



# **Young Democrats of Massachusetts**

## **Code of Conduct**

# Young Democrats of Massachusetts Code of Conduct

## I. Purpose and Scope

1. All members of Young Democrats of Massachusetts, as well as those taking part in YDMA events or their planning, shall be bound by this code of conduct at all times in order to promote a healthy and supportive community of people and to ensure compliance with all applicable laws and the policies of Young Democrats of America.
2. At all times, members of YDMA and those included in the above section shall make every effort to represent YDMA in a positive manner and conduct themselves properly at all YDMA events and in all other places during their tenure with YDMA.
3. Members, as representatives of Young Democrats of Massachusetts—and by extension of the broader Democratic Party, shall uphold the ideals of respect and civility expected by the organization and may face repercussions for violations set out herein.

## II. Interpersonal Behavior and Discrimination

1. YDMA as an organization, as well as all of its members and those persons attending events sponsored by YDMA, must not engage in any form of harassment on the basis of race, age, sex, gender identity, transition in gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, change in marital status, religion or lack thereof, pregnancy, or disability—or on any other inherent quality as may be prohibited by local, state, or federal law—or by further orders of the Executive Committee of YDMA.
2. No member to whom this code applies shall hurt, coerce, or intimidate any other person, and such incidences which persist—without requirement of any pending complaint having previously lodged under Section IV—either against a single person or of multiple persons, shall be considered bullying if there exists a pattern of harassment and treated as such under Section IV; this section shall have the same force and effect against those acts described within it if they are to occur electronically.
3. Members shall speak and act in good temper and moderation at convention, while participating or attending a Board or Executive Committee meeting or any subsidiary group thereof, while generally in debate or engaging in any YDMA activity, or while acting in an official capacity as a YDMA representative, regardless of its location be it physical or virtual; and all members shall be expected to follow the YDMA Guidelines for Respect, Social Media Guidelines, and any other guidelines which may be issued by the Executive Committee.
4. Acts of sexual harassment, which may include: physical or verbal harassment of a sexual nature, coercive requests for sexual favors, unwanted or unconsented sexual advances or contact, or any other form of sexual harassment—which may be defined by law or by further order of the Executive Committee—are strictly prohibited, and those that engage in the acts described in this subsection on either a frequent or severe basis may face any of the penalties laid out under Section IV subsection 5, in accordance with the procedure and due process laid out therein.
5. It is the obligation of all YDMA members to alert YDMA to harassment when they become aware of it, and any member who observes activity which may constitute a violation of the YDMA Code of Conduct should convey these concerns to the Vice President for Membership and Outreach.

6. Retribution against any person who files a complaint in accordance with subsection 1 of Section IV is strictly prohibited, and any person taking action in retribution against a person for the filing of a complaint against any other person shall be punished under this section.

### **III. Compliance with Relevant Laws**

1. Young Democrats of Massachusetts, its members, officials, and guests at official functions shall at all times be in compliance with all local, state, and federal laws—and tribal laws where applicable.
2. Should any person to whom this code applies at any time undertake an action which is found to have been a contravention of the laws of any applicable jurisdiction, either by the determination of an arbitration body prescribed by law or by agreement, or by the provisions set out under Section IV of this document, may be removed from their official position, in the manner provided in by the YDMA bylaws, suspended or removed from membership, in the manner provided in by the YDMA bylaws, or otherwise punished in a lesser manner under the terms of section IV.
3. YDMA complies, and requires its members to comply, with all applicable laws and regulations relative to the consumption, transportation, and distribution of alcohol and all other controlled substances, and expressly prohibits underage drinking or any age-inappropriate actions relative to controlled substances; and smoking shall be prohibited at all YDMA sponsored events.

### **IV. Disposition of Complaints and Alleged Violations**

*[As adopted as Standing Order 1 of the YDMA Board]*

1. YDMA prioritizes the careful and expedient consideration of complaints and allegations and the measured and proper imposition of penalties; any member of YDMA, any person who can be verifiably or credibly be shown to have attended a YDMA function, or any person to whom leave shall be given by the Executive Committee of YDMA to file a complaint, may submit to the Board of Directors of YDMA a complaint against any member or attendee for a violation of this code.
2. Upon the receipt of any allegation made under this provision, the Board of Directors shall, after a period of no less than ten (10) days, proceed to consideration of the complaint, which motion to proceed shall be without debate if previously noticed; except where the person accused may agree to proceedings under a nolo contendere agreement whereby they concede the allegations made are true, and under which proceedings the Executive Committee shall decide the appropriate penalty, if any, to be imposed, within a period not to exceed twenty-one (21) days, to be consistent with subsection 5 of this section.
3. The Board of Directors shall consider the complaint and may, either at the time of its consideration or at another time which the Board may prescribe by a single motion to postpone definitely, order the collection of all relevant documents, photographs, videos, recordings, or objects, as it may be permitted to compel by law or provide for testimony from any witness, and any motion excepting the final vote on the issuance of a report (debate for which is set forth in subsection 4 of this section) which shall be made at a meeting of the YDMA Board pursuant to this subsection shall be decided without debate, except that the mover of such motion and a single opponent may be each given one minute of debate, at the discretion of the presiding officer.

4. The Board, after a period of debate which shall not extend beyond a sum of two (2) hours, shall vote on approving a report on the actions to be taken to rectify the situation and impose any penalty which may be provided under subsection 5 of this section—which report at the request of the complainant may be made privately or be otherwise redacted; the report issued shall require no standard form, except that the report shall plainly state if the complaint is affirmed, affirmed in part, declined, or if the complaint shall be transferred to the Executive Committee for further consideration, which action shall occur as a matter of default if no report shall be agreed to after the sum period set in this subsection.

5. The Board shall be empowered to impose the following penalties by a vote of 2/3rds of the whole number of elected members, a report relative to the complaint having been affirmed, or affirmed in part: expulsion, suspension, removal from a position of leadership—either of the organization or of a committee thereof, a formal reprimand, or any lesser penalty—either made alone or in concert with any other penalty set out herein; and the presiding officer shall entertain no attempt to suspend any part of this section by unanimous consent.

6. Any member against whom a complaint is filed or who holds a conflict of interest in the complaint to be arbitrated shall not vote nor be counted for the purposes of a quorum, which for this purpose shall be a majority of the whole number of members duly elected.

## **V. Transparency**

1. Under YDMA's commitment to transparency, all members are expected to be forthright and honest about any violation as detailed in this code of conduct, and the failure to disclose any violation provided therein to the Executive Committee, shall constitute a violation of this code and is punishable under this subsection unless any such proceedings shall have been sealed by court order.

2. All officers of YDMA shall at all times maintain full standards of transparency in the conduct of their office, and any action taken outside of the internal structure of YDMA in their official capacity shall be of public record, except in such extraordinary circumstances where the Executive Committee shall order such action in a closed session.

3. Any member of YDMA shall be entitled to attend an open session of the Executive Committee or of the Board of YDMA, and the minutes of such meetings shall be a matter of public record.