

Democratic Party of Frederick County



Bylaws

This version of the Bylaws, with approved amendments, as adopted by the membership on May 21, 2025, supersedes and replaces all prior versions and is the official governing document of the Democratic Party of Frederick County.

**BYLAWS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY
OF FREDERICK COUNTY, MARYLAND**

Article I. **Name and Authority**

The name of this organization shall be the Democratic Party of Frederick County (hereinafter referred to as "the Party"). The Party shall have such authority and powers as may be granted, delegated, or otherwise permitted by the laws of the United States and the State of Maryland, by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Maryland Democratic Party, and the Constitution of the Democratic Party of Frederick County.

Article II. **Membership**

Membership in the Democratic Party of Frederick County shall be open to all residents of Frederick County, Maryland who support the ideals and principles of the Maryland Democratic Party and the Democratic Party of the United States and is a registered Democrat. Persons under the age of registering to vote are encouraged to participate in the activities of the Party.

Article III. **Governing Body**

As set forth in Article III of the Constitution of the Democratic Party of Frederick County, the supreme governing body of the Party shall be the Democratic State Central Committee of Frederick County, also known as Frederick County Democratic Central Committee (hereinafter referred to as the "Central Committee").

Section 1. MEMBERSHIP.

- A. General. The members of the Central Committee shall be those persons elected from Frederick County, Maryland, in accordance with the laws of Maryland, the Constitution, and Bylaws of the Maryland Democratic Party.
- B. Number. There shall be fourteen (14) members of the Central Committee, elected at large.
- C. Election. Members of the Central Committee shall be elected for a term of four (4) years beginning upon certification of the results of their election and continuing until their certification of the next election of their successors. Elections shall be conducted in accordance with the laws of the State of Maryland, which provide for elections to be held at the time of the gubernatorial primary.

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Central Committee members shall be elected by a process that recognizes three gender categories: female, male and non-binary. Elections shall ensure that no one gender category shall exceed 50 percent of the committee's total membership. A committee shall be considered gender balanced as long as variance between men and women in the group does not exceed one (1). In the case of gender non-binary, they shall not be counted as either a male or female, and the remainder of the committee shall be equally divided..

Section 2. ASSOCIATE MEMBERS.

The Central Committee may appoint no more than three Associate Members of the Central Committee subject to the following provisions:

1. Associate members must, at the time of appointment, be registered to vote as a Democrat in Frederick County.
2. Associate members shall be appointed based on a majority of vote of all Central Committee Members.
 - 2.1. The Term of the associate member shall run from the date of appointment and shall expire at the end of the current Central Committee term.
 - 2.2. Associate members are not members of the State Central Committee. Associate Members serve at the pleasure and may be removed by a majority vote of the Central Committee members. A vote to remove is final and may not be appealed.
 - 2.3. Except as otherwise provided herein, associate members are subject to the provisions of the Charter and the Bylaws of the National Party, The Constitution and Bylaws of the State Party, and these Bylaws.
3. Associate members may vote on any matter relating to Central Committee administration, activities and expenditures, and may be a member of any standing committee.
 - 3.1 Associate member may not vote on any matter relating to filling vacancies (e.g., Congressional, General Assembly, County Government, Central Committee), electing officers to, or removal of any officers of a committee, removal of non-associate members from the Central Committee or any matter reserved by law, the Constitution

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and Bylaws of the State party or these Bylaws, to members of the State Central Committee.

4. Any dispute regarding an associate member's right to vote on any matter shall be decided by the Chair of the Central Committee after consultation with the members of the Committee, and with the State Party as necessary.

Section 2. TERM OF OFFICE. Members of the Central Committee shall be elected for a term of four years, commencing the day after the gubernatorial general election. Members elected under these bylaws to fill a vacancy on the Central Committee shall serve until the end of the term of the member whose vacancy they were elected to fill.

Section 3. VOTING. Each member of the Central Committee shall receive one (1) vote. Participation by a real-time video communication platform is considered to be attendance at a meeting. Proxy voting is prohibited. If a time-sensitive issue arises, the Chair may call for an electronic vote (e.g., email).

Section 4. MEETINGS.

A. Regular Meetings.

1. Frequency. The Central Committee shall hold at least six (6) regular meetings per calendar year. During a gubernatorial election year, a meeting shall take place within seven (7) days following the certification of the gubernatorial primary results.
2. Scheduling/Notice. The Chair shall be responsible to call meetings. In the event of the failure or refusal of the Chair to call any required meeting, the Vice Chair, or the Secretary, in order of succession, may call such meetings. Public notice of regular meetings shall be available on the Party's website or published in the newspaper.
3. Place. All regular meetings shall be held in Frederick County, Maryland.
4. Agenda. The Chair shall have an agenda for each regular meeting. The Chair may limit any meeting agenda to those items submitted to the Chair by a Central Committee member in writing (or email) at least seventy-two (72) hours before the meeting.

B. Special Meetings

1. Frequency. A special meeting of the Central Committee may be called at

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any time by the Chair or by a majority of the Central Committee members or by petition in writing of one hundred (100) Registered Democrats in Frederick County.

2. Scheduling/ Notice. Notice of any special meeting shall be given to the Members of the Central Committee at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the meeting and shall include a brief description of the business to be conducted at the meeting.
 3. Place. All special meetings shall be held in Frederick County, Maryland.
 4. Agenda. Any business that may be conducted at a regular meeting may be conducted at a special meeting.
- C. Quorum. A quorum shall be required for the transaction of all business. Fifty-one (51 %) of the current full-voting membership shall constitute a quorum. Proxy voting is prohibited.
- D. Procedure. The authority for the rules of procedure for the Central Committee shall be those contained in the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order, except when they shall conflict with the Constitution or Bylaws of the Maryland Democratic Party or the Constitution of the Democratic Party of Frederick County, or a resolution to the contrary duly adopted by the Central Committee.
- E. Public Participation. All Central Committee meetings shall be open to the general public and shall be closed only if announced publicly in advance or upon a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the Central Committee members present and voting at any such meeting. All minutes of the Central Committee's regular meetings shall be open and available for inspection by the general public.
1. Public Participation – Monthly Meetings – The Central Committee shall allow public comments at each of its monthly meetings. Public comments will be limited to three (3) minutes per speaker.
 2. Public Participation – Special Meetings to Fill Vacancies: Public attendance is allowed, however, except for the qualified applicants, the public shall not be permitted to comment at Public Meetings convened by the Central Committee to specifically fill vacancies on the Central Committee, the federal, state, and/or county levels of government, and/or necessary state and county boards for recommending names to the Governor for appointment.

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- F. Code of Conduct. Central Committee members and Party volunteers are essential to the overall success of the Democratic Party. Members and volunteers representing the Democratic Party at public or private meetings and events must behave professionally and promote Party unity, both in person and on social media. If it comes to the Chair and/or Vice Chair's attention that someone's conduct appears to violate this code of conduct, a private warning shall be issued; subsequent offenses may be grounds for removal of the member or volunteer.

Section 5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS. It shall be the duty and responsibility of each member of the Central Committee to further the purposes and policies of the Party.

A. Local Central Committee Meeting Attendance. A member of the Central Committee may be considered to have resigned and the seat vacated by virtue of a regular failure to participate in the activities and affairs of the Democratic Party of Frederick County and the Central Committee. Such activities include, but are not limited to:

1. Attend 3/4 of the regularly scheduled meetings of the Central Committee within a 12-month period.
2. Read emails, and participate in discussions in communication applications or designated communication forums in a timely manner.
3. Take an active role on at least one subcommittee OR act as the official liaison to at least one Democratic club/community group.
4. Make a reasonable effort to attend official DCC and candidate events.

B. State Central Committee Meeting Attendance. A member of the Central Committee may be considered to have resigned and the seat vacated by virtue of a regular failure to participate in the activities and affairs of the Maryland Democratic Party. Failure to participate shall be defined as a failure to attend a majority of the regularly scheduled meetings of the Democratic State Central Committee of Maryland in a four-year term at places and dates determined by the Maryland Democratic Party.

C. Disqualification. A member of the Central Committee may be considered disqualified for office and removed as a member for the following grounds:

1. Malfeasance (the commission of a wrongful or unlawful act involving or affecting the performance of one's duties) or misfeasance (the

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performance of an official duty in an improper or unlawful manner or with an improper or corrupt motive) in office.

2. Conviction of a felony.
3. Openly supporting or endorsing a candidate for public office of another political party or an independent candidate who is opposed or will be opposed by a Democratic nominee for the same office, or a write-in candidate opposed by a Democratic nominee for the same office. Violation of this subsection may include endorsing or making public statements of support for a candidate; donating money or in-kind goods or services that are subject to official reporting; displaying signs on real or personal property; wearing or displaying campaign buttons, bumper stickers, or similar displays; or participating in coordinated or cooperative campaign efforts in support of such a candidate or candidates.

D. Removal. Removal of a member of the Central Committee under Sections A or B above shall proceed in accordance with Article III, Section 5 of the bylaws of the Maryland Democratic Party. Removal of a member of the Central Committee under Section C above shall proceed in accordance with Article III, Section 6 of the of the bylaws of the Maryland Democratic Party.

E. Code of Ethics. Members of the Central Committee shall be subject to the same substantive rules of ethical guidance as state public officials to ensure that they shall at all times conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the credibility upon the office that they serve, shall not use their office to gain special privileges and benefits, and shall refrain from action in their official capacities when their independence of judgment would be adversely affected by personal interests.

F. Confidential Documents or Discussions. The Central Committee may create and/or receive confidential documents from the National Party, Maryland State Party, Elected Officials, or other sources. All documents deemed confidential should not be shared or discussed with anyone outside of the Central Committee unless express permission is granted by the document creator. Only the Central Committee Chair, or Vice Chair in the Chair's absence may seek permission of the document creator.

G. Candidate Endorsements. The Central Committee can support and publicly endorse Democratic candidates in a general election and can support and publicly endorse candidates that are registered Democrats in a general election for offices that are non-partisan. The candidates endorsed shall be the top vote

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earners in the primary election and up to the number of available seats. A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Central Committee may vote to endorse Democratic candidates fewer than the number of open seats, after a primary election, or if there is no primary for a given election.

Section 6. CHAIR OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

- A. Chair. The Chair of the Central Committee shall also be the Chair of the Party.
- B. Election. The Chair of the Central Committee shall be elected by and from the members of the Central Committee at the first meeting of the Central Committee following the primary election in a gubernatorial election year.
- C. Term. The Chair shall serve for a term of four (4) years and until their successor is chosen and qualified.
- D. Duties. The Chair shall have the right to vote and preside at all meetings of the Central Committee; preserve order during the deliberations; serve as the official spokesperson for the Central Committee and Party, including media requests; appoint all committees; sign all records, vouchers or other documents in connection with the work of the Central Committee; and perform such other duties as may be required by law or as may be directed by the Chair of the Maryland Democratic Party or the Central Committee. The Chair may appoint legal counsel who shall serve at the pleasure of the Chair.

Section 7. OTHER OFFICERS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

- A. Other Officers. Other officers of the Democratic State Central Committee of Frederick County shall include the Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, and Editor, and may include one or more Assistant Secretaries and Assistant Treasurers.
- B. Duties of the Vice Chair. The Vice Chair shall perform such duties as the Chair or Central Committee shall designate and shall act in the absence of the Chair.
- C. Duties of the Secretary. The Secretary shall have charge of all books, records, and other documents of the Central Committee. The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the Central Committee meetings and mail or transmit them to each member of the Central Committee. Ensure that a copy of all approved minutes of the Central Committee are provided to the Maryland Democratic Party, as required by the Maryland Democratic Party Bylaws; All records shall be

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maintained at the permanent office of the Central Committee or by the Secretary, in the absence of a permanent office.

- D. Duties of the Treasurer. The Treasurer shall keep accounts of all monies the Central Committee receives and/or disburses and shall deposit all monies and valuables in the name of and to the Central Committee's credit in such banks and depositories as the Central Committee shall designate by appropriate resolutions. The Treasurer shall not expend or disburse any money or valuable thing or incur any liability whatsoever, except by the authority and subject to the Chair or the Central Committee's direction. The Treasurer shall prepare and present a financial report at all meetings of the Central Committee

- E. Duties of the Editor. The Editor shall publish the *Banner* newsletter in all months except January; remind elected officials and other contributors of upcoming deadlines; and determine format and length requirements for articles, as well as suitability for ads and other graphics. The Editor shall be one of the administrators on the official Central Committee social media accounts.

- F. Duties of Assistant Secretaries and/or Assistant Treasurers. The Chair may appoint one or more Assistant Secretaries and/or Assistant Treasurers to assist the Secretary or Treasurer as the case may be in the performance of their respective duties and to act in place of the Secretary or Treasurer in the event of an absence, illness, or vacancy in the office.

Section 8. VACANCIES.

- A. Central Committee. In the event of a vacancy in the position of Chair, the Vice Chair shall fill the vacancy of the Chair. In the event of a vacancy in any other office, that office shall be filled by the vote of a majority of the members of the Central Committee. In the event of a vacancy on the Central Committee, that position shall be filled by the vote of a majority of the members of the Central Committee, by a person meeting the same requirements as that of the member, she or he is being elected to replace.

- B. Elective Offices. From time to time, the Central Committee may be empowered or required by law, or by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Maryland Democratic Party, to fill vacant elective office. In such an event, the Central Committee shall ensure that reasonable public notice is given concerning the vacancy, the procedure for filling the vacancy, and the qualifications and requirements for candidates to fill the vacancy. Meetings held by the Central Committee for the purpose of filling such a vacancy shall be open to the public, and votes for the purpose of filling the vacancy shall be

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conducted by roll call.

- C. Public Advertisement. No vacancy shall be filled prior to the public advertising thereof and the holding of a special public meeting for the purpose of soliciting candidates to fill said vacancy.

Section 9. FINANCES – BUDGET.

- A. Finances. The Central Committee shall have the authority to raise funds necessary for the implementation of the budget of the Central Committee. However, no funds raised by the Democratic State Central Committee of Frederick County shall be used on behalf of any candidate during a contested primary election.
- B. Budget. The Finance Committee shall prepare an annual budget of anticipated revenues and expenditures for each calendar year. The budget shall be submitted to the Central Committee for approval or amendment. The budget shall allocate funds for expenditure by line item categories. Upon adoption of the budget, the Chair, Treasurer, and one other member of the executive committee, shall have the right to approve expenditures within a line item category without further approval by the Central Committee. Any reallocation of expenditures, unallocated expenditure, or expenditures that exceed the budget line item category must be approved by the Central Committee.

Section 10. COMMITTEES.

- A. Standing Committees. The Central Committee shall establish the following standing committees to assist in the administration of the business of the Party:
1. Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and Editor, and shall be responsible for ensuring the structure, support, and guidance necessary to coordinate all the responsibilities of the Central Committee. The Executive Committee shall formulate statements as needed to respond to issues of community interest and concern.
 2. Communications/Messaging Committee. The Communications/Messaging Committee shall consist of the Secretary and other individuals appointed by the Chair. The Communications/Messaging Committee shall develop and deliver a powerful Democratic message and the communications infrastructure

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to deliver it effectively. It shall promote the message of the Party to the general public using media as may be convenient or expedient. The Committee shall assist the Central Committee in its efforts to communicate with Members of the Party by electronic means, newsletters, press releases, and the like.

3. Finance Committee. The Finance Committee shall consist of the Treasurer and other individuals appointed by the Chair. The Finance Committee shall be responsible for developing and maintaining a budget for the Central Committee and implementing and coordinating its fundraising efforts.
 4. Campaign Strategy Committee. The Campaign Strategy Committee shall be responsible for developing a strategy for the recruitment and training of Democratic candidates and the operation of campaigns promoting the election of Democratic candidates. It shall provide the Party with assistance in educating the Party about campaign methods and resources.
 5. Volunteer Committee. The Volunteer Committee shall develop and maintain a list of volunteers who will assist the Central Committee in the furtherance of its goals. The Volunteer Committee shall recruit and train new volunteers as well as notify volunteers of opportunities to help candidates, staff events, join subcommittees, etc.
 6. Outreach Committee. The Outreach Committee shall be responsible for coordinating, aligning, and promoting the efforts of various activist groups and diverse communities of interest in furthering the Party's objectives.
- B. Ad Hoc Committees. The Chair may appoint one or more Ad Hoc Committees as may be necessary or advisable in the Chair's opinion to the efficient administration of the Party.
- C. Board of Advisors. The Board of Advisors shall consist of members of the Party recognized for their expertise in political affairs, their long-term commitment to the Party, and/or their diversity and breadth of opinions and representations. The Board of Advisors shall provide general advice and counsel to the Central Committee.
- D. Membership. The Chair shall designate and appoint members on all committees and the Board of Advisors and shall designate the member who

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shall be the Chair. Any registered Democrat residing in Frederick County shall be eligible for appointment to any committee.

Article IV. Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended at a regular meeting of the Central Committee by a two-thirds majority vote in accordance with Article IV of the Constitution of the Democratic Party of Frederick County.

By Authority: FCDCC, McCamie Patterson, Treasurer