Bylaws of the General Defense Committee of the Industrial Workers of the World

GDC Central Administration
https://iww.org/projects/gdc
iww.gdc.central@gmail.com

Established: October 5th, 1917
As amended through January 1, 2019.
8.3 Emergency Referendum

8.3.1 An emergency referendum may be initiated at any time by a signed petition of 15% of the membership or 20 members, whichever is greater, all of whom are to have been in good standing for more than one quarter. This referendum will follow the proper emergency referendum procedure.

8.3.2 Upon receipt of a completed Emergency Referendum petition, the CST and Steering Committee shall, over the gdc-list@lists.iww.org, announce the receipt of the emergency referendum petition. It will also be announced in the next GOB after receipt. After a period of 60 days to allow for discussion on gdc-list@lists.iww.org and in the GOB, the CST shall send ballots to all GDC members in good standing for voting following the rules laid out in item 8.2.2.

8.3.3 Petitions must be signed with the member’s full name and membership number and may be submitted electronically to gdc@iww.org, submitted to a GDC Central member, or delivered by mail to the address at the end of this document.

8.3.4 The CST will verify the eligibility and membership of each petitioner and announce the legitimacy of the petition no later than 72 hours after receiving the petition.

Preamble to the IWW Constitution

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of the working people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life.

Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the means of production, abolish the wage system, and live in harmony with the Earth.

We find that the centering of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the ever growing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trade unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers.

These conditions can be changed and the interest of the working class upheld only by an organization formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or in all industries if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

Instead of the conservative motto, “A fair day’s wage for a fair day’s work,” we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, “Abolition of the wage system.”
8.2 Referendums

8.2.1 A general referendum on any organization question, including constitutional amendments, may be initiated by the General Steering Committee of the GDC, by a chartered local, by a petition of 20 GDC members in good standing or by the GEB or the General Convention of the IWW.

8.2.2 All referendum items shall be submitted no later than 11:59pm EST on Labor Day and shall be included on a ballot to be issued no more than 60 days after the end of the IWW Delegate Convention. Notification of all referendum items, including the full text of all questions to be voted upon and names of all nominees for the Steering Committee who are eligible and have not declined, will be provided to all members via mailing not less than 30 days before ballots are mailed. Ballots shall be sent to all members in good standing and shall be open for voting for 31 days. Ballots shall be sent by mail to all members. The deadline for receipt of ballots at GDC Central shall be printed on the ballot. Votes shall be counted and the results released no later than 32 days after ballots were mailed to the membership.

8.2.3 Bylaws, as well as future amendments and revisions to the Bylaws, must be approved by the GDC membership through referendum.

8.2.4 All changes ratified by a general referendum shall take effect January 1, unless otherwise noted in the measure.

8.2.5 The Steering Committee may approve the formation of regional ballot committees elected by a GDC local to issue, receive, count and report the results of the ballots to the CST in accordance with the referendum timeline and requirements as set out by the bylaws and Steering Committee. The ballot committee shall send all ballots to the CST upon completion of its duties.

It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organized, not only for everyday struggle with capitalists, but also to carry on production everyday struggles with capitalists, but also to carry on production until the capitalist class of bosses, managers, landlords, and their cops have been overthrown.

Preceding the GDC Constitution

Preceding the GDC Constitution
8 Article VIII

8.1 Materials

8.1.1 There shall be a standard label for the GDC. It shall be of a crimson color and always the same in design. The use of the label shall only be vested in our organization. The Steering Committee and CST shall take any necessary steps to protect the label of the GDC.

8.1.2 All branches of the GDC should procure and use such supplies as dues books, dues stamps, official buttons, labels and badges from GDC Central. All such supplies are to be of an uniform design. Regional Locals may print their own materials, dues books, dues stamps, official buttons, labels and badges, in their own language, if they desire. The design and format of these materials should remain generally consistent with those produced by the Central Administration, and copies of these materials must be forwarded on to the CST.

8.1.3 Assessments may be produced by the local and regional locals distributing them in various denominations. Likewise, assessments may be produced by GDC Central of various denominations and types for various fundraising purposes. A copy, digital or otherwise, of any stamps issued by an International Group must be sent to GDC Central.
7.1 Clearing House

7.1.1 The CST and Steering Committee will maintain contact with each local of the GDC, and the CST will function as a Clearing House for all supplies and materials necessary to conduct the business of the GDC.

7.1.2 The Secretary-Treasurer of each GDC Local or International Local will maintain contact with the Clearing House through the CST, and shall record all fees, dues, and assessments collected by their local's delegate(s) provided by the Clearing House and return these, along with all fees and dues money set aside for the General and Defense funds, to the CST Quarterly.

7.1.3 All Regional delegates, delegates-at-large, and others bearing such credentials shall record all fees, dues, and assessments collected by their local's delegate(s), provided by the Clearing House, and return these, along with all fees and dues money allocated to the General and Defense funds, to the CST Quarterly.

7.2 Clearing House and Reporting Deadlines

7.2.1 The due dates for all reporting to CDC Central each quarter are the 1st of January, April, July, and October of each year. This shall remain effective for all delegates, Locals, Secretaries, Secretaries-Treasurers, and delegates-at-large.
Of these dues, 50% shall be deposited in the Defense Fund; the remaining 50% may be deposited in the General Fund.

6.3.4 Dues are paid on a quarterly basis. A dues payment covers an entire quarter regardless of the day on which it was paid. A member who has not paid dues for the one (1) quarter period prior to the current quarter is considered in bad standing and is not entitled to any rights or benefits in the GDC until they have been paid. A local may vote to allow a member in bad standing to participate in local business meetings with voice, but no vote. After two (2) quarters in bad standing, a three (3) quarter period of unpaid dues prior to the current quarter, members are considered to be on inactive standing and cannot take part in business meetings.

6.3.5 Members in inactive standing may reinitiate their membership by paying an initiation fee along with one quarter’s dues upon reinitiating or by paying, in full, any back dues at the current dues rate. Any person reinitiating their membership shall be assigned the same membership number in which they were originally assigned upon their first initiation. If a replacement card is needed upon reinitiating, the Local or GDC Central shall issue the replacement at no additional charge.
6.2 Budget and Fiscal Year

6.2.1 At the start of each IWW Fiscal Year, the Steering Committee and GEB Chair will discuss, create, and finalize a budget for the GDC.

6.2.2 The GDC Central budget must be completed and approved by the Steering Committee no later than 15 days after the start of the IWW Fiscal Year.

6.2.3 The GDCs fiscal report shall coincide with that of the IWW. Currently, each fiscal year starts July 1st and ends June 31st.

6.2.4 The IWW Audit Committee has the authority to audit the books of the GDC.

6.3 Dues

6.3.1 Initiation fees for GDC membership are $5.00, all of which goes directly to the CST. All other membership dues shall be paid:

- $20 for those with higher income or resources
- $10 for those with limited income or resources
- $5 for those in extreme circumstances

Local and at-large members may determine their appropriate fee based on their circumstances.

At large members, who are not part of a local, shall pay all their dues directly to the CST, or an at-large or regional delegate.

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may not exceed $25 each per recipient per year, and the total of all gifts in a calendar year may not exceed $500, or 4% of the Defense Fund, whichever is greater. Such gifts may only be issued to Defense Funds or to incarcerated individuals who are members of the General Defense Committee or IWW. These gifts can also be given to prisoners as commissary gifts.

6.1.6 The membership of the GDC may requisition up to 50% of the funds from the Defense Fund for any given initiative by means of a referendum of the entire GDC membership. Said referendum may be called by a signed petition of 10% of the membership of the GDC in good standing for at least one month prior to the month the petition is initiated or by 10% of chartered Locals making an official petition by majority vote and balloting to be conducted by the office of the CST.

6.1.7 GDC Locals and Regional Locals may raise funds through assessments and other fundraising techniques to aid in the defense of class war prisoners outside the IWW and GDC. These funds will be a separate trust by the chartered local or international group. Delegates-at-large are required to submit all dues and assessments with their quarterly delegate report.

6.1.8 Donations sent to the GDC on behalf of class war prisoners, will always be so earmarked and always be passed on in a timely fashion to the defense account of the prisoner. Donations that remain unclaimed after 2 years will be allocated to the Defense Fund by the CST.

6.1.9 The General Fund is not to exceed $25,000. Funds exceeding $25,000 in the General Fund shall be transferred to the Defense Fund.

1 Article I

1.1 Name

1.1.1 This organization shall be known as the General Defense Committee of the Industrial Workers of the World, and shall be stated so on membership cards, literature, and letterheads.

1.2 Structure

1.2.1 The General Defense Committee shall be composed of GDC Central, GDC Locals, and GDC Regional Locals.

1.2.2 GDC locals may be known as the “GDC of the IWW” of a particular local IUB or GMB where applicable.

1.2.3 The official means of communication shall be the GDC Email List at gdc-list@lists.iww.org. All GDC members so indicating on their membership form shall be subscribed to this list. Members can also communicate with GDC Central via mail at the address printed at the end of this document.

1.2.4 Upon request, incarcerated members may communicate by mail to the GDC e-mail list.

1.2.5 The Constitution and Bylaws of the Industrial Workers of the World hereby supersede any conflicting language within the GDC Bylaws as the GDC is bound by the IWW Constitution.
6.1 Funds

6.1.1 Two funds will be maintained by GDC Central. The General Fund will be maintained as the operating fund for the GDC, for the purpose of expenses, printing, and other supplies related to the operation of GDC Central. The Defense Fund of the GDC shall be accounted for separately and distributed for the purpose of legal defense work.

6.1.2 The Steering Committee is empowered to create new funds as it sees fit.

6.1.3 Any member of the IWW or GDC in good standing may petition the GDC Steering Committee for direct aid in their legal defense from the Defense Fund. This aid may take the form of bail, bond or legal aid, and may take the form of a grant or a no-interest loan. The CST and loan recipient shall write and sign a reasonable and fair repayment plan.

6.1.4 Such funds may normally only be drawn out of the Defense Fund by the Steering Committee, after a proper petition, motion and majority vote in favor.

6.1.5 In the interest of fulfilling one of the GDC’s goals of strengthening solidarity, the CST is permitted to issue checks for Gifts of Solidarity to other Defense efforts that are properly maintained and properly recorded, and that are in the interests of the IWW and the GDC.

6.1 Funds
5.6 Charges against Officers

5.6.1 Charges against any Officers of the GDC should be filed in writing with the GEB or the Delegate Convention, following the protocols laid out for charges in the Constitution of the IWW.

1.3.6 All local officers including Local Secretaries-Treasurer and all Delegates elected, shall be members in good standing of the GDC.

1.3.7 Locals may create non-officer positions, such as coordinator positions or chair positions for committees or working groups, in which non-IWW GDC members may take responsibility.

1.3.8 Each local may modify their local dues structure while keeping the split with GDC Central 50% of dues collected at the rate established by GDC Central, and produce local assessments stamps. No GDC Local may modify their dues structure to be less than $5 per quarter unless it is for the membership of the incarcerated. A copy of any stamps or structure changes issued by a local must be sent either by mail or email to GDC Central.

1.3.9 No chartered local shall enact any legislation or motion conflicting with the constitution of the IWW.

1.3.10 All Locals and Delegates will remit copies of financial records to any member of GDC Central, any member of the GEB or the GST immediately upon request. The requesting body will reimburse copy costs for locals and delegates in hardship, provided receipts are included with IWW Reimbursement Forms. Reimbursement Forms can be found at www.iww.org or be mailed by request of GDC Central.

1.3.11 All Delegates are responsible for maintaining his/her own monthly financial report to their branch or the CST and shall endeavor to keep all members within their jurisdiction in good standing and aware of all referenda.

1.3.12 Uncleared Delegates and de-chartered locals will remit all GDC supplies and funds to GDC Central.
5.5 Election of the Steering Committee

5.5.1 Nominees for the Steering Committee shall each be a member of the GDC in good standing and must remain a member in good standing while serving on the Steering Committee.

5.5.2 Delegates on the Steering Committee may be elected and/or recalled by the membership of their Chartered Local at any time. Any person elected to the Steering Committee must remain in good standing with the GDC while holding office.
Article V

2 Article II

2.1 Membership

2.1.1 Any member of the IWW in good standing may be a member of the GDC.

2.1.2 Non-members of the IWW, and those ineligible for membership in the IWW may still join the GDC, as long as they subscribe to the general principles and aims of the IWW and GDC.

2.1.3 All members shall agree to abide by the regulations of the GDC and the Constitution and regulations of the IWW; to study the principles contained therein; and make themselves acquainted with its purpose.

2.1.4 No expelled member of the IWW shall be eligible for membership in the GDC.

5.4.4 The Steering Committee will have general oversight over all GDC publications and guide their policy.

5.4.5 Any voting Delegate elected by their chartered Local can make motions on the GDC email list to be voted on by the Steering Committee. Steering Committee motions are strongly encouraged to be posted as a draft for a 48-hour discussion period before being made as live motions. Motions can be made live without a draft period when deemed necessary by the motions author.

Draft motions will be titled with the authors initials followed by a dash, two asterisks, (DRAFT), and then the title of the proposed motion as shown in this example: ZZ - ** (DRAFT) Charter Lunar Base IWW General Defense Committee Local 555.

Live motions will be titled the same as draft motions while replacing the asterisks with numbers to reflect the number of motions made so far by the authoring Steering Committee Delegate and with (DRAFT) removed as shown in this example: ZZ - 01 Charter Lunar Base IWW General Defense Committee Local 555.

Live motions made to the Steering Committee will have a voting time of 7 days. At the end of the 7 day voting period the CST will announce whether or not the motion has passed with a compiled list of votes cast. A motion will be considered passed if a majority of Steering Committee Delegates who cast a vote on the motion have voted in favor.

5.4.6 The GDC Steering Committee has the power to elect a Chair of
3.1 Goals

3.1.1 The GDC of the IWW wants most to provide support to any number of the working class who finds themselves in legal trouble due to their involvement in the class war.

3.1.2 Any member of the IWW or GDC who finds themselves in legal trouble due to their involvement in the class war.

3.1.3 The GDC of the IWW works most to provide support to any number of the working class who finds themselves in legal trouble due to their involvement in the class war.

3.1.4 CDC Locals and Regional Locals will always try to engage in education as to the case (or cases) in question.

3.1.5 Non-members of the IWW and GDC who find themselves embattled with the law may also expect solidarity from the organization, including motions of support, letter writing, and public education as to the case (or cases) in question.

3.1.6 The GDC is also available to its members who find themselves in legal trouble due to their involvement in the class war.

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3 Article III

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5 Article V

5.2.4 The term of office shall be for 1 year and shall commence on January 1.

5.2.5 The CST will remit any and all financial and communication records upon request by any member of the GDC Steering Committee or any member of the GEB or the GST of the IWW.

5.3 Election of the Central Secretary-Treasurer

5.3.1 Nominees for the office of the CST shall each be a member of the IWW, in good standing for two years, and a member of the GDC for at least one year prior to nomination.

5.3.2 In the event that no nominee for CST meets these requirements, then they shall be reduced to 1 year membership in the IWW, and 6 months membership in the GDC.

5.3.3 Nominations for the office of CST will be made at the Delegate Convention of the IWW. Nominations may also be by mail or email, with nominations closed by the final adjournment of General Convention. The election shall be by general referendum of the membership of the IWW.

5.3.4 Any person elected to the CSTs office must remain in good standing with both the IWW and the GDC while holding office.

5.3.5 No candidate for the CST will be permitted to run or hold other office within the General Administration at the same time, unless no other qualified candidates are available.

5.3.6 No candidate is eligible for more than three terms in succession. Members who have served three or more consecutive terms as CST shall only have their names placed on the ballot, in the event that two qualified nominees cannot otherwise be secured.

4 Article IV

4.1 Location and Timeline of GDC Convention

4.1.1 Each year, the GDC shall hold a General Convention. Nominations for the convention host site shall be made at the General Convention of the GDC or through the mail with nominations closed by the adjournment of the General Convention. Election of the convention host site shall be by referendum ballot as provided for in section 8.2.

4.1.2 The General Convention of the GDC shall not remain in session over 3 days. The GDC Steering Committee and Central Secretary-Treasurer shall draft an agenda to be issue to the Delegates prior to Convention convening. All resolutions shall be provided to GDC Central at least 90 days before the opening of the General Convention. GDC Central shall include all resolutions in a mailing not less than 60 days before the General. No resolution not circulated in advance shall be considered by the Convention unless it is of an emergency nature and the delegates vote by a two-thirds majority to add to the agenda.

4.2 Powers of GDC Convention

4.2.1 The GDC Convention is the legislative body of the GDC. Any amendments to GDC bylaws must go to the GDC Referendum to approved. Referenda to approve changes to the Constitution shall be issued according to the provisions of section 8.2.
5 Article V

5.1 General Officers

5.1.1 The officers of the GDC shall consist of the Central Secretary-Treasurer (CST) and General Defense Steering Committee.

5.2 Duties of the Central Secretary Treasurer

5.2.1 The CST shall take charge of all books, papers and effects of the GDC, shall conduct the correspondence pertaining to his/her office, is the custodian of the seal of the organization, and will act as a Clearing House for stamps, cards and other educational supplies.

5.2.2 The CST is responsible for the financial accounting of all funds of the GDC, controlling the Defense Fund of the GDC, and all other expenses and special accounts. The CST is responsible for maintaining a quarterly financial report available to the General Convention for filing with the General Secretary of the IWW. The CST shall be available each year to the IWW Convention, reporting on the state of the GDC and on its various projects. Any business or discussion of the principles, processes, or methods of the GDC may be handled by the Delegate Convention at this time.

4 Article IV

4.2.2 The General Convention has the power to determine the policy of the GDC, when sustained by a referendum vote of the General Convention.

4.2.3 The General Convention has the power to expel any member for violation of the principles, Constitution or Bylaws of the union.

4.2.4 The General Convention shall use the current edition of Roberts Rules of Order as standard parliamentary procedure. Convention may elect a parliamentarian to assist the chair and delegates with interpretation of rules of order.

4.3 Representation at GDC Convention

4.3.1 Each chartered Local will require a minimum of 5 members and shall be seated separately from the delegates.

4.3.2 Individual members in good standing with the GDC or the IWW may attend the convention, with voice but without vote. By referendum, Locals with between 20 and 49 members in good standing shall have two delegates each; Locals with between 50 and 199 members in good standing shall have three delegates each; Locals with between 200 and 499 members in good standing shall have five delegates each; and Locals with 500 or more members in good standing shall have an additional delegate for each hundred members.

4.3.3 The expenses of delegates to the General Convention shall be wholly or partially borne by the body they represent. No delegate to the General Convention shall have any amount of his or her expenses paid for out of the treasury of the General Administration IWW or GDC Central.
is in order. The ruling of the chair may be challenged and overturned by a simple majority of delegates. Resolutions determined to be out of order do not proceed to second reading. Resolutions proceeding to the second reading shall be referred to the Resolutions Committee to consider amendments.

4.8.4 The Resolutions Committee shall, before the second reading of the resolution, review any amendments submitted by delegates. The resolutions committee shall assist delegates with the preparation of amendments and prioritize amendments for consideration by Convention. The resolutions committee may, at their discretion, merge, split, or amend proposed amendments for clarification and ease of consideration by the convention, in consultation with the Local delegation or representative of the committee that proposed the motion.

4.8.5 At the second reading stage, delegates shall vote on the amendments brought forward by the resolutions committee. Once all amendments brought forward by the resolutions committee for second reading have been considered by the convention, the resolution shall proceed to third reading.

4.8.6 At the third reading stage, delegates shall vote on whether to adopt the resolutions. Further amendments to the resolution emanating from the floor at third reading may be considered only by a two-thirds vote of delegates present.

4.9 Convention Observers

4.9.1 GDC Steering Committee shall have the ability to invite observers from like minded organizations to attend the convention. The GDC Steering Committee shall have the power to delegate this power to a convention planning committee.
4.6.3 Delegates to the General Convention shall not serve for two consecutive terms. Records of Delegates GDC Central shall forward a complete record of each delegate elected to the General Convention to the chairperson of the GEB and to the Secretary-Treasurer in order to facilitate the work of the Credentials Committee of the General Convention.

4.7 GDC Audit Committee

4.7.1 The General Convention of the GDC shall nominate an Audit Committee consisting of 3 members and a minimum of 2 alternates, all in good standing, to audit GDC Central's books and records, and bank accounts shall be closed and reconciled by July 31 of each year. Its expenses shall be borne by GDC Central. It shall convene between the close of the fiscal year and the next convention, where it shall present its report. This report shall be published in the minutes of the General Convention of the GDC, and the General Organization Bulletin of the IWW.

4.8 GDC Convention Resolutions

4.8.1 Resolutions for the General Convention shall be sent by a chartered Local of the GDC. No resolution sent in by an individual shall be considered by the General Convention.

4.8.2 Each resolution and amendment to the GDC Bylaws submitted to General Convention shall be given three readings, each reading separated by a reasonable amount of time to allow for reading and consideration. Each resolution and amendment to the GDC Bylaws shall be sent to the Secretary of the GDC. The General Convention shall be prepared to consider all resolutions and amendments.

4.8.3 At the first reading, the chair shall rule on whether the resolution or amendment has been properly submitted and in accordance with the rules of the General Convention. If the chair rules that the resolution or amendment is in order, it shall be considered by the General Convention. If the chair rules that the resolution or amendment is out of order, it shall be stricken from the agenda.

4.8.4 The General Convention shall adopt or reject resolutions and amendments presented to it by a majority vote. No delegate shall have more than one vote on the adoption of a resolution or amendment of a delegate's resolution. No delegate shall have more than one vote on the expulsion of a member. Any member who has not been a delegate or a member of the General Convention shall be considered as a delegate. Any member who has not been a delegate or a member of the General Convention shall be considered as a member of the General Convention.