

# Guide to County Officer Conventions

## What is a County Convention?

A County Convention is an official meeting of a County Central Committee for the purpose of electing its officers including the Chair, Vice-Chair, State Committeeman/woman, Alternates, Secretary, Treasurer, and other officers – if your county rules allow for additional positions.

## Why is it important to hold County Officer Conventions?

Organizing at the local county level is the greatest way for us to recruit, cultivate and assist candidates at ALL levels of the Democratic Party. County volunteers and county officers are the only way we can fight back against the huge amounts of money that have rolled into our political system with the Citizens United decision by the U.S. Supreme Court. Montanans care what their neighbors think and county-level organizing is the best way to build a Democratic Party majority.

Montana statute recognizes County Central Committees as the Party authority in each county. If an election is NOT held in the time allotted for county elections a County Committee does NOT legally exist. This can have impacts on attending state party conventions, filling vacancies in elected offices, filling vacancies in primary nominations, choosing candidates in special nominating conventions and other important issues related to the state of Montana.

Bottom line: holding a County Convention is necessary for being an “active” Central Committee.

## When are County Conventions held?

County Conventions are held between **April 15th and May 31st** of odd-numbered years.

## How do we let interested people know about our Convention?

Montana law states that the County Chair must mail notice to all elected or appointed precinct committeemen and committeewomen. You must also advertise the convention in the newspaper at least four (4) days before the convention. Emailing your precinct person list counts as notice and additional attempts at promoting the convention are encouraged.

## Who can attend the Convention?

All meetings of the Montana Democratic Party at all levels are open to the public. Thus, anyone can *attend* as an observer, but not everyone can *participate* as a voter.

IMPORTANT NOTE: These conventions/meetings need to be held in a venue that is accessible to people with disabilities. The public library or a meeting room at the county courthouse are good examples of convention sites.

## Who can vote at County Conventions?

MDP Bylaws (Rule 2, Section B, Part 2) are very specific that only elected or appointed precinct committeemen and committeewomen, and current county officers can vote in these elections.

## What if our county does not have elected Precinct Committeemen/women?

There are two suggestions for how to handle vacancies: 1) The elected officers of a County Central Committee may appoint precinct committeemen/women with the consent of the County Committee in advance of the convention, provided they reside in the precinct they are appointed

to represent and they are a voter of the county; or 2) If a precinct person is absent, the convention voters may fill the vacancy by appointing someone, who meets the requirements of the position, to fill in ONLY during the convention.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Appointments must be filed with the County Election Administrator as soon as possible and/or before the County Convention.

### **What if our committee has two great people for Chair and Vice-Chair but they are both the same gender?**

Montana's election laws require that the Chair and Vice-Chair must be of different genders. Your central committee must either have both genders represented or not have a Vice-Chair.

### **How many votes does it take to elect an officer?**

The format used most often by MDP is a majority election, which is 50 percent of votes cast plus one, although plurality elections, collecting more votes cast than any other candidate, have been used in the past.

### **We had the Convention... now what?**

Please use the enclosed "County Election Results Form" to report to the Montana Democratic Party Headquarters the results of your election. You must also report the results of your election to your County Election Administrator.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The "County Election Results Form" will be used as certifying credentials to the State Officers' Convention. If it is not filed with Party Headquarters your delegates will not be considered certified.

Additionally, please be sure to select a regularly-scheduled meeting time for your central committee and report that information to the State Party on the provided form. Most central committees meet monthly, but once every two months or quarterly are also accepted "regular" intervals.

## **Descriptions of officers of County Central Committees**

### **County Chairperson**

- The County Chairperson will preside over meetings of the County Central Committee.
- The Chairperson will hold a delegate credential to the State Central Committee for the purposes of the State Rules Convention, the State Officers' Convention, the State Platform Convention, and any other official meeting of the State Central Committee.
- The Chairperson will be responsible for calling and notifying members of the County Committee of meetings, Officers' Conventions, possible candidate/elected officials replacement elections, etc.
- The Chairperson is generally the point person for specific asks from elected officials and party officials that relate to the county.
- The Chairperson also holds a voting position on the Montana Democratic County Chairs Association which names a representative to the State Executive Board.

### **County Vice-Chairperson**

- The County Vice-Chairperson will preside over meetings of the County Central Committee in the County Chairperson's absence.

- The Vice-Chairperson will move to the County Chairperson's position if the Chairperson resigns, becomes incapacitated, or is unable to fulfill his or her duties.
- The Vice-Chairperson will hold a delegate credential to the State Central Committee for the purposes of the State Rules Convention, the State Officers' Convention, the State Platform Convention, and any other official meeting of the State Central Committee.
- The Vice-Chairperson also holds a voting position on the Montana Democratic County Chairs Association.

### **State Committeeman and Committeewoman**

- The State Committeepersons (one man and one woman from each county) serve as voting delegates to the State Central Committee for the purposes of the State Rules Convention, the State Officers' Convention, the State Platform Convention, and any other official meeting of the State Central Committee.

### **Alternates**

- Alternates will assume the voting credentials of the County Chairperson, County Vice-Chairperson, State Committeeman, and the State Committeewoman at all meetings of the State Central Committee, in the event that the regular voting delegates cannot make it.

### **Secretary**

The Secretary of the County Central Committee is responsible for:

- taking and reporting the minutes of meetings of the County Central Committee
- correspondence of changes to the make-up of the committee to the County Election Administrator and the State Party
- conveying official notices to the State Central Committee.

### **Treasurer**

The County Committee Treasurer is responsible for:

- taking all precautions to properly document and report income/expenses to the State Commissioner of Political Practices
- filing all reports with the state Commissioner of Political practices
- being named as the Treasurer on all information/public communications from the County Central Committee.

### **Precinct Committeeman/Committeewoman**

The Precinct Committeeman and Committeewoman of each precinct are responsible for representing Democrats in the precinct. They are elected by the voters on the Democratic primary ballot and serve as Democratic elected officials. They are responsible for choosing and electing the members of the County Central Committee and the county's representatives to the State Central Committee. Additionally, they are responsible for choosing replacements for legislative vacancies that fall within their precinct.

### **All Officers of the County Central Committee**

It is expected that all officers at all levels of the Democratic Party in Montana try to accomplish the following

- Build the membership of the Party
- Identify Democratic voters
- Register people to vote

- Conduct an extensive Get-Out-the-Vote (GOTV) operation before an election
- Educate the public about the Democratic Party Platform
- Educate the public about voting procedures and regulations

## **Laws to follow in connection with the County Convention**

*MCA 13-38-205* (1) The committee shall meet prior to the state convention of its political party and organize by electing a presiding officer and one or more vice presiding officers. The gender of the presiding officer and the vice presiding officer may not be the same. The committee shall elect a secretary and other officers as necessary. It is not necessary for the officers to be precinct committee representatives.

*MCA 13-38-205* (3) The presiding officer of the county central committee shall call the central committee meeting and not less than 4 days before the date of the central committee meeting shall publish the call in a newspaper published at the county seat and mail a copy of the call to each precinct committee representative. If party rules permit the use of a proxy, a proxy may not be recognized unless it is held by an elector of the precinct of the committee representative executing it.

*MCA 13-38-205* (4) The county presiding officer of the party shall preside at the county convention. No person other than a duly elected or appointed committee representative or officer of the committee is entitled to participate in the proceedings of the committee.

*MCA 13-38-205* (5) If a committee representative is absent, the convention may fill the vacancy by appointing some qualified elector of the party, resident in the precinct, to represent the precinct in the convention.

*MCA 13-38-205* (6) The county convention shall elect delegates and alternate delegates to the state convention under rules of the state party. The presiding officer and secretary of the county convention shall issue and sign certificates of election of the delegates

**Official County**  
**Convention Results Form**



Elections held in \_\_\_\_\_ County  
On the Date of \_\_\_\_\_.

I, the Undersigned Chairperson of the County Democratic Central Committee, do notify that the following named people, have been elected under my supervision, in compliance with Montana State Statute and Montana Democratic State Central Committee Rules to the titled positions. This shall serve as notice of the elections of County Central Committee Officers.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson for 2021-2023 of County Democratic Party of \_\_\_\_\_ County.

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**Officers**

**Chair**

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Vice Chair**

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

**State Committeeman**

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

**State Committeewoman**

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Secretary**

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Treasurer**

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

**1<sup>st</sup> Female Alternate**

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

**1<sup>st</sup> Male Alternate**

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_



**2<sup>nd</sup> Female Alternate**

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

**2<sup>nd</sup> Male Alternate**

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please either mail or email the results for to your County Election Administrator and the Montana Democratic Party

Montana Democratic Party  
PO Box 802  
Helena, MT 59624

Korbin Bragstad [korbin@montanademocrats.org](mailto:korbin@montanademocrats.org)

**Remember to send a copy of the results from to your County  
Elections Administrator.**

<b><u>County</u></b>	<b><u>Election Administrator Address</u></b>		<b><u>County</u></b>	<b><u>Election Administrator Address</u></b>	
Beaverhead	2 S Pacific St No 3	Dillon MT 59725	McCone	Box 199	Circle MT 59215
Big Horn	PO Box 908	Hardin MT 59034	Meagher	Box 309	White Sulphur Springs MT 59645
Blaine	PO Box 278	Chinook MT 59523	Mineral	Box 550	Superior MT 59872
Broadwater	515 Broadway St	Townsend MT 59644	Missoula	200 W Broadway	Missoula MT 59802
Carbon	PO Box 887	Red Lodge MT 59068	Musselshell	506 Main	Roundup MT 59072
Carter	Box 315	Ekalaka MT 59324	Park	414 E Callender St	Livingston MT 59047
Cascade	Box 2305	Great Falls MT 59403	Petroleum	Box 226	Winnett MT 59087
Chouteau	Box 459	Fort Benton MT 59442	Phillips	Box 360	Malta MT 59538
Custer	1010 Main	Miles City MT 59301	Pondera	20 4th Ave SW	Conrad MT 59425
Daniels	Box 247	Scobey MT 59263	Powder River	Box 200	Broadus MT 59317
Dawson	207 West Bell	Glendive MT 59330	Powell	409 Missouri	Deer Lodge MT 59722
Deer Lodge	800 Main	Anaconda MT 59711	Prairie	Box 125	Terry MT 59349
Fallon	Box 846	Baker MT 59313	Ravalli	215 S 4th St Ste C	Hamilton MT 59840
Fergus	712 W Main	Lewistown MT 59457	Richland	201 W Main	Sidney MT 59270
Flathead	800 S Main	Kalispell MT 59901	Roosevelt	400 2nd Ave S	Wolf Point MT 59201
Gallatin	311 W Main Rm 210	Bozeman MT 59715	Rosebud	Box 47	Forsyth MT 59327
Garfield	Box 7	Jordan MT 59337	Sanders	Box 519	Thompson Falls MT 59873
Glacier	512 E Main	Cut Bank MT 59427	Sheridan	100 W Laurel Ave	Plentywood MT 59254
Golden Valley	PO Box 10	Ryegate MT 59074	Silver Bow	155 W Granite Rm 208	Butte MT 59701
Granite	Box 925	Philipsburg MT 59858	Stillwater	Box 149	Columbus MT 59019
Hill	315 4th St	Havre MT 59501	Sweet Grass	Box 888	Big Timber MT 59011
Jefferson	Box H	Boulder MT 59632	Teton	Box 610	Choteau MT 59422
Judith Basin	Box 427	Stanford MT 59479	Toole	226 1st St S	Shelby MT 59474
Lake	106 4th Ave E	Polson MT 59860	Treasure	Box 392	Hysham MT 59038
Lewis & Clark	316 N Park Ave Rm 168	Helena MT 59623	Valley	501 Court Sq Box 2	Glasgow MT 59230
Liberty	Box 459	Chester MT 59522	Wheatland	Box 1903	Harlowton MT 59036
Lincoln	512 California	Libby MT 59923	Wibaux	PO Box 199	Wibaux MT 59353
Madison	Box 366	Virginia City MT 59755	Yellowstone	Box 35002	Billings MT 59107