

South Orange County Young Democrats

Constitution

Preamble

The purpose of the South Orange County Young Democrats will be to pursue the ideas of liberty, justice, and freedom for all regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or income. We shall pursue these ideas through support of the candidates and ideas of the Democratic Party. With these thoughts we establish this constitution.

Article I

Name

The name of this organization is the South Orange County Young Democrats, henceforth referred to as “the Chapter”.

Section 1: The Chapter will be affiliated with the California Young Democrats, and the Young Democrats of America.

Section 2: The Chapter will be chartered with the California Young Democrats and work as closely as possible with all levels of the Democratic Party.

Article II

Membership

Section 1: Membership to the Chapter is open to persons living in South Orange County who are at least thirteen (13) years of age and not more than thirty-five (35) years of age who are registered Democrats, or who intend to register when eligible.

Section 2: South Orange County is defined as the area of Orange County, CA south of Santiago Peak and east of California State Route 133. This area includes the following cities and unincorporated areas: Aliso Viejo, Coto de Caza, Dana Point, Ladera Ranch, Laguna Beach, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel, Laguna Woods, Lake Forest, Las Flores, Mission Viejo, Modjeska, Rancho Mission Viejo, San Clemente, San Juan Capistrano, and Trabuco Canyon.

Section 3: Membership will not be affected by race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, or physical disability.

Section 4: Membership dues, if any, shall be set by the Executive Board with consultation from the Treasurer. The amount, payment schedule, and method of collection shall be determined by the Executive Board and announced to the membership in advance.

Section 5: An active member in good standing shall be defined as a member who is current on all required dues and has attended at least two general body meetings held during the relevant membership period, as determined by attendance records maintained by the Secretary.

Section 6: Members experiencing financial hardship that prevents payment of required dues may request a hardship waiver. Hardship waivers shall be reviewed and approved by the Treasurer, with oversight from the President. Approval of a hardship waiver shall not affect a member's status as a member in good standing, provided all other membership requirements are met. The Executive Board may establish procedures governing the request and review of hardship waivers to ensure fairness and consistency.

Article III

Officers

The Chapter will be composed of the South Orange County Young Democrats Executive Board and the remaining members. The Executive Board will consist of the officers of the Chapter. The organization shall have four (4) officers.

Section 1: The four (4) voting officers will be: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer. All voting officers will be elected by organization members as outlined in Article VIII.

Section 2: Appointed officer positions may be created by the President, subject to approval by a simple majority vote of the Executive Board. Officers may be appointed by the President, subject to a will serve as nonvoting members of the Executive Board. Appointed officer positions must hold clear approval by a simple majority vote of the Executive Board, to fill these positions. All appointed officer titles and well-defined roles and responsibilities, as determined by the Executive Board. The number of appointed officer positions must not exceed the number of elected officer positions.

Section 3: An officer may be impeached and removed from their position with a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote of the Executive Board. In case of an impeachment vote all executive board members must cast a vote for or against impeachment.

Section 4: All decisions of the Executive Board shall be determined by a simple majority of votes cast, unless otherwise specified in this Constitution. Executive Board members may vote in favor, against, or abstain. Abstentions shall not be counted as votes cast. In the event of a tied vote on any matter before the Executive Board, the President shall cast the deciding tie-breaking vote. If the President is the subject of the vote or otherwise unable to vote, the Vice President or acting President shall serve as tie-breaker.

Section 5: Should an elected office become vacant at any time, for any reason, the President or acting President, shall schedule a special election within three (3) weeks of the vacancy to fill the vacant office.

Article IV

Officer Duties

Section 1: The President will be the chief executive officer for the organization. They will preside over all chapter meetings. The President will have all of the following duties and powers. The absence of a specific power of duty from this list is not necessarily a denial of its existence.

- A. Establish administrative procedures not otherwise provided for by the Constitution or By-Laws of this chapter.
- B. Act for and on behalf of the Chapter when they are not in session.
- C. Establish the agenda for each meeting of the Chapter (general body and Executive Board).
- D. Investigate and research any local races and target Democratic and/or liberal candidates.
- E. Setup and appoint Chapter members to work on selected local campaigns.
- F. Serve as delegation chair to the California Young Democrats state convention.
- G. The President may delegate one or more of these duties and/or powers to the Vice President or appointed officers, given these duties and/or powers align with the officer position's designated purpose.

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

- A. Act as President Pro-Tempore in the absence of the President.
- B. In a case where the President's office becomes vacant, the Vice President will automatically become acting President and will assume all powers, duties and responsibilities associated with that position until a special election is held for the office.
- C. Assist the President in the performance of their duties.

Section 3: The Secretary will have all the following duties and powers:

- A. Appoint a director for the Chapter's social media accounts, pending the approval of the Executive Board.
- B. Keep accurate minutes of all chapter meetings (general body and Executive Board).
- C. Maintain an accurate mailing list and phone directory of all members.
- D. See to all correspondence of the chapter as directed by the President.
- E. Ensure the validity and timely delivery of the club charter to the California Young Democrats.

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

- A. Develop fundraising ideas and solicit monetary donations.
- B. Maintain accurate financial records for the Chapter.
- C. Advise the President and the Executive Board of the financial condition of the Chapter.

D. If deemed necessary by the Executive Board, the Treasurer will file any reports for the California Democratic Party (CADEM) or the State Ethics Commission in a timely manner.

Article V

Sergeant At Arms

If deemed necessary by the Executive Board, a Sergeant At Arms may be appointed by the Executive Board and approved by the General Body. Their duties include calling each General Body meeting to order, and maintaining security and order at each meeting of both the Executive Board and the General Body.

Article VI

Executive Board

The South Orange County Young Democrats Executive Board will be the chief policy making body for the Chapter.

Section 1: The Executive Board will have all of the powers necessary for the proper and legal execution of all duties of the Chapter.

Section 2: The Executive Board will meet no less than five (5) times during the course of one (1) year.

Article VII

General Body

The Chapter general body will meet every second Wednesday of the month throughout the course of the year, unless otherwise specified in this Constitution.

Article VIII

Elections

Section 1: Election of the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer will be held at the last meeting in April of each year in that defined order. The results of the April elections shall pertain to the following calendar year. All terms are for one year.

Section 2: Elected officers' terms and duties begin immediately following the end of the election meeting. All terms are for one year.

Section 3: Any active member of the Chapter in good standing shall be eligible to declare candidacy for an elected office. Procedures for declaring candidacy, including deadlines and required submissions, shall be established by the Executive Board and announced to the general membership no fewer than fourteen (14) days prior to the election meeting. Only active members in good standing, as defined in Article II of this Constitution, shall be eligible to vote in chapter elections.

Section 4: An election meeting shall be held for each election cycle. All declared and eligible candidates shall be afforded an equal opportunity to address the general body, including equal speaking time and equal access to any question-and-answer period. The Executive Board shall determine the logistical details of the election meeting, including time limits, format, and moderation, provided that all candidates are treated fairly and equally.

Section 5: Voting shall be conducted in a manner determined by the Executive Board that ensures fairness, confidentiality where appropriate, and the integrity of the election process. The method of voting may include voice vote, written ballot, or electronic formats, as determined by the Executive Board and announced in advance of the election meeting.

Section 6: The candidate receiving a simple majority of votes cast shall be declared the winner. If no candidate receives a simple majority, a runoff election will take place among the two candidates with the most votes.

Section 7: Should an elected office become vacant, the procedures for special elections shall be governed by Article III of this Constitution.

Section 8: To be eligible for election to the office of President, a candidate must have completed at least one (1) full year of service as a voting member of the Executive Board prior to the election. This requirement may be waived only in the event that no eligible candidate is available, as determined by a majority vote of the Executive Board.

Article IX **Constitutional Amendments**

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 place the amendment on the agenda for that meeting. The amendment will be considered approved if three-fourths (3/4) of the Executive Board, including the vote of the advisor, and two-thirds (2/3) of the general body vote in favor of the amendment. In order for a vote to be considered on a constitutional amendment there must be a minimum of 50% of the total membership.

Article X **Endorsements**

Section 1: The Chapter may endorse candidates for public office and ballot measures consistent with its purpose. Endorsements shall be limited to races and measures within the geographic and political scope of the Chapter, as determined by the Executive Board. In most cases, the Executive Board is recommended to limit the geographic scope of endorsements to races and measures relevant to South Orange County, as defined by Article II, Section 2 of this Constitution.

Section 2: The Executive Board shall establish and announce procedures for requesting, considering, and voting on endorsements prior to any endorsement vote. An endorsement meeting shall be held at which all eligible candidates will be afforded equal opportunity to address the general body, including equal speaking time and equal access to any question-and-answer period. All procedures shall be applied fairly and uniformly.

Section 3: No Executive Board member employed by or associated with a campaign being considered for endorsement by the Chapter may preside over the endorsement meeting, or segment of the endorsement meeting, in which the race or measure pertaining to that campaign is being considered. Association with a campaign may include, but is not limited to, being a paid staff member, general consultant, or intern working in service of the campaign. Should the President be unable to preside over the relevant endorsement meeting or segment, the Vice President may do so. If neither is able to do so, the Executive Board may select a voting or nonvoting officer to preside over the relevant endorsement meeting or segment.

Section 4: Only active members in good standing may vote on endorsements. An endorsement shall require approval by a $\frac{3}{5}$ (60%) majority vote of all present voting members. In races with multiple candidates, the Executive Board may establish runoff or multi-round voting procedures.

Section 5: The Chapter will be under no obligation to issue an endorsement in any race or on any measure.

Section 6: An endorsement may be reconsidered or revoked by the same voting body and under the same voting threshold required for approval, or by a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote of voting members of the general body.

Article XI

Number of Offices

No one person may hold more than one office in the Chapter. This limit includes both elected and appointed positions.

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