



HOW TO BE A DELEGATE TO THE 2008 DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION

Texas will send 228 delegates and 32 alternates to the Democratic National Convention in 2008. These Texans will help choose the Democratic nominees for President and Vice President, and they will also express opinions on key national issues. We encourage you to participate and to run for national delegate. What follows is, in general terms, an explanation of how to be a delegate to the National Convention. If you want more information, read the "Texas Democratic Party National Delegate Selection Plan for 2008" and the "Rules of the Texas Democratic Party." Both are available on the Texas Democratic Party website, www.txdemocrats.org.

FILING REQUIREMENTS

To become a delegate to the National Convention you must:

1. Vote in the 2008 Democratic primary;
2. File a Statement of Candidacy with the State Chair no earlier than **April 21** and no later than **May 21, 2008**. Filing forms will be available from the Texas Democratic Party by **April 5, 2008**; and
3. Be elected by the State Convention in Austin **June 6-7, 2008**. If you participate in all stages of the convention process and campaign among delegates to the State Convention, you will have a better chance to become a delegate.

PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY

Texas will hold a presidential primary on **Tuesday, March 4, 2008**. The Primary will be open to any registered Texas voter who does not vote in another party's primary and who does not attend another party's political convention.

A total of 126 delegate positions (three-quarters of the base delegation) will be distributed to presidential candidates based on the results of the primary. Forty-two delegate positions (one-quarter of the base delegation) will be distributed based on the number of people attending the party's conventions. The delegates themselves will be elected at our State Convention **June 6-7, 2008**, in Austin.

CONVENTION SYSTEM

Texas Democratic Party has a three-level convention system:

- Level 1.** Precinct Conventions;
- Level 2.** County Conventions (or Senatorial District Conventions in urban areas); and
- Level 3.** State Convention.

Those who attend their Precinct Convention will elect delegates to the County/Senatorial Convention; those who attend their County/Senatorial Convention will elect delegates

to the State Convention. Those who attend the State Convention will elect delegates to the National Convention.

PRECINCT CONVENTIONS

A convention will be held in your precinct at **7:15 p.m. on March 4, 2008**, the same day as the Presidential Primary. The convention is usually held at the polling place and is open to anyone who votes in the Democratic Primary that day (or during the early voting period). There will be a sign at the polling place telling exactly where the convention will be held. If you can't find a sign, ask your election clerk where the convention will be held.

The convention begins at 7:15 p.m. when the Precinct Chair calls the convention to order. If the Precinct Chair is absent, anyone participating may start the meeting. The convention is governed by Robert's Rules of Order and Texas Democratic Party Rules. If you are late to the convention, you can still participate; however, you can't change what has already happened.

The first item of business is for everyone attending to sign in and indicate the presidential candidate (including undecided) he or she supports. This is not a secret ballot. The State Party will provide your Precinct Chair with forms to use.

Next, the convention elects a Chair and Secretary to run the convention.

Third, the Chair announces:

1. The number of delegates to the County/Senatorial Convention the precinct will elect;
2. The percent of people attending the Precinct Convention who support each candidate; and
3. The number of delegates the supporters of each candidate are entitled to elect.

Delegates are awarded to presidential candidates based on a candidate's share of supporters at the convention by using the following formula:

E-Z Math Formula to Determine Threshold

Number of People at Precinct Convention

Divided By

Number Of Delegates To County/Senatorial Convention To Which The Precinct Is Entitled

Equals

Threshold (Number of People Required for a Candidate Caucus)

(Always Round Up)

EXAMPLE:

31 people attend a Precinct Convention which is entitled to 6 delegates to the County/Senatorial Convention. Divide 6 into 31 for an answer of 5.1. Since you always round up, the threshold for this Precinct Convention would be 6.

Fourth, supporters of each candidate gather in a group and elect delegates and alternates to the County/Senatorial Convention. Anyone who supports a candidate who did not win enough of the convention to elect one delegate may join the supporters of the candidate who is their second choice.

Voting within the group is done at one time. The group first secures enough nominations to fill all of the delegate and alternate positions. Each person casts as many votes as there are delegates to be elected. For instance, suppose you support Jane Doe for president and she is entitled to 4 delegates and 4 alternates to the County/Senatorial Convention. Your group must first make at least 8 nominations. Then, one vote is taken and you cast 4 votes. You may cast your votes for one person or split them among several people. The highest vote-getters are selected in rank order until all delegate and alternate positions are filled.

The Precinct Convention may take positions on issues.

COUNTY/SENATORIAL CONVENTIONS

If you are elected a delegate or alternate at your Precinct Convention, you may attend your County Convention on **Saturday, March 29, 2008**. In some urban counties, Senatorial District Conventions will be held instead of a County Convention.

The County Convention is called to order by the County Chair, who calls for the report of the Credentials Committee. The Credentials Committee is a committee of the convention that decides disputes over who has been elected a delegate or alternate. The committee is elected by the County Executive Committee before the convention.

You will first elect a Chair and Secretary to run the convention.

Next, a poll is taken of all the delegates to determine how many delegates of the convention support each candidate. The Chair will announce the results.

Fourth, delegates in each precinct, or sometimes a group of precincts, gather together to elect delegates and alternates to the State Convention. Within the group, the delegates and alternates are elected at one time, but you cast only one vote. The highest vote-getters are the delegates and the next highest are the alternates. For example, suppose your precinct gets to elect one delegate and one alternate to the State Convention. Only one election is held and you get to cast only one vote. Thus if 10 supporters of John Smith are present and all 10 vote for one delegate to the State Convention while 8 supporters of Jane Doe are present and all 8 vote for another delegate, then the

John Smith representative will be the delegate and the Jane Doe representative will be the alternate.

The results of all the elections within the precincts are added together and given to the Nominations Committee. This committee then distributes the “at-large” delegates among each of the presidential candidates so that the county’s delegation reflects each candidate’s fair share of the convention. For instance, if supporters of Jane Doe made up 50% of your convention, the Nominations Committee would work to see that 50% of the delegates to the State Convention from your county would be her supporters. However, a candidate who wins less than 15% of the convention doesn’t have to be given any at-large delegates. The at-large delegation must also be used to make sure that the whole delegation is equally divided between men and women as far as mathematically practicable.

STATE CONVENTION

If you were elected a delegate at your County/Senatorial Convention, you may participate in the State Convention, held **June 6-7, 2008**, in Austin.

Although the State Convention will officially come to order about **6:00 p.m. on Friday, June 6**, there will be issue caucuses during the day and Senate District Caucuses will meet from **3:00 to 5:00 p.m. on Friday**. Any Senate District Caucuses that do not finish their business will reconvene after the convention recesses for the evening.

Each delegate will officially sign-in indicating his/her presidential preference or uncommitted status when the delegate picks up his/her credentials. The sign-ins will be counted statewide and the totals will be used by the Nominations Committee on Saturday to distribute the pledged party and elected official delegates and the at-large delegates among the presidential candidates. However, any candidate who wins less than 15% of the whole State Convention will not get any at-large delegates.

The State Convention elects four types of delegates to the National Convention:

1. 126 pledged senatorial district delegates and 21 alternates;
2. 35 unpledged party and elected official delegates;
3. 25 pledged party and elected official delegates and 5 alternates; and
4. 42 at-large delegates and 6 alternates.

PLEGDED SENATORIAL DISTRICT DELEGATES

At the Senatorial District Caucus, supporters of each candidate gather to elect their share of delegates and alternates to the National Convention. These must be equally divided between men and women.



The number of delegates awarded each candidate is based on the results of the Presidential Primary in that district. However, any candidate who does not win 15% of the vote in that district will not get any senatorial district delegates.

UNPLEDGED PARTY AND ELECTED OFFICIAL DELEGATES

On **Saturday morning, June 7**, the Nominations Committee will meet to first nominate unpledged delegates. These are set by national party rules as:

1. Members of the Democratic National Committee from Texas;
2. The former Speaker of the United State House of Representatives and the former Chair of the Democratic National Committee; and
3. All Democratic Members of the United States House.

These delegates will be immediately ratified by the State Convention.

PLEDGED PARTY AND ELECTED OFFICIAL DELEGATES

The Nominations Committee will take a break for one hour after nominating the unpledged delegates to allow those people who are eligible to be “pledged party and elected official delegates” to file a Statement of Candidacy with the chair of the committee.

After the break, the committee will nominate “pledged party and elected official delegates.” These are awarded to

each presidential candidate based on the sign-ins made the day before.

These names will be immediately reported to the convention for a vote.

PLEDGED AT-LARGE DELEGATES AND ALTERNATES

After the convention votes on the pledged party and elected official delegates, the Nominations Committee will nominate “at-large” delegates and alternates.

The “at-large” delegation is distributed among presidential candidates in the same way that the pledged party and elected official delegates are distributed. The entire “at-large” delegation must be used, if necessary, to make sure that the whole Texas delegation to the National Convention is equally divided between men and women. It will also be used to meet certain affirmative action goals.

The Nominations Committee will also nominate 3 unpledged at-large delegates.

NATIONAL CONVENTION

If you are elected a delegate or alternate by the State Convention, you may participate in the National Convention in Denver **August 25-28, 2008**.

The state party will advise you on fund-raising and on low-cost housing and transportation if you would not otherwise be able to attend.

SENATORIAL DISTRICT DELEGATES AND ALTERNATES

District	Delegates	Alternates	District	Delegates	Alternates	District	Delegates	Alternates
1	4	1	11	4	1	21	4	1
2	4	1	12	4	1	22	3	0
3	4	1	13	7	1	23	6	1
4	4	1	14	8	1	24	3	0
5	4	1	15	4	1	25	6	1
6	3	0	16	4	1	26	4	1
7	3	0	17	5	1	27	3	0
8	4	1	18	4	1	28	3	0
9	3	0	19	4	1	29	3	0
10	5	1	20	4	1	30	3	0
						31	2	0



2008 ELECTION CALENDAR

Jan. 2	Last day to file for place on the primary ballot.
Jan. 4	First day to apply for ballot by mail for Primary Election.
Jan. 11	Last day for County Executive Committees to select time and place for County and Senatorial District Conventions and to conduct drawing for ballot order.
Feb. 4	Last day to register to vote in March Primary.
Feb. 8	First day to apply for ballot by mail for runoff if did not request runoff ballot on application for primary ballot.
Feb. 19	First day of Early Voting for March 4 Primary.
Feb. 26	Last day for County Clerk to <u>receive</u> application for ballot by mail for primary ballot.
Feb. 29	Last day of Early Voting for March 4 Primary.
March 4	Primary Voting 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Precinct Conventions 7:15 p.m.
March 10	Last day to register to vote in runoff.
March 19	SDEC canvasses primary election results.
March 29	County and Senatorial District Conventions select delegates to State Convention.
March 31	First day of Early Voting for runoff.
April 1	Last day for County Clerk to <u>receive</u> application for ballot by mail for runoff.
April 4	Last day of Early Voting for runoff.
April 8	Runoff Election for Primary.
Apr. 21	First day to file Statement of Candidacy for National Delegate.
May 21	Last day to file Statement of Candidacy for National Delegate.
May 28	TDP sends list to Presidential Candidates for approval.
June 5	Presidential Candidates send TDP their approved list of Delegates. SDEC meeting in Austin.
June 6-7	State Convention, Austin Convention Center.
June 17	Presidential candidate must file a list of suggested standing committee members for the National Convention with the State Chair.
Aug. 25-28	National Convention – Denver, Colorado.
Sept. 5	First day to apply for ballot by mail for General Election.
Oct. 6	Last day to register to vote for General Election.
Oct. 20	First day of early voting for General Election.
Oct. 28	Last day for County Clerk to <u>receive</u> application for ballot by mail for General Election.
Oct. 31	Last day of Early Voting for General Election.
Nov. 4	General Election.
Dec. 15	Presidential Electors convene at the State Capitol.
