



# County Chair Handbook

Nebraska Democratic Party

June 2024

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# Introduction

Congratulations! You've just been elected County Chair, a critical leadership role in our Democratic Party. You are the glue that keeps things together at the local level to build the party and elect Democrats in your county and across the state.

Whether you were eager to become Chair of your county, dragged into it. Or are a vice-chair who is filling out the rest of the elected chair's term. Whatever the reason, people are looking to you to move your county party forward.

There are 93 Nebraska counties. That means there are 93 different ways to lead your County Party. Maybe you have been active and played significant roles in your county for decades, or maybe you are just getting going after your county has been without an organized Democratic party for years. We welcome all shades of blue at our table and perfection is not a requirement!

As County Chair you set the tone for your county party.

- You are the point of contact between the State Party and your County Party.
- You are the major contact between the County Party and elected Democrats and Democratic candidates.
- You are the person members in the community and news organizations look to as the face of the Democratic Party.
- You are the person who looks ahead and plans events to build the party and elect Democrats from parades to voter registration, county meetings, and more.
- You are the person who works to ensure continuity and to make sure that the County Party is in good hands when you turn the organization over to your successor.

At all times, remember a few things:

- Everyone in your county party is a volunteer. Find something for them to do, and welcome all shades of blue into our party--even if you disagree or agree with a volunteer's choice of a candidate in a primary.
- You are the leader of your county party, but you are not alone. There are people around the state, and in your county, who have been through the same thing you are going through right now. If you need advice, reach out to us.

- There are all sorts of paths to get from here to there. The most important thing to remember is we do not require perfection. We require hard work and teamwork. This is how we win.

# Nebraska Democratic Party Statewide Officers and Staff

## Officers

Elected every 4 years at the State Convention. All leadership positions in the party are unpaid, volunteer positions that require travel, fundraising, candidate recruitment and party-building responsibilities. With the exception of DNC Committeepeople, the elections for the executive committee are held during midterm years. The election happens in the summer and the officers start their terms at the first State Central Committee meeting after the November election. DNC Committeepeople are elected at the State Convention in Presidential Years for a four-year term. The election happens in the summer and the Committeepeople start their terms as soon as the National Convention is over.

### **Chair: Jane Kleeb**

The Chair serves as a member of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) and the Association of State Democratic Committees (ASDC).

The State Chair directs the actions of the staff and is the face of the party. The chair schedules and facilitates meetings. "The State Chair is the Executive officer of the State Party, and shall be elected by accredited delegates assembled in the State Convention. The State Chair shall carry out all policies and programs of the State Party as determined by the State Convention, the State Central Committee, and/or the State Executive Committee. The State Chair shall also do everything to initiate, to organize and/or promote development of the state Party at every level throughout the State, and shall perform all other such duties as are prescribed elsewhere in this Constitution and/or in the Bylaws of the Nebraska Democratic Party." <sup>1</sup>

### **Vice Chair: Ron Kaminski**

"The Vice Chair shall be elected by the accredited delegates assembled in the State

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<sup>1</sup> Nebraska Democratic Party, 2020, Section 5.B.1

Convention each midterm election year for a four-year term. The Vice Chair shall be a different gender identity from that of the State Chair and shall temporarily assume the duties of the State Chair in the event of a vacancy in that office. The Vice Chair shall assist the Chair in carrying out the functions and duties of the Chair's office”<sup>2</sup>

**Vice Chair of County Parties: Ryan Griffin**

“The Vice Chair of County Parties shall be elected by a caucus of county chairs held at the State Convention each midterm election year for a four-year term. The Vice Chair of County Parties shall act as a liaison between the State and County Parties and shall temporarily assume the duties of the State Chair in the event of a vacancy in both the office of State Chair and Vice Chair. ”

**DNC Committeepople:**

**DNC Committeewoman Elect:** Sharlette Schwenninger

**DNC Committeeman:** Sean Flowerday

They are elected at the State Convention, in Presidential Years, for a four-year term. The election happens in the summer and the Committee People start their terms as soon as the National Convention is over. They also serve as members of the DNC.

“The National Committeeman and National Committeewoman shall be elected by the accredited delegates assembled in the State Convention each presidential election year for a four-year term. The National Committee representatives shall reflect the State Party philosophy to the National Committee, shall act as liaisons between the State and National Parties, shall use their public visibility to the best advantage and aid of the State Party and in soliciting financial support for it, and shall perform all other duties as are prescribed by the Nebraska Democratic Party, and by the Bylaws and procedures of the Democratic National Committee.”<sup>3</sup>

**Treasurer:** Ted Kessler

“The State Treasurer shall be nominated by the State Chair and be confirmed by the State Central Committee. The State Treasurer shall act as custodian of all party monies and shall be responsible for all federal and state reporting procedures. In conjunction with the Finance Committee, the State Treasurer shall assist the State Chair, State Central Committee, and State Executive Committee in the preparation of an annual

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<sup>2</sup> Nebraska Democratic Party, 2020, Section 5.B.2

<sup>3</sup> Nebraska Democratic Party, 2020, Section 5.B.3

budget, in periodic budget revisions, and to insure the financial stability of the Democratic Party.”<sup>4</sup>

**Secretary:** Stephanie Matejka

“The State Secretary shall be nominated by the State Chair and confirmed by the State Central Committee. The State Secretary shall be responsible for transcribing and disseminating the official record of all Party business, whether before the State Convention, the State Central Committee, or the State Executive Committee.”<sup>5</sup>

## Staff

The NDP staff work every single day to help elect Democrats and build the party infrastructure. Our staff, under the current leadership team, formed a union with IBEW. Staff positions are protected under a union contract and are no longer tied to a particular elected party officer.

**Executive Director:** Precious McKesson, [precious@nebraskademocrats.org](mailto:precious@nebraskademocrats.org)

**Communications Director:** Jose Flores Jr., [jose@nebraskademocrats.org](mailto:jose@nebraskademocrats.org)

Manages website, social media and party emails. Handles press releases and media interview requests.

**Political Director:** Ron Rivera, [ronr@nebraskademocrats.org](mailto:ronr@nebraskademocrats.org)

VAN access, data and field

**Outreach Director:** Gina Frank, [gina@nebraskademocrats.org](mailto:gina@nebraskademocrats.org)

Volunteers, Block Captains, county chairs, grassroots activism and outreach.

**Voter Engagement Director:** Hannah Wroblewski, [hannah@nebraskademocrats.org](mailto:hannah@nebraskademocrats.org)

Voter engagement, canvassing, events..

**Party Affairs Coordinator:** Jack Schiewe, [jack@nebraskademocrats.org](mailto:jack@nebraskademocrats.org)

Liason between Staff and Caucuses and Councils, organizes SCC meetings

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<sup>4</sup> Nebraska Democratic Party, 2020, Section 5.B.4

<sup>5</sup> Nebraska Democratic Party, 2020, Section 5.B.5

# NDP Mission Statement

Our state's greatest strength is our people: honest, hard-working people from all walks of life. We believe in growing the good life for ALL Nebraskans, not just for a few at the top. At the Nebraska Democratic Party, we want to do well for ourselves and our families -- and do our part for our communities, state, and country. We respect the dignity of every person--no matter who you are, what you look like or where you come from. Each of us has something valuable to contribute to our state. When Nebraskans work together, we can accomplish anything. Democrats fight every day to move our state forward and make our government and our economy work for every Nebraskan--not just powerful special interests.

The Nebraska Democratic Party is made up of volunteers and staff to elect Democrats across our state. We are working hard to build our Party and elect Democrats across our state. <https://nebraskademocrats.org/party-platform/>

## How the State Party Works with County Parties

The State Party provides support and guidance to County Parties. Some of the support and services we have available to county parties include:

- ★ **VAN-** You can sign the MOU and access the Voter File for your county. The Voter file gives you access to tools to make managing your county party and getting Democrats elected much easier.
- ★ **Infrastructure-** We have extensive email and phone lists, access to texting platforms, and a mail permit that allows us to send bulk mail at a discounted rate. We can use these resources to help you build your county party and reach Democrats in your area.
- ★ **Literature-** The state party creates lit pieces for outreach and voter education. These pieces are available to you. If you have a specific need, let us know.
- ★ **Block Captains-** Our Block Captains get 50 doors in their neighborhood and they talk to their neighbors about voting and civic engagement 3 times a year.
- ★ **Blue Bench Training-** We provide training opportunities several times a year and if you are interested in something specific, please reach out and we will do what we can to accommodate your request!
- ★ **Monthly Meetings-** The Vice-Chair of County parties holds monthly meetings with the county chair caucus. This is an opportunity to network with county chairs across the state and share best practices on the grassroots organizing efforts in each county.



# Running your County party

You, as a leader of a political party, have to deal with issues and personalities in a way that keeps others recognizing you as a leader. Every County and situation is different, and it's your job as a leader to find a way to make things work.

You can't control or do everything

You are the chair, and you have committee people<sup>6</sup> as members of your organization, but it's important to remember that they are volunteers, and are not yours to command unless they're willing to be commanded. They will need to be included in decisions, they will need to be persuaded, and they will need to be involved.

From time to time, there will be conflicts. Sometimes it will be due to personalities, other times it will be due to differing priorities. A little conflict is fine - people who are engaged make better Committee members. Be careful that the conflict doesn't become bitter and escalate into a feud. That not only distracts from the main goals of the county party but chases good people away - they don't want to give up their evenings for a prolonged, distressing battle between people who should be on the same side. As a chair, your job is to keep things moving along - sometimes that means putting your foot down, and other times it means giving in for the good of the party.

The Democratic Party is a big tent and we welcome lots of viewpoints. We draw the line at viewpoints that make marginalized communities less safe. Racism, homophobia, transphobia, bigotry, and sexism are against our platform. The state party offers training annually to help us be more inclusive and avoid harm. We have a code of conduct that we expect candidates and party leaders to abide by. It can be found here: [Code of Conduct](#) and [Code of Conduct One Pager](#) (If you are reading a paper copy of this, you can find a digital version by searching for it on [nebraskademocrats.org](http://nebraskademocrats.org), or you can call the NDP office and a staff member can send you a paper copy)

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<sup>6</sup> In some counties there are elected committeepeople, in other counties membership is defined in other ways. For our purposes, "committee people" refers to your members however you define them.

## Working with Candidates and Elected Democrats

The main job of any Democratic party is to elect Democrats. Every county has different tasks, and different things it needs to do, but nothing else is more important than supporting your local Democrats.

The role of a county party varies with each County depending on its traditions, leadership and elected Democrats in the county.

Each County party needs to decide its priorities and set goals. Some counties, for example, may have a goal of electing a legislator or county commissioner. Others in dominant Democratic areas may spend their effort training volunteers to be effective campaigners. Others, in areas where the party has been weak, may decide that it's best effort should be put into increasing its role in County politics and preparing itself for the future.

## Working with Community Groups

Some of our greatest allies are the groups on the ground doing the work all year. It's important to know who those people are and get to know them. Take the time to reach out to groups in your area that align with our Democratic Party Values. Be aware that some non-profit organizations cannot be political so don't be offended if they don't work with you directly.

## Growing your County Party

Recruiting volunteers, and keeping them engaged is a critical part of having a thriving county party. It is important to be present and visible all year around especially in rural areas where Democrats feel neglected.

Some ideas for recruiting new volunteers and keeping current volunteers engaged and being visible in your community all year:

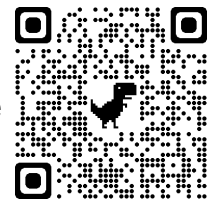
- Making Calls
- House Parties
- Trainings
- One-on-one meetings
- Digital outreach
- Personal networks
- Tabling at community events
- County Fair Booth
- Parades
- Service Projects

# Fundraising

Every County party needs to find ways to raise money. Some counties have offices during election season - these parties are more effective in helping to elect Democrats (space for phone banking canvases staging etc.) some counties support their local Democratic candidates financially. Most County parties need money for their booths at the county fair, or to pay for postage or a post office box. Some counties have annual banquets that serve as their main fundraiser. Others have auctions, yard sales, or sell items at County Fair time.

Many counties consider doing a mailer as a fundraiser. Those are expensive, and returns are usually scant, but a letter done in the right way, to the right people may be effective.

The most critical thing to remember is if you stay under spending or raising \$5k life is pretty easy. If you spend or raise more than that you then need to file with NADC and maybe even FEC--still all doable, but requires paperwork and legal assistance. There is a [memo](#) available that goes in depth on this topic. You can find it at the link above, the QR code, or contact the party and we can send it to you.



# Press relations

A good relationship with the news organizations in your county is vital. You cannot expect them to agree with you on every issue, and some of them may be very much opposed to your beliefs. Most will be willing to accept meeting notices and information about events, particularly if you have some rapport with them.

The key to gaining rapport with reporters is to remember that they are people. Be nice -- after all, you want them to do something for you.

Make sure you get notices to the newspaper and radio stations for them to use them in a timely manner. The notices have to be clear, with date, time and address for meetings. Each newspaper will have its own guidelines for submitting calendar and press releases.

Never forget: your job and their jobs are different, and there will be times when your jobs and theirs collide. Do not tell a news reporter anything you do not want to see in the paper, online or broadcast on radio or TV.

If you feel your position wasn't represented well in a story, you should tell them, but don't be defensive or confrontational. Best way to handle reporters is to be moderate whether you're pleased or displeased with the story.

## **Roles of Officers**

The roles of officers can mirror the roles of state party officers, or you can define those for your county party.

### **Chair**

The county chair has the responsibility of maintaining the organization of the county party. The duties mirror those of the State party officers.

### **Vice Chair**

Your vice-chair only has official duties in case you are unable to fulfill yours, but you and or the county Party Committee May assign the vice-chair to specific duties. Some County Parties have more than one vice-chair. The vice-chair shall be a different gender identity from that of the county chair.

### **Treasurer**

Your treasure is a very important person with very important responsibilities. The treasurer must keep the financial records of the party.

### **Secretary**

The secretary is in charge of non-financial records such as minutes correspondents etc. Some County parties combine secretary and treasurer, other County parties split up the job of secretary.

## **Replacing Officers or Committee People**

Your County party's bylaws should have provisions for filling vacancies on a temporary basis. Most County bylaws require that the vacancy be filled at the next Central committee meeting. All committee people, whether elected or appointed, are able to vote to fill vacancies.

## **Parliamentary Procedure**

Parliamentary procedure is used to ensure that the rights of the individual members and the rights of the organization are protected and enforced. When properly used these

procedures provide the best way yet to make sure the organization can accomplish its objectives in an orderly and expedient manner. While smaller groups may use less formal procedures the rights of the members should always be paramount.

The NDP Constitution and Bylaws and the DNC Rules mandate the use of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised for procedural matters where they are not inconsistent with the constitution and bylaws. Counties may wish to make modifications to some of these procedures.

In most cases, you don't need to be an expert in parliamentary procedure in order to be a good chair. You do need to know the basics, and you ought to have a copy of Robert's rules of order, revised, just in case. There are people who love to tie up meetings with motions and other dilatory tactics, you may need to know just enough about parliamentary procedure to keep them from bringing your central committee meetings to a halt. County Chairs and other members should be familiar enough with Robert's to ensure the orderly flow of the meeting.

At the end of this handbook, there are some pages with sample motions and how they are handled.

If your county party is very small and informal, it's ok to have meetings that are informal. If you have a larger group it's a good idea to implement these procedures.

## County Meetings

We encourage you to have meetings every month at a consistent time and place, this allows people to plan to attend on a regular basis. County meetings can be as formal or informal as you want. You can find a sample meeting agenda at the end of this handbook. If you are in a rural area where Democrats are separated by miles, it may be a good idea to have a social component to your meetings.

Rural county chairs: It's OK if your county party meetings start out as 4 people meeting monthly at a coffee shop and discussing outreach and planning how to contact more members. Your meeting minutes may just be a notebook of brainstorming you've done to reach out to lonely Democrats in your area. The work of building the party infrastructure takes time and as your organization grows, you can make changes to your structure by adding positions and becoming more formal.

# County Convention

One of your critical roles as a county chair is to hold a county convention in even numbered years to elect delegates to the State Convention.

In Presidential years the county convention is an important part of our Delegate Selection Plan and we are counting on you to facilitate this. Every four years there is a Delegate Selection Plan (DSP) that is drafted by the rules committee and approved by the DNC and then by the State Central Committee. They then draft rules for County Conventions so that your events are compliant with State Laws and with the DSP and DNC rules.

County Parties must also hold county conventions in midterm years. There are state statutes that require certain accommodations and public notice. The State party will guide you through the process when that time comes.

Here are the main points of the Convention process:

- ★ Pick a date that doesn't conflict with major holidays and is within the range we will specify
- ★ Pick a location that is large enough for your expected group
- ★ Give notice of the meeting place, date, and time
- ★ Here are the things that must be accomplished (Some of these change slightly with the Delegate Selection Plan in Presidential years, this was the 2024 list):
  - Must publish county convention dates and times 7 days prior to each convention.
  - Must elect County Officers
  - For Douglas County only, they also must elect County Central Committee Members. Douglas is the only County Party that elects a County Central Committee at County Convention.
- ★ You will get detailed guidance as the convention dates get closer. Make sure that the state party has up-to-date contact information for you so you don't miss anything.

## Bylaws

It's important to have a set of bylaws that fits the needs of your county party, and that are flexible enough to change when the situation requires. Bylaws should enable the

County party to do what it needs to do. It is supposed to enable the majority, but give certain rights and protections to the minority. If the bylaws give too much weight to one side or the other, they should be changed. If you don't have a set of bylaws and don't know where to start, take a look at a set of bylaws for another County party. Use it as a start, and make changes that fit the needs of your county party.

Bylaws do not need to mirror those of the state party, but they cannot have clauses that are at odds with it either. An example of a clause that would be a problem would be one that sets organization dates that are different from State party requirements.

Party business is discussed at the meeting, and officers, committee chairs, and others give reports on their activities. Central Committee members are encouraged to join one of several standing committees that plan events, work on resolutions or work on organizing the party.

## **Electing Democrats**

### **Recruiting Candidates**

One of the main jobs of a county party is to find candidates. At the county and local level, it is vital that the county party make an effective effort. Whether the elections are held on a partisan basis or not, it is extremely important to recruit and run candidates for local offices such as soil conservation district, water board, School board, city council, county commission etc. These seats are often uncontested and serve as a great training ground for candidates interested in running for higher office.

If your county party has an idea for someone at higher levels, statewide office or Congress, it's best to contact the State Party and let them take things from there.

Democratic Candidates who sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) can get access to the voter file to help with their campaigns. The state party, under the leadership of Jane Kleeb, has chosen to grant Basic VAN access to all candidates who sign the MoU and abide by the rules of the party. Enhanced VAN has more information and is available with the price on a sliding scale depending on the size of the race.

### **Endorsing Candidates**

One of the main jobs of a county party is to find candidates. At the county and local level, it is vital that the county party make an active effort - whether the elections are

held on a partisan basis or not. Some counties have a tradition of endorsing Democratic primaries but most do not. Those counties that do endorsements usually require a supermajority for an official endorsement.

It is strongly recommended that your county party not endorse a candidate in a Democratic primary. If there's interest in endorsing in the primary election, your county party needs to consider whether it helps or hurts the candidate for the party. If an endorsement causes too much tension within your county party or if it creates difficulties when your endorsed candidate loses the primary, it might be best not to endorse.

Endorsements in local, nonpartisan elections can be difficult as well. Voters generally are not fond of partisanship and expect non-partisan elections to remain that way. Some County Parties have a tradition of endorsing in local elections, but those are usually ones with strong Democratic traditions. Even so, endorsing in non-partisan races has been known to backfire on candidates and County parties.

If endorsing in local races is considered, it's best to make sure that it will be in the best interest of the candidate and the county party. If an endorsement doesn't help either, it would be best to encourage County party members to be active in the race on a personal basis.

## Helping Candidates

The main job of any Democratic party is to elect Democrats. Every county has different tasks, and different things it needs to do, but nothing else is more important than supporting your local Democrats. Your county party can help Democrats in a number of ways, namely:

- Going door-to-door
- Making calls to voters
- Writing letters to the editor
- Raising funds
- Recruiting Block Captains

It's important that you let your local Democratic candidates know early on that the party wants to help. Let them know the various ways you might be able to help and let that



candidate decide how the county party can help best. Remember, the candidate is the one who's on the ballot, and whose credibility is on the line. In most cases, they have to reach the broadest section of the voting public in order to win elections, and not everything a County party wants to do might be helpful. Always be a friend to your candidates, and help them in ways they think best.

## **Voter File**

This is made available through the Democratic party of Nebraska to each County party. It allows the county party to print out walking, phone, or mailing lists. The voter final can be sorted by precinct, party, age, sex, voting frequency, and many other options. The voter file is known as votebuilder and is web-based, meaning that with a username and password you can log on from any computer with internet access. There is also a mobile phone application, MiniVAN, that allows users to export canvassing lists from VAN and enter data from your device as you canvass. The app can be downloaded via the Google Play or Apple Store.

The State Party offers training as needed. We highly encourage you to learn to use votebuilder and miniVAN so you can pull lists whenever you want, however if you are not comfortable with computers, we are happy to send them to you so you can build your County Party. You do not need to pay your county clerk for the list. We can give you one that includes any phone numbers we have.

When you incorporate the voter file into your organizing, it helps the state party know who is active in your area, and it helps candidates running in your county to know who to reach out to first when they are getting their campaign established.

## **VAN Tips, Tricks, and Resources**

### **What is VAN?**

NGP VAN, Inc. is a privately owned database and web hosting service used by the Democratic Party, Democratic campaigns, and Democratic affiliated organizations and non-profit organizations such as caucuses. This guide will specifically address the VoteBuilder software created by NGP VAN. VoteBuilder is an information management tool that is used to contact and track interaction between you and potential voters. For the purposes of this guide, we will refer to VoteBuilder as VAN and the company as NGP VAN.

## Setting up

If you are setting up VAN for your county for the first time, you will first need to contact the Nebraska Democratic Party's Field and Data Director who will provide you with a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) that you must review and sign. This MOU is the contract between you and the NDP and will serve as a guide for what is permissible use of VAN. This MOU can change, and you may be required to review and accept changes to the MOU from time to time. The Field and Data Director will then set up a committee for your county party. A committee is your county party's specific data set, and individuals who set up personal accounts to work with your county party will have their accounts within your committee.

For additional information on using VAN, check out our training events and email [info@nebraskademocrats.org](mailto:info@nebraskademocrats.org) or your state party contact, and ask for the VAN handbook.

## Digital Presence

With most of the world connected to the internet, it's important to build a digital infrastructure for your county party and to make it so that you can hand that information off to the next chair when you pass the baton.

It is critically important that as party leaders we verify the information that we send out into the public. Before responding to or forwarding posts, memes, emails, or news stories be sure to verify the information. If you can't find reliable sources or are not sure about a story it's better to not share rather than share fake news.

**Do not share AI generated content.** Artificial intelligence is being used to desensitize us to reality. It steals artwork from artists and destroys trust. The picture may be cute or inspiring, but look at the source, critically examine the content, and if in doubt, don't share it. Beware of video and sound too. If something really happened, there will be video from multiple perspectives and sources.

## Email

Please create a dedicated county party email address. Specifically a Gmail address. Google has a suite of resources that will be very helpful in keeping all your data together and creating institutional continuity for when you pass the baton to the next

chair. They have a place to create and store documents such as bylaws, spreadsheets, slideshows, contacts, and your party calendar.

## Website

If your county party has funds and someone who is technically savvy, a website is a good way for people to find you with a quick internet search. It is important to keep your website updated otherwise people may assume you no longer exist.

## Social Media

Facebook pages are free and public so if you have a Facebook account, it is a good idea to create a Facebook page for your county party and publicize your events and activities there along with notices of upcoming election deadlines.

If you are an avid Twitter (or X) user, a Twitter account for your county party can be a good way to interact with elected officials and members.

If you love taking photos and communicating through images, an Instagram account might be a good fit for you -- and is particularly popular with younger voters.

If you feel uncomfortable using social media, the state party can help you create social media accounts.

## Digital Security

With the ease of reaching people in the digital age comes the vulnerability of being hackable. There are ways to protect yourself though:

- Strong passwords -- Strong passwords are long, random, and contain a mix of letters, numbers and symbols. Do not use your county party passwords in any other places.
- Two-factor authentication -- protects your account by requiring a special code if you try to log in from a new device. This keeps people from accessing your account without your permission. It is highly advised that you set this up for your personal accounts too.
- Pay attention to the sender's address in emails. Don't respond to an email that claims to come from someone you know but has an email address that you don't recognize. **This is a VERY common scam.**

- If you get an email that looks suspicious, ALWAYS forward it to the state party and we will contact the DNC Digital Security Team.
- If you have a question or need help with securing your digital presence, please contact us. THERE IS NO STUPID QUESTION. We are more than happy to help you.

## County Chair Checklist

Each Spring we will ask for an update from each county party:

- List of officers and contact info
- Summary of previous year's activities
- County-level and down elected positions open this year
- Outreach plan for neglected communities in your county
- Meeting schedule and location
- Any problems you are having
- Trainings, special events, or staff visits you'd like to schedule
- Upcoming events you would like us to add to our calendar

You can also find this list at the end of the handbook.

## Passing the Baton

You have done all this work as chair and we are grateful for your service. When it's time to pass the baton, the new chair must have access to all the infrastructure that you have built:

- Be sure they can sign into the county party email and update the password retrieval information.
- Make them an admin on the county party Facebook page.
- Help them log into your Twitter (X) and Instagram accounts if you have them.
- Make sure they know how to contact the state party for access to the Voter File (you CANNOT give them your password or transfer the account, but they can be added to the County Party Committee)

## **The Business of the County Parties under the NDP is governed by Bylaw 3:**

### **3. COUNTY ORGANIZATION**

**3.1. County Convention.** Each County shall hold a convention in the manner prescribed by Nebraska State law, and may elect to have delegates to the County Convention file for office with the election commissioner or county clerk. In the event that insufficient delegates to a County Convention have been elected in the Primary Election or by Caucus, it shall be the duty of the County Chair to exercise their best efforts to provide for the election, appointment, or designation of delegates.

**3.2. Election of County Officers and Committee.** At the County Conventions, a County Chair, a County Vice-Chair, a Secretary of the County Committee and Treasurer of the County Committee should be elected. The County Executive Committee is composed of the elected officers of the County Committee. The County Committee shall be composed of the elected officers of the County Committee and the committeepersons elected at the County Convention. Meetings of the County Committee may be called by the Chair or by a majority of the Executive Committee or by at least six (6) committeepersons at such time and place as may be designated in the call. The County Vice-Chair shall preside in the absence of the Chair. If the County Chair is removed from office, relocates his or her residence from the County, dies, resigns or changes party affiliation, a vacancy shall exist. Vacancies in County Party offices shall be filled through election by the respective County Central Committee, or according to the Constitution or Bylaws of the County Party or according to the provisions of Section 3.3 of these Bylaws, if applicable. In the event there is not a Vice-Chair to call a meeting, the County Committee Meeting may be called by at least six (6) committeepersons or by the State Chair for the purpose of electing a new County Chair.

**3.3. Filling County Chair Vacancy.** In the event of the removal of a County Chair by the State Central Committee or its Executive Committee, the County Executive Committee shall select a new County Chair within one (1) month and immediately notify the State Chair of its selection. In the event of any vacancy in the office of County Chair continuing for a period of more than one (1) month, the State Chair shall have the authority to appoint an acting County Chair who shall hold office until the holding of the next County Convention.

**3.4 Gender Representation.** The Chair and Vice Chair must be of different gender identities.

**3.5 Governance.** County Parties are authorized to adopt Bylaws consistent with the NDP Constitution and Bylaws. Upon adoption or amendment of Bylaws, the County Party shall provide such bylaws to the NDP Rules Committee. Lacking any formal Bylaws of their own, a County Party shall be governed by the applicable portions of the NDP Constitution and Bylaws.

# Robert's Rules of Order -Simplified

## Most commonly used motions

1. **Main motion.** This motion is used to bring business before the assembly. It is the lowest ranking of all motions. It can only be made while no other business is pending. It cannot interrupt a speaker, requires a second, is debatable and amendable, normally requires a majority vote and can be reconsidered.

**SCRIPT:** "I move that we hold a voter registration class at the next meeting."

## Subsidiary Motions

2. **Postpone Indefinitely.** This motion is used to kill a main motion for the session. It is the second lowest ranking motion. It cannot interrupt a speaker, requires a second, is debatable and the debate can address the underlying motion. It is not amendable and requires a majority vote. If the motion fails it cannot be renewed for the same main motion at that session.

**SCRIPT:** "I move the question be postponed indefinitely."

3. **Amend.** This motion is used to modify the wording of an existing motion or another motion to amend. A primary motion to amend can be amended but a secondary motion to amend cannot. The motion takes a higher precedence of the motion it seeks to amend. It is debatable if the underlying motion is debatable. The motion requires a second and a majority to pass. This should not be confused with a motion to amend a bylaw.

**SCRIPT:** "I move strike the word 'next' and insert the word 'June' in the motion."

4. **Commit or Refer.** This motion is used to refer or commit another motion to a committee. It is debatable and amendable as to the question of referral and the details of the referral. It cannot interrupt another speaker and requires a second. It can be reconsidered unless the committee has already begun deliberating on the motion. It requires a majority to be adopted.

**SCRIPT:** "I move to commit the motion to a Committee of the Whole."

5. **Postpone to a Certain Time.** This motion delays consideration of a question until a specific time. It cannot interrupt a speaker, requires a second, it is debatable only on the question of postponement and the time, the time may be amended. It requires a majority to pass. If the member wants to make the motion a special order, it requires a 2/3 vote.

**SCRIPT:** “I move that we postpone consideration until 2 P.M. or

**SCRIPT:** “I move that we postpone consideration until 2 P.M. and make it a special order.”

- 6. Limit or Extend the Limits of Debate.** This motion is used to decrease or increase the time available for debating a question. It cannot interrupt a speaker and requires a second. It is not debatable but is amendable. It requires a 2/3 vote and any unexecuted part can be reconsidered.

**SCRIPT:** “I move to limit debate to three minutes per speaker.”

- 7. Previous Question.** This motion ends debate and puts the pending question or a series of pending questions to a vote. It cannot interrupt a speaker, requires a second, is not debatable or amendable. It requires a 2/3 vote.

**SCRIPT:** “I move the previous question.”

**SCRIPT:** “I move the previous question on the amendment and the main motion.”

- 8. Lay on the Table. /Take from the Table.** The motion to Lay on the Table temporarily sets a motion aside so other matters can be considered. . The motion to Take from the Table resumes consideration of the question that was tabled. Neither can interrupt a speaker, both require a second, neither are debatable or amendable. Both require a majority to pass. It can be reconsidered and renewed.

**SCRIPT:** “I move to table the motion.”

## Privileged Motions

- 9. Call for the Orders of the Day.** This motion allows for a member to require the assembly returns to the agenda. It can interrupt a speaker and does not require a second. It is neither debatable nor amendable. It requires only the demand of a single member and cannot be reconsidered. It can be overridden with a 2/3 vote against returning to the agenda.

**SCRIPT:** “I call for the Orders of the Day.”

- 10. Raise a question of Privilege.** This motion allows a member to raise a question of privilege for themselves or the assembly. The motion can interrupt a speaker if necessary and does not require a second. It is neither debatable nor amendable. It is ruled upon by the presiding officer and cannot be reconsidered.

**SCRIPT:** “I rise to a question of privilege. We cannot hear the sound system in the back of the hall.”



- 11. Recess.** This motion is used to provide for a slight intermission in the meeting. It cannot interrupt a speaker and requires a second. It is not debatable but is amendable. It requires a majority vote and cannot be reconsidered.

**SCRIPT:** “I move to recess for fifteen minutes.”

- 12. Adjourn.** This motion ends the business portion of a meeting. It cannot interrupt a speaker and requires a second. It is not debatable or amendable. It requires a majority vote for adoption and cannot be reconsidered.

**SCRIPT:** “I move to adjourn.”

- 13. Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn.** This motion sets a time and sometimes the place for an adjourned meeting. It has no effect on the current meeting. It can be moved either as a privileged motion or incidental main motion. It cannot interrupt a speaker and requires a second. It is not debatable when moved as a privileged motion but is debatable when moved as an incidental main motion. It is amendable. It requires a majority vote and can be reconsidered.

**SCRIPT:** “I move that when this meeting adjourns, we adjourn to meet here at 2 p.m. on Tuesday.”

## Incidental Motions

- 14. Point of Order/Appeal.** A Point of Order allows anyone to bring attention to a breach of the rules. It can interrupt a speaker, does not require a second, is not amendable. It is debatable under some circumstances. The point is ruled upon by the chair however the chair can allow the assembly to vote on the point. An appeal is used to challenge a ruling of the chair. It can interrupt a speaker, requires a second, is normally debatable, and a majority or tie vote will sustain the decision of the chair. Can be applied to most rulings of the chair.

**SCRIPT:** “I move that we hold a voter registration class at the next meeting Point of Order. The motion requires a 2/3 vote.”

**SCRIPT:** “I appeal the ruling of the chair.”

- 15. Parliamentary Inquiry/Request for information.** These motions allow a member to ask a question of the chair or another member through the chair. They may interrupt a speaker, do not require a second. They are not debatable or amendable. They are not voted upon.

**SCRIPT:** “I have a parliamentary inquiry. Which motion are voting on?”

**SCRIPT:** “I have a request for information. Is this the latest Treasurer’s report?”

**16. Suspend the Rules.** This motion allows for the suspension of certain procedural rules to expedite the business. It cannot interrupt a speaker, requires a second, is not debatable or amendable, and requires a 2/3 vote. Usually used in conjunction with another motion. It cannot be applied to non-procedural rules.

**SCRIPT:** “I move to suspend the rules and consider the last agenda item now.”

**17. Division of the Assembly.** This motion requires a standing vote or show of hands. Can interrupt a speaker, does not require a second, is neither debatable nor amendable. Can be done on demand of a member.

**SCRIPT:** “Division”

**18. Object to Consideration:** This motion prevents consideration of a question without debate. It can interrupt a speaker. Does not require a second. Is not debatable or amendable and requires a 2/3 vote against consideration.

**SCRIPT:** “I object to consideration of the question.”

**19. Division of the Question:** This motion divides a question to allow for two or more separate votes on a motion containing multiple questions. It is not in order when another has the floor, requires a second is not debatable. Can be amended as to how to divide the question. Requires a majority vote. **Note:** Where multiple independent resolutions are presented as one motion. A separate vote may be demanded on any or all of the questions by a single member.

**SCRIPT:** “I move to divide the question after the first paragraph.” or

**SCRIPT:** “I want a separate vote and debate on question #7

**20. Consider Seriatim.** This motion allows long motions to be considered by paragraph. It cannot interrupt a speaker and requires a second. It is not debatable and is amendable. It requires a majority vote and cannot be reconsidered.

**SCRIPT:** “I move to consider the platform seriatim.”

**21. Motions Relating to Nominations.** These motions are used to determine the methods used for making nominations. They cannot interrupt a speaker and require a second. If made while an election is pending, they are not debatable but are amendable. They require a majority vote, except a motion to close nominations requires a 2/3 vote. These motions can be reconsidered under circumstances described in the Parliamentary Authority.

**SCRIPT:** “I move that nominations be closed.”

**22. Motions Relating to Voting and the Polls Elections.** These motions relate to rules for elections, including opening and closing the polls. When an election is pending or has just been voted on these motions are not debatable but are

amendable. If an election is not pending these motions are both debatable and amendable. These motions require a majority vote. These votes can be reconsidered under circumstances described in the Parliamentary Authority.

**SCRIPT:** “I move the election be by signed ballot.”

- 23. Requests to be excused from Duty.** This motion allows a member to be excused from mandatory duty. If made by the member it requires a second and can interrupt a speaker if the circumstances demand. It is both debatable and amendable. It requires a majority vote and only a negative vote can be reconsidered.

**SCRIPT:** “I request to be excused from the next meeting.”

### **Motions that Bring Again a Question Before the Assembly**

- 24. Take from the Table.** This motion takes a motion that was laid on the table. It cannot interrupt a speaker and requires a second. It is neither debatable nor amendable. It requires a majority vote and cannot be reconsidered.

**SCRIPT:** “I move to take the previously tabled motion from the table.”

- 25. Rescind or Amend something previously passed.** This main motion is used to modify something that was previously passed. It cannot interrupt another speaker. It requires a second. It is debatable. It can be amended but must meet any prior notice requirements. With prior notice, a majority is required to pass. Without meeting prior notice requirements, a 2/3 vote or a majority of the entire membership is required to pass.

**SCRIPT:** “I move to amend the Finance Resolution passed at the last meeting.”

**SCRIPT:** “I move to rescind the Finance Resolution passed at the last meeting.”

- 26. Discharge a Committee.** This motion either discharges the committee of the motion that was referred to it. It cannot interrupt another speaker and requires a second. It is debatable and amendable and requires a majority vote if notification was given. If notice is not given a 2/3 vote, or a majority vote of the entire membership is required. If the committee fails to report on time or the motion only requires a partial report a majority is all that is needed to discharge the committee.

**SCRIPT:** “I move to discharge the committee of the motion refer at the last meeting.”

- 27. Reconsider.** This motion allows the assembly to bring back a question for further consideration after the question has been voted on. It cannot interrupt a

speaker and requires a second. It can only be made by a member of the prevailing side. It is debatable where the motion to be reconsidered is debatable, but it is not amendable. It cannot be reconsidered. The motion should be used only by the procedures outlined in the Parliamentary Authority.

**SCRIPT:** "I move to reconsider the resolution passed at the last meeting."

# Sample County Meeting Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Welcome, pledge, etc
3. Approval of Minutes
4. Reports of Officers and Standing Committees
  - a. Chair's Report
  - b. Vice Chair's Report
  - c. Treasurer's Report
  - d. Rules Committee Report (if applicable)
    - i. Amend Bylaw 5.2 (see attached proposal)
    - ii. Amend Bylaw 5.6 (see attached proposal and proposed amendment)
  - e. Report of Platform Committee (if applicable)
    - i. Resolution on Climate Change
  - f. Reports of Special Committees (if applicable)
    - i. Report of Committee created to improve rural infrastructure.
  - g. Unfinished Business and General Orders
    - i. Johnson motion to have phone bank training.
5. New Business

# Sample County Convention Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Seating of Delegates (approval of delegate list)
3. Election of Convention Chair and Convention Secretary(optional)
4. Election of County Party Officers
  - a. County Chair
  - b. Vice Chair
  - c. Secretary
  - d. Treasurer
  - e. any other officers provided for by County Party Constitution and Bylaws)
5. Election of County Central Committee Members (if applicable)
6. Election of State Convention Delegates and Alternates
7. Additional Business

# NDP Contact Information

## Officers

**Chair:** Jane Kleeb, [jane@nebraskademocrats.org](mailto:jane@nebraskademocrats.org)

**Vice Chair of County Parties:** Ryan Griffin,  
[vicechairofchairs@nebraskademocrats.org](mailto:vicechairofchairs@nebraskademocrats.org),

## Staff

**Executive Director:** Precious McKesson, [precious@nebraskademocrats.org](mailto:precious@nebraskademocrats.org)

**Communications Director:** Jose Flores Jr., [jose@nebraskademocrats.org](mailto:jose@nebraskademocrats.org)

**Data and Field Director:** Ron Rivera, [ronr@nebraskademocrats.org](mailto:ronr@nebraskademocrats.org)

**Outreach Director:** Gina Frank, [gina@nebraskademocrats.org](mailto:gina@nebraskademocrats.org)

**Party Affairs Coordinator:** Jack Schiewe, [jack@nebraskademocrats.org](mailto:jack@nebraskademocrats.org)

# County Organization Reporting Form

County \_\_\_\_\_

Officers Name and Contact Info:

**Chair**

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**Vice Chair**

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**Secretary**

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**Treasurer**

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Digital contact for the County:

**Email**

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**Website**

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**Facebook**

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**Twitter**

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**Instagram**

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**TikTok**



**Other**

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- On another page or in a separate document include:
  - Summary of previous years activities
  - County level and down elected positions open this year
  - Outreach plan for neglected communities in your county
  - Meeting schedule and location
  - Any problems you are having
  - Trainings, special events, or staff visits you'd like to schedule
  - Upcoming events you would like us to add to our calendar