

Virginia Young Democrats Code of Conduct 2025

Each member of the Virginia Young Democrats (VAYD) is expected to uphold the values of the organization, and a member's participation in VAYD is contingent upon abiding by this Code of Conduct.

1. Respect for Others.
 - a. All VAYD members must abide by VAYD's Safe Space Policy, which is incorporated in this Code of Conduct.
 - b. VAYD expects that each member will act responsibly and respectfully of others' autonomy to the extent that it does not incur harm.

2. Responsible Drinking.
 - a. Any VAYD member who chooses to consume alcoholic beverages at any VAYD-related event must be at least 21-years old.
 - b. Choosing to participate or not participate in the consumption of alcohol is an individual and voluntary choice, and all VAYD members are prohibited from pressuring another individual to consume alcohol.
 - c. Any VAYD member who chooses to consume alcoholic beverages is expected to do so responsibly.
 - d. Any VAYD member who perceives that another VAYD is consuming alcohol irresponsibly is expected to contact a VAYD Executive Committee member immediately.

3. Event Space Rules.
 - a. Any VAYD member who attends a VAYD-sponsored event at any venue or event space is expected to act responsibly and in a manner that does not reflect negatively on VAYD.
 - b. Any VAYD member who attends a VAYD-sponsored event must abide by the rules of that venue or event space, in addition to all applicable rules of VAYD.

4. Resolving Conflicts.
 - a. Each VAYD member will make a good faith effort to resolve conflicts respectfully, directly, and confidentially.
 - b. If a conflict cannot be resolved after a good faith effort by the parties involved or if members have irreconcilable differences which affects the comity of VAYD, one or more parties may appeal to the VAYD Executive Committee for mediation.
 - c. If a conflict involves illegal activity, members are expected to alert a member of the VAYD Executive Committee without undue delay.

5. Duty to Report.

- a. Any VAYD member who knows or has reason to know that another VAYD member has committed a violation of this Code of Conduct is expected to report such violation to a member of the VAYD Executive Committee for referral to the VAYD Judicial Committee or to the Chair of the VAYD Judicial Committee.

VAYD Safe Space Policy

1. VAYD does not tolerate any form of harassment or assault.
2. VAYD recognizes that “yes means yes.” VAYD members may not engage in any physical contact of any kind without clearly expressed consent. VAYD recognizes that consent may be revoked at any time, and VAYD members are accordingly required to cease physical contact whenever consent has been withdrawn.
3. VAYD members who feel unsafe at any point during a VAYD-related event may seek intervention from a member of the VAYD Executive Committee.
4. VAYD members are expected to avoid gendered and encouraged to use inclusive language in lieu thereof, such as substituting “you all,” “y’all,” or “folks” for “guys” or “gals.”
5. VAYD members are expected to avoid ableist language.

Procedure for Handling an Incident of Harassment

The procedures laid out in this document do not supersede or contravene Article VIII of the VAYD Constitution, rather they offer an expedited process for handling urgent reports of harassment.

1. **Complaint.** If there is an incident of harassment, the VAYD Judicial Committee Chair shall alert the Judicial Committee no more than 24 hours after the incident has been reported and shall order a convening on the Judicial Committee within 7 days.
2. **Initial Meeting.** At the meeting called to consider the complaint as outlined in Section 1, the Judicial Committee determine whether an investigation is necessary, and if not whether to proceed to a written indictment. The accuser submitting the complaint shall be expected to testify at this meeting and to provide any evidence relating to their claims. If the Judicial Committee foregoes an investigation, a two-thirds vote of the whole Judicial Committee shall be necessary to approve a written indictment.
3. **Investigation:** If the committee elects to begin an investigation, the accused will be notified by the VAYD Judicial Committee Chair. The Judicial Committee is be authorized to meet on subsequent days on at least 12 hours’ notice for as long as necessary to complete the investigation.

4. Indictment: If the Judicial Committee approves a written indictment under this Emergency Procedure, the Chair of the Judicial Committee shall transmit such indictment to the Executive Committee and the accused no later than 24 hours after such vote. The Executive Committee shall hold a special meeting to consider the indictment on no less than 12 hours' notice and no later than 96 hours after the indictment has been received.
5. Disciplinary Action. The Executive Committee may take any action available to a deliberative body short of removing an individual from office or revoking membership under this emergency procedure. Any suspension from office of membership or ban from attending any VAYD-sponsored events shall be effective for no longer than 14 days, which may not be extended without undergoing proceedings outlined in Article VIII of the VAYD Constitution.
6. Right to Privacy. The Judicial Committee and the Executive Committee shall grant anonymity to the accuser upon request, which shall include redacting names from any evidence proffered in the investigation and in the written report.
7. Confidentiality. All Judicial Committee hearings are confidential in the utmost, and violation of this confidentiality shall be a basis for disciplinary proceedings outlined in Article VIII of the VAYD Constitution. Any member of the Judicial Committee determined by the Judicial Committee to have violated this confidentiality shall be immediately removed from their position and barred from subsequent appointment to the Judicial Committee.
8. Conflict of Interest. Any member of the Judicial Committee or the Executive Committee who has a conflict of interest is expected to voluntarily recuse unless a two-thirds majority of the whole number of the respective body shall ascertain otherwise. If the Judicial Committee or the Executive Committee determines in the course of their respective proceedings that a member has a conflict of interest, they may vote to recuse said member or members by a majority vote of the whole number of their respective bodies. Any member found after a proceeding to have had a conflict of interest and failed to have recused shall be subject to disciplinary action under Article VIII of the VAYD Constitution.
9. Immediate Danger Response. If a member reports an incident of harassment at a VAYD-sponsored event wherein a VAYD member is in immediate danger, the President of VAYD, or their designee, shall be authorized to remove the individual(s) creating such danger and to pursue appropriate legal action as necessary.
10. Reporting. Should any VAYD member have their membership revoked or be barred from VAYD events following proceedings initiated under this emergency procedure, the President of VAYD, or their designee, shall notify the state and local parties of such action, as well as the president(s) of the chapter with which the member is associated.