



ARTICLE 1 – NAME

The name of this organization shall be DC for Democracy.

ARTICLE 2 – PURPOSE

DC for Democracy is a grassroots organization located in the nation's capital that works at the national and local levels to promote political empowerment, integrity in leadership, and transparency in government. To this end, DC for Democracy will bring new people into the political process, support progressive issues and candidates, and advocate full citizenship rights through statehood for the District of Columbia.

- Section 1.** To promote good government and the participation of citizens in government at the federal, state, and local level.
- Section 2.** To provide an opportunity for interested persons to participate in the democratic process.
- Section 3.** To commit DC for Democracy and its members to the principles of equity, inclusion and equal opportunity irrespective of race, religion, ethnic background, disability, national origin, age sex, sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Section 4.** To work towards providing the highest degree of justice, social welfare and opportunity for everyone.
- Section 5.** To adopt positions and act on international, national, state and local issues.
- Section 6.** To stimulate interest and participation in registration and voting.
- Section 7.** To endorse candidates, issues, referendum and ballot initiatives of our choice, and take supportive action.
- Section 8.** To support other objectives and principles approved by DC for Democracy.

ARTICLE 3 - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Membership in DC for Democracy is open to all individuals who affirm the mission and values of the organization.

Section 2. Membership will not be limited based on an individual's political party affiliation, or residency.

Section 3. Voting membership is offered to all members.

Section 4. An individual joins DC for Democracy by attending a DC for Democracy meeting and by filling out a DC for Democracy membership form. Membership is considered active upon completion of both steps.

This definition of membership takes effect January 1, 2024. Until then, the existing membership list remains valid.

ARTICLE 4 - VOTING

Section 1. Each member shall be entitled to one vote in all proceedings of DC for Democracy.

Section 2. A new member is eligible to vote in DC for Democracy proceedings 30 days after joining the organization as described in Article 3, Section 4.

Section 3. In an endorsement ballot, absentee ballots are permitted only if all of the following conditions are met:

The member requesting an absentee ballot must be a member for a minimum of 30 days prior to the request of the ballot;

A minimum of one week's notification prior to the date of the endorsement meeting is given to request an absentee ballot from the Chair.

Absentee ballots will be provided to those members requesting one and who meet the above two criteria. Completed ballots must be returned to the Chair no later than one day before the endorsement meeting.

Section 4. The Steering Committee shall create endorsement criteria and an

application process for all candidates interested in receiving the endorsement of DC for Democracy.

The Steering Committee shall specify in the Endorsement Criteria the election or other purpose of the endorsement vote, the date the endorsement vote will be held, and which candidates are included in the endorsement options. These decisions, like other Steering Committee actions, may be overruled by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a meeting.

Section 5. The endorsement of, or opposition to, any candidate or candidates, or to any national, regional, state, or DC issues shall require the affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of members voting (present and absentee).

If a two-thirds majority is not obtained, no endorsement will be made. If there are only one or two endorsement options (candidates, initiative answers, etc.), each voter may cast one vote for a candidate (or for "No Endorsement") and the votes are totaled to see if any candidate reaches two-thirds.

If there are more than two endorsement options, a modified instant-runoff vote is used to give voters the option of expressing support for more than one option. This will generally happen only for candidates, since other endorsements will be yes or no votes. Each voter may cast one vote for a candidate (or for "No Endorsement") and then, if desired, cast a second-choice vote to be used if the preferred candidate is eliminated during the counting. Voters should not cast any votes for a candidate they would not be willing to endorse. Votes are counted as follows:

1. First-choice votes are totaled.
2. If one candidate reaches two-thirds, the endorsement is made and the process is complete.
3. If no candidate has reached two-thirds and two or more candidates remain, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated and those votes are transferred to the second-choice candidates marked on those ballots, if there are any. Ballots with no second-choice candidate, and ballots whose second-choice candidate has already been eliminated, are assigned to "No Endorsement" (a special "candidate" that is never eliminated). Go back to step (2).

4. If only one candidate and "No Endorsement" remain, and the candidate has not reached two-thirds, then no endorsement is made and the process is complete.

Resolving ties: If a candidate must be eliminated during counting and candidates are tied for the fewest votes, then the candidate among them with the fewest votes in the previous round of voting is eliminated (and the round before that can be used as a further tiebreaker if necessary, and so on). If the candidates are tied in all earlier rounds as well, then all of them are eliminated.

After an endorsement has been made, a two-thirds vote of the members present at a meeting may call for a new endorsement vote if (1) a new Updated 2/13/19 Page 3 of 9 candidate appears who might better fit the endorsement criteria than the endorsed candidate or (2) the endorsed candidate withdraws from the election or demonstrates that he or she does not fit the endorsement criteria.

Section 6. There shall be twenty-one days written notice for any meeting held for the purpose of endorsing any candidate or candidates for elective office, and/or issues.

Section 7. At all meetings, except for the election of officers and endorsements, all votes shall be by voice. For election of officers, ballots shall be provided and there shall not appear any place on such ballot that might tend to indicate the person who cast such ballot.

At all votes by ballot, the Chair of such meeting shall, prior to the commencement of balloting, appoint a committee of three who shall act as "Inspectors of Election" and who shall:

1. Establish a written "Rules of the Day" to be provided to the membership for approval prior to balloting beginning, and
2. at the conclusion of such balloting, certify in writing to the Chair the results and the certified copy shall be physically affixed in the minute book to the minutes of that meeting.

No inspector of election shall be a candidate for office or shall have a direct or material interest in the vote.

ARTICLE 5 – MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

- Section 1.** General membership meetings shall be held no less than quarterly (one per three months), upon notice in writing giving the hour and place of meeting to each member of DC for Democracy at least fourteen days before the date of the meeting. Additional meetings may be called at the discretion of the Chair, provided notice in writing is given, giving the hour and place of the meeting, to each member of DC for Democracy at least seven days before the date of the meeting. Notice sent by email to the membership shall constitute writing for this purpose.
- Section 2.** Special meetings of DC for Democracy may be called by the Chair, by the majority of the Steering Committee, or by petition of thirty-three percent (33%) of the members of DC for Democracy, provided a notice stating the time and place of such meeting is given in writing to each member of DC for Democracy at least 72 hours before the appointed time.
- Section 3.** A majority of the Steering Committee members and twenty (20) members eligible to vote, must be present at regular and special meetings to constitute a quorum and shall be required to conduct any DC for Democracy business.
- Section 4.** Minutes will be created for each General Membership meeting and Special meeting. Meeting minutes will be made public to all members.

ARTICLE 6 – STEERING COMMITTEE

- Section 1.** The Steering Committee shall be composed of:
- Chair
 - Treasurer
 - Assistant Treasurer
 - Secretary
 - Ombudsperson
 - Political Director: direct electoral endorsements
 - Membership Outreach Director: direct efforts to increase, diversify and engage members
 - Organizing Director: coordinate with endorsed candidates and campaigns, and mobilize members to participate
 - Information Technology Director: direct technology decisions

- Communications Director: direct communications policies
- Three (3) At-large members: add diversity, experience, or skills that benefit the organization
- Operations Director: direct day-to-day operations and provide administrative support

Section 2. The Chair, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Secretary and Ombudsperson shall be elected by a vote of the general membership, in accordance with Article 7. The Political Director, Membership Outreach Director, Organizing Director, Information Technology Director, Communications Director, Operations Director, and three (3) at-large members shall be appointed by the Chair, and approved by majority vote of the elected officers.

Section 3. The functions of the Steering Committee shall be to conduct business between meetings; to take action on behalf of DC for Democracy in accordance with the stated purposes of the organization on legislative matters that arise between membership meetings and require immediate action; to provide communications between committees and officers; and to provide liaisons between DC for Democracy and other groups.

Section 4. The Steering Committee shall meet at least ten times per year in ten different months. Additional meetings may be called by the Chair or by a majority of the Committee, provided notice is given at least seventy-two hours in advance to each member. When possible, a telephone conference call will be set up for steering committee members unable to attend in person.

Section 5. No decision shall be taken by the Steering Committee unless a majority of its members are present. For decisions made electronically, all Steering Committee members shall be considered present.

Section 6. Steering Committee meeting minutes and decisions shall be reported no later than 48 hours before the next general membership meeting. The membership shall have the right to overrule, on a two-thirds (67%) vote of voting members present, any action taken by the Steering Committee.

Section 7. Any member of the Steering Committee may resign by filing a written resignation with the Steering Committee.

ARTICLE 7 – OFFICER ELECTIONS

- Section 1.** Any eligible member may seek to have their name placed on the ballot by collecting the signatures of ten (10) members on a nominating petition. Petitions may be obtained beginning two months before a scheduled election, and are due two weeks before the scheduled election. Nominations may be made from the floor only if there are no candidates listed for a position.
- Section 2.** The Chair, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Secretary and Ombudsman shall be elected by a vote of the general membership.
- Section 3.** The election shall be held at the February membership meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at this meeting. Presentations limited to a previously agreed upon timeframe are then conducted. If any office is contested, winners will be chosen by majority vote, by secret ballot. If all offices are uncontested, winners will be chosen by voice vote. If more than two candidates compete for one office, the modified instant runoff voting system specified in Article 4 shall be used.
- Section 4.** Officers shall be elected for a term of one year and their term shall begin at the end of the regular meeting in which they are elected.

ARTICLE 8 - OFFICERS

- Section 1.** The officers of DC for Democracy shall be as follows:
- Chair
 - Treasurer
 - Assistant Treasurer
 - Secretary
 - Ombudsperson

- Section 2.** Duties of the officers shall be as follows:

The **Chair** shall assume general supervision of the affairs of DC for Democracy, serve as Chairperson of the Steering Committee, act as the official speaker for DC for Democracy, and provide strategic direction for the organization. The Chair shall ensure the timely implementation of motions approved at the meetings of the organization and the Steering Committee. The Chair or a Steering Committee member designated by the

Chair shall preside at meetings of DC for Democracy and the Steering Committee.

The **Treasurer** shall collect contributions, keep a record of the budget and finances of DC for Democracy, file all necessary and legal documents and reports, and make regular Treasurer reports to the Steering Committee. The Treasurer shall pay any expenses up to \$200.00, as well as expenses which have been approved by the Steering Committee that exceed \$200.00.

The **Assistant Treasurer** shall assist the Treasurer in all capacities, and shall serve as the Treasurer if and when the Treasurer is unavailable.

The **Secretary** shall keep a record of the minutes of all DC for Democracy and Steering Committee meetings.

The **Ombudsman** shall serve as a direct, confidential, and impartial advocate for the interests of the membership.

- Section 3.** Eligibility to hold one of the five officer positions requires DC residency and voting membership in DC for Democracy.
- Section 4.** The term of office is one calendar year. Elected officers may not serve more than three consecutive terms in the same position.
- Section 5.** Eligibility to hold office shall not be limited by the fact of holding office in another organization, political or otherwise.

ARTICLE 9 – VACANCIES

Vacancies that may occur among Officers of DC for Democracy shall be filled by temporary appointment of the Steering Committee and serve in an acting capacity until confirmed by a majority vote of the present and voting DC for Democracy members at the next regularly scheduled meeting. Notification of the temporary appointment shall be given immediately to the Steering Committee members, and at least 14 days prior to a confirmation vote by the membership. A special meeting will be called within sixty days, if no general membership meeting is scheduled, to elect an individual to permanently fill the position for the remainder of the term. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at the meeting.

ARTICLE 10 – COMMITTEES

- Section 1.** The Steering Committee may establish committees as required to carry out the organization’s purposes. All such committees are considered ad hoc (as opposed to standing), and expire at the end of each calendar year at the regular member meeting in February each year. Committees may be renewed each year through a new application. This may be done at any regular member meeting, by a simple majority vote of the members present.
- Section 2.** Membership in any committee, excluding the Steering Committee, is open to all members of DC for Democracy. Each committee shall be led by a Chair or Co-chairs who are either appointed by the Steering Committee or elected by the members of the committee.
- Section 3.** Meetings of all committees shall be scheduled by the Chair or Co-chairs of the committee, with notice given to all members of the committee. Meeting notes will be distributed to members of the committee.
- Section 4.** DC for Democracy members may also propose new committees. To create a new committee, three or more members of DC4D must submit an application to the Steering Committee. The application form will be made available to any member who requests it. Applicants will be invited to present their proposal at the next regular member meeting for questions or concerns. The Steering Committee will then either approve the application, request adjustments, or reject the application. Applications may be submitted and approved at any point. Regardless of start date, all committees will last through the regular member meeting in February each year.
- Section 5.** Committee Chair or Co-chairs shall be elected annually, by the members of the committee. These elections shall take place at the committee’s first meeting of the year after renewal, by a simple majority vote of the members present.
- Section 6.** Committee members may choose to elect additional officers of the committee, including Secretary, Field Director, or other officers at the committee’s discretion.

ARTICLE 11 – COALITIONS AND ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS

- Section 1.** Some advocacy victories are only possible with a coalition of organizations working in partnership. It is often other organizations, not DC4D, that convene and run these coalitions, and invite involvement from partner groups. Any DC4D member may introduce a coalition or advocacy campaign for consideration of joining. This shall take place at any DC4D monthly meeting. The introducing member shall provide an overview of the campaign and may invite a coalition representative to present and answer questions from members. The decision of whether to join shall be made by a simple majority vote of members present at the introductory meeting or a regular member meeting at a later date.
- Section 2.** If the introduction is successful and DC4D joins the coalition, the introducing member (or another member appointed in their place) will join regular meetings of the coalition as DC4D's liaison. The liaison will be responsible for regularly reporting back to DC4D's membership or related working group(s) about the activities of the coalition. The liaison will also facilitate participation from DC4D's members in support of the coalition's goals when needed.
- Section 3.** Once DC4D joins a coalition or campaign, the campaign liaison, in partnership with the Steering Committee or any related working groups, has authority to participate in any and all activities related to the campaign, including but not limited to, signing on to public letters, mobilizing rallies and actions, and making calls to action. The campaign liaison, working group, and/or Steering Committee may undertake these individual activities without seeking re-approval of the full membership.
- Section 4.** At any point, any DC4D member may bring forward a motion to exit a coalition. The member shall introduce the motion and provide explanation at the next regular meeting. The decision of whether to exit will be decided by a simple majority vote of the members present.

ARTICLE 12 - PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised*, shall govern DC for Democracy in all cases in which they are not inconsistent with the rules of order of the organization. A motion to "call the question" shall not be considered in order until an opportunity has first been provided for at least one person to speak in favor of the motion and at least one person to speak against it.

ARTICLE 13 - AMENDMENTS

These by-laws can be amended at any regular meeting by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting after due notice of such amendment(s) has been sent to every member of the organization at least twenty-one days before the meeting where such amendment(s) shall be acted upon. The By-laws shall be published in their entirety, dated and distributed to every member of the organization by the Secretary, no later than fourteen days after any meeting at which the By-laws have been amended in a substantive way. Distribution and publication may include posting on the DC for Democracy website for public access.

ARTICLE 14 - RECALL OF OFFICERS/STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Any officer or appointed steering committee member may be recalled by a vote of two-thirds of those members present and voting at a general membership meeting, provided notice of such recall action shall have been given in writing to all members at least twenty-one days before the meeting at which such recall action is to be proposed.