



*Stand Up. Take Action. Vote.*

## How to Start a PDA Chapter

*“Without Chapters, PDA is an empty promise.”*

**PDA Chapter** (*chap'ter*), *n* 1. an autonomous local organizing unit  
2. a group of progressives working collectively with other PDA Chapters  
across the country so that we may speak as a unified progressive voice  
3. the progressive grassroots' voice on the hill 4. the grassroots'  
fulfillment of the PDA promise 5. feet on the street 6. heat in the street

[www.pdamerica.org](http://www.pdamerica.org)

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Or reference our web site at:  
[www.pdamerica.org](http://www.pdamerica.org)

Click on "*Grassroots*" / "*PDA Structure*"



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## **Basic Organizational Relationships with PDA**

This document describes the organizational structure through which local and state groups can establish a relationship with Progressive Democrats of America (PDA). For more information, go to [www.pdamerica.org](http://www.pdamerica.org).

### **Chapters and Caucuses**

**PDA Chapters:** A PDA Chapter is an autonomous local organizing unit that works collectively with other Chapters across the country so that we may speak as a unified progressive voice. It is PDA's goal to support the creation of at least one PDA Chapter in each of our 435 congressional districts.

PDA encourages groups to organize specifically as PDA Chapters, or.....

Already existing groups -- such as DFA Groups, Democratic Clubs, Peace Groups, Meet-Ups, Young Democrats, Senior Citizens Groups or other special interest groups -- can become a PDA Chapter while maintaining their original identity. We call these "fusion" chapters.

**State Progressive Caucus:** A Caucus is a statewide organizing unit within the State Democratic Party (in some states called a Club or an Initiative). A Democratic Party State Progressive Caucus is organized to provide a structure through which progressive organizations and individuals can work collectively to rebuild the Democratic Party and to renew democratic values. Members of PDA Chapters who are members of the Democratic Party are encouraged to join their State Progressive Caucus, Club or Initiative.

## PDA Allies

An Ally is an organization that shares a basic philosophical perspective with PDA; i.e., is like-minded, but often utilizes a different strategy from PDA. PDA's relationship with an Ally is often strategic and may be short term. An Ally usually functions *outside* of the Democratic Party.

An Ally relationship is the basis of PDA's outside the Democratic Party strategy.





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## **PDA Chapters and State Caucuses**

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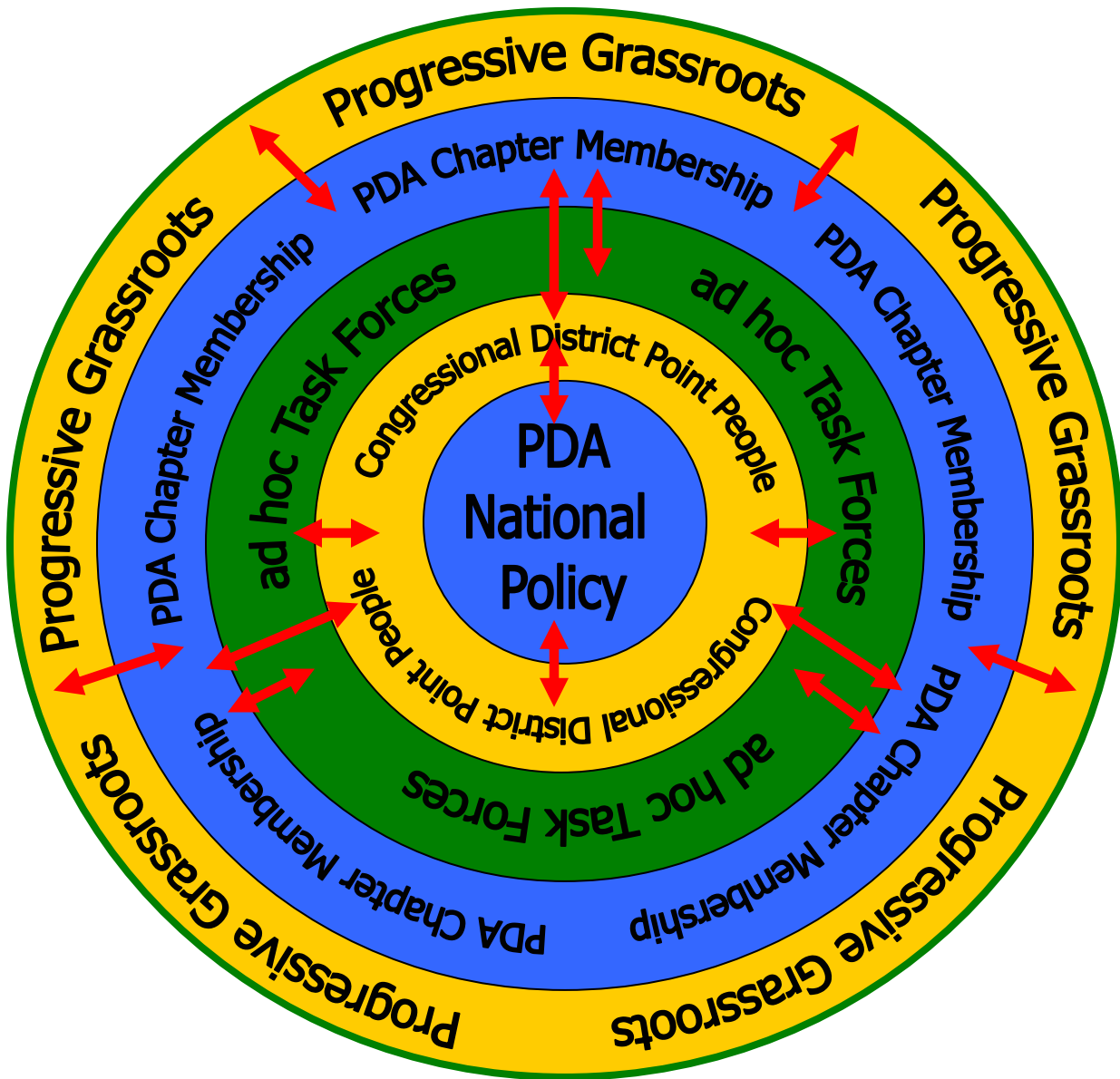
It is through Chapters, that PDA provides the organizational structure for a unified national grassroots progressive voice both inside and outside the Democratic Party. By organizing local Chapters, local participants who are members of the Democratic Party can become politically active within their local and state Democratic Parties and work to renew and rebuild the party and to elect more progressive Democrats. Through local Chapters, local participants who are not members of the Democratic Party can become politically active with progressive allies to promote a national progressive agenda. Using this organizational structure, local members become part of a national network of progressives who can be mobilized by Congressional District for national legislative action and federal elections.

Benefits to becoming a PDA Chapter include.....

- Affiliation with the fastest growing politically progressive movement in the country! Since our launch in Boston in July 2004, PDA has taken the lead in pulling the Democratic Party back toward the left -- reminding the party to respond to its base outside of the Beltway -- on issues like the war, the Downing Street Memo, the bankruptcy bill scam, the importance of universal single-payer health care and the defeat of CAFTA. We're working to strengthen the progressive wing of the Democratic Party through our inside/outside strategy which provides a place for everyone at the table.
- Nationwide network with other PDA Chapters.

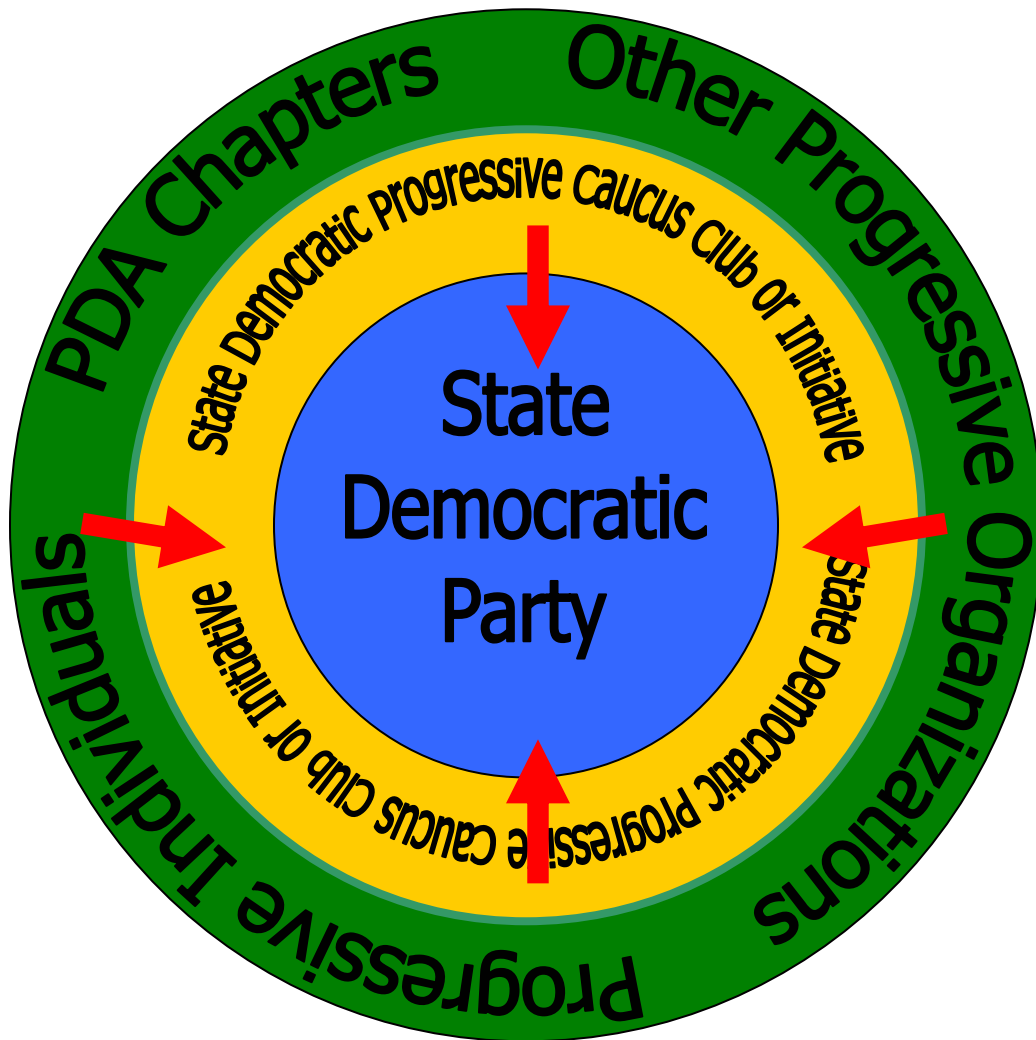
- Direct link to progressive policy makers on the hill – through our working relationship with the Congressional Progressive Caucus.
- Organizational support — Our Field Department offers constant organizational and networking support.
  - With organizational tools such as our “How to Start a Chapter” booklet, we’re available to support you in initial Chapter organization.
  - When you plan your first meetings, we will send an announcement to everyone on PDA’s database in your town, city, county, state and/or region letting them know about it!
  - As your group grows, we will add your events to PDA’s web site “Events Calendar”!
  - We’ll keep you up-to-date with our weekly staff reports.
  - We’ll give you first-hand briefings with PDA national leadership on fast-breaking news from inside-the-beltway.
  - Our “Field Correspondent” will be available to help you tell your story through press releases, articles and stories.
  - We’ll provide Regional Trainings including fundraising, speakers’ training and grassroots political organizing.
  - And we can even help you line-up nationally known speakers for your major events and fundraisers.
- Direct input into PDA development through our on-going Chapter work, our ad hoc Task Forces, and our Congressional District Point Person program.
- Political support -- PDA will offer support in candidate recruitment and support, leveraging progressive power within the Democratic Party and developing and networking national political action.

The graphic below indicates the functional relationship between the grassroots, PDA Chapters, our ad hoc Task Forces, Congressional District Point People and PDA National Policy.



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The graphic below indicates the functional relationship between PDA Chapters, other progressive organizations and progressive individuals... a State Democratic Party Progressive Caucus, Club or Initiative... and a State Democratic Party.



## **Chapter Relationships:**

PDA Chapters will establish an organizational name independent of PDA, such as "Progressive Democrats of Pima County" or "Progressive Democrats of East Peoria," but will have authorization to include the PDA name and logo (along with a statement that the Chapter is affiliated with PDA) on their web pages, press releases and other identifying documents.

An individual PDA Chapter will at no time speak for other PDA Chapters or for PDA. Endorsements that include PDA's name will be made on behalf of duly recognized individual Chapters only.

In exchange for recognition as an official PDA Chapter, each chapter will immediately enter all of its chapter membership data into PDA's national database and will continue to update PDA's national database as new members join.

PDA reserves the right to withdraw Chapter status and/or its links if PDA is misrepresented in any way, or if mismanagement, discrimination, illegal activity, or patterns of unethical behavior occur.



## **Starting a PDA Chapter**

A minimum of five people who are committed to the mission and goals of PDA are required. When five people have come together with this intent, they should complete the [online application form](#) to request recognition as a Chapter. The request will automatically be sent to the national [Field Director](#).

### ***A “Thriving PDA Chapter” will:***

- ***Have a direct working relationship with their PDA “State Coordinator”***
- ***Have a direct working relationship with the designated PDA “Congressional District Point Person” in their Congressional District (CD)***
- ***Hold regularly scheduled meetings which are posted on PDA’s web site with announced agendas***
- ***Include members who are actively engaged in working inside the Democratic Party***
- ***Include members who are actively engaged in building a Progressive Caucus (Club or Initiative) within their State Democratic Party***
- ***Include members who are actively engaged locally with allies***
- ***Be actively involved in a campaign for a candidate, an initiative or a proposition***
- ***Have an designated media coordinator who handles press releases and blogging and who regularly posts chapter news and events on PDA’s web site***
- ***Have an active web site***
- ***Have a database coordinator who works actively to build PDA’s database***
- ***Be actively involved in diversity outreach***
- ***Be actively involved in recruiting PDA sustaining members***
- ***Have a fund raising plan to support PDA nationally as well as to support your local chapter***

By submitting the [online application form](#), a Chapter formally agrees to accept and adhere to the goals and missions. Once the web form has been received and verified, the Chapter will be posted on PDA's website with contact information (including a link to the Chapter's web page if one exists).



**Become a PDA Chapter**

Following is a copy of the Chapter Application Form found on PDA's web site [www.pdamerica.org](http://www.pdamerica.org). Go to <http://www.pdamerica.org/join-ind.php>, complete the form and submit. If you don't have internet capability, please call us at 480 529 2131 for assistance. You'll be hearing from us soon!

Name of Organizing Chapter:

Your Email Address:

Name and contact information of Chapter leadership:

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
1.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
2.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
3.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
4.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
5.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Geographic and/or interest area represented by the Chapter (e.g., Miami, Florida or Election Reform):

How many members are now in your Chapter?

Synopsis of the current level of development of the Chapter:

What is the legal structure of your Chapter:

What do you need most from PDA to support the development of your Chapter?

If you have a web page, please give the address:

What contact information would you like listed for your Organizing Chapter (contact name, phone, web address, and/or email)? (Please be sure the information is entered accurately.)





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## **PDA Chapter Membership**

Any person who accepts the goals and mission of PDA is eligible for Chapter membership regardless of their age, gender, religion, race, ethnicity, economic status or sexual orientation.

Chapter members who are members of the Democratic Party will be encouraged to actively participate within their County, Congressional District and State Democratic Party Organization to work in precincts, and to promote progressive issues and progressive candidacies. Chapter members who are members of the Democratic Party will, whenever possible, become delegates, party officers, central committee members, committee members, and candidates for office at the local, state, and federal levels.

Chapter members who are not members of the Democratic Party will be encouraged to actively participate with like-minded progressive organizations that support a progressive agenda.

Members will also be asked to become active in local organizations, community councils, and seek appointments to government commissions.



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