

# -- THE ABC'S OF A PRECINCT CONVENTION --

At 7:15 p.m., on the evening of the Primary Election, Democratic primary voters throughout Texas will meet to hold their precinct convention to do the following:

- Elect delegates to the county or senatorial district convention
- Adopt resolutions that will be submitted to the county or senatorial district convention

The convention may seem complicated at first, but it is very easy and quick to conduct. Here are some basic rules that you need to follow:

1. Voters who **VOTED in the Democratic Primary** can participate in the Precinct Convention.
2. The standing precinct chair has priority in terms of running the precinct convention and is considered the temporary chair of the convention; however, anyone can start the convention **in the event the precinct chair does not attend the convention or the seat is vacant**.
3. Make sure that the election judge has the "Precinct Convention Here Tonight" reminder sign/poster to post on the wall.

## STEPS TO THE PRECINCT CONVENTION:

**Step 1:** Precinct Chair will pick up the precinct convention packet from the Election Judge at 7 pm (or when the last voter has voted). **Please note:** if the precinct chair is **not** the election judge, it would be a good idea to contact the Election Judge by phone the night before to coordinate the pick up of the precinct convention packet.

The precinct packet contains the following items:

1. A letter from the State Party Chair
2. Precinct Convention Minutes Form – carbon copy set
3. Precinct Convention Sign-in Sheet (aka "Exhibit A") – carbon copy set
4. Reporting form for those elected as Delegates to County/Senatorial District Convention (aka Exhibit G) - carbons
5. Reporting form for those elected as Alternates to the County/Senatorial District Convention (aka Exhibit H) - carbons
6. Excerpt from *The Rules of the Texas Democratic Party*
7. Return Envelope to return convention materials to the County Chair
8. Half-slips of colored paper with Delegate/Alternate Counts and address of the County Chair

**Step 2:** The temporary convention chair calls the precinct convention to order and appoints a temporary Secretary to take minutes of the convention proceedings, using the prescribed forms included in your precinct packet.

**Step 3:** The temporary convention chair will then ask the eligible convention attendees to sign in on the Precinct Convention Sign-in Sheet, **Exhibit A** (also known as the "enrollment"). A person becomes eligible to participate in their precinct convention if they voted in the Democratic Primary on Election Day, by mail or by early vote. The Election Judge should have provided to the precinct chair (or presiding officer of the convention) a copy of the **poll book** which is to be used to verify any questions about a participant's qualifications.

**Step 4:** The first order of business is to elect a permanent Precinct Convention Chair and Secretary. In addition to the Permanent Convention Chair and Secretary, the precinct convention is entitled to elect other officers (such as a Parliamentarian) that the convention participants deem necessary.

**Step 5:** Next, you will elect delegates and alternates to the County/Senatorial District Convention. In the packet, there should be a half-slip of paper which contains the number of delegates and alternates the precinct is entitled to elect. (Remember: there are **no secret ballots** in the Democratic convention process). The Permanent Chair calls for nominations for the delegate and alternate slots.

## ELECTION PROCEDURE:

In a non-presidential year, TDP Rules provide convention participants an option of participating "at-large" or in support of a "petition" for a particular political preference. **If no petitions are offered** (the general rule) the convention attendees caucus together ("as a whole") to elect their delegates and alternates:

- **All** delegates and alternates shall be elected at-large by **majority vote**.

- If a majority vote cannot be achieved, the petition process is invoked, utilizing the document entitled “E-Z Math/Delegate Proportionate Share Formula” (located on the inside back cover of your TDP Rules Excerpt).

**If caucuses are requested by petition**, refer to the Rules of the Texas Democratic Party, Art. IV.B.11 and the Rules Excerpt provided in your packet for appropriate procedures, which includes information necessary to calculate a caucus's proportionate share of delegates:

- Chair announces the number and percentage of participants who signed each petition and the proportionate share of Delegates and Alternates each group is entitled to elect (utilizing the document entitled “E-Z Math/Delegate Proportionate Share Formula,” located on the inside back cover of your TDP Rules Excerpt).
- Nominations are made within each caucus until closed
- Each caucus participant casts one vote in the election for delegates; the highest vote-getters become the Delegates and the next-highest are the Alternates.

If any delegate or alternate positions remain unfilled after caucusing, those positions should be elected at-large by majority vote. **Regardless of whether petitions are or are not submitted**, if a majority vote still cannot be achieved to determine any remaining delegate and alternate seats, then those seats remain unfilled; nevertheless, all precinct delegations to the County/Senatorial District Conventions are entitled to vote their full delegate strength.

**IMPORTANT:** Filling **ANY and ALL** delegate and alternate positions must be done *before* the precinct convention adjourns.

**Remember:** You do not need to have attended the precinct convention to be a delegate to the County/Senatorial District Convention! If you are unable to attend your precinct convention – but voted in the Democratic Primary (on Election Day, by mail or early vote) – you can have a friend, spouse, etc., submit your name for consideration in the election for delegate.

- Those individuals who are elected but did not attend the precinct convention are to be noted on the proper forms with a **double** asterisk (\*\*)

**Step 6:** After the election of delegates and alternates is concluded, the Permanent Convention Chair calls for nominations for, and the election of, a Delegation Chair from among those delegates just elected.

**Step 7:** At this time, the Permanent Convention Chair asks the participants if any of them have resolutions to present to the body for consideration. Such resolutions should be read, discussed and voted upon. Following the adoption of resolutions, if any, the Permanent Convention Chair should call for additional business to be brought before the body. If there is no additional business, a motion to adjourn the convention is in order.

#### **AFTER THE CONVENTION:**

The Permanent Convention Chair has a very important responsibility to ensure the convention materials are returned to the County Chair. The Precinct Convention Minutes, as well as the Precinct Convention Exhibits A, G and H are carbon copy documents – each has a white (original first page), yellow and blue page. The blue copies are for the Permanent Convention Chair to keep. The white (original) and yellow copies of the carbons – as well as the voter roll – need to be returned to your **County Chair** no later than three (3) days after the convention, using the envelope and address provided in your precinct convention packet.