

Dallas Area Transit Alliance Bylaws

VERSION 0.4 (published 2025/05/17)

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of the organization is Dallas Area Transit Alliance (hereafter “DATA”).

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

DATA is a grassroots, volunteer organization whose purpose is to advocate for riders of Dallas Area Rapid Transit (“DART”), and public transportation riders in the Dallas metropolitan area. The members of DATA believe that access to a safe, reliable, comprehensive, and affordable transit network is essential to the quality of life for every resident of the DART service area, and to that end we advocate for the preservation, expansion, and improvement of DART and raise awareness for issues that may negatively affect our fellow riders.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Eligibility for Membership

Membership in DATA is open to any resident of the Dallas metropolitan area who supports the purpose of DATA as outlined in Article II.

Section 2. Registration

Membership in DATA may be attained by signing in to any two consecutive regular membership meetings, either in writing or via the online form provided.

Section 3. Dues

As a volunteer organization, DATA does not charge dues for membership.

Section 4. Rights of Members

Active members may:

- A. Vote on business before the membership, and in the election of officers, provided the voting meeting is not the same meeting at which a member either (1) first joins DATA, or (2) returns to DATA after a lapse in membership (see Section 6, Subsection 2 below);

- B. Each active member may cast one (1) vote at a meeting per agenda item at any general membership meeting;
- C. Participate in the non-executive committees, at the discretion of the committee chair;
- D. Attend events held by DATA and participate in public transit advocacy actions initiated by DATA
- E. View DATA records and minutes of all DATA meetings.

Section 5. Responsibilities of Members

- A. First and foremost, members are expected to represent DATA in a positive manner and adhere to the Purpose of DATA as outlined in Article II.
- B. Members are expected to adhere to the DATA Code of Conduct.

Section 6. Loss of Membership

Subsection 1. Lapsed Membership

- A. Membership may enter lapsed status if a member fails to attend at least one (1) general membership meeting each quarter.
- B. Unless specified that an event or committee activity is for active members only, lapsed members are welcome to attend any DATA events and continue participating in committees they were involved in previously.
- C. Upon attending their next general membership meeting, a lapsed member enters Limited Member status, outlined in Subsection 2 below.

Subsection 2. Limited Membership

- A. Except for as described in Section 6, Subsection 1 above, membership may be placed in Limited status by a majority vote of the Executive Committee in the following circumstances:
 - 1. A member engages in disruptive behavior at a DATA event, general membership meeting, or in a committee meeting; or
 - 2. A member fails to uphold the Responsibilities of Members outlined in Section 5 above.
- B. A member in limited membership status may attend DATA meetings and participate in official DATA events, but:
 - 1. May not vote on business before the membership;
 - 2. May not vote in officer elections;
 - 3. May not be nominated for, run for, or hold an office in DATA;

4. Depending on the nature of how a member was placed in Limited Membership, their participation in committees may be placed on hold at the discretion of each committee chair.
- C. A member who entered Limited Membership status as a result of being a Lapsed Member immediately regains full membership status at the next general membership meeting they attend.

Subsection 3. Revoked Membership

- A. Membership may be revoked by a majority vote of the Executive Committee in the following circumstances:
 1. A member has acted in direct contravention or obstruction of the purpose of DATA; or
 2. A member has displayed a pattern of disruptive behavior at more than one (1) general membership meeting or event; or
 3. A member has displayed, over a period of time, an unwillingness to abide by the Responsibilities of Members or Code of Conduct
- B. A revoked member may not attend DATA meetings, and may not participate in official DATA events.

ARTICLE IV. GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Section 1. Meeting Purpose and Scheduling

Subsection 1. Annual Meeting

- A. An Annual General Membership Meeting shall be held for the purpose of electing officers and conducting other official business of the general membership.
- B. The time and place of the annual meeting shall be established by the general membership at the previous Annual Meeting.
- C. Any modifications to the location and date of the Annual Meeting should be communicated to the membership via social media and newsletter no later than two (2) weeks prior to the new date of the meeting.

Subsection 2. Additional Meetings

- A. Additional meetings of the general membership may be scheduled by the President or the Executive Committee.
- B. Dates and times of meetings should be published via social media and newsletter no later than two (2) weeks prior to the meeting date.

- C. At least one (1) meeting should be scheduled each quarter to update the membership on the current activities of DATA.

Section 2. Meeting Procedures

Subsection 1. Quorum

Quorum at any formal meeting of the membership shall be either 10 active members or one-fifth ($\frac{1}{5}$) of the eligible voting membership, whichever is fewer. Quorum for Committee meetings shall be at least one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) of the eligible committee members. The Chair may appoint an active member present to ensure a quorum.

Subsection 2. Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Society in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the society may adopt.

Subsection 3. Agenda

- A. Meeting agendas shall be set by the President and Vice President.
- B. The agenda shall be published no later than three days prior to the date of the meeting.
- C. Prior to the start of the meeting, the general membership may propose any amendments or additions to the agenda, subject to approval by the President.

ARTICLE V. OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. Executive Committee Composition

- A. The Executive Committee of DATA shall consist of all elected and appointed officers.
- B. Each elected officer receives one (1) vote in Executive Committee meetings. All appointed officers are non-voting members, participating in the Executive Committee in an advisory capacity.

Subsection 1. Elected Offices

- A. The Elected Offices of DATA shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and the chairs of the Permanent Committees.

- B. The officers shall be elected by ballot to serve for one (1) year or until their successors are elected, and their term of office shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.
- C. No two (2) elected offices may be held simultaneously by the same person.

Subsection 2. Appointed Offices

- A. The Appointed Offices shall consist of the System Administrator, Treasurer, and Parliamentarian.
- B. Appointed offices may be nominated by the Executive Committee, subject to an approval vote by the General Membership.
- C. An elected officer may serve simultaneously as an appointed officer.

Section 2. Eligibility

Notwithstanding any disqualifying circumstances outlined below, any active member of DATA may serve as an officer.

Subsection 1. Disqualification

A member may be disqualified from eligibility for the following reasons:

- A. Holding beliefs or have taken substantive actions against DATA's primary Purpose;
- B. Having a significant association with entities considered to be against DATA's primary Purpose- for example; a director, manager, board member, or advisor;
- C. Failing to disclose potential conflicts of interest when submitting your candidacy for an office within DATA, as outlined in Subsection 2 below.

Subsection 2. Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interest include, but are not limited to:

- A. Being a board member, employee, contractor, or intern, or having any direct financial relationship with DART or any other Regional Transit Authority;
- B. Serving as a government employee or direct association of a government employee at the local, municipal, state, or federal level. This includes any formal relationships such as advisory roles, partnerships, or consultancy agreements with government entities;
- C. Official association with any regional planning authority through employment, advisory roles, or contractual relationships. Examples include but are not limited to entities such as North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), NCTA etc.;
- D. Elected or appointed official of any local, municipal, state or federal government. This includes roles on city councils, transit boards, or similar governing bodies;

- E. Association with firms that engage in lobbying, as well as formal or informal relationships with firms, individuals, or organizations that engage in lobbying efforts, particularly those that may influence transit-related policies, budgeting, or legislation. This includes lobbyists directly representing interests opposed to DATA's primary Purpose.

Section 3. Elected Offices

Subsection 1. Officers Generally

- A. All officers shall transfer all official DATA documents and records to each subsequently elected officer.

Subsection 2. President

The President shall:

- A. Preside at all meetings of the general membership;
- B. Preside at all meetings of the Executive Committee;
- C. Act as the official spokesperson for DATA;
- D. Be an ex-officio member of all committees;
- E. Provide final approval for meeting agendas;
- F. Provide tie-breaking votes, if required, in any General Membership or Executive Committee meeting;
- G. Create and dissolve ad-hoc committees.

Subsection 3. Vice-President

The Vice-President shall:

- A. Be vested with all the powers and perform all the duties of the President during the absence or unavailability of the latter, or with the President's explicit permission. This leadership role assumption also applies in cases of death, resignation or removal;
- B. Develop the agenda for General Membership meetings, subject to the President's approval before distribution.

Subsection 4. Secretary

The Secretary shall:

- A. Facilitate communication between outside individuals and organizations and the other officers and members of DATA;
- B. Record all votes and minutes of all General Membership and Executive Committee meetings;
- C. Record attendance at meetings;

- D. Maintain an up-to-date membership roster;
- E. Maintain the official copy of all documents pertaining to the founding, incorporation, structure, and actions of DATA, including but not limited to DATA's bylaws, Code of Conduct, and lists of committee members;
- F. Recruit an Assistant Secretary from the membership, if needed, to assist with recording meetings' minutes and attendance, as well as, maintenance of DATA's defined documents and records.

Subsection 5. Permanent Committee Chairs

The chairs of each Permanent Committee shall:

- A. Be responsible for the activities of their committee and tasks assigned to their committee by the Executive Committee and as enumerated in Article VII, Section 2 of these bylaws;
- B. Present a report on their committee's activities at each regularly scheduled meeting.

Section 4. Appointed Offices

Subsection 1. Systems Administrator

The Systems Administrator shall:

- A. Assist the other officers as needed with the technological aspects of their roles;
- B. Maintain the official DATA website, email accounts, and social media accounts;
- C. Assist the Secretary for providing DATA members information as to dates, times, and locations of all DATA meetings and events.

Subsection 2. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall:

- A. Collect and maintain accurate records of any contributions from the membership, or other sources, for specific uses as needed by DATA;
- B. Maintain accurate records of the use and distribution of said contributions, in accordance with General Accepted Accounting Procedures;
- C. Maintain any bank accounts held by DATA, assuring that any checks issued include a co-signature of at least one (1) elected officer.

Subsection 3. Parliamentarian

The Parliamentarian shall:

- A. Advise the officers and membership as to the interpretation of these Bylaws;
- B. Ensure that meetings follow the DATA bylaws and appropriate procedures, in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

Section 5. Resignations or Removal

- A. An officer may be removed from office by a vote of no less than two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the other members of the Executive Committee in the following circumstances:
 - 1. The officer has neglected their duties and responsibilities in such a way as to negatively affect the operation of DATA and fulfillment of its primary Purpose;
 - 2. The officer has acted in such a way that their membership would be limited or revoked under Article III, Section 6, Subsections 2 and 3.
- B. In the event that an office becomes vacant for any reason, the President shall appoint an interim officer from among the membership for up to two (2) months until a special election can be held. A special election shall be held within two (2) months to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the unexpired term.

ARTICLE VI. NON-EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

Section 1. Committee Participation

- A. Observation of any of the following committees is open to any member in good standing.
- B. Committee chairs may nominate committee members, subject to the approval of the President.
- C. Committee members are expected to participate in the activities of their respective committees regularly, and chairs of committees may remove committee members for inactivity.
- D. Members may be nominated to and participate in any number of committees.

Section 2. Permanent Committees

- A. The permanent committees of DATA are committees deemed to be essential to the operation of this organization to fulfill its primary Purpose.
- B. Permanent Committees may be created, dissolved, merged, or have duties amended only by amendment of these Bylaws as outlined in Article IX.
- C. The permanent committees shall be the:
 - 1. Events Committee;
 - 2. External Affairs Committee;
 - 3. Community Outreach Committee;
 - 4. Policy Research Committee;
 - 5. Finance Committee.
- D. The duties enumerated in these Bylaws for each Permanent Committee are the responsibility of each respective Chair to ensure the fulfillment thereof, and
 - 1. Each Chair holds the final say in the actions of each Committee;

2. Each Committee Chair may delegate responsibilities and tasks to participating members as needed;
 3. Each Committee should meet at least once between meetings of the general membership;
 4. Each Committee should record decisions taken and action items at their committee meetings and communicate those records to the Secretary.
- E. The Executive Committee shall resolve any conflicts or overlapping role concerns by any Permanent Committee Chairs.

Subsection 1. Events Committee

The Events Committee and its Chair shall:

- A. Oversee the planning and execution of DATA's official events;
- B. Manage event logistics, including venue selection, scheduling, and vendor coordination;
- C. Evaluate event success and gather feedback for future events.

Subsection 2. External Affairs Committee

The External Affairs Committee and its Chair shall:

- A. Be responsible for maintenance of contact with media and government organizations;
- B. Write press releases for DATA, with release subject to approval of the President;
- C. Confirm that all communications are statements from DATA, and not those of DART nor any other transit agency or organization.
- D. Be responsible for external communications with other non-governmental, non-media organizations;

Subsection 3. Community Outreach Committee

The Community Outreach Committee and its Chair shall:

- A. Be responsible for the online presence of DATA and its official accounts on social media, and the cadence and content of social media posts;
- B. Track engagement metrics of DATA's social media accounts and posts;
- C. Monitor social media posts to assure clear distinctions of DATA's Purpose vs. DART's (or any other transit entity's) policy or position.

Subsection 4. Policy Research Committee

The Policy Research Committee and its Chair shall:

- A. Conduct research on relevant state or local policies and issues impacting DATA's Purpose;
- B. Analyze data to inform DATA members of policy recommendations;
- C. Monitor and report on legislative, transit agency board, and city council agenda items relevant to DART;

- D. Develop and maintain a rubric for grading policies, platforms, and candidates with respect to DART and other public transit agencies.

Subsection 5. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee shall:

- A. Establish procedures for collection and disbursement of funds;
- B. Review and present to the Executive Committee for approval any expenditures not already approved by the Executive Committee;
- C. Audit the records of contributions and expenditures maintained by the Treasurer to ensure accuracy and compliance with these Bylaws, and any relevant standards or regulations.

Section 3. Committee Vice-Chairs

The Chairs of the Permanent Committees may appoint vice-chairs to assist with and share in their duties. At the next General Membership Meeting, the Chair should announce their appointed vice-chair to be entered into the record. Vice-chairs may attend Executive Committee meetings to assist the committee chairs with their duties.

Section 4. Ad-Hoc Committees

The Executive Committee may create, combine, or dissolve ad-hoc committees to fulfill specific purposes as needed, and appoint Chairs of these committees to take responsibility for said committee's purpose.

ARTICLE VII. REORGANIZATION AS A 501(c) NONPROFIT

- A. Should the Executive Committee determine that it is in the best interests of DATA's Purpose to transition from being a strictly volunteer organization to becoming a registered 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4) nonprofit, the Committee shall first make a presentation detailing the case for and against reorganization, to be presented to the membership at a general membership meeting. This presentation should contain the following essential information:
 - 1. Why DATA's Purpose would be better served as a registered nonprofit;
 - 2. The difference between 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) nonprofits, and the reason for selecting one over the other;
 - 3. The potential dues structure that would be necessary to cover the initial and ongoing costs of registration, and options for continued membership for members for whom dues would be a burden;

4. How dues would be handled and funds used, and whether any officers would begin to receive compensation for service;
 5. What amendments to these Bylaws would be necessary to allow this transition. This shall be considered sufficient to fulfill the amendment process outlined in Article VIII.
- B. At the next general membership meeting after the above presentation, a member of the Executive Committee shall make a motion that reads as follows:
1. “I move to authorize the Executive Committee to begin the process of registering and reorganizing the Dallas Area Transit Alliance as a [501(c)(3)/501(c)(4)] nonprofit, and make the sufficient amendments to the DATA bylaws to that end as previously outlined by the Executive Committee.”
- C. This motion must pass with support of at least two-thirds (2/3rds) of the active membership present at the meeting.

ARTICLE VIII. AMENDMENTS TO THESE BYLAWS

- A. Amendments to these bylaws may be proposed by the Executive Committee or by any active member.
- B. The Executive Committee shall study the proposed amendment(s);
- C. Within one (1) month of proposal, the Executive Committee shall provide the membership with an analysis of the amendment and a recommendation for or against adoption, as well as any suggested changes to the amendment(s);
- D. A vote to ratify the amendment(s) must be held at the following Formal Meeting;
- E. To be ratified, any amendment(s) to the bylaws must pass with support of at least two-thirds (2/3rds) of the eligible active membership present at the meeting.