

## Democratic Socialists of Vancouver

### By-Laws

*Amended November 2022 at the AGM*

#### **Basis of Unity**

1. The Democratic Socialists of Vancouver (DSoV) is a membership-based democratic, inclusive, and pluralist organization dedicated to a democratic transition from capitalism to socialism.

DSoV aims to bring about this transition through mass organization of the working class - in the workplace, in the places we live, at the ballot, and beyond. .

DSoV members reject the rigged economic order produced by capitalism and colonialism, as well as all discrimination based on race, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, and religion. We recognize that the harms of class society impact some more than others and seek to reduce as many barriers to participation in this organization as we can.

DSOV recognizes we live, work and organize on unceded territories of the Tsleil-Waututh, Squamish and Musqueam nations, and seek to advance decolonization in everything we do.

DSOV is a work in process, and we humbly welcome your participation in this shared work of building a better and more just world.

2. These By-Laws will govern the operation of the DSoV.
3. These By-Laws may be amended by a vote of a two-thirds majority of the members of the DSoV present at a General Meeting.

#### **Membership**

4. Membership in the DSoV is open to anyone who agrees with the principles of the DSoV, regardless of affiliation with other similar groups or organizations.
5. The Steering Committee will determine a membership application process.
6. Any person who applies to become a member will be admitted to membership unless a two-thirds majority of the Steering Committee determines that person does not align with the principles of the DSoV.
7. If the Steering Committee rejects a person's application for membership, it will inform the membership at the next General Meeting, including the basis for rejection.
8. The Steering Committee will determine the amount, if any, of membership dues.

9. A member becomes a Voting Member if they have been a member for at least 30 days.

### **General Meetings**

10. General meetings will be held as determined by the Steering Committee. If 9 or more DSoV Members call for a General Meeting, the Steering Committee will schedule one within a month of that call.
11. Any Voting Member may vote on proceedings at a general meeting and in elections of the Steering Committee.
12. Where possible, all major decisions will be made by a majority vote of the members present at general meetings.
13. Any Voting Member may add business to the Agenda at a general meeting.
14. If a Voting Member wishes to propose any amendments to these by-laws, they must inform the Steering Committee at least 21 days prior to the general meeting, who will circulate the proposed amendment at least 14 days prior to the general meeting.
15. A quorum of the membership will consist of 10 members of the DSoV.

### **Annual General Meeting**

16. The DSoV will hold an Annual General Meeting at least once per calendar year and not more than 16 months following the previous Annual General Meeting.
17. The Steering Committee will provide at least 30 days notice to all members of an Annual General Meetings.
18. Business at the Annual General Meeting will include:
  - a. Election of a Steering Committee.

### **Steering Committee**

19. The Steering Committee of the DSoV will consist of 5-9 members.
  - a. At least 60% of the members (eg. 6 of 9) of the Steering Committee will come from equity-seeking groups.
20. The membership of the DSoV will elect Steering Committee members at the Annual General Meeting of the DSoV.
21. The Steering Committee will implement decisions made at general meetings and coordinate the affairs of the DSoV between general meetings.
22. If the Steering Committee makes a decision between general meetings, they will report that decision to the membership at the next general meeting and facilitate discussion in regard to that decision.
23. The Steering Committee will ensure that DSoV funds are spent equitably and fairly in the pursuit of the DSoV's goals. Expenditures in excess of \$1000.00 will be voted on by the general membership at a general meeting.
24. Each Member of the Steering Committee will serve a term of two (2) years, with each Annual General Meeting marking one year of the term.

#### **24.1 Transition Provision**

On the first Annual General Meeting following the passing of this provision:

- a) No fewer than 50% of Members (eg. at least 5/9) elected to the Steering Committee will be elected to a term of one (1) year, notwithstanding Section 24 of the by-laws.
  - b) The remaining Members will be elected to the regular term of two (2) years.
  - c)
25. If there is a vacancy on the Steering Committee, the membership will elect a new Steering Committee member at the next general meeting of the DSoV.

#### **Working Groups**

26. The affairs of the DSoV will be organized around Working Groups.
27. Any Voting Member of the DSoV may join or organize a Working Group.
28. If a Voting Member wishes to organize a Working Group, they will present a proposal to the membership at a general meeting. The members will vote by simple majority to approve the Working Group.
29. Each Working Group will ensure a liaison or liaisons are appointed to communicate with the Steering Committee and the membership at general meetings.

#### **Dispute Resolution**

30. Any member may raise a dispute about another member by writing a formal complaint to the Steering Committee.
31. All members of the DSoV agree to participate in the dispute resolution process.
32. If a member raises a dispute:
  - a. The Steering Committee will strike a Dispute Resolution Committee consisting of three Voting Members of the DSoV:
    - i. One member of the Dispute Resolution Committee will be chosen by the member who raised the dispute;
    - ii. One member of the Dispute Resolution Committee will be chosen by the member who is the subject of the dispute;
    - iii. One member of the Dispute Resolution Committee will be chosen by the Steering Committee, and will have no close personal (eg, romantic, professional, familial) relationship with the disputants.
    - iv. If either member does not choose a Dispute Resolution Committee member, the Steering Committee will choose the additional member or members.
  - b. The Dispute Resolution Committee will assist the members in mediating their dispute.
  - c. If the Dispute Resolution Committee is unable to mediate the dispute successfully, they may recommend the Steering Committee take action including, but not limited to, expulsion of the member from the DSoV.

- d. If the Dispute Resolution Committee makes recommendations to the Steering Committee, the Steering Committee may:
  - i. Vote to enact the recommendation; or,
  - ii. Vote to do any other thing.
- e. If the vote is on whether to expel a member from the DSoV, it will require a two-thirds majority of Steering Committee members present to pass; otherwise, all votes will require a simple majority.
- f. Following a Dispute Resolution process, the Steering Committee will deliver an anonymous report to the membership about the process.
- g. If the Steering Committee does not follow the recommendation of the Dispute Resolution Committee, they will provide reasons in the report to the membership for not following the recommendation.
- h. Once a decision is made regarding Dispute Resolution, it will be the responsibility of the Steering Committee to ensure the resolution is carried out.
- i. The Dispute Resolution Process will remain confidential to all persons except the members involved, the Dispute Resolution Committee, and the Steering Committee.