

WASHTENAW COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY BYLAWS

*Adopted September 13, 2009
Most recent update: February 6, 2016*

ARTICLE I. NAME

This organization shall be known as the Washtenaw County Democratic Party (WCDP). It shall consist of the Officers, Executive Committee, County Committee, and all members of the Michigan Democratic Party and all duly elected Democratic precinct delegates residing in Washtenaw County.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

Section 1. The purposes of the WCDP include:

- To recruit, train, organize and support an effective, cohesive, and motivated cadre of officers, committee members, delegates, precinct workers and party activists in order to further Democratic Party goals, principles, and programs;
- To provide aid and support to official Democratic Party candidates who are working to promote the interests, values, and activities of the Democratic Party and whose districts rest wholly or partially within Washtenaw County; and
- To involve all of its members in implementing the previous two purposes by promoting their active and meaningful participation in the business of the WCDP including, but not confined to, providing the membership an opportunity to know more about Democratic candidates, organizing campaign activities, approving Party expenditures, establishing policies and rules, and taking positions on political issues.

Section 2. The WCDP shall be a non-profit organization and upon its dissolution, all assets and real and personal property of the Party and its committees shall revert to the benefit of the Michigan Democratic Party. No part of the income or assets of the WCDP shall inure to any of its members except for the reimbursement of actual expenses, approved by the WCDP, or a contribution for electing a member to office if the WCDP so approves.

ARTICLE III. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

Section 1. All membership and business meetings of WCDP at all levels shall be open to all members of the Democratic Party regardless of actual or perceived race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, economic status, religion, ethnic identity, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, physical appearance or disability.

Section 2. No tests for membership in, nor any oaths of loyalty to, the WCDP shall be required or used which has the effect of requiring prospective or current members of the Democratic Party to acquiesce in, condone or support discrimination on the grounds of actual or perceived race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, economic status, religion, ethnic identity, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, physical appearance or disability.

Section 3. The time and place for all membership and business meetings of the WCDP on all levels shall be publicized fully and in such a manner as to assure timely notice to all interested persons. Such meetings must be held in places accessible to all Party members and large enough to accommodate all interested persons.

Section 4. The WCDP, on all levels, shall support the broadest possible participation without discrimination on grounds of actual or perceived race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, economic status, religion, ethnic identity, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, physical appearance or disability.

Section 5. The WCDP shall publicize fully and in such a manner as to assure notice to all interested parties a full description of the legal and practical procedures for selection of and qualifications for WCDP officers and representatives on all levels. Publication of those procedures shall be done in such a fashion that all prospective and current members of the WCDP will be fully and adequately informed of the pertinent procedure in time to participate in each selection procedure at all levels of the WCDP organization. Posting this information on the Party web site (<http://washtenawdems.org>) and making it available upon request shall be sufficient under this section. The Statutory Vice-Chair shall take responsibility for this publication.

Section 6. Proportional voting shall be used in the election of delegates and alternates to any Convention, and members of the Executive Committee.

Section 7. All rules and bylaws of the WCDP at all levels shall be consistent with the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party and shall be available on request in writing to any member of the WCDP.

Section 8. No rule shall be adopted at any level of the WCDP that would require a person to cast a vote or be recorded as voting contrary to that person's judgment.

Section 9. On all questions of procedure not resolved by the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party or these Bylaws, the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be used.

Section 10. The Chair and Vice-Chair of any unit, Committee, Caucus or Convention of the WCDP shall be of the opposite sex.

Section 11. Votes shall not be taken by secret ballot at any meeting of the WCDP at any level.

ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Membership of the WCDP shall consist of all members of the Michigan Democratic Party residing in this county.

Section 2. Precinct delegate positions shall be apportioned and delegates elected in accordance with Michigan statute and the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party.

Section 3. The Officers, Executive Committee and County Committee of the WCDP shall be selected in accordance with the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party and these bylaws.

ARTICLE V. MEETINGS

Section 1. The regular meetings of the Executive Committee shall be on the day of the month at the location and time designated in the meeting notice. At least five (5) days' notice shall be given of the date, time and place of the meeting. Notice may be given by mail, telegram, fax or email. The Executive Committee shall meet 6 times a year in months when the County Committee does not meet. A quorum shall exist at an Executive Committee meeting when 1/3 of the Executive Committee members are present.

Section 2. The full County Committee shall meet quarterly in months when the Executive Committee does not meet to review the activities of the Executive Committee. At least five (5) days' notice shall be given of the date, time and place of the meeting. Notice may be given by mail, telegram, fax or email. A quorum shall exist at a County Committee meeting when a 1/4 of the County Committee members are present.

Section 3. Special meetings of the Executive or County Committee may be called by a majority of the members of the Executive Committee or County Committee, respectively. At least five (5) days' notice shall be given of the date, place, time and purpose of the special meeting.

Section 4. Subject to the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party and these Bylaws, all meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order (latest edition).

Section 5. The Officers should meet more frequently than the Executive Committee to plan and carry out the day-to-day execution of Party business.

ARTICLE VI. OFFICERS, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND COUNTY COMMITTEE

Section 1. WCDP Executive Committee.

a. Membership. One third (1/3) of the Executive Committee shall automatically consist of the most recent nominees for countywide office and the county commission, and State House, State Senate and U.S. House whose districts include all or part of the county. The County Convention shall elect the balance of the Executive Committee that shall consist of twice the number of automatic members. Each even-numbered year within twenty (20) days following the November election the delegates to the County Convention shall convene at the call of the county Chair for the purpose of electing part of the Executive Committee.

b. Purpose. The purpose of the Executive Committee is to provide equitable leadership for the WCDP and oversight for the work of the Officers and the rest of the WCDP.

c. Vacancies. If a vacancy occurs in the position of delegate-elected member of the Executive Committee, the remaining delegate-elected members may fill the vacancy. The Executive Committee may fill a vacancy in any of its officers.

d. Meetings. The Executive Committee shall meet 6 times a year at a regularly scheduled meeting in months when the County Committee does not meet and shall keep minutes of all meetings which shall be available to all Party members at County Committee meetings.

e. Budgeting. The Executive Committee shall have final approval of the annual and election budgets as presented by the Board and shall regularly review receipts and expenditures at its meetings as reported by the Treasurer.

Section 2. WCDP Officers.

a. Definition and Election. Officers shall be selected in accordance with the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party within thirty (30) days of the election of the Executive Committee. The Statutory Officers are a Chair, a Vice-Chair of the opposite sex of the Chair, a Secretary, and a Treasurer, who shall serve as officers of both the Executive Committee and County Committee.

1. Chair - The Chair shall convene and preside at all Executive Committee meetings, and have such other duties as are usual to the office of County Chair, or that may be required by this organization.

2. Statutory Vice-Chair - The Statutory Vice-Chair shall assist the Chair in the discharge of his/her duties, and shall temporarily assume the duties and responsibilities of the Chair in his/her absence.

3. Secretary - The Secretary of this organization shall keep an accurate record and minutes of the proceedings of the meetings of the Executive Committee, Executive Board, and County Committee. The Secretary shall keep and preserve all the books, documents, correspondence, records, minutes, effects, and any other property of this organization, and when a new secretary is elected the past secretary shall forthwith deliver to the newly elected secretary all the aforesaid items kept and preserved during his/her tenure of office. The Secretary shall see that proper notification is given to the Executive Committee and County Committee of their meetings.

4. Treasurer - The Treasurer shall be responsible for the financial receipts and disbursements of this organization subject to the approval of the Executive Committee. The funds of this organization shall be deposited in banks or credit unions and shall be drawn upon only by checks signed by the Treasurer as long as the expenditure is included in an approved budget or otherwise approved by the Officers or Executive Committee.

The Treasurer shall be responsible for ensuring WCDP compliance with all applicable rules including State Elections Board and Federal Election rules and filing of all required reports with the appropriate agencies with review by the Executive Committee.

The Treasurer shall make financial reports (detailing receipts and disbursements since the last report) at every Board and Executive Committee meeting and more general financial balance information at all County Committee meetings.

When a new Treasurer is elected, the past Treasurer shall forthwith deliver to the new Treasurer the funds and all the books and records kept during his/her tenure in office.

In addition to the 4 Statutory Officers the Executive Committee shall select the following officers that will also serve as chairs of their corresponding standing committees:

1. Vice-Chair for Resolutions, By-laws and Policy
2. Vice-Chair for Fundraising
3. Vice-Chair for Communications shall be responsible for the editorial content of the website, email communications with members and supporters, the newsletter, and press releases, and public relations.
4. Vice-Chair for Legislative Programs shall act as liaison to key elected officials and develop venues and forums for interaction with these key elected officials.
5. Vice-Chair for Programs shall be responsible for issue advocacy, town halls, voter education, potential candidate education, and candidate forums.
6. Vice-Chair for Visibility shall be responsible for tables and booths at events, rally and parade participation, t-shirts and bumper stickers.
7. Vice-Chair for Precinct Organization shall be responsible for voter registration, voter identification and persuasion, get out the vote, poll challenger and greeter recruiting, training, and organizing, and voter education as it relates to these activities.
8. Vice-Chair for Outreach shall be responsible for outreach to communities and organizations, diversity, and service projects.
9. Vice-Chair for Membership shall be recruiting new members, encouraging membership renewals in the Michigan Democratic Party within the County, recording and maintaining attendance records for the Executive Committee and County meetings and programs and functions of the WCDP, and maintaining a database of members and supporters.

The Executive Committee may from time to time select officers in addition to the thirteen officers specified above which in its judgment are proper to carry out the purposes of the Party.

The WCDP Officers are referred to collectively as the *Executive Board*.

b. **Meeting.** The Officers shall meet at a minimum, monthly and otherwise at the discretion of the Statutory Chair.

c. **Purpose.** The main purpose of the WCDP Officers is to plan and oversee the execution of the day-to-day business of the Party and execute their individual responsibilities as outlined below.

d. **Filling Vacancies** – The Executive or County Committee may fill any vacancies in the

Officers at a regular meeting of either body. Either group shall take nominations from the floor and then vote on the candidates for the vacancy in accordance with the MDP rules followed for selection of that officer.

e. **Budgeting** - The Board with the help of the Treasurer shall cause an annual budget to be presented and approved by the Executive Committee every year. In even years the Board will present a separate detailed election-related budget to the Executive Committee for approval after it receives enough information from the Coordinated Campaign to do so.

Section 3. WCDP County Committee.

a. **Membership.** Within forty-five (45) days of January 1 of each odd-numbered year the Executive Committee determines the membership of the County Committee. Membership of the County Committee shall include 2 party member representatives from each precinct in the county nominated and elected by the Executive Committee and any additional members the Executive Committee may nominate and elect. The total number of County Committee members may not exceed the total number of precinct delegates allocated for Washtenaw County.

b. **Purpose.** The main purpose of the County Committee is to foster and support the grassroots precinct organization.

c. **Budget Review.** The County Committee shall also review WCDP budget approved by the Executive Committee and may review the activity of the Executive Committee.

d. Between meetings of the County Committee, the Executive Committee has all the powers and performs all the duties of the County Committee, including the filling of vacancies in nominations as prescribed by law.

e. The Statutory Vice-Chair shall convene and preside at all County Committee meetings.

ARTICLE VII. COMMITTEES

Section 1. The Chair, subject to the approval of a majority of the Executive Committee, may appoint any additional ad hoc committees and committee Chairs necessary for the work of the organization.

Section 2. The Chairs of the Standing Committees are the Officers listed in Article VI above; except for the Information Systems Committee Chair who is appointed by the Chair with the advice and consent of the Executive Board. The Standing Committees shall include the following:

1. Resolutions, By-laws and Policy
2. Fundraising
3. Communications
4. Legislative Programs
5. Programs

6. Visibility
7. Precinct Organization
8. Outreach
9. Membership
10. Information Systems shall be responsible for the design management and technical support of the website, technical maintenance of the database of members and supporters, and technical support for email communications with members and supporters.

These committees may include appropriate subcommittees. The Chair of the County Party shall be an ex-officio member of all standing committees.

ARTICLE VIII. RESOLUTIONS *(updated June 6, 2015)*

Section 1. A resolution is a WCDP statement of position.

Section 2. A resolution may be adopted at a convention. The procedure for handling resolutions at a convention shall be set forth in the call to the convention. If a proposed resolution is not circulated with the call to the convention, the proponent of the resolution shall provide enough copies so that each person in attendance may have one.

Section 3. A resolution may be adopted by the Executive Committee, the County Committee, or a regular or special meeting of the WCDP membership. If the resolution is proposed for a regular or special meeting of the WCDP membership, the proposed resolution shall be included in the notice of the meeting of the WCDP membership.

Section 4. A resolution takes a simple majority to be adopted. If the written notice required by Section 3 is not given, the resolution may still be introduced, but it requires a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote to be adopted.

ARTICLE IX. ENDORSEMENTS *(adopted February 6, 2016)*

Section 1. The WCDP shall not make endorsements in any Democratic Party primary or caucus that is contested or may be contested. After the primary or caucus, the WCDP may, but need not, endorse any Democratic candidate who seeks our endorsement, subject to the provisions of this article.

Section 2. A candidate seeking an endorsement must be a member of the Michigan Democratic Party before an endorsement is made.

Section 3. The WCDP may, but need not, endorse a candidate in a non-partisan race, either judicial or non-judicial, and may endorse ballot questions. The number of candidates endorsed shall not exceed the number of candidates to be elected to a given office.

Section 4. A request for endorsement may be made to any member of the WCDP Executive Board, who shall promptly send the request to all members of the Executive Board.

The request shall be made in writing (email is acceptable) and shall indicate the office for which the candidate is seeking an endorsement. The Executive Board shall promptly consider all such requests. The Executive Board may, but need not, require a candidate or a supporter of a ballot question to fill out a questionnaire, appear for an interview with the Board, or furnish such other information that the Board determines is necessary for it to consider the request.

Section 5. The Executive Board may, but need not, recommend by a majority vote that the WCDP endorse a candidate or ballot question. The recommendation shall be sent to everyone on the WCDP's mailing list as part of the notice of the next general membership meeting.

Section 6. The candidate or ballot question is endorsed if the Executive Board's recommendation is approved at the general membership meeting by a majority vote. No request for endorsement, other than the Executive Board's recommendation, may be considered by any general membership meeting. A recommendation for an endorsement that fails to be approved shall not be reconsidered.

Section 7. An endorsement does not imply that a financial contribution will be made.

A copy of this article of the bylaws shall be sent to any candidate or supporter of a ballot question requesting an endorsement.

ARTICLE X. AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Proposals for changes or amendments to these bylaws shall first be referred to the Rules and Bylaws Committee that shall report its recommendations to the next regular Executive Committee meeting or special meeting called for that purpose.

Section 2. These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members of WCDP membership, present at a meeting, provided that written notice setting forth the proposed amendment has been given to all Party members at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of the meeting.

Section 3. These bylaws shall be in full force and effect upon their adoption and shall supersede all bylaws, rules, motions and policies of a contrary nature with the exception the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party.