

By-laws
of the
SEPTA Youth Advisory Council
Version 2.2

Effective November 18, 2015

*Replaces Bylaws Effective **July 28, 2015***

I. Name

1. The name of the organization shall be the SEPTA Youth Advisory Council, and shall be referred to hereafter as “Youth Advisory Council” or “YAC.”

II. Mission and Purposes

1. The mission of the Youth Advisory Council is twofold: (1) to advocate student needs to SEPTA leadership and (2) to provide outreach to the region’s youth.
2. The Youth Advisory Council, established by the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (“SEPTA” or “the Authority”), shall serve as SEPTA’s primary outreach and advocacy group to area youth ages 14 to 22. The YAC will be charged with providing opportunities for youth riders to voice their thoughts.
3. The Youth Advisory Council shall work in conjunction with SEPTA to accomplish its mission. The YAC will advocate youth needs to SEPTA leadership and assist the Authority in evaluating service and initiative implementation. Further, the YAC will assist in the creation of promotional, outreach, and educational materials related to SEPTA services and special events.
4. The Youth Advisory Council is authorized to formulate recommendations, suggestions, and plans regarding the improvement of mass transit service for youth in the region.
5. The Youth Advisory Council is authorized to solicit and receive public opinion concerning SEPTA from youth.
6. The Youth Advisory Council is authorized to submit proposals to SEPTA for promotional and educational events.
7. Members of the Youth Advisory Council are authorized to represent and advocate to peers on behalf of the YAC at events explicitly organized in partnership with SEPTA for such purpose, provided that all materials and information distributed thereby have been sanctioned by SEPTA and the YAC.
8. The Youth Advisory Council is authorized to take all other such actions as shall be consistent with the foregoing purposes and not in contravention of the law.

III. Membership

1. The Youth Advisory Council classifies three types of members, outlined herein:
 - a. **Executive Members** consist of those who hold a position of office (specifically any person who serves on the Executive Subcommittee during their position’s tenure) on the Youth Advisory Council. These members are eligible to receive passes from SEPTA and are expected to adhere to all requirements of YAC members. Should an Executive Member no longer hold a position within the Executive Council, they shall be reclassified as a Committee Member.
 - b. **Committee Members** are those who are full-fledged members of the YAC. These members are eligible to receive passes from SEPTA and are expected to adhere to all requirements of YAC members.
 - c. **Annex Members** are those who have a limited-engagement membership with the YAC. Restrictions on membership can be either time-based, duty-based, or both. Passes for Annex Members will be determined on a case-by-case basis depending on the duration and nature of one’s membership. Annex

Members are required to adhere to all relevant requirements of their YAC engagement.

2. Eligibility to join and remain on the Youth Advisory Council must be in compliance with the following requirements:
 - a. The Youth Advisory Council shall generally consist of between 14 and 24 members, at least half of which must be Executive or Committee members. The specific number of positions is not to be limited on the basis of a pre-selected number of members, but rather on the merits of applications so long as capacity constraints can be satisfied.
 - b. Members are to be regular users of SEPTA throughout the duration of their tenure.
 - c. Members are to maintain residence, attend school, or work within the SEPTA Service Area throughout the duration of their tenure.
 - 1) Proof of residency, proof of employment, and/or proof of enrollment in a school within the SEPTA Service Area may be requested at any time and must be furnished within twenty-one (21) days of request. Failure to do so may temporarily preclude members from active engagement and could result in dismissal from the YAC.
 - 2) Members leaving the area for a set amount of time (usually during the summer months or for a college's "Study Abroad" program) must request a leave of absence for the duration of their absence.
 - (a) If it is determined by the Chair and Vice-Chair that an Executive Member shall not be able to fulfill their duties, a member shall be temporarily appointed to the position in the interim.
 - (b) This appointment must either be confirmed by the person for whom the office is normally held or by two-thirds of a quorum of the Youth Advisory Council at the subsequent plenary meeting.
 - d. Members are to be between the ages of sixteen and twenty-two (16-22) throughout their time as a member. Members who turn twenty-three (23) during the course of their term shall be allowed to carry-out their tenure until the end of the operating year so long as they meet all other YAC eligibility requirements.
3. Applications for membership on the Youth Advisory Council shall be handled following the procedure outlined herein:
 - a. Prior to submitting any application, any individual interested in joining the YAC must first subscribe to the YAC Email Update newsletter to receive updates from the organization.
 - b. After subscribing to email updates, individuals may submit a standing application to join the YAC. On the standing application, posted on the YAC website, candidates will provide biographical and eligibility information, a résumé, a statement of interest, and answers to other short questions.
 - c. Applications are then to be screened by the Executive Council to ensure prospective members meet the eligibility requirements for the YAC. Provided the applicant qualifies under the basic eligibility framework, they shall be notified of this eligibility qualification.

- d. Individuals meeting the eligibility qualification will be required to attend three (3) regularly-scheduled meetings of the YAC prior to consideration for membership on the YAC.
 - 1) During this time, individuals may work with YAC Members in the same manner as public individuals on non-confidential YAC initiatives, provided a current YAC Member in good standing serves as the liaison between the qualifying individual and the YAC.
 - 2) During this time, the qualifying individual must at least once be interviewed by no less than two members of the Executive Council.
 - e. Upon successful meeting of the requirements outlined above, the qualifying individual may officially request membership. The prospective member may be admitted to the YAC at any time pursuant to the Executive Council's discretion provided...
 - 1) ...the qualifying individual exhibited a dedication to the YAC's mission.
 - 2) ...the qualifying individual agrees to remain committed to upholding the YAC's mission and abiding by these bylaws at all times.
 - 3) ...the qualifying individual continues to meet all of the requirements of a qualifying individual.
 - 4) ...the qualifying individual's acceptance would add to the diversity of backgrounds/perspectives represented on the YAC.
 - 5) ...the qualifying individual's acceptance would not cause the YAC's membership to grow beyond its limitations.
 - 6) ...the qualifying individual's acceptance would not be better served by delaying their acceptance (such as for, but not limited to, accepting a cohort of individuals at the same time).
 - f. The Executive Council may waive portions of the membership application procedure (§ II.3), this portion aside (§ II.3.f), upon a motion before the members of the SEPTA Youth Advisory Council.
4. The Youth Advisory Council Operating Year, on which the Annual Operating Plan and standard term of membership will follow, consists of one year beginning on September 1 and concluding on August 31. This Operating Year shall be broken into Plenary Periods that begin on the day of a general plenary meeting and conclude the day prior to the subsequent general plenary meeting.
 5. Members of the Youth Advisory Council shall not be subject to term limits on their service, except that all members shall be required to step down no later than the end of the term which follows their twenty-third birthday, and that all Officers of the Youth Advisory Council shall adhere to the term limits set forth in Section § IV of these bylaws.

IV. Officers

1. General

- a. The officers of the Youth Advisory Council shall be an Executive Chair, an Executive Vice Chair, and a Secretary.
- b. The officers shall be elected annually by a majority vote of Executive and Committee Members in good standing through the use of an electronic ballot. Said ballot is to both open and close during the plenary period immediately

preceding the August plenary meeting and remain open for a duration of no less than one week. Elections for other positions shall occur on the same ballot in a similar fashion.

- c. A vacancy in an office shall be filled by a special election to occur in similar fashion to the policies outlined in the preceding section; the officer so elected shall serve for the remainder of the term of the office to which he or she is elected.
 - d. Officers of the Youth Advisory Council shall serve a term of one operating year, to be measured from the date of their election, or until they reach the maximum age of membership on the Youth Advisory Council, in which case they must step down as stipulated in Section III of these bylaws, and their office shall be filled by the procedure outlined above.
2. Executive Chair
- a. The Executive Chair shall call and conduct all regularly scheduled meetings of the Advisory Council and may call and conduct special meetings of the body as deemed necessary.
 - b. The Executive Chair shall be responsible for composing an agenda for each plenary meeting, copies of which shall be made available to all YAC members and members of the public when that meeting is called to order.
 - c. The Executive Chair shall serve as the head of the Executive Council, and shall be responsible for reporting on its actions to the Youth Advisory Council at regularly scheduled meetings.
 - d. The Executive Chair, or a member designated by the Chair, shall be the official spokesperson for the Youth Advisory Council.
 - e. The Executive Chair shall be required to compose and make public a biannual report or presentation on the progress of the Youth Advisory Council, the first of which shall be delivered no later than the date of the February plenary meeting and the second of which shall be delivered no later than the August plenary meeting.
 - f. The Executive Chair shall be required to oversee the creation of a SEPTA Youth Advisory Council Annual Operating Plan (henceforth referred to as the "AOP") that will outline the objectives of the YAC for the upcoming YAC Operating Year.
 - 1) A period of public comment to seek public AOP direction must be open electronically for seven (7) consecutive business days or held in-person at a central location with public notification occurring no later than seven (7) days prior to the hearing.
 - 2) The chair must deliver the AOP to YAC members no later than the date of the September plenary meeting unless the upcoming SEPTA Annual Service Plan has not been made available to the YAC at least ten (10) business days prior to said meeting or the public comment period has not been completed, in which case the chair will electronically distribute the AOP to all members within seven (7) business days of the meeting of all stipulations.
 - 3) The AOP must be approved with two-thirds support of members in good standing eligible to vote either in the plenary meeting at which the AOP is

presented (if applicable) or electronically within five business days, inclusive, of the AOP's distribution.

4) The AOP may be amended pursuant to § VII.2.

3. Executive Vice-Chair

- a. The Executive Vice Chair shall assume the duties of the Executive Chair in his or her absence, and shall perform his or her customary actions as directed on such an occasion.
- b. The Executive Vice Chair, in partnership with the Executive Chair, shall manage and facilitate the relation between the YAC and SEPTA.
- c. The Executive Vice Chair, in partnership with the Executive Chair and Directors, shall oversee the direction and completion of the work of project teams, ensuring that they remain aligned with the larger goals of the Youth Advisory Council.

4. Secretary

- a. The Secretary shall be responsible for record-keeping and organization of the YAC's official records (including, but not limited to, meeting recordings, agendas, and outreach event sign-up).
- b. The Secretary shall be responsible for processing YAC member applications and sharing said applications with those responsible pursuant to these bylaws.
- c. The Secretary shall be responsible for collecting a weekly update from all active members pertaining to their efforts during the prior week.
 - 1) The Secretary is additionally responsible for preparing a weekly report summarizing said efforts and distributing to the Executive Council in a timely fashion.

V. YAC Subsets

1. The Executive Council

- a. The Executive Council shall consist of all Officers of the Youth Advisory Council plus two additional At-Large Executive Members.
- b. The Executive Council shall act in place of the Youth Advisory Council when, because of time constraints, it is not possible to call a meeting of the full Advisory Council, provided that this section shall not be construed to replace the requirement for plenary meetings of the Youth Advisory Council.
- c. The Executive Council shall meet or communicate regularly to perform administrative functions for the Advisory Council, including, but not limited to, the development of meeting agendas, the direction of and coordination across YAC initiatives between regularly scheduled meetings, and consultation with SEPTA representatives on YAC initiatives.
- d. The Executive Council may establish, amend, and revoke policies and make otherwise administrative decisions related to specific existing initiatives of the YAC in order to facilitate their completion or feasibility. This section shall not empower the Executive Subcommittee to make amendments to these bylaws, or to authorize new initiatives without the consent of a quorum of YAC members at a regularly scheduled meeting or through electronic distribution.
- e. The Executive Chair of the Youth Advisory Council, by extension as the Chair of the Executive Council, shall report on the work of this body at regularly scheduled meetings of the Youth Advisory Council

2. Project Teams

- a. The Youth Advisory Council shall consist of a number of “Project Teams,” each of which is charged with achieving an actionable goal related to a specific YAC initiative.
- b. Project Teams shall be led by a designated “Project Manager” charged with overseeing the project and managing the group’s day-to-day affairs.
 - 1) Project Managers may serve indefinitely on good behavior, although other members shall be permitted to challenge their position in an election whose process could commence at any time.
 - (a) The incumbent and challenger shall each be afforded seven (7) days to prepare a statement for distribution to eligible voters.
 - (b) Upon the receipt of all statements or the close of the seven-day period, whichever comes first, the statements shall be distributed to eligible voters along with an electronic ballot to remain open for a period of five (5) days.
 - (c) Eligible voters shall include all members of the designated Project Team prior to the election challenge and all members of the Executive Council.
 - (d) Ballot weights shall be assigned such that Project Team Member (Manager plus Associates) ballots account for two-thirds of the decision and the Executive Council Member ballots account for one-third of the decision.
 - (e) Ballot results shall be announced as soon as a final decision has been reached (either upon the situation wherein all eligible voters have voted or wherein no additional votes could change the decision) with the results taking effect within two business days.
- c. Each Project Team shall have a designated Director whose function involves updating the Executive Council on Project Team affairs and coordinating initiatives across Project Teams.
- d. Project Teams shall be required to meet with their Project Manager and a Quorum (two-thirds) of their “Project Associates” at least once per plenary period to discuss project progress. The designated Director shall be invited to attend all meetings held by the Project Team. Specific teams may be exempted from meeting or, conversely, required to meet during a month when the Youth Advisory Council does not convene, as stipulated by the Executive Council.
 - 1) Each Project Team shall either record their meetings (through software such as Google Hangouts On Air) or maintain minutes of its meetings as shall be necessary to reasonably inform the Youth Advisory Council of its activities. The Project Manager shall provide all documents to their Designated Director within five (5) business days of the regularly scheduled meeting in question.
 - 2) All subcommittee meetings shall be open to the members of the Youth Advisory Council

3. Establishment and Dissolution of Project Teams

- a. Automatic establishment and dissolution of Project Teams shall occur in conjunction with the passing of a new Annual Operating Plan and the entire completion of a project, respectively.
 - b. A motion to create a new Project Team may be submitted by any member of the Youth Advisory Council at a regularly scheduled meeting. Discussion of the motion shall be required, and a two-thirds vote must be obtained to confirm the measure.
 - c. A motion to dissolve an existing Project Team may be submitted by any member of the Youth Advisory Council at a regularly scheduled meeting. Discussion of the motion shall be required, and a majority vote must be obtained to confirm the measure.
4. Policies Applying to all YAC Subsets
- a. Relevant project teams shall work closely with SEPTA representatives to manage all aspects of events that require authorization, financing, reservation of space, manpower, or provision of promotional materials by the Authority or its employees.
 - b. Relevant project teams shall secure all necessary permissions from high school administrations, school districts, university administrations, and SEPTA staff that may be required to enter private/public property and conduct such programs thereon.
 - c. Relevant project teams shall report on the work of their projects at regularly scheduled meetings of the YAC.

VI. Plenary Meetings

1. The Youth Advisory Council shall hold twelve plenary meetings per year. Each member shall be sent a meeting notice and agenda in advance of the meeting.
2. Special plenary meetings may be called at the discretion of the Executive Chair, provided that reasonable notice is given to each member.
3. The Executive Chair may limit debate or discussion or determine and enforce time limitations that provide for an orderly progression of the meeting. The Executive Chair's discretion is subject to review by a majority of members present at a meeting.
4. The Youth Advisory Council may act at a scheduled plenary meeting while a quorum is present. A quorum shall consist of fifty-one percent of the membership in good standing.
5. All decisions made at a plenary meeting, except as otherwise noted herein, shall be by a majority of those members present, after opportunity for discussion.

VII. Amendments

1. Amendments to these by-laws must be presented at a plenary meeting of the Youth Advisory Council and approved by a two-thirds vote of those present in order to take effect.
2. The AOP may be amended with two-thirds support of members in good standing eligible to vote either in the plenary meeting at which the amendment is presented (if applicable) or electronically within five business days, inclusive, of the

amendment's distribution.

VIII. Attendance and Leave of Absence Policy

1. It is expected that each member will attend at least two-thirds of all obligatory plenary meetings of the Youth Advisory Council as well as all project meetings of which he or she is a member during the relevant timeframe.
2. A member may be excused from meeting attendance, for good cause, by the Executive Chair in the case of a Plenary Meeting or by the appropriate Project Manager in the case of a project team meeting.
 - a. An excused absence shall neither count as an attendance nor absence from a meeting, but rather will reduce the denominator from which attendance percentage is calculated for the purpose of Section 1 above.
 - b. Excused absences are not to be confused with "Understood Absences" which are acknowledged in advance, but continue to be counted as an absence.
 - c. "Unexcused absences" which are absences for which inability to attend is not expressed in advance, shall be counted twice for the purpose of tallying one's absences in accordance with Section 1 above.
3. The attendance requirements may be waived by the Executive Council in the event that a member, for compelling reasons, requests a leave of absence from the Youth Advisory Council or a standing subcommittee for a specific period of time.
 - a. During one's Leave of Absence ("LOA"), all member obligations are temporarily suspended. Consequently, pass privileges are forfeited for the duration of one's Leave of Absence.
 - b. Members who will be unable to work and meet with their Project Teams and the entire YAC as required in these bylaws should request an LOA immediately upon such determination is made.
 - c. Members who are out of the area during the summer or travelling through "study abroad" programs are highly encouraged to request an LOA such that their membership space is held for their return.
4. If a member fails to meet the requirements of this policy, it shall result in action by the Executive Council, through the office of the Executive Chair, to:
 - a. Notify the member of the consequences of such failure, including revocation of TrailPass privilege and expulsion from the Council.
 - b. Bring charges of dismissal against the member at a plenary meeting of the Youth Advisory Council. The member shall enjoy the right to a statement of defense and the motion will be subject to discussion and vote by the Youth Advisory Council.
 - c. In the case of an affirmative vote by the Youth Advisory Council, official termination of membership from SEPTA and the YAC.