

**BYLAWS
OF THE HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL,
TRANSGENDER and ALLIES DEMOCRATIC CHAPTER**

**A CHARTERED CHAPTER OF THE FLORIDA GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL, AND
TRANSGENDER DEMOCRATIC CHAPTER**

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the Hillsborough County Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Allies Democratic Chapter, united in a common purpose, in order to strengthen and further the ideals and principles of the Democratic Party, which recognizes and promotes diversity, good will, and respect for all members of the community, do hereby adopt and uphold these bylaws.

**ARTICLE I
NAME**

The name of this Chapter shall be Hillsborough County Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Allies (GLBTA) Democratic Chapter (hereinafter referred to as "Chapter"), a Chartered Chapter of the Florida Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) Democratic Chapter (hereinafter referred to as "Caucus"), affiliated with the National Stonewall Democrats and the Hillsborough County Democratic Executive Committee (HCDEC).

**ARTICLE II
OBJECTIVE**

Section 1. Objective

The object of this Chapter shall be:

- to stimulate active interest in political and governmental affairs;
- promote the candidacy of Democrats specifically committed to the principle that no natural person shall be deprived of equal rights based on sexual orientation or gender identity and expression and
- to encourage the passage of legislation securing such rights;
- to strengthen and to further the ideals and principles of the Democratic Party;
- to provide reasonable and ongoing financial support to the Chapter;
- to promote participation among Democrats;
- to support and elect the duly selected nominees of the Democratic Party in national, state, and local campaigns;
- to foster good fellowship among Democrats; and
- to encourage voter registration and advocate issues without discrimination on grounds of real or perceived race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, physical disability, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

Section 2. Mission

Further, it shall be the mission of this Chapter to foster good will between gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and allied members of the Democratic Party and the community at large. We seek to continue working with other GLBT and like-minded Chapters united with a common purpose. We seek individual freedom in the framework of a just society and political freedom in the framework of meaningful participation by all citizens.

Section 3. Endorsements

In all state-wide primaries, elections, or runoffs, whether partisan or non-partisan, where more than one Democrat is running for the same public office, the Chapter shall be bound by the Chapter's endorsement or non-endorsement action. In all other primaries, elections, or runoffs, whether partisan or non-partisan, where more than one Democrat is running for the same public office, within the geographic area of the Chapter, the Chapter may endorse (defined as endorsing, certifying, screening, or recommending, in any manner), and support a candidate. No such endorsement shall be made prior to the close of the period of candidate qualifying. To be endorsed, a candidate for a given office shall be recommended by a simple majority vote of the Steering Committee. Such endorsement action shall then be confirmed by a simple majority vote of those present and voting at a General Membership special or regular meeting. At no time, will this Chapter support any non-Democrat against a Democrat in any election, other than in judicial and/or non-partisan elections.

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP AND AFFILIATION

Section 1. Eligibility for Membership

Democrats registered to vote in Hillsborough County interested in the objectives of this Chapter shall be eligible for membership. No other residency restriction may be placed upon membership or the privileges of membership in this Chapter. In accordance with Article VI of the Florida Democratic Party Bylaws, with the exception of the Chapteral meeting of this Chapter, those members permitted to vote in any club election for officers or board members must have been a member of the Chapter at least forty-five (45) days prior to the date of such election. Officers and directors shall be required to execute the Loyalty Oath in the form included in the Bylaws of the Florida Democratic Party.

Section 2. Friends of the Chapter

A person who:

- is not a Florida resident, or
 - is not eligible to register to vote in Florida, or
 - others who subscribe to the purpose and mission of the Chapter,
- shall be a "friend", upon payment of dues specified by the Steering Committee.

"Friends" may speak at meetings and assist on committees, but may not vote.

Section 3. Dues

The chapter shall determine the annual dues of each category of membership or affiliation. Dues are payable upon joining and, thereafter, in advance on or before December 31 of each year. The Membership Committee will notify members two months in arrears; those renewing members whose dues are not paid within 30 days thereafter shall be automatically placed in inactive status and shall not be considered members. The voting privileges of those members in arrears will be suspended until dues are paid. Dues shall entitle one to membership in the Chapter as either a member or a friend.

Section 4. Resignation from Membership

Members desiring to resign from the Chapter shall submit their resignation in writing to the Secretary and President, through the Membership Committee Chair.

ARTICLE IV RE-CERTIFICATION

Section 1. Charter Re-certification

In July of every odd numbered year, or at such time as otherwise required by the Chapter, the Chapter shall apply to the Membership and Chartering Committee of the Caucus for charter re-certification. Failure to do so shall result in the forfeiture of all rights and privileges of the use of the word Democrat, Democratic, or derivative thereof.

ARTICLE V OFFICERS

Section 1.

The officers of this Chapter shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary and a Treasurer. The President shall appoint a Historian, a Parliamentarian, and a Sergeant-at-Arms as ex officio, non-voting officers. All officers shall perform the duties prescribed in Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, the parliamentary authority for the Chapter, as modified and amplified by these bylaws.

Section 2.

All terms of office shall be for 2 year(s). Officers shall be eligible for no more than 4 consecutive terms in the same office.

Section 3.

No member shall hold more than one elected office at a time.

Section 4.

Publications of elections shall be as follows: August of odd years.

Section 5.

Nominating Committee shall consist of three (3) members appointed by the President and the committee will establish the election guidelines.

**ARTICLE VI
DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

Section 1.

The President shall preside at all meetings of the Chapter; shall be an ex officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee; shall appoint all the Standing and Special Committees and their chairs'; shall represent the Chapter at county, district and state functions; shall give guidance to the chair of each committee and shall perform all duties pertaining to the office of the president.

Section 2.

The Vice President shall render all possible assistance to the president in matters pertaining to the Chapter, and shall assume the office in the absence of, or inability of, the president to serve.

Section 3.

The Secretary shall keep an accurate record of all meetings of the Chapter and Steering Committee; shall maintain a current list of members with addresses, phone numbers, email addresses and precinct numbers; shall have a copy of the Chapter bylaws with any amendments properly recorded.

Section 4.

The Treasurer shall receive all monies of the Chapter; shall keep an accurate record of receipts and expenditures; shall present a statement of all income and all expenditures at each meeting occurring since the previous meeting of the Chapter, and at other times when requested by the Steering Committee; and shall pay out funds only as authorized by the Steering Committee. Books of the Treasurer shall be audited by the Audit Committee at the end of each calendar year. Checks shall be signed jointly by the Treasurer and the President.

Section 5.

The creation of additional officers shall be undertaken in the bylaws at the time when they are adopted or amended.

**ARTICLE VII
STEERING COMMITTEE**

Section 1.

The steering committee shall consist of the elected officers and all chairs of the Standing Committees.

Section 2.

The duties of the Steering Committee shall be to plan each month's general membership meeting so as to be organized, to transact business of the Chapter in regular or special meetings, and to make recommendations to the Chapter.

Section 3.

Meetings of the Steering Committee shall be held no more than ten (10) days prior to the regular membership meeting of the Chapter, or at the request of the president, or at the request of three members of the steering committee, at least one of whom must be an officer.

Section 4.

Five (or more) members of the steering committee shall constitute a quorum.

Section 5.

The President shall not vote except in the case of a tie.

**ARTICLE VIII
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**

Section 1.

Regular meetings of the Chapter shall be held monthly, on the 2nd Wednesday of the month unless otherwise ordered by the Chapter or by the steering committee.

Section 2.

Special general membership meetings may be called by the president or a majority of the steering committee, with one week's notice to the members. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated in the notice.

Section 3.

Twenty five percent (25%) of the total membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any regular or special meeting. A majority vote of those members in attendance is necessary to carry motions.

Section 4.

All meetings shall be in a facility accessible to the physically disabled.

**ARTICLE IX
VACANCIES AND REMOVAL**

Section 1. Vacancy of President

If a vacancy occurs in the office of President, the Vice President shall become President.

Section 2. Other Officer Vacancies

Other vacancies shall be filled, on an acting basis, by appointment of the President, until the next regular meeting of the Chapter, provided that 10 days notice is given of the vacancy, at which time the position will be filled for the remainder of the term, by nominations from the

floor. Election shall be by open ballot; members shall indicate their choice for the vacancy and shall sign and print their own name. Elections may be by acclamation, if only one nominee is presented for the vacancy. All ballots shall be kept by the local representative of the Chapter for a period of thirty days following the date of the election and shall be available for review by any member. All ballots shall, thereafter, be transmitted to the Chapter, which may hold such ballots for a period of three years, after which time they may be destroyed.

Section 3. Removal

Any officer may be removed upon a two-thirds vote of the members at any regular or special general membership meeting after at least ten days notice to the membership that a motion for the purpose of removal of such officer will be considered at such regular or special meeting. The removal may be for cause, including, but not limited to, malfeasance, misfeasance, neglect of duty, abandonment of office, incompetence, permanent inability to perform official duties, and conviction of a felony. Any absence from four Steering Committee meetings within a calendar year may constitute neglect of duty. Unexcused absences from two consecutive regular Steering Committee meetings shall constitute abandonment of office.

ARTICLE X COMMITTEES

Section 1.

The Standing Committees shall be Finance/ Fundraising, Bylaws, Political Action/Campaign, Membership, Publicity, Audit and Ad Hoc (when the President deems necessary) and shall be appointed by the President promptly after each annual meeting or as necessary. Each chair, including Ad Hoc, shall be dues paying members and will continue to renew during the tenure of their services as Chair of their respective committees.

Section 2. Committee Responsibilities

- A. The Finance/Fundraising Committee shall assist the treasurer in the preparation of the annual budget and maintaining the financial records of the Chapter. Also this committee is responsible for raising funds to support Chapter activities.
- B. The Bylaws Committee shall recommend such changes in the Bylaws as appear necessary and feasible from time to time.
- C. The Political Action/Campaign Committee shall work toward the election of Democratic nominees who support the goals of this Chapter for the area covered by the Chapter, including county, state, and national candidates.
- D. The Membership Committee shall see that all persons applying for membership are, in fact, registered Democrats, and shall also organize and assist on membership campaigns.
- E. The Publicity Committee shall see that all activities, including meetings, are advertised through the media and is responsible for maintaining the Chapter website.
- F. The Audit Committee shall review the financial records for accuracy and shall submit a report to the Steering Committee summarizing the results of the review.

**ARTICLE XI
ACCOUNTABILITY**

Section 1.

Dissolution: In the event this Chapter wishes to dissolve, a resolution stating the date of dissolution and the reasons for same shall be adopted by a majority vote of the Chapter after being submitted in writing at the previous meeting. When the Chapter disbands for any reason, the Chapter's assets and funds, after all debts are satisfied, shall become the property of the Caucus.

Section 2.

Grievances: Chapter disputes and grievances shall be resolved with the Caucus.

**ARTICLE XII
PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the Chapter in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws, any special rules of order the Chapter may adopt, the rules of the Caucus, Florida Democratic Party and National Democratic Party.

**ARTICLE XIII
AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS**

The bylaws may be amended by a majority vote at a regular meeting pursuant to notification in writing one week prior to the meeting. Bylaws and any changes or amendments are subject to approval of the Florida Democratic Party Committee on Clubs, Organizations, and Caucuses together with copies of the minutes of the meeting at which these amendments were adopted.

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By a vote of 16 YEAS and 0 NAYS, on August 2, 2005, the Bylaws were approved. The Bylaws were approved by the Chapter on August 2, 2005.

Subsequent amendments include:

- a. By a vote of 15 YEAS and 0 NAYS, on November 8, 2005, the Bylaws were amended, as follows:
Such amendment was approved by the Chapter on November 8, 2005.
- b. By a vote of 18 YEAS and 0 NAYS, on April 11, 2007, the Bylaws were amended, as follows:
Such amendment was approved by the Chapter on April 11, 2007.

- c. By a vote of 18 YEAS and 0 NAYS, on June 1, 2009, the Bylaws were amended, as follows:
Such amendment was approved by the Chapter on June 1, 2009.
- c. Continuing in like manner.