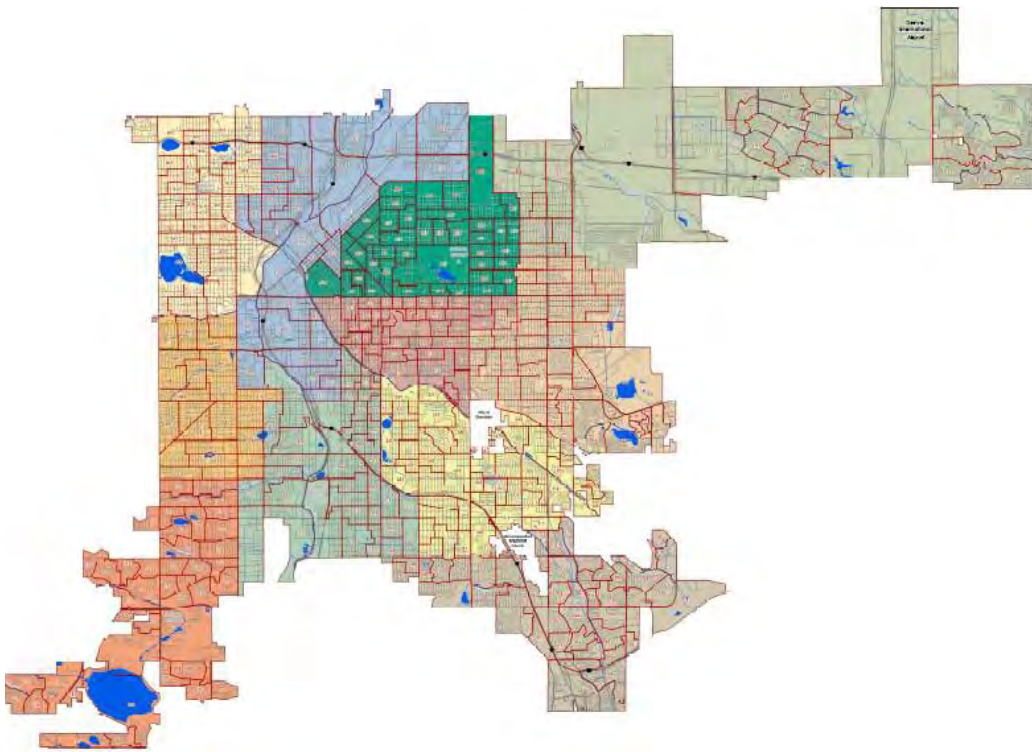


# THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF DENVER

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

## PRECINCT COMMITTEE PERSON HANDBOOK



2015



# THANK YOU

from Anne Murdaugh, Chair, Democratic Party of Denver

Dear Democratic Party Precinct Committee Person:

I'd like to thank you for working for the Democratic Party of Denver in the critically important position of Precinct Committee Person. You are the heart, soul and strength of the Party. Grassroots democracy begins with you. You represent the Party to your neighbors, and in turn, you are the eyes and ears of our Party.

The Party depends on you to make THE difference in elections by following the guidelines in this handbook to register new Democratic voters and get them to vote. With your active, ongoing help in your precinct, we will succeed in electing good Democrats to all levels of public office.

This handbook was prepared by the Democratic Party of Denver for you, the Precinct Committee Person. In addition to this handbook, we will provide ongoing opportunities for training and development. Please check with your sub-district Captain or our County Headquarters about the schedule. Also, volunteer opportunities for you and your friends are plentiful and only one phone call away!

Together, we will build and sustain the best Democratic Party organization in the country and support Governor John Hickenlooper, U.S. Representative Diana DeGette, and all elected Democrats in moving Colorado forward. Thank you again for your critical leadership.

**“The most important job I ever held was that  
of precinct committeeman.”**

- - President Harry Truman

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# OVERVIEW

This handbook is designed to help you fulfill the responsibilities of Precinct Committee Person (PCP). As a PCP, you are the elected or appointed representative of the Democratic Party of Denver to your neighborhood and precinct. You are a vital link between elected officials, the party and voters.

This handbook provides an overview of the role of PCPs and information and tips to help you succeed in this position. It also covers the mission of the Democratic Party of Denver and its structure as well as the major activities of the Party and the roles and responsibilities of other Party officers with whom you will work closely.



# VISION, MISSION AND CORE VALUES

As representatives of the Democratic Party of Denver, PCPs need to know the vision, mission, and core values of the Party, and reflect these in their efforts. Members of the Party are voters properly registered with the Denver Elections Commission as Democrats.

**Vision:** Create and develop strong, dynamic, active communities and leaders who champion and foster these core Democratic principles: 1) Quality public education opportunities; 2) Accessible health care; 3) Individual liberty and equality; 4) Civic, environmental and fiscal responsibility in domestic and international affairs; and 5) Job opportunities, worker rights and economic well-being for all workers.

**Mission:** The Democratic Party of Denver seeks to inspire, educate, activate and recruit citizens of Denver to elect Democratic candidates who support our Democratic core values.

**Core Values:** The Democratic Party of Denver is guided by these fundamental values:

- Integrity/Responsibility: We honor core Democratic principles. We say what we do and we do what we say. We hold each other accountable for the results promised.
- Inclusion: We promote and encourage participation by all, especially those who might otherwise be discouraged, marginalized or excluded.
- Efficiency/Effectiveness: We work in a well-organized way and use cutting-edge ideas, methods and tools to produce results.
- Honor/Respect: We value and acknowledge each other as individuals contributing to the betterment of humankind and society. We treat each other with respect, dignity and appreciation.
- Freedom: We support the right of the individual to make their own moral and ethical choices.



# VISION, MISSION AND CORE VALUES

- Security: We recognize the right of all individuals to live free from the threat of violence.
- Fairness/Justice: We act from standards of objectivity as we work toward a society that achieves an equitable balance of conflicting needs, demands and rights.
- Patriotism: We have a deep and abiding love for the United States of America.



# STRUCTURE OF THE PARTY

## **Precincts**

The precinct is the smallest political unit in the country and the cornerstone of the Democratic Party. Denver currently has 346 precincts. Each precinct has two PCPs, who are elected during the caucus or appointed by the Chair.

## **Districts & Sub-Districts**

Denver is divided into eight districts that correspond to the Colorado State House of Representatives. House Districts 1 and 9 have some precincts outside of the county of Denver. Each House District has a Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary who are elected by Central Committee members from the respective district.

Denver also has five State Senate Districts, four of which include precincts in other counties, one Judicial District and one Congressional District. These districts also have a Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary who are elected by Central Committee members from the respective district. However, only House Districts are used for the purposes of Party organization and administration.

House Districts are divided into two sub-districts, A and B, for a total of 16 sub-districts. There are anywhere from 25-30 precincts in each sub-district.

Each sub-district has a Captain and Co-Captain, who are elected by PCPs. In addition, the Captain and Co-Captain appoint a Finance Chair. The County Party Chair must approve this appointment. The Sub-District Captains, Co-Captains and Finance Chairs also serve on the Executive Committee of the County Party.

## **County**

At the County level, the Central Committee is the governing body of the Democratic Party of Denver. The County Party Chair is the chair of the Central Committee.

The Central Committee is comprised of:

- Executive Committee Members,
- Elected Officials who reside in Denver, and
- Precinct Committee Persons.



# STRUCTURE OF THE PARTY

The Executive Committee includes party officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer); their appointed assistants; Captains, Co-Captains and Finance Chairs of each sub-district; and up to 12 Captains-at-Large, who are appointed by the County Party Chair.

Every two years in February of odd number years, the Central Committee elects the party officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) during the reorganization. At the same time, PCPs elect Captains and Co-Captains for their sub-districts; and Central Committee members elect District Chairs, Vice Chairs and Secretaries of their respective district. The Central Committee also elects members of the State Party Central Committee and Executive Committees, and committees for the County platform and rules. In addition, it has the power to adopt and amend rules governing the County Party.

## **Caucus, Assembly & Convention**

### Precinct Caucus

Precinct Caucuses are held every two years in even numbered years. At the caucuses, eligible Democratic voters who reside in the precinct:

- Elect PCPs, who serve as the representative of their precinct for two years;
- Elect delegates to the County Assembly or County Convention (during presidential election years); and
- Vote on resolutions. Resolutions that are approved become planks for the Party platform.

### Assembly

The purpose of the Assembly is to nominate primary candidates for public office and to adopt a platform. Assemblies are held every two years. Assemblies are run by the Chairs of the Districts.





# STRUCTURE OF THE PARTY

At the County Assembly, delegates select primary candidates for State House, State Senate and the Denver District Attorney. State House members are elected every two years, while State Senate and other state office holders are elected every four years. The Denver District Attorney is also elected every four years.

At the Congressional Assembly, delegates select primary candidates for U.S. House of Representatives, State Board of Education and CU Board of Regents. Delegates for the Congressional Assembly are elected at the County Assembly.

At the State Assembly, delegates select primary candidates for U.S. Senate. Delegates for the State Assembly are elected at the County Assembly.

## Convention

Conventions are held every four years during presidential election years and are held in conjunction with the corresponding Assembly. The purpose of conventions is to elect delegates based on support for presidential candidates to other political conventions.

The County Convention delegates are elected based on precinct support for presidential candidates. In turn, delegates to the Congressional and State Convention are selected at the County Convention.

At both the Congressional and State Conventions, delegates to the Democratic National Convention are selected.

The Democratic National Convention nominates the Democratic candidate for offices of President and Vice President of the United States, and approves a National Democratic Party Platform.



# PCP ROLES & DUTIES

As a Precinct Committee Person (PCP), you are the representative of the Democratic Party in your neighborhood. Elections are won or lost in precincts, and PCPs are vital to ensuring strong Democratic support for Party candidates and issues.

PCPs are elected at the precinct caucus and serve a two-year term. PCPs can also be appointed by the Chair with the advice of the Sub-District Captain and Co-Captain to fill a vacancy. Any registered Democrat is eligible to be a PCP in the precinct where she/he lives.

The primary role of a PCP is to serve as the connection between the Party and voters, and represent her/his precinct within the Party.

Duties of PCPs include:

- Attending all meetings of the Central Committee and sub-district, unless properly excused;
- Supporting nominees of the Party and educating voters about the Party and nominees;
- Recruiting and maintaining contact with precinct volunteers to assist with GOTV and Party activities;
- Directing Party activities within precincts; and
- Contacting all Democrats in the precinct with the time, place and date of the precinct caucus.
- Coordinate GOTV activities within your precinct.

Tips to help you be an effective PCP:

- Get a copy of your precinct map and precinct voter list. These tools will help you become familiar with your precinct. Learn the boundaries, the number of houses and apartment buildings, religious centers, schools, and businesses in your precinct. The Voter Activation Network (VAN) point person for your sub-district can help you obtain this information.



# PCP ROLES & DUTIES

- Know your precinct's demographics. Be aware of and sensitive to the economic and cultural makeup of your precinct. Find out the number of union members, veterans, students of voting age, etc. in your precinct. Ask your sub-district VAN point person for help with this information.
- Get to know your neighbors. Get acquainted with the Democrats in your precinct; learn about their interests and concerns. Let them know you are a resource for them. Host a house party, community event, spaghetti dinner, candidates' forum, or political video party to bring together voters in your neighborhood.
- Canvass your neighborhood. Go door-to-door to register new voters and update voter information.
- Recruit volunteers in your precinct. Volunteers can help you with your activities as a PCP and increase Democratic strength in your precinct.
- Communicate regularly with volunteers and voters. Provide updates of Party activities and events, summary of meetings, and other important information.
- Read your local newspapers and find out how your neighbors feel about the issues impacting Denver and Colorado. Keep up to date on Party positions on issues.
- Get to know Party officers and elected Democratic officials. Attend Party meetings and activities.
- Understand your local election laws and deadlines. Know the deadlines for registering to vote, and facts about state and city elections, school board elections, and bond elections. Ask the County and State Party for help with this information.
- Be visible during campaign season. Distribute Party and candidate literature, display yard/window signs and assist with gathering signatures for petitions.
- Solicit donations. Coordinate with the County Fundraising Committee and Sub-District Finance Chair to include fundraising in your activities.
- Obtain a copy of '*The Activists Guide*' from your sub-district Captain. it contains important information about your specific precinct.



# ROLES & DUTIES OF OTHERS

## House Sub-District Captain

- Supports all nominees of the Party
- Attends all meetings of the Executive and Central Committee
- Recruits Party workers in their sub-district and works with them to find and fill PCP vacancies.
- Supervises all drives and canvassing required by the Central and/or Executive Committees.
- Works with sub-district Finance Chair on fundraising activities.
- Notifies and conducts at least two meetings per year of the sub-district, usually monthly.

## House Sub-District Co-Captain

- Works with the Captain on all Captain duties.
- Assists in the selection of the Finance Chair.

## House Sub-District Finance Chair

- Keeps the financial records for the sub-district.
- Serves as a member of the County Party's Finance Committee.
- Assists in developing and implementing sub-district fundraisers.

## House/Senate/Judicial/Congressional District Chair

- Organize and run their District Assemblies.
- Conducts the Vacancy Committee meetings to fill positions in the event of a vacancy.



# DEMOCRATIC PARTY CONTACTS

## THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF DENVER

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[www.DenverDemocrats.net](http://www.DenverDemocrats.net)

Please be sure to visit our website for more information about Democratic events, volunteer opportunities, local and national news items, as well as information on your House or Sub-District. You will also find information specific to the various committees that make us work, such as Technology, Fundraising & Events, Get Out the Vote, Leadership, Diversity & Outreach, and Public Policy. Get to know Democrats currently holding office or running for office, as well as how and when to vote.

### Denver Party Officers:

Chair	<b>Anne Murdaugh</b>	<a href="mailto:chair@denverdemocrats.org">chair@denverdemocrats.org</a>
Vice Chair	<b>Robert Rodriguez</b>	<a href="mailto:vicechair@denverdemocrats.org">vicechair@denverdemocrats.org</a>
Secretary	<b>Russ Johnson</b>	<a href="mailto:secretary@denverdemocrats.org">secretary@denverdemocrats.org</a>
Treasurer	<b>Rita Simas</b>	<a href="mailto:treasurer@denverdemocrats.org">treasurer@denverdemocrats.org</a>

## The Colorado Democratic Party

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### State Party Officers:

Chair	<b>Rick Palacio</b>	<a href="mailto:rpalacio@coloradodems.org">rpalacio@coloradodems.org</a>
1st Vice Chair	<b>Beverly Ryken</b>	<a href="mailto:bryken@coloradodems.org">bryken@coloradodems.org</a>
2nd Vice Chair	<b>Barbara Jones</b>	<a href="mailto:bjones@coloradodems.org">bjones@coloradodems.org</a>
Secretary	<b>Martelle Daniels</b>	<a href="mailto:mdaniels@coloradodems.org">mdaniels@coloradodems.org</a>
Treasurer	<b>Christopher Ott</b>	<a href="mailto:cott@coloradodems.org">cott@coloradodems.org</a>
Executive Director	<b>Anne Wilseck</b>	<a href="mailto:awilseck@coloradodems.org">awilseck@coloradodems.org</a>

## The Denver Young Democrats

*"Engaging and Motivating Young Democrats in Denver"*  
[www.DenverYoungDems.org](http://www.DenverYoungDems.org)

The Democratic Party of Denver's Denver Young Democrat's Liaison is Jane Feiereisal.

Please contact her at [jfeiereisal@denveryoungdems.org](mailto:jfeiereisal@denveryoungdems.org)