member of West Virginia Young Democrats may publicly support any candidate of their choosing, but as a private citizen, and not as a member of West Virginia Young Democrats.

The West Virginia Young Democrats and all chartered chapters endorse all Democratic nominees for elected office, except that the Executive Committee may by majority vote rescind the organization's endorsement of a Democratic nominee who has exhibited conduct which, in the considered opinion of the Executive Committee, embarrasses the Party or is otherwise unbecoming of a Democratic nominee.

Section 3: Awards

The criteria, selection and distribution of all awards will be at the discretion of the State Executive Committee. The following will be standing awards of West Virginia Young Democrats, and will be awarded no more than once a year:

1. Jennings Randolph West Virginia Young Democrat of the Year Award
2. Robert C. Byrd Award for Distinguished Service
3. Jay Rockefeller Distinguished Alumni Award
4. Chapter of the Year Award

Section 4: Bylaws, Standing Rules and Rules of Procedure

1. Bylaws: West Virginia Young Democrats may at any time adopt bylaws for the governance of any part of West Virginia Young Democrats not expressly provided for in the Constitution. The bylaws may in no way conflict with

the Constitution. A 2/3rds majority of the State Executive Committee is required to adopted or amend bylaws. A simple majority of the State Executive Committee may elect to have proposed bylaws changes taken up the Rules and Constitution Committee at the next Annual State Convention. Bylaws proposals sent to the Annual State Convention need a simple majority to be adopted.

2. Standing Rules: West Virginia Young Democrats may adopt standing rules for the ease of use of procedure, providing they are not in conflict with the Constitution or the state bylaws. The State Executive Committee may adopt their own standing rules at any time. Any consideration for standing rules of the Annual State Convention must originate in the Rules and Constitution Committee.
3. Rules of Procedure: Both the State Executive Committee and the Annual State Convention will use *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* as the rules of procedure for all meetings.
4. Minor Constitutional Changes: The State Executive Committee reserves the right to amend the Constitution for grammatical, spelling, and formatting changes when appropriate. The changes can in no way substantively change the Constitution.

Article VIII: Amendments

Section 1: Submission of Proposed Amendments

Any member of West Virginia Young Democrats may submit recommendations for the amendment of the constitution to the President. Consideration and approval for Constitutional Amendments can only be done on even numbered years. All submissions must be made to the Convention Leadership Team 30 days before the start of the Annual State Convention. Submissions may also be proposed after the deadline if 2/3rds majority of the Rules and Constitution Committee so approves.

Section 2: Review of Submitted Proposals

The President or his designee will make all submitted amendment proposals available for review to all state chapters 15 days before the start of the Annual State Convention.

Section 3: Review and Approval of the Constitutional Committee

All proposed amendments will be reviewed and discussed during the Annual State Convention by the Constitutional Committee. Individuals who submitted amendments may amend their submissions or withdraw them at the beginning of the meetings. The Constitutional Committee must approve all amendments before being brought to a vote during the Annual State Convention.

Section 4: Approval of the Annual State Convention

Any proposed amendments that passed the Constitutional Committee will be brought to a vote of the Annual State Convention. A 2/3rds majority is required for approval.