

Participating In or Chairing Democratic Precinct Convention

WHY ATTEND? Because this is your opportunity to impact the affairs / direction of the Democratic Party of Texas. It is the most basic grassroots expression of participatory democracy, right in your neighborhood. This is where Parties get built and changed. The main business is to elect and become a delegate to your Senate District or County Convention (**NOTE:** counties where the entire county is in the same Senate District have County conventions instead of Senate District conventions) to be held on Saturday March 25, 2006 where delegates to the State Convention are elected and resolutions passed on issues of the day.

WHEN? Tuesday, March 7, 2006 at 7:15pm in the building where your precinct has voted on election day. A notice should be posted at the polls to announce the meeting, right after the polls close at 7pm.

WHERE? In or very near the building where your precinct voted during the primary election. Call your County Democratic Party office during the daytime of the week prior to election day to confirm the location. It will also be listed in the newspaper and should be posted on the web site of the County Clerk's office.

WHO? Anyone who has just voted in the Democratic Primary election starting with early voting through election day on March 7, 2006.

HOW? First, just show up! Better yet, call friends and Democratic allies in your precinct who share your views on issues you care about and recruit them to join you. Typically these meetings last about an hour.

BRING? Your voter registration card, a pen, paper, and if you wish, a copy of the Democratic Party Rules downloaded from the Texas Democratic Party website at <http://www.txdemocrats.org/files/Rules2004.pdf>. Also bring several copies of issues Resolutions you are interested in presenting to move up the Party chain. The goal is ultimately to write these resolutions, vote on them at the various conventions (precinct, senate district, county and the state conventions) and get nominated resolutions included in the state Texas Democratic Party platform.

WHAT? The Democrat Chair typically runs the meeting, but if not available, or preferred by the group assembled, **any participant can be elected to Chair the meeting**. A packet is provided to guide the convention Chair through the meeting steps, agenda and reports that have to be completed which ultimately document the proceedings.

The major business conducted at the precinct convention is to elect delegates and an equal number of alternates to go to the March 25, 2006 Senate District or County Convention and vote on resolutions. Major meeting steps are:

1. All participants sign in.
2. Call meeting to order.
3. Elect meeting "Permanent" Chair and Secretary (to take minutes and prepare forms).
4. Chair announces the number of delegates assigned by a formula set by the Party Rules and an equal number of alternates to go to the March 25, 2006 Senate District or County Conventions.
5. Participants nominate and elect Delegates to go to the March 25, 2006 SD or County Convention. You can nominate yourself and vote for yourself. Delegates elected do not have to be at the precinct meeting, but must have voted in the Democratic Primary. That is verified at the SD or County Convention where lists of the voter rolls are maintained.
6. Chair calls for reading of Resolutions. Participants vote for or against Resolutions to go forward to the SD or County Convention. This is a simple majority rules vote up or down.
7. Logistics of SD or County Convention are discussed and a motion to Adjourn is called for by the Chair. Assignments are made to call Delegates and Alternatives not attending the Precinct Convention.
8. The Chair and Secretary complete and sign the forms provided in the Convention packet, including copies of Resolutions accepted, and follow instructions on disposition and filing of the forms and reports.

2006 Convention Details and Useful Information

Important Dates

- January 6, 2006 - First Day to Apply for Ballot by Mail
- February 6, 2006 - Last Day to Register to Vote
- February 10, 2006 (if did not request runoff ballot on application for primary ballot) - First Day to Apply for Ballot by Mail
- February 21, 2006 – First Day of Early Voting
- February 28, 2006 - Last Day to Apply for Ballot by Mail (received not Postmarked)
- March 3, 2006 - Last Day of Early Voting
- **March 7, 2006 - Primary Election Date**

If runoff elections are required, the following dates apply

- March 13, 2006 (March 12th is the 30th day, but deadline moves to next business day) - Last Day to Register to Vote
- April 3, 2006 - First Day of Early Voting
- April 4, 2006 - Last Day to Apply for Ballot by Mail (received not Postmarked)
- April 7, 2006 - Last Day of Early Voting
- **April 11, 2006 - Primary Runoff Election Date**

Attend the Senate District (or County) and State Convention!

- March 25, 2006 – Senate District Convention
- June 8 – 10, 2006 - Texas Democratic Party State Convention

Fort Worth Convention Center, Will Rogers Memorial Center
1201 Houston Street
Fort Worth, TX, 76102

Harris County Clerk's office

Election Information including poll locations and sample ballots

<http://www.harrisvotes.com/electinfo.htm>

Harris County Democratic Party Office

1445 North Loop West, Suite 110

Phone: 713-802-0085

<http://www.hcdp.org/>

Texas State Democratic Party Office

Democratic Party Rules for 2004 – 2005 - <http://www.txdemocrats.org/files/Rules2004.pdf>

Other Randomly Useful Information

You can calculate, in advance the number of Delegates to your SD or County Convention by visiting the election results archive at <http://www.harrisvotes.com/eresultsarchive.htm>.

1. Locate the Nov. 5, 2002 General & Special Elections **CANVASS REPORT** (HTML or PDF available)
2. find the Democratic “governor” results for your Precinct, (Sanchez)
3. Calculate the total of all votes in your Precinct for Sanchez, divide 25 into that total. This should be the number of delegates assigned to your precinct. You will also need an equal number of Alternates. Typically, in non-Presidential years like this, anyone who wishes to be a Delegate or Alternate will get to attend. Note that this information IS included in the packet the convention the Chair receives; this is only a formula if you want to calculate that information in advance.

A note about voting for delegates. Each participant in the convention may cast a number of votes equal to the number of Delegates allocated to such Caucus. For example, if there are three positions to be filled, each delegate may cast three full votes in the following manner: (a) one vote for each of three candidates; (b) two votes for one candidate and one vote for one other candidate; or (c) three votes for a single candidate. Only a full vote may be cast; fractions of a vote are prohibited. Persons receiving the highest number of votes shall be the Delegates elected by that caucus. **Secret ballots are prohibited by the party rules!!**