

# **Constitution & Bylaws of the Cass County Democratic Party**

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## **Preamble**

The Cass County Democratic Party, hereafter referred to as the “County Party,” recognizes the inherent worth of all people and does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, disabilities, ethnic background, or cultural heritage. The purpose of the County Party is to serve the public interest by providing the ongoing structure to ensure the election of Democrats to both partisan and nonpartisan offices; to retain and recruit Democrats and encourage potential candidates for public office; and to provide our membership with a forum on matters of political interest. The County Party also provides education and training. The intention of the County Party is to approach its tasks with integrity and honor and to involve as many people as possible in the process. The goal of the County Party is to build a Party whose strength is in its solidarity.

## **Article I - Authority**

This Constitution supersedes any and all other previous constitutions, bylaws, or procedures of the Cass County Democratic Party. This Constitution is the supreme governing document of the Cass County Democratic Party unless in violation of any Nebraska election law, United States election law, charter, bylaw, or procedure of the Nebraska Democratic Party or Democratic National Committee, in which case it is superseded.

## **Article II - Name of Party**

The name of this organization shall be the Cass County Democratic Party or Cass County Democrats.

## **Article III - Membership of Party**

All registered Democrats who are residents of Cass County in the State of Nebraska are members of this party.

## **Article IV - Organization of Party**

### **Section 1 - County Convention**

Clause 1 - The Cass County Democratic Party shall conduct a county convention biennially in the manner prescribed by law and complying with any rules and procedures adopted by the State Central Committee of the Nebraska Democratic Party as provided in the Nebraska Democratic Party bylaws.

Clause 2 - In the event the state party elects to have delegates to the County Convention register with the election commissioner or county clerk, the county party shall provide for delegates to the County Convention to register with the election commissioner or county clerk.

Clause 3 - Forty Percent (40%) of the registered delegates shall constitute a quorum to convene the County Convention. The quorum, once established, shall stand for the remainder of the Convention.

Clause 4 - The County Chair or their designee shall temporarily preside over the County Convention until the election of the County Convention Chair. Immediately following, the County Convention shall adopt rules of the convention.

Clause 5 - The County Convention shall elect a County Chair, County Vice Chair (of different gender identities), County Secretary, and County Treasurer.

Clause 6 - The County Convention shall elect delegates and alternates to the State Convention, may adopt resolutions or recommendations for items to be included in the party platform, and may transact other such business as may come before it.

Clause 7 - The County Convention shall elect members of the County Central Committee.

Clause 8 - The County Convention shall be adjourned only by a majority vote of those present and voting.

## **Section 2 - County Executive Committee**

Clause 1 - The County Executive Committee shall be composed of the elected officers of the county party and shall have control of the County Party Organization.

Clause 2 - The terms of the officers of the County Party shall begin with the adjournment of the County Convention and shall extend to the adjournment of the next biennial County Convention unless resignation, removal, or death shall come first.

Clause 3 - Meetings of the County Executive Committee shall occur at least monthly and may be called by the County Chair or by a majority of the County Executive Committee at such time and place as may be designated in the call. The County Chair shall preside over all County Executive Committee meetings, with the County Vice Chair presiding in the absence of the County Chair.

Clause 4 - A simple majority of officers of the County Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum and once a quorum is reached it shall be in effect until adjournment. County Party

Officers must attend or be excused in advance at all regularly scheduled Executive Committee meetings.

Clause 5 - The County Executive Committee shall (a) create and approve an annual budget, (b) determine, set, and formulate the politics of the County Party, (c) deal with issues that require action by the County Party Organization, (d) have the power to overrule the County Chair, (e) have the power to amend by 2/3rds vote the Constitution and Bylaws of the County Party, and (f) have the power to establish rules, procedures and policies to govern itself effectively and to carry out the duties of the County Party organization.

Clause 6 - The duties of the County Chair, in addition to any powers and responsibilities that may be elsewhere specified, shall (a) establish subcommittees as appropriate and appoint the chairs of subcommittees with approval of the Executive Committee, (b) supervise the organizing and conducting of the County Convention, meetings of the Executive Committee, and meetings of the Central Committee, (c) preside at meetings of the Executive Committee and meetings of the Central Committee, (d) Direct day-to-day activities and messaging of the County Party organization; however, the Chair shall take no action contrary to any specific directive of the County Convention, Executive Committee, or Central Committee, (e) represent the County Party under the authority and direction of the Executive Committee and Central Committee, (f) set the time and place of meetings of the Executive Committee, and (g) assign duties to Executive Committee officers and Central Committee as needed.

Clause 7 - The County Vice Chair shall (a) be of a different gender than the County Chair, (b) preside over the Executive Committee or Central Committee in absence of the County Chair, and (c) fulfill other duties as assigned by the County Chair.

Clause 8 - The County Secretary shall (a) keep the minutes of the County Executive Committee and County Central Committee, (b) handle correspondence, (c) retain records for reference and historical purposes, and (d) fulfill other duties as assigned by the County Chair.

Clause 9 - The County Treasurer shall (a) keep and dispense the funds of the County Party as directed by the Executive Committee and Central Committee, (b) assume the fiduciary responsibility of prudent handling of County Party funds, (c) ensure that all funds are not commingled with other accounts, (d) make a report at the regularly scheduled meetings of the Executive Committee and Central Committee as to the condition of the County Party's finances, (e) apply for, manage, and execute all actions relating to grants, and (f) file appropriate financial disclosure paperwork with the Nebraska Accountability and Disclosure Commission or other entities.

Clause 10 - If a county party officer is removed from office, relocates their residence from the county, dies, resigns, or changes party affiliation, a vacancy shall exist. Except as provided in this section for County Chair vacancies, vacancies in county party offices shall be filled through appointment by the County Executive Committee.

Clause 11 - In the event of a vacancy in the office of the County Chair, the County Vice Chair shall assume the duties of the County Chair. In the event of a vacancy in the offices of both County Chair and County Vice Chair, a County Executive Committee meeting may be called by the State Chair of the Nebraska Democratic Party for the purpose of electing a new County Chair.

Clause 12 - A County Party officer may be removed with 3/4ths concurrence of the Executive Committee for failure to attend regularly scheduled meetings, violation of the Nebraska Democratic Party's code of conduct, relocation of residence outside of the county, or change in party affiliation.

Clause 13 - No expense in excess of \$50.00 shall be made without a prior majority vote of the Executive Committee. Any expense in excess of \$200.00 shall require two signatures. Receipts for reimbursements shall be provided at least seven (7) days prior to the next scheduled meeting. Votes of expenditures shall occur during the regularly scheduled meetings of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee has authority via its regular communications channel to override prior meeting decisions between meetings in cases of fiscal responsibility. Overrides and explanations will be included in the next month's minutes.

Clause 14 - The County Chair and County Secretary shall draft and publish an agenda for each meeting of the Executive Committee at least 24 hours prior to a scheduled meeting. Minutes of each meeting of the Executive Committee shall be approved at the subsequent meeting.

### **Section 3 - County Central Committee**

Clause 1 - The County Central Committee shall be composed of the elected County Executive Committee members and County Central Committee members elected at convention or otherwise elected under this Constitution.

Clause 2 - All Democratic elected officials who represent part or all of Cass County, and all Democratic candidates who are running for a district that encompasses all or part of Cass County shall be ex-officio non-voting members of the County Central Committee. Nothing in this subsection prevents an elected official or candidate from being a full-voting member.

Clause 3 - When the County Convention is not in session, the County Central Committee shall (a) meet at least monthly, (b) advise the County Executive Committee in the direction and control of the County Party Organization, (c) advise the County Executive Committee in determining, setting, and formulating the politics of the County Party, (d) have the power to overrule an action of the County Chair or County Executive Committee by 2/3rds vote, (e) have the power to amend the Constitution and Bylaws of the County Party by 2/3rds vote, and (f) have the power to establish rules, procedures, and policies to govern itself effectively.

Clause 4 - County Central Committee members shall (a) be composed of registered Democrats residing in Cass County, (b) abide by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Cass County Democratic Party, (c) take an active role in County Party activities, (d) help elect Democrats to office in Cass County, and (e) attend regularly scheduled County Central Committee meetings or be excused in advance by the County Party Chair.

Clause 5 - Forty Percent (40%) of the members of the County Central Committee shall constitute a quorum. Once reached, a quorum shall be in effect until adjournment.

Clause 6 - Special meetings of the County Central Committee may be called by the County Chair, or by a petition of Twenty-Five Percent (25%) of the members of the County Central Committee. Members of the County Central Committee must be notified no less than five (5) days prior to a meeting and be provided with an agenda.

Clause 7 - When the County Convention is not in session, the County Central Committee may nominate and elect additional members of the County Central Committee. Candidates meeting the qualifications of this Constitution and Bylaws to serve on the County Central Committee may be seated by a majority vote of the County Central Committee.

Clause 8 - A member of the County Central Committee may be removed by a 2/3rds vote of the County Central Committee for failure to attend regularly scheduled meetings, failure to fulfill duties under this Constitution and Bylaws, violation of the Nebraska Democratic Party's code of conduct, relocation of residence outside of the county, or change in party affiliation.

Clause 9 - There shall be standing subcommittees under the County Central Committees. The Chair of each Standing Committee shall be appointed by the County Chair. Each Standing Committee shall issue a report of its activities at each County Central Committee meeting.

Clause 10 - The Fundraising Committee shall (a) be responsible for generating revenue for the County Party, (b) host fundraising events, and (c) recruit sustaining donors to the County Party.

Clause 11 - The Voter Outreach Committee shall (a) be responsible for outreach to voters to maintain and develop membership for the County Party and elect Democrats, (b) host social and community events, and (c) review, research, formulate, and distribute messaging and materials.

## **Article V - Support of Candidates**

Clause 1 - The primary purpose of the County Party is to elect Democrats to partisan and nonpartisan offices in Cass County. The County Party will provide support in appropriate forms to Democrats running for office.

Clause 2 - Party resources are materials, physical or intellectual, that are produced by the County Party on its behalf or at its request and which are funded by the County Party.

Clause 3 - The County Party may endorse any Democrat or democratic-leaning Nonpartisan for elected office by simple majority approval of the Executive Committee. The County Party shall not make any endorsement in a contest in which two Democrats are running. The County Party shall not endorse any democratic-leaning Nonpartisan in a contest in which a Democrat is running.

Clause 4 - The County Party may withhold endorsement from any Democrat running for office who (a) has not been an active Democrat, (b) is significantly inconsistent with the platform or values of the County Party or Nebraska Democratic Party, (c) has violated the Nebraska Democratic Party's code of conduct, or (d) who has failed to report their financial status to the Federal Election Commission or Nebraska Accountability and Disclosure Commission.

## **Article VI - Official Acts**

Clause 1 - Business transacted at the County Convention in accordance with the official rules then in force shall be the official acts of the County Party. Beyond the County Convention, the County Executive Committee shall determine official acts of the County Party. At no time shall any other individual or body, no matter how constituted, be authorized to represent, or to hold itself to represent the County Party.

## **Article VII - Parliamentary Authority**

Clause 1 - All questions of parliamentary procedure shall be determined in accordance with the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, except as may be provided by



the Constitution & Bylaws of the County Party, or by resolution of the Executive Committee, Central Committee, or County Convention.

### **Article VIII - Amendments**

The Constitution & Bylaws of the County Party may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the delegates present and voting at the County Convention with a quorum established, or by the Executive Committee or Central Committee as provided by this Constitution & Bylaws.

Proposed amendments shall follow the election of Convention officers and officials, and the adoption of Convention rules. Once approved, the adoption of amendments shall be effective immediately.

### **Article IX - Dissolution**

The County Party may be dissolved according to the laws of the State of Nebraska. In the event of dissolution, an audit shall take place, after which all remaining money, items and equipment shall pass to the Nebraska Democratic Party.

\_\_\_\_\_, Convention Chair

\_\_\_\_\_, Convention Secretary