



California Progressive Alliance (CPA) Bylaws

These Bylaws were Adopted by CPA membership (group members and individual members) at our Founding Convention, March 30-31, 2019 and amended by CPA members on June 14, 2020. To see the amendments via tracked changes of specific parts of the initial document, click [HERE](#).

Below are the current bylaws as amended.

Article I: Mission Statement

The California Progressive Alliance (CPA) is a statewide independent volunteer network of progressive individuals and organizations united by our shared belief that a better California is possible by reclaiming our government from the corporate and moneyed interests that have overshadowed the voice of the people. Together—regardless of party affiliation or no party affiliation—we seek to (1) elevate progressive ideas throughout the state, (2) promote the creation of local political alliances and people-powered coalitions to enact progressive change in local government, (3) support corporate-free progressive candidates and progressive issue-based electoral campaigns, and (4) wield our collective power to lobby the state legislature on current and future legislation, as well as research and write new model legislation.

A. We define “progressive” as anything or anyone that has a predilection for poor, working class (including the diminishing middle class), and historically marginalized communities, and that works to actively elevate, rather than harm, these communities. This applies to issues, individuals, organizations, legislation, and overall narrative.

B. We define “corporate-free” candidates as those taking no corporate or business money, including

no money from LLCs, LLPs, or small businesses. While we support business and entrepreneurship—especially small independent businesses—and their right to make a decent profit, we believe that money from business accounts should not be a part of our electoral and political process. We strongly denounce corporate PACs and are unwavering in our belief that corporations are not people.

Article II: Core Values

A. We believe in a California for all. A better California is possible through our collective efforts to unify the different populations that make-up our diverse state. A truly progressive agenda requires a united effort to take on the problems and challenges of economic, political, and racial inequality, criminal justice reform, and the environmental crisis. We must function as a united front to protect our children's future, our infrastructure, and our social safety nets.

B. We believe Democracy is about people, not corporations. Large corporations wield too much power in our society, not only economically, but politically as well. We refuse contributions from corporations in all our activities and campaigns, and instead position ourselves as a levy against corporate power through the collective and voluntary efforts of progressive individuals and organizations.

C. We believe Democracy is about government being transparent. Government should be responsive to the will of the people through fair and clean elections and through sustained political engagement. Elected officials should serve the public honestly and must represent their constituents and communities, not corporate donors. We must end the backroom politics that have corrupted our political system. Democracy should be of, by, and for the people.

D. We believe in Diversity and respect for each other's ideas, norms, language, culture, and history. We are a diverse Alliance of people who live and work in California, some for many generations and some who are recent immigrants. We aim to unify progressives around policy, not labels. We welcome people of any party affiliation, no-party affiliation (NPP), and people of all backgrounds who may be unable to vote. We agree on the need to build a strong progressive movement where people support each other.

E. We believe that successful progressive movements build power for all people. We recognize that historical realities, the economic system, disparate educational opportunities, and unequal distribution of resources give form to an uneven social structure. In all of our activities, internal and external, we will prioritize the needs and development of those who are disadvantaged by the social, political, and economic system: people of color, women, LGBTQIA, young people, seniors, low income people, immigrants, and disabled individuals.

F. We believe in a strong progressive agenda for justice and equality. We are committed to actively promoting social, racial, ecological, and environmental justice; gender, economic, and political

equality; healthcare and housing as a human right, climate solutions that transition us to green energy with living wage jobs and job retraining for displaced workers, and a fair and vibrant democracy. We will not always agree on every issue or strategy but we actively welcome ideas, input, and participation as we invite more Californians, particularly those from marginalized communities, into this Alliance.

Article III: Status

A. The California Progressive Alliance is an unincorporated association registered in the State of California. In California, unincorporated association is defined as an “unincorporated group of two or more persons joined by mutual consent for a common lawful purpose, whether organized for profit or not.”

B. The CPA is a volunteer-run organization of dues-paying members, organized not for any profit-making purpose, but as an association of individuals and allied organizations, united by our mission statement and core values. Membership dues and donations are not tax-exempt.

Article IV: Membership

Section 1: Eligibility

A. Attendance of general meetings and convenings shall be open to everyone, but only official members of the CPA shall be considered voting members.

B. Individuals in California who agree with the mission and core values of the organization and pay the basic dues of the CPA may become voting members in good standing of the organization.

C. Monthly dues for CPA membership are:

- a. \$5 for students, seniors and low-income members; \$10 for regular membership; and \$27 or more for sponsor-level membership.
- b. Dues may be waived for members with extreme financial hardship.
- c. Given that we are a donation-based organization, members are encouraged to contribute more than the basic dues if they are financially able.

D. Membership in the organization is limited to individuals. However, groups and organizations can and are encouraged to be part of the CPA as Allies.

- a. An “Ally” is hereby defined as a group or organization that has agreed to partner with the CPA in an effort to organize and generate support for progressive issues, candidates, and legislation.
- b. Each Ally is subject to its own existing bylaws, rules, and principles, but must adhere to the CPA Mission Statement, Core Values, and bylaws when working with the CPA as an Ally entity.
- c. See Appendix C for process to become an Ally.

Section 2: Rights of Members

- A. Members can attend and vote at convenings of the membership, receive membership emails, join Action Teams and Committees, and be considered for CPA leadership positions.
- B. Members are encouraged to bring forth ideas and issues to Action Teams and the Steering Committee.
- C. Members are encouraged to participate actively in their local organizations as well as in the CPA.
- D. Members are expected to be respectful of each other and generally to promote the CPA and its mission in public.
- E. While individual members are allowed to endorse and/or work for any candidate of their choosing, as an organization the CPA will only support candidates who adhere to our progressive values and refuse all corporate money as defined above
- F. No members shall have rights to the assets of the organization. Upon dissolution, all assets will be donated to a qualified non-profit or allied grassroots organization.
- G. All voting procedures will operate by way of one person, one vote.

Section 3: Termination

- A. Members may have their membership terminated by the Steering Committee for just cause, which constitutes being in clear violation or opposition to CPA's Mission Statement, Core Values, and goals.
- B. Membership removal can be proposed by any other member but requires a two-thirds vote from the Steering Committee upon review of case.
- C. Member in question must be notified at least 15 days before a scheduled hearing in order to state his or her case for remaining in the group.
 - a. Membership removal will require a two-thirds vote from Steering Committee members present at the meeting.
 - b. If Member in question is not present at the hearing, the member may automatically be removed without hearing.

Section 4: General Membership Convenings

- A. All meetings, phone conferences, and general membership conventions shall remain respectful of all members and shall operate following Rosenberg's Rules of Order.
- B. General membership convenings will be held at least two (2) times per year.
 - a. One convening shall be our annual Convention, where Steering Committee and officers will be elected, starting with the March 2019 Founding Convention.
 - b. A second convening will be directed primarily toward endorsement of candidates for public

office and ballot measures.

c. More than two meetings annually can occur, if needed, as determined by the Steering Committee.

C. Decisions at membership meetings will be the final authority in the CPA on policy.

Article V: Action Teams

Section 1: Eligibility

A. Any member is eligible to be part of an Action Team, so long as he or she satisfies the requirements set forth in Article IV: Membership.

a. Action Teams are open to all members of the CPA and may, at the discretion of the Action Team, be open to nonmembers interested in activity around the specific topic.

B. A request for volunteers to serve on Action Teams will occur before, during and after biannual membership convenings.

C. Initial Action Teams will be proposed by the interim Steering Committee to be adopted at the Founding Convention.

a. Action Teams can be proposed by any voting member via Proposal, which must be submitted to the Steering Committee for review.

Section 2: Function

A. Action Teams will be the basic unit of research and action around specific topics and issues within the CPA (as opposed to Standing Committees, which address functional activities of the organization).

B. Action Teams will initiate both strategy and policy discussions with the CPA.

a. Strategy or policy that require a decision or endorsement by the whole CPA or effect the CPA significantly will be submitted to the Steering Committee.

C. Action Teams may work closely with corporate-free elected officials in researching, mobilizing, and implementing policy relevant to the Action Team's goals and the CPA's Mission Statement and Core Values. D. Action Teams will initiate both strategy and policy discussions within the CPA.

a. Strategy or policy that require a decision or endorsement by the whole CPA or effect the CPA significantly will be submitted to the Steering Committee.

b. Action Teams may work closely with corporate-free elected officials in researching, mobilizing and implementing policy relevant to the Action Team's goals and the CPA's Mission Statement and Core Values.

c. Action Teams will each have a Coordinator who will be responsible for convening meetings, record keeping, and communicating progress with the Steering Committee.

E. Initial Action Teams (this is a growing list) include Legislative Action Team (work on emerging

legislation, lobbying legislators, and writing new legislation), Electoral Action Team (educating voters, including helping independent voters cast their ballots correctly in the presidential primary), Outreach Action Team (encouraging building local alliances throughout the state and helping facilitate outreach to members and allies), and Endorsement Recommendation Action Team (propose CPA endorsements for public office).

Article VI: Standing Committees

Section 1: Eligibility and Function

- A. Any member is eligible to be part of a Standing Committee, so long as he or she satisfies the requirements set forth in Article IV: Membership.
- B. Standing Committees shall exist within the CPA in order to address and fulfill functional activities of the organization (as opposed to Action Teams, which address issue-based programs and initiatives)
- C. A request for volunteers to serve on Standing Committees will occur before, during and after biannual membership convenings.
 - a. Members can serve on multiple Standing Committees if desired.
- D. Standing Committees shall be created by the interim Steering Committee.
 - a. Any additional Standing Committees shall be created by the Steering Committee if deemed necessary.

Section 2: Committees In addition to the Steering Committee, the following committees will be established to operate on an ongoing basis:

A. Membership Committee

- a. Help welcome new members into the CPA.
- b. Plan and schedule general Membership gatherings in consultation with the Steering committee.
- c. Initiate other member events as appropriate.
- d. Maintain membership records and database.

B. Finance Committee

- a. Develop a yearly Budget
- b. Review expenditures
- c. Make proposals for fundraising

C. Communications Committee (to be chaired by the Communications Coordinator)

- a. Edit and produce the CPA emails

- b. Maintain and produce the CPA website
 - c. Maintain and expand CPA social media communications
- D. Nomination Committee
- a. Oversee nomination and election procedures within the CPA.
 - b. The Nomination Committee shall be responsible for implementing a process for selecting a new Steering Committee to be voted on each year by the membership at the annual Convention.

Article VII: Steering Committee

Section 1: Eligibility

- A. Any member is eligible to be nominated for a leadership position within the Steering Committee, so long as he or she satisfies the requirements set forth in Article IV: Membership.
- B. The Steering Committee will be elected annually at the scheduled general membership convening.
- C. Steering Committee will include:
 - a. 3 Elected Officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer)
 - b. A minimum of 10 and maximum of 20 At-Large members
 - i. At large members must be active members of the organization willing to take on varied tasks either as part of Action Teams, Standing Committees, Alliance Coordinator and/or other needed tasks as they come up.
 - c. At least 2 of the At Large Members shall be youth members (youth is defined as ages 15-24). It will be the goal to have at least one quarter of the total At Large seats be youth under 25 years of age.

Section 2: Function and Responsibilities:

- A. The Steering Committee will make decisions of the CPA between membership gatherings, conferences, and convenings.
 - a. In the event of urgent actions or decisions, the Steering Committee will take a vote on such matters, to be decided within 24 hours. In order for the vote to pass, a majority of the responses must be in the affirmative. Due to the urgent nature of such decisions, this vote will take place via email within the Steering Committee.
- B. The minimum responsibilities of a Steering Committee members are to attend Committee Meetings (predominantly online meetings and phone conferences) and regularly participate in Committee email discussions and votes.
 - a. The Steering Committee will meet at least monthly.

b. The Steering Committee must have at least one lead person responsible for each of the three year-long standing committees: Membership, Finance and Communication.

c. The Nominating Committee will be formed and meet at least 2 months prior to the next year's Annual Convention date and have a prepared slate to propose to membership at least 14 days prior to the Annual Convention.

C. The Steering Committee will receive policy or program Proposals from Action Teams, ad hoc committees, or individual members at any time.

a. New proposals must be submitted to the Steering Committee at least 60 days before the next scheduled convening.

b. Each proposal will be reviewed and accepted by the Steering Committee (as long as it does not veer from the Core Values and Mission of the CPA)

D. The Steering Committee will submit approved Proposals to general membership at the next scheduled convening for general membership discussion and vote.

a. Any member who disagrees with a Steering Committee decision not to bring a Proposal to the membership may appeal to the Steering Committee.

b. Proposals not approved by the Steering Committee shall be maintained in a "Proposals in Progress" database on the CPA website so that members can continue to work on them and refine them for future submission to the Steering Committee.

E. The Steering Committee shall be responsible for creating and maintaining Action Teams.

a. Members of the CPA are encouraged to propose new Action Teams as policy issues and strategies arise.

b. The Steering Committee will appoint a chair of the Action Team, who will serve until such a time as the Action Team selects a replacement. The Steering Committee may disband an Action Team which is no longer active or needed.

c. The Steering Committee will receive regular reports and proposals from the Action Teams and will submit issues and opportunities to the Teams for consideration, recommendations, and action

d. The Steering Committee will regularly review the actions of the Action Team chairs and may approve, modify, or revoke those actions.

F. The Steering Committee may replace a chair of an Action Team or Standing Committee, permanently or temporarily if a vacancy occurs.

G. The interim Steering Committee will propose Guidelines for Endorsement of Candidates Running for Public Office to be adopted at the 2019 Convention. (see Appendix A)

a. This policy shall be implemented by the Endorsement Recommendation Action Team.

H. The Steering Committee will be responsible for creating and appointing an Advisory Board, deemed necessary

a. The Advisory Board shall provide advice and recommendations to the Steering Committee on various issues and policies related to the CPA actions.

b. Members of the Advisory Board are not members of the Steering Committee, and therefore can only advise, but not vote, on Steering Committee matters.

I. Alliance Coordinators: Steering Committee members will be required to assist with coordinating between and among our allies and helping to build new alliances.

a. Examples may include but not be limited to: Environmental, Single Payer, Social Justice, Election Reform Alliance Coordinator.

b. Alliance Coordinators will build, maintain and grow our alliances with other organizations.

c. Alliance Coordinators will facilitate the bringing together of like minded organizations to further common interests and build a more unified movement.

Section 3: Election of Steering Committee

A. Elections for the Steering Committee and Officers will be yearly through confidential online or in-person voting. (An interim Steering Committee will serve prior to the founding Convention taking place on March 30-31, 2018).

B. Procedure for the election of a Steering Committee shall occur using the following method:

a. The interim Steering Committee will create a process for how nominations for Steering Committee will be received. (see Appendix B)

b. The sitting Steering Committee will announce the election to the membership, citing the criteria and any other relevant information about the election, and invite nominations and self-nominations.

i. The Steering Committee shall be responsible for creating a Nomination Committee with at least 2 people not serving on the current Steering Committee (one person from Southern California and one from Northern California).

ii. The Steering Committee will establish other rules as necessary for the conduct the election at the convention.

c. The Nomination Committee will present new Steering Committee nominees to the sitting Steering Committee, along with their recommendations (with attention towards balance in terms of race, gender, age, and active involvement on issues).

- d. A list of all new Steering Committee nominees will be circulated to the membership. The completed questionnaires of all nominees will be included in the circulation.
- e. Officer positions will be determined by Ranked Choice Voting.
- f. At-Large Members will be determined by a majority vote; slots will be allocated to the top 2+0 vote-getters, or as many are required to fill a 13-person Steering Committee.

Article VIII: Officers

Section 1: Eligibility

- A. Any member is eligible to be nominated for a leadership position, so long as he or she satisfies the requirements set forth in Article IV: Membership.
- B. Officers who are eligible must reside in the state of California. In the event that an officer moves out of the state, they shall be permitted to serve the remainder of their term, but shall not be able to run for a Steering Committee position again until they have resettled within the State.

Section 2: Positions and Responsibilities

A. Chair

- a. The Chair will be a public spokesperson for the CPA on issues where another person has not been so designated.
- b. It is the Chair's role to ensure that business is conducted in a way that follows the rules or bylaws of the group, and respects and upholds the rights of all members of the group
- c. The Chair, in concert with the Vice-Chair, will be responsible for setting agendas for Steering Committee meetings and ensuring all Steering Committee members' items are included.

B. Vice Chair

- a. In the event that the Chair is absent or otherwise unable to fulfill the Chair's duties, the Vice Chair will assume the Chair's role.
- b. The Vice Chair, in concert with the Chair, will be responsible for making sure agenda outline current matters to be discussed and are sent to all Steering Committee members prior to each Steering Committee meeting.

C. Treasurer

- a. The Treasurer will collect membership dues and donations, oversee and track bank deposits and expenditures, issue "thank you" notes to donors (most will be given an automatic thank-you online) and write checks and make debit card payments authorized by the Steering Committee.

b. Treasurer does not need to attend SC meetings; however, he or she must provide financial reports for each meeting and upon request from SC or membership.

Article IX: Voting

- A. In all bodies of the CPA we strive to reach consensus and inclusion.
- B. Where this is not possible, votes are determined by a simple majority of ayes and nays, with the exception of Steering Committee elections and Public Office endorsements, which utilize the procedures outlined in Appendix A & B.
- C. There is no quorum requirement for properly noticed meetings.

Article X: Amendments

- A. Amendments to these Bylaws may be submitted by the Steering Committee to a membership convening with the content provided at least 30 days in advance.
 - a. Any 10 members can submit a proposed amendment to the Steering Committee. The Steering committee shall submit the amendment to the membership 30 days in advance of the next membership convening.
 - i. The membership meeting may adopt the Bylaws amendment by 80% vote.

Appendix A

CPA Basic Guidelines for Endorsement of Candidates Running for Public Office (as referred to in Article VII, Section 2 (G) of the by-laws)

The **Endorsement Recommendation Team** (ERT) will be an Action Team of the CPA and shall be responsible for proposing Candidate Endorsements to the Steering Committee (SC). Candidates who are not recommended by the ERT may make a request to the Steering Committee that they also be considered for endorsement. The SC will make a determination based on whether or not these additional candidates share the mission and values of the CPA. Ultimately, at a membership convening, the CPA membership will decide those races (including primary races and general election races) in which the CPA will consider endorsement, with the caveat that any candidate considered must share the

organization's mission and values.

The ERT will communicate with candidates running for public office who are seeking CPA endorsement and will create a questionnaire (or questionnaires) for circulation, to be filled out by the candidate or official representative of the candidate. Candidates seeking elected offices including but not limited to the CA State Assembly, CA State Senate, CA State Constitutional offices, US Congress (representing California) or US Senate (representing California) can seek out the endorsement of the CPA and will be provided a questionnaire. All questionnaires for candidates should include, at a minimum, questions based on #1 and #2 below:

1. Candidates interested in receiving the endorsement of the CPA must vow to not take campaign donations from corporations (which includes money from all businesses, large and small), development firms, law firms and/or charter school associations. Our view is that the profit motive must be kept out of our electoral process. We are also very clear on the notion that corporations are not people. *[We do think it is acceptable to take money from unions, since unions are people fighting for their rights within corporate entities.]* Do you agree to not take money from corporations, developers, law firms and charter schools? Do you agree to publicly denounce any support for you coming from any PACs or 501c4s that are funded by corporations or charter school associations?

2. It is our view that candidates should also be organizers. This means candidates endorsed by the CPA must understand the importance of organizing a movement in order to address issues in line with progressive values. If an endorsed candidate of the CPA wins their election, it is our view that they should continue to play a role in organizing the movement, alongside the CPA and other progressive organizations. Do you agree that elected officials must also be organizers of the community and will you work with the CPA in continuing to organize our statewide movement if elected?

Questions should also be included to determine a candidate's position on issues that the CPA has deemed to be important and urgent for that election cycle. Questionnaires could also include questions specific to various districts, cities, and regions.

After questionnaires are reviewed by the ERT, they will also conduct candidate interviews of those candidates who line up with our values and mission.

Endorsement recommendations made by ERT and any additional candidates will be reviewed and voted on by the Steering Committee and then brought to the membership-at-large for a ratification vote. Ranked Choice Voting procedure will be utilized to determine CPA endorsements.

If a candidate or officeholder changes their position on a major CPA policy or platform issue endorsements will be publically revoked, with the consent of 50% plus one of the membership.

Note: Endorsements of ballot measures and/or ballot propositions shall be taken up by the membership with a similar process.

Appendix B

Guidelines for Process of Nominating new Steering Committee (see also Article VII, Section 3 of By-laws)

The Nomination Committee (NC) will be appointed by the Steering Committee (SC) and set up a brief questionnaire with just a few questions to ascertain why a nominee wants to serve. The questionnaire will be circulated to all sitting SC members to determine their interest in continuing to serve and if so what officer position they would like to apply for or if they want to be considered for an at-large member seat. The criteria for service on the SC and any other relevant information to the election will be included on the questionnaire.

The NC will also reach out to various members who are thought to be interested in running and circulate the questionnaire to them. In addition, the Steering Committee will put out a call by email circulating the questionnaire for interested members to apply and/or nominate others.

Based on answers to the questions, and follow up interviews, the NC will propose recommendations for the 3 officer positions and 10 at-large members. Any Officer positions that remain open will be filled by additional At-Large members in order to maintain an 13-person Steering Committee. The roles and functions of unfilled Officer positions will be fulfilled by the Steering Committee as a whole.

The NC's recommendations, along with other qualifying nominees seeking a seat, will be presented to the sitting SC for review and circulated to the membership for a vote. The completed questionnaires of all qualifying nominees will be included in the circulation.

Officer positions will be determined by Ranked Choice Voting. At-large members will be determined by a majority vote; slots will be allocated to the top vote-getters.

Appendix C

Function and Guidelines for Ally Organizations (see also Article IV, Section 1 of By-laws)

Given that membership in the California Progressive Alliance (CPA) is limited to individuals, outside organizations are encouraged to be part of the CPA as Allies. An "Ally" is defined as an organization that has agreed to partner with the CPA in an effort to organize and generate support for progressive issues and legislation. Ally organizations are encouraged to work closely with CPA Action Teams. In this regard Allies are de facto local ground teams for CPA initiatives and may be called upon to support official organizational efforts with their internal membership. Allies are encouraged to notify the Steering Committee and Action Teams of events and local or regional issues and request that the CPA

endorse, publicize, or co-sponsor them. The CPA Steering Committee may also rely on Ally organizations for advice and recommendations.

Allied organizations will be part of a statewide database, which will be available to CPA general membership for organizing and recruitment purposes.

While each Ally is subject to its own existing bylaws, rules, and principles, it must adhere to the CPA Mission Statement, Core Values, and bylaws when working with or on behalf of the CPA as an Ally entity.

Group leadership from within each Ally organization will be expected to review, sign, and submit an Ally Sign-On form and commitment agreement. Every Ally request shall be reviewed by the Steering Committee before the organization is officially accepted as an Ally of the CPA. Upon approval by the Steering Committee each organization is encouraged to make a financial contribution to the CPA for our statewide infrastructure-building. The CPA suggests that Ally contributions reflect the size and resources of the Ally organization.

Political endorsements by individual Ally organizations do not reflect official endorsement by the CPA of that same candidate or issue. The CPA and its Allies will make endorsement decisions individually and independently. Allies are not expected to endorse and support every candidate, bill, measure or action that the California Progressive Alliance endorses. Some organizations, those that have 501c3 status, are required by law to abstain from making candidate endorsements. CPA welcomes 501c3s as Ally Organizations and has no expectation that a 501c3 Ally will be involved in or adhere to the CPA candidate endorsement process. No candidate or ballot measure proponent can claim that any of our individual Ally groups endorses them, only that CPA endorses, and vice versa. Ally organizations may use the CPA logo and affiliation only in such a way that is consistent with these guidelines.

The Steering Committee reserves the right to revoke the Ally status of an organization if at any point it determines the specific group is acting in clear violation of the CPA's Mission Statement and Core Values.