

# Mid-Atlantic State Constitution

**Ratification Date:** March 16th, 2019, Spring One Day 2019

**Framed By:** Matthew Wieseltier, 2019 President Pro Tempore

## OFFICERS OF THE STATE

### 1999-2000

John Pitts, Governor  
Rachel Isaacs, Lieutenant  
Governor

### 2000-2001

Rachel Isaacs, Governor  
Eli Schlam, Lieutenant Governor

### 2001-2002

Dave Graff, Governor  
Samantha Moll, Lieutenant  
Governor

### 2002-2003

Vilas Rao, Governor  
Allison Lindenberg, Lieutenant  
Governor

### 2003-2004

Lauren Renaud, Governor  
David Glickstein, Lieutenant  
Governor

### 2004-2005

Kristen Fiani, Governor  
Laura Gross, Lieutenant  
Governor

### 2005-2006

Dan Ingram, Governor  
Michele Giovia, Lieutenant  
Governor

### 2006-2007

Julia Kaplan, Governor  
Joshua Hursa, Lieutenant  
Governor

### 2007-2008

Bryan Matis, Governor  
Christina Rosivack, Lieutenant  
Governor

### 2008-2009

Juan Carlos Melendez-Torres,  
Governor  
Manas Kulkarni, Lieutenant  
Governor

### 2009-2010

Jared Macher, Governor  
Joshua Lipson, Lieutenant  
Governor

### 2010-2011

Brent Bovenzi, Governor  
Chandni Sinha Das, Lieutenant  
Governor

### 2011-2012

Shawn Rusterholz, Governor  
Josh Leifer, Lieutenant Governor

### 2012-2013

Simone Klein, Governor  
Cole Aronson, Lieutenant  
Governor

### 2013-2014

Cristian Vides, Governor  
Allison Berger, Lieutenant  
Governor

### 2014-2015

Ruth Boyajian, Governor  
Simran Singh, Lieutenant  
Governor

### 2015-2016

Roberto Ruiz, Governor  
Ian Baum, Lieutenant Governor

### 2016-2017

Rohan Marwaha, Governor  
Daniel Zhao, Lieutenant  
Governor

### 2017-2018

Ariel Rakovitsky, Governor  
Olivia Vladyka, Lieutenant  
Governor

### 2018-2019

Dev Patel, Governor  
Neha Nandiwada, Lieutenant  
Governor

### 2019-2019

Neha Nandiwada, Governor  
Olivia Fox, Lieutenant Governor

### 2019-2020

Olivia Fox, Governor  
Avaneen Pinninti, Lieutenant  
Governor

### 2020-2021

Erica Choe, Governor  
Meha Patel, Lieutenant Governor  
Archit Mehta, Speaker of the  
State Assembly

### 2021-2022

George Botros, Governor  
Mehrish Khan, Lieutenant  
Governor Parth Harish, Speaker  
of the State Assembly

## Preamble

We, the students of the Mid-Atlantic State of the Junior State of America, in our endeavor to achieve a better understanding of the governmental process, to increase our awareness of contemporary issues, to promote students' involvement in politics, to educate students so that they may be able to discharge their future civic duty effectively, to encourage good leadership qualities and responsibility in high school students, and to serve as representatives for the concern of those students, do hereby establish this State Constitution of the Mid-Atlantic Junior State of America.

## Article I: Names and Boundaries

### SECTION 1.

The name of this organization shall be the Mid-Atlantic Junior State of America (MAS, The Mid-Atlantic State). The organization may also be referred to as the Junior State.

### SECTION 2.

The Mid-Atlantic State shall consist of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, the District of Columbia, Virginia, and North Carolina.

## Article II: Rights of Members

### SECTION 1.

The State Assembly shall make no law restricting the rights of the members of the Mid-Atlantic State to practice their religion, exercise their right to freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom to assemble, or freedom to petition the State Assembly or any elected official for a redress of grievances

### SECTION 2.

All members of the Junior State shall enjoy equal protection under this Constitution and shall not be denied any rights or privileges entitled to them by the law without proper action according to the law as established within this Constitution.

### SECTION 3.

The Mid-Atlantic State shall not discriminate on the account of race, creed, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or nationality.

### SECTION 4.

Any elected official or cabinet member found to have violated the aforementioned rights of any member or person within the jurisdiction of the Mid-Atlantic State shall be subject to immediate impeachment charges to be brought against them by the Speaker of the State Assembly.

## Article III: Membership Qualifications

### SECTION 1.

A member of the Mid-Atlantic State shall be defined as any student who has paid annual membership dues and belongs to a Junior State chapter contained within the boundaries of the Mid-Atlantic State.

## Article IV: The Chapter

### SECTION 1.

A Junior State chapter shall be formed when there is a minimum of eight members who paid the annual membership due. Schools with less than twenty-five students need only five tax-paid members to start an official chapter.

### SECTION 2:

Each chapter shall have a teacher advisor.

### SECTION 3.

A chapter shall be chartered by the Mid Atlantic State Governor upon receipt and approval of the chapter's constitution.

### SECTION 4.

No chapter shall deny its members a republican form of government.

### SECTION 5.

A chapter, once authorized, shall not have to resubmit its constitution every year. If amendments have been made to that document, it must be resubmitted for the Governor's approval.

### SECTION 6.

The requirements of taxes and constitution shall not be changed, regardless of the size of the chapter.

## Article V: Regions and Districts

### SECTION 1.

The Mid-Atlantic State shall be divided into various regions and/or districts, the exact boundaries of which to be determined by the State Assembly, with advice and consent from the Governor.

### SECTION 2.

No person or chapter shall belong to more than one region or district and the members of the region or district are to be the only voters in their respective elections.

### SECTION 3.

No region or district shall deny its members a republican form of government.

#### **SECTION 4.**

The chief executive officer of a region shall be the Mayor.

- a. The Mayor, elected by delegates, shall be the official representative of the region for the state and the organization.
- b. The Mayor shall oversee regional activities.
- c. Should the office of Mayor be vacated, the Mayoral Chief of Staff shall act as Mayor until a State Assembly confirmation can be held. The State Assembly shall legislate a further line of succession based on the circumstances of each individual region.

#### **SECTION 5.**

The second-ranking official of a region shall be the Vice Mayor.

- a. A Vice Mayor, elected by delegates, shall aid the Mayor in his or her duties.
- b. The Vice Mayor shall have the responsibility of running regional elections unless the Vice Mayor is a candidate. In that event, the order of succession will be as follows: Speaker of the State Assembly, Lieutenant Governor, Mayor, Governor. If all of the previous officials are running for office, the Program Director will designate a replacement.
- c. Should the office of Vice Mayor be vacated, the Vice Mayoral Chief of Staff shall act in place of the Vice Mayor until a State Assembly confirmation can be held. The State Assembly shall legislate a further line of succession based on the circumstances of each individual region.

#### **SECTION 6.**

The chief executive officer of a district shall be the District Executive.

- a. The District Executive shall be the official representative of the district for the state and organization.
- b. The District Executive shall oversee all activities within that District.
- c. The District Executive shall have the responsibility of running elections within their district unless the District Executive is a candidate. In that event, the order of succession will be as follows: Speaker of the State Assembly, Lieutenant Governor, Governor. If all of the previous officials are running for office, the Program Director will designate a replacement.
- d. The State Assembly shall be tasked with legislating the process through which the office of District Executive shall be filled in case of a vacancy based on the circumstances of each individual district and its cabinet.

#### **SECTION 7.**

The State Assembly shall have the power to legislate the governing structure of each District, apart from the existence of a District Executive in every district.

#### **SECTION 8.**

The term of office for these officials shall be from the June 1st following the elections to the subsequent 31st of May.

## **Article VI: The State**

#### **SECTION 1.**

No person or chapter shall belong to more than one state and the members of the state are to be the only voters in state elections.

#### **SECTION 2.**

The Mid-Atlantic State shall not deny its members a republican form of government.

#### **SECTION 3.**

The chief executive officer of the Mid-Atlantic State shall be the Governor.

- a. The Governor shall have the power to authorize chapters. A chapter is authorized when the Governor approves its constitution and the chapter has paid its taxes. If a constitution is not approved, the Governor shall return it to the chapter with recommendations for its resubmission.
- b. The Governor shall be responsible for all implementing and overseeing all programs of the Mid-Atlantic State.
- c. The Governor and Speaker of the State Assembly shall have the joint authority to veto any act of the State Assembly throughout the duration of the State Assembly Meeting in session or within 10 days of the bill's passage. Upon vetoing any action there will be a 2 minute "pro speech," after which the Governor and Speaker of the State Assembly will have the opportunity to give a 2 minute speech to justify the veto. The State Assembly may then, upon a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote of the body, motion to override the veto.
- d. Should the office of Governor be vacated, the gubernatorial line of succession shall be as follows: Gubernatorial Chief of Staff, MAS Convention Coordinator, MAS Executive Director of Debate, MAS Director of Communication. The highest official on this list who remains in office shall act as Governor until a State Assembly confirmation can be held, unless they themselves are removed from office, in which case the next-highest official still in office shall act as Governor until a confirmation by the State Assembly can be held.

#### **SECTION 4.**

The Lieutenant Governor shall be the second-ranking executive official of the Mid-Atlantic State.

- a. The Lieutenant Governor may be directed to perform any duties necessary for the functioning of the Mid-Atlantic State as defined by the Governor.
- b. The Lieutenant Governor shall act as the Governor should the Governor be absent in any given conference.

- c. The Lieutenant Governor shall have the power to convene the Supreme Court of the Mid-Atlantic State. They shall be responsible for helping the governor select Justices as well as overseeing the decisions made and overall effectiveness of the Court.
- d. Should the office of Lieutenant Governor be vacated, the Lieutenant Gubernatorial line of succession shall be as follows: Lieutenant Gubernatorial Chief of Staff, Assistant Convention Coordinator, Director of Expansion, MAS Director of Fundraising. The highest official on this list who remains in office shall act as Lieutenant Governor until a State Assembly confirmation can be held, unless they themselves are removed from office, in which case the next-highest official still in office shall act as Lieutenant Governor until a confirmation by the State Assembly can be held.

#### **SECTION 5.**

The Speaker of the State Assembly shall be the presiding officer of the Mid-Atlantic State Assembly, as well as the chief legislative officer of the Mid-Atlantic State.

- a. They shall be responsible for calling into session and presiding over the State Assembly.
- b. The Speaker of the State Assembly shall conduct all Mid-Atlantic State elections unless the Speaker is a candidate. In that event, the order of succession will be as follows: Lieutenant Governor, Vice Mayor, Governor, South Atlantic Executive, Mayor. If all of the previous officials are running for office, the Program Director will designate a replacement.
- c. The Speaker shall oversee a cabinet of a Speaker Pro Tempore and designated “State Assembly Aides”.
- d. Should the office of the Speaker be vacated, the Speaker Pro Tempore shall act in his or her place until the State Assembly confirms his or her ascension. If the State Assembly fails to confirm the Speaker Pro Tempore or they are ineligible for promotion, the State Assembly shall vote to confirm State Assembly Aides as the new Speaker of the State Assembly in order of seniority by age.

#### **SECTION 6.**

The term of office for these officials shall be from the June 1st following the elections to the subsequent 31st of May.

## **Article VII: The State Assembly**

#### **SECTION 1.**

The State Assembly of the Mid-Atlantic State shall be the legislative body of the state.

- a. It shall be composed of one delegate from each chapter of the state.
- b. The delegate shall be chosen by a majority vote of a chapter’s tax-paid members, to be conducted by the Chapter President/s.

## **SECTION 2.**

The State Assembly shall meet as a whole at most once a month, at both Mid-Atlantic State sponsored events as well as dates set by the Speaker of the State Assembly, and may pass legislation affecting the entire state, provided that a quorum is met. At regional events, the State Assembly may meet, but it shall not pass legislation that specifically affects regions/districts that are not present at the event. Legislation that affects the state in general is to be permitted if the region in which the conference is held contains over 51% of chapters in the Mid-Atlantic State.

## **SECTION 3.**

Each delegate to the State Assembly shall have one vote. The Speaker of the State Assembly may only vote to break a tie.

## **SECTION 4.**

The Speaker of the State Assembly shall act as the presiding officer of the State Assembly. A Speaker Pro Tempore shall be chosen in the same fashion as any other Chief of Staff to act as the presiding officer of the State Assembly should the Speaker of the State Assembly be unable to preside.

## **SECTION 5.**

A quorum shall be necessary to conduct business.

- a. At least 51% of the total chapters in the Mid-Atlantic State must attend the meeting.
  - i. At least 40% of chapters from the South Atlantic District that are attending the convention must be present at the meeting
- b. 100% of representatives/proxies in attendance must vote yay, nay, or abstain for the vote to be considered valid.

## **SECTION 6.**

The official rules of procedure for sessions of the State Assembly shall be *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, with the inclusion of the rule that any officials listed in Article 7 Section 7 may amend legislation

## **SECTION 7.**

The State Assembly shall consider bills made by itself or presented by the Mid-Atlantic Elected Officials, their Chiefs of Staff, the Speaker Pro Tempore, and any Senior Department Head whose bill concerns their own department. The State Assembly shall also consider bills written by any dues paid JSA member, so long as 1 SAR is listed as a signatories on the bill (meaning they would like to see a bill debated), or so long as only 1 signatory is listed, with that signatory being either the Speaker of the State Assembly or the Speaker Pro Tempore. All motions shall require a majority vote of representatives present and voting except:

- a. Approval of constitutional amendments shall require two-thirds vote
- b. Motions to override a veto initiated jointly by the Governor and Speaker of the State Assembly shall require two-thirds vote

- c. Motions to impeach an elected official shall require two-thirds vote
- d. Motions to officially change the status of regions or districts shall require two-thirds vote

**Subsection 1.**

If three or more Elected Officials inform the Speaker of the State Assembly two weeks prior to the meeting that they wish to present a bill to the Assembly, this bill shall take precedence over any other bills or matters in front of the State Assembly, unless there is a motion to impeach an elected official.

**SECTION 8.**

The State Assembly shall have the power to make laws necessary and proper for carrying into execution this Constitution, and for fulfilling the purpose of the Junior State of America as outlined in the Preamble of this Constitution.

**SECTION 9.**

The State Assembly has the specific power to pass legislation regarding regional and state boundaries (Genesis Law), elected officials and their duties (Elected Official Law), all election related matters (Election Law), State Assembly procedures (State Assembly Law), regional conventions (Regional Law), chapter-specific procedures and conventions (Chapter Law), convention procedures and duties (Convention Law), and the judicial branch of government (Judicial Law).

**Subsection 1.**

The Speaker of the State Assembly or her or his subordinates shall have the responsibility to inform Elected Officials and Department Heads of Cabinets Department on any legislation about their departments. The other elected officials namely the Governor of the Mid Atlantic State and the New Jersey Region Mayor shall have the responsibility to inform the Speaker of the State Assembly of convention dates 5 weeks prior to the convention. The Speaker shall have the responsibility to classify each bill on the docket on the basis of which department they shall affect. If the bill does not affect any of the departments laid out below then only the Elected Officials must be informed of the bill. The department heads or Elected Officials shall now have the responsibility to comment on and mark up bills that affect their department. The Speaker and his or her cabinet shall have the responsibility to work with the State Assembly Representatives and the department heads to refine and amend the bills to reflect the nuances and intricacies of their department. The department heads shall have the right to speak on any bill touching their department.

- a. The Mid-Atlantic Convention Coordinator and the Elected Official he or she may report to must be informed on any bills related to Convention Planning
- b. The Mid-Atlantic Executive Director of Debate and the Elected Official he or she may report to must be informed of any bills related to the Debate Department
- c. The South Atlantic Executive must be informed of any bills related to the South Atlantic District
- d. The Mid-Atlantic Directors of Expansion and the Elected Official they may report to must be informed of any bills related to the Expansion Department



- e. The Mid-Atlantic Directors of Fundraising he or she may report to must be informed on any bills related to the Fundraising Department or Supplemental Programs
- f. The New Jersey Region Vice Mayor and the Vice-mayoral Chief of Staff must be informed on any bills related to Chapter Internal Affairs Department
- g. The Mid-Atlantic Directors of Activism and the Elected Official they may report to must be informed on any bills related to the Activism Department
- h. The New Jersey Region Mayor must be informed on any bills related to One Days
- i. The Chapter Conference Convention Coordinator and the Elected Official he or she may report to must be informed on any bills related to Chapter Conferences.

#### **SECTION 10.**

The State Assembly shall keep a journal or record of each meeting. This journal shall be published after the conclusion of each meeting. This journal shall consist of:

- a. The public votes the State Assembly shall take. The State Assembly shall take public votes on all matters. Records on the total vote counts on the bills before the State Assembly.
  - i. If 2/3rds of the State Assembly votes for a secret vote on a specific matter in front of the Assembly this record shall not be kept.
- b. All votes on impeachment shall be secret votes. The journal shall only reflect the final vote on the motion of impeachment and shall not provide how individual representatives voted on the matter. While the Speaker of the State Assembly shall oversee impeachment votes, the Program Director shall supervise the vote and be provided with how each State Assembly Representative voted on the impeachment motion.

#### **SECTION 11.**

The State Assembly shall never have the right to strip an Elected Official of their power without the consent of said Elected Official. This does not preclude the state assembly from adding or abolishing Elected Official positions.

## **Article VIII: The Supreme Court**

#### **SECTION 1.**

The Judicial Branch shall be the third branch of the Mid-Atlantic Junior State of the Junior State Government.

- a. There shall be a Supreme Court of the Mid-Atlantic State.
- b. The Supreme Court shall act as the official mediating body in the Mid-Atlantic State. Its ruling shall be final and can only be overturned through subsequent court decisions.
- c. The Judicial Branch shall consist of five Supreme Court justices.

## **SECTION 2.**

The function of the Mid-Atlantic State Supreme Court shall be:

- a. To educate the members of the Mid-Atlantic State about the role of a judicial system in governing and to provide an opportunity for said members to observe this principle working for the benefit of the State.
- b. To maintain a balance of power within the Mid-Atlantic State government, including cases of judicial review, when necessary.
- c. To serve as a just and impartial arbitrator for conflicting members and bodies within the Mid-Atlantic State.

## **SECTION 3.**

The Supreme Court shall have primary jurisdiction within the state over all cases which are concerned with the constitutionality of a statute or bylaw, and have the final decision in all grievances between conflicting members and bodies within the Mid-Atlantic State. All of its ruling shall be binding.

## **SECTION 4.**

The justices on the Supreme Court shall be nominated by the Governor and must be confirmed by a majority of the State Assembly.

## **SECTION 5.**

Of the five Supreme Court justices, one shall be appointed Chief Justice.

- a. The role of the Chief Justice shall be to serve as the head of the Judicial Branch.
- b. The Chief Justice shall preside over the Supreme Court when it is in session.
- c. The Chief Justice shall also be responsible for organizing and chairing the meetings between the Justices during case deliberation and docket planning meetings.

## **SECTION 6.**

All the justices in the Judicial Branch are responsible for the following:

- a. Serving on the Supreme Court.
- b. Meeting with the other Justices to reach verdicts based on a majority of the justices, and dealing with other matters of Court business.
- c. Helping in the organization of and presiding over mock trials.

## **SECTION 7.**

The Supreme Court shall be the supreme judicial body on the in the Mid-Atlantic State. It shall have original jurisdiction over all legislation passed by the State Assembly and actions of the Governor and shall have the power to rule these actions unconstitutional and void. It shall also have appellate jurisdiction over the judicial actions of any regulatory committees created by the Assembly (ex: the Fair Elections Committee).

## **SECTION 8.**

Any tax-paid Mid-Atlantic State member may file a challenge to the Supreme Court. The procedure shall be as follows:

- a. Challenge is submitted to Chief Justice.
- b. If at least two Justices wish to hear the case, it is heard by the court at the next state event. If the challenge is submitted during the course of an event, it shall be heard either at the same event, or at the directly following event, and the discretion of the Chief Justice.
- c. The Supreme Court hears the case and issues its decision, in writing, at the same event, if possible or within a week or two of the event.
- d. The Chief Justice will send copies of the decision and any minority opinions to both the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, who shall report the decision to the Mid-Atlantic State and the State Assembly.

# **Article IX: Elections**

## **SECTION 1.**

Any tax paid member of the Mid-Atlantic State shall be eligible for the candidacy of the office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, or Speaker of the State Assembly. Candidates for Mayor and Vice Mayor must be authorized members of the region they are campaigning to represent. Candidates for District Executive must be authorized members of the district they are campaigning to represent.

## **SECTION 2.**

Candidates must be authorized Mid-Atlantic State chapter members not graduating during the term of office to run for and hold an office, unless an exception is granted by the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Speaker of the State Assembly, with the advice and consent of the Program Director.

## **SECTION 3.**

All elections for state and regional offices shall occur at Spring State.

## **SECTION 4.**

There shall be 2 Co-chairs of the Fair Election Committee, the Speaker of the State Assembly and the Vice Mayor of the NJR, unless either of them are candidates in that given year. The Program Director shall settle any disputes between the Co-chairs.

## **SECTION 5.**

The Fair Elections Committee shall authorize an official Fair Elections Committee Handbook each year and enforce a set of rules:

- a. Spending limits shall be set at the discretion of the Speaker of the State Assembly.
- b. Violation of spending limits results in the confiscation of materials until the total spent is under the spending limit.

- c. Candidates may not distribute literature until their official announcement at Winter Congress
- d. Candidates may speak about their campaign wherever and whenever they please but may not use official Junior State events such as debates in order to further their campaigns.

#### **SECTION 6.**

Any chapter that brings more than six people to Spring State shall be required to send one person to act as a Fair Elections Committee agent for the district, regional, and state elections. The chapter may choose different agents to send in the district or regional and state elections themselves. Agents must be impartial in the election they serve in.

#### **SECTION 7.**

The Fair Election Committee chairs and designated Fair Elections Committee agents shall conduct all election-related activities on the voting floor.

- a. All chapters are required to sit together on the voting floor. The Fair Elections Committee agent shall take their attendance and report to the chairs. The Chapter President will then receive an envelope with the same number of ballots as they have members in attendance.
- b. A candidate may challenge a chapter vote for vote not adding up to the attendance reported. In this case, slips will be counted by the Fair Elections Committee chairs instead of the Chapter Presidents.
- c. The names of all Fair Elections Committee agents will be considered public knowledge and cannot be concealed.

#### **SECTION 8.**

Election results shall be certified via the signature of the Mid-Atlantic State Program Director or Assistant Program Director before being publicly announced by the chair(s) of the Fair Elections Committee.

#### **SECTION 9.**

The State Assembly shall have the power to pass legislation necessary and proper for carrying into execution or bringing about alteration of any election-related item not specifically delegated to the Fair Elections Committee by this Constitution or included herein.

## **Article X: Ratification**

#### **SECTION 1.**

This Constitution shall be ratified upon a two-thirds vote of the State Assembly.

## **Article XI: Oath of Office**

### **SECTION 1.**

Before any member of the Mid-Atlantic Junior State may assume any elected office of the Mid-Atlantic Junior State, they must take the following oath:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the Junior State of America; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of this government, that I take this obligation freely, without mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties upon which I am about to enter.