

**Bylaws of the  
DEMOCRATIC PARTY of BENTON COUNTY**

**ARTICLE I. NAME**

The organization shall be known as the Democratic Party of Benton County, also known as the County Committee. It shall consist of all duly elected members residing in Benton County. The Democratic Party of Benton County exists under the authority granted by the Democratic Party of Arkansas, hereafter referred to as DPA.

**ARTICLE II. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Democratic Party of Benton County is to elect Democrats, promote local issues voted on by the County Committee, and promote and support the current Platform of the Democratic Party of Arkansas. The County Committee shall be a non-profit organization and upon its dissolution, all assets and real and personal property of the Committee and its sub-committees shall revert to the benefit of the Arkansas Democratic Party. No part of the income or assets of the County Committee shall be paid to any of its members except for the reimbursement of actual expenses, or a contribution for electing a candidate to office if the Party so approves.

**ARTICLE III. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES**

Pursuant to DPA Bylaws Article I - Membership. Section 1.01. Democratic Party Open to All, which states:

- a) All meetings of the Democratic Party are open to all members of the Democratic Party regardless of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, military status, sexual orientation, or economic status.
- b) No test for membership in, nor any oaths of loyalty to, the Democratic Party should be required or used which has the effect of requiring prospective or current members of the Democratic Party to acquiesce in, condone or support discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, military status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or economic status.
- c) The time and place for all meetings of the Democratic Party shall be publicized fully and in such a manner as to assure timely notice to all interested persons. Such meetings shall be held in places accessible to all Party members and large enough to accommodate all interested persons.
- d) The Democratic Party shall support the broadest possible registration without discrimination on grounds of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, national

origin, age, disability, military status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and economic status.

- e) The Democratic Party shall publicize fully and in such a manner as to assure notice to all interested parties a full description of the legal and practical procedures for selection of Democratic Party officers and representatives on all levels. Publication of these procedures should be done in such a fashion that all prospective and current members of the Democratic Party will be fully and adequately informed of the pertinent procedures in time to participate in each selection procedure at all levels of the Democratic Party organization.

#### **ARTICLE IV. PARLIMENTARY AUTHORITY**

**Section 1.** Pursuant to DPA Bylaws Article XI Procedure and Amendment. Section 11.01 Parliamentary Procedure, which states:

These Rules shall govern the proceedings of all Democratic meetings. Where these Rules do not speak or there is no provision or established custom, Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall govern.

**Section 2.** The Chair rules in matters of dispute of these rules, bylaws and procedures, and members who do not agree with the Chair's decision may appeal to the Rules, Bylaws and Procedures Committee.

**Section 3.** All members are empowered and responsible for ensuring that these procedures are followed.

#### **ARTICLE V. COMPOSITION OF COUNTY COMMITTEE**

**Section 1.** Pursuant to DPA Bylaws Article II County Committees. Section 2.02 Composition of a County Committee, which states:

- (a) The County Committee shall be composed of members registered to vote in the county in which they reside and are paid members in good standing and who file to join the committee during the primary election filing deadline.
- (b) The County Committee shall extend membership to county registered voters seeking membership outside the filing period. Aside from votes taken at the County Convention, in order to vote, one must be a member 30 days prior to any votes taken by the County Committee.
- (c) Each County Committee shall make a goal to have at least twenty (20) members.
- (d) There shall be no limit to the number of county committee members.

- (e) County Committee members shall take office at the commencement of the biennial County Convention and serve until the convening of the next biennial convention.

Section 2. Pursuant to DPA Bylaws Article II County Committees. Section 2.03 The County Convention, which states:

- (a) Biennial County Conventions shall be held, for the purpose of confirming delegates to the State Convention and electing county representatives to the State Committee, and for any other such purpose as may be required by state law or party rules.
- (b) On the first Monday following the general primary election, i.e. the primary runoff election, County Committees will hold their County Convention. Adequate notice shall be given by the Secretary of County Committee notifying County Convention delegates and candidates by mail no later than one week in advance of said County Convention and by news release in the local news media of each county no later than one week in advance of said County Convention.
- (c) The delegates of the County Convention shall be all county committee members.
- (d) The County Convention shall be called to order by the Chair of the County Committee. If the Chair or Vice Chair of the County Committee is not present, or is present and refuses to act, then any delegate to the County Convention may serve as Temporary Chair.
- (e) The County Convention delegates shall elect the county's representatives to the State Committee. Article IV presents the process through which the number of representatives from a given county is identified.
- (f) The County Convention shall also identify the county's delegates to the State Convention. All members of the county committee at the time of the County Convention shall be eligible to attend the State Convention as a voting delegate.
- (g) The Chair and Secretary of the County Convention shall certify the names of the county's State Committee representatives and State Convention delegates to the Secretary of the State Committee within seven (7) days of the election.

## ARTICLE VI. CERTIFICATION OF COUNTY COMMITTEE

Pursuant to DPA Bylaws Article II – County Committees. Section 2.04  
Organization of a County Committee, which states:

- (a) Certification. In order for a County Committee to use the name Democratic Party in the State of Arkansas and solicit funds in the name of the Democratic Party, each County committee shall be certified by the Democratic Party of Arkansas.
- (b) Biennial requirements for certification are:
  - 1. Election of officers. County Committees shall convene in January immediately after the General Election for the purpose of electing a Chair, Vice Chair, who shall be of opposite sex of the Chair, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. Each office shall not be combined or held by more than one person at a time. Other officer positions may be created by majority vote of those members present and voting. Officers and members serve for two (2) year terms until the convening of the next officer election in January after the next General Election.
  - 2. Election of Election Commissioner. A County Election Commissioner shall be elected in January after the General Election following the election of County Officers. The office of Election Commissioner shall not be combined with any other offices.
  - 3. Timely payment of fees or dues established by the Democratic Party of Arkansas, along with required forms shall be sent to the ~~state party~~ Democratic Party of Arkansas immediately following the Primary Election and quarterly thereafter.
  - 4. Meet a minimum of quarterly (4 times) during the course of a non-election year and no less than six (6) times during the course of an election year.
  - 5. County Committees shall record the minutes of each meeting. Within ten (10) days after the minutes are approved, copies of the minutes shall be sent to the Democratic Party of Arkansas headquarters. Minutes shall include, at a minimum, those present, the agenda covered, and actions taken by the County Committee. The minutes may be sent in any form to the DPA, including electronically, by fax, or mail.
  - 6. Within ten (10) days after the organization of the County Committee in January following the General Election, the Secretary of the County Committee shall forward a form provided by the Democratic Party Arkansas with the county committee list to the Secretary of the Democratic Party of Arkansas showing the names and mailing address,

email address, landline and/or cell phone number of its officers and members. Updates shall be made quarterly to the Secretary of the Democratic Party of Arkansas.

7. Within ten (10) days of the date of electing the Election Commissioner, the Chair or the Secretary of each county committee shall notify the county clerk in writing the names and addresses of those selected to serve on the county board of election commissioners in accordance with state law.
8. Submission of required financial information to the Democratic Party of Arkansas.
  - (a) County Committees required to file financial information to the Arkansas Secretary of State shall also send a copy of the filing to the DPA by the filing deadline.
  - (b) County Committees not required to file financial information with the Arkansas Secretary of State shall file financial information of the type and at intervals required by the County Committee Review Committee.
9. Submit a copy of the County Committee bylaws to the Democratic Party of Arkansas. If a county committee chooses to use the State Party bylaws as their governing document a statement to that effect shall be sent to the Democratic Party of Arkansas. Such bylaws must include a provision that officers of the county committee must avoid public expressions of support, including campaign contributions, for opposing Democratic nominees.
10. Each County Committee shall submit a plan to actively support candidates running for office.
11. Each County Committee shall submit a plan for community outreach to promote the Democratic Party, which may include the recognition of chapters of the County Committee or partnering with affiliated groups.

## **ARTICLE VII. SELECTION OF PARTY NOMINEES**

**Section 1.** Pursuant to DPA Bylaws Article IX. Section 9.06. Eligibility Application which states:

- (a) Each candidate for nomination in the Democratic Primary shall file a Candidate Eligibility Application with the appropriate Party committee. The application shall read as follows: As a candidate in the Democratic Primary Elections to be held on \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, I agree to abide by the results of said Primary Elections and support the Principles of the

Democratic Party. I am eligible and legally qualified to file for this office under Arkansas law. This \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_. Signature.

- (b) Each County, State and National Committee member and each Party official shall file a Candidate of Eligibility Application with the appropriate Party committee. The application 3 shall read as follows: As a member/officer in the \_\_\_\_\_ Democratic Committee, I agree to abide by the results of all Democratic Primary Elections and to support the principles of the Democratic Party. I am eligible and legally qualified to file for this office under Arkansas law and Party rules. This \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_. Signature \_\_\_\_\_
- (c) No Person having resigned from public office as a provision to a plea agreement to avoid felony prosecution shall be certified by the Democratic Party of Arkansas to be a candidate and/or its nominee.

## ARTICLE VII. MEETINGS

**Section 1.** Pursuant to DPA Bylaws, Article II County Committees, Section 2.05 Meetings of the County Committee, which states:

- a) Statutory Meetings. The County Committee shall meet, as required by state law, for the purpose of conducting primary elections and shall comply with statutory requirements and these Rules regarding notice of such meetings. Ten (10) days written notice of such meetings shall be given by the Secretary to the Committee members. The news media within the County shall also be informed thereof at the time of the calling of such meeting.
- b) Notice. The County Committee shall meet at the call of the Chair at such time and place as is designated in the call. Notice of calls for meetings of the County Committee shall be mailed or emailed by the Secretary to each member of the Committee at least five (5) days before the dates of the meetings, provided that in case of an emergency, the Committee may be convened on two (2) days notice. The news media within the County shall be informed thereof at the time of the calling of such a meeting. Following such notice, a county committee meeting may be canceled at the last minute by the officers solely due to unforeseen circumstances.
- c) Special Meetings. Special meetings of the County Committee shall be called by the Chair upon request of one-fifth (1/5) of the membership of the full Committee. Upon failure or refusal of the Chair to call a requested meeting, the call may be issued by those members requesting the same. Notice of calls of special meetings shall be mailed by the

Secretary to each member of the Committee at least five (5) days before the date of the meeting, provided that in case of an emergency, the Committee may be convened on two (2) days notice. In the event the Secretary shall fail or refuse to act, those making the call may give such notice.

- d) Attendance. A County Committee member who misses three (3) or more consecutive meetings shall be required upon notice to show good cause therefore or may be dismissed from the Committee by its vote.

**Section 2.** Except as otherwise noted, all decisions are decided by a 50% plus 1 vote.

**Section 3.** Ballots shall be provided for any vote, including election of officers, upon request of a member of the County Committee who is present. Otherwise, voting will be conducted by a show of hands or voice vote.

Section 4. Pursuant to DPA Bylaws Article II – County Committees. Section 2.01. General Provisions, which states:

- a) Proxy voting shall be permitted at meetings of the county committee only by a vote of the county committee to allow proxy voting. If proxy voting is allowed the following rules shall apply: (1) no member shall vote the proxy of more than one other member; (2) proxies shall be granted only when printed, dated, signed and filed with the Secretary by the commencement of a meeting; (3) no proxy shall be valid for more than one meeting; (4) the Secretary shall preserve said proxies for no less than one year past the term of the Committee, at the Democratic Party headquarters as part of the records of the State Committee.
- b) Quorum. The minimum quorum for a County Committee shall be twenty percent (20%) unless membership in County Committee is 100 or more in which case ten (10%) will constitute a quorum.

## **ARTICLE VIII. OFFICERS OF THE COUNTY COMMITTEE**

**Section 1.** Election of Officers. Refer to Article VI. Certification of County Committee Section 2.04 (a).

**Section 2.** The Chair will appoint, in November of a General Election year, a Nominating Committee comprised of three (3) County Committee members. The Nominating Committee will present to the County Committee in December a slate of officers for election at the January meeting in odd-numbered years, in accordance with the Rules of the Democratic Party of Arkansas. Nominations may also be made from the floor at the

January meeting. Prior consent must be obtained before an individual is nominated, whether from the floor or by the Nominations Committee.

**Section 3.** In the event of the vacancy of an office, the Chair shall appoint an officer pro-tem to discharge the responsibilities of that office until the County Committee elects someone to the office vacated.

## **ARTICLE X. COMMITTEES**

**Section 1.** Standing Committees are found in the County Committee's current Procedure manual: Finance; Fundraising; Rules, Bylaws, and Procedures; Candidates and Elections; Public Relations, Platform and Resolutions; and Membership.

**Section 2.** Members of standing committees will be appointed by the Chair, and volunteers will be accepted.

**Section 3.** The Chair of the County Committee shall be an ex-officio member of all Committees or may designate another County Committee member as ex-officio if that member agrees.

**Section 4.** The Chair of the County Committee may create ad hoc committees as deemed necessary.

**Section 5.** The County Committee will establish a Steering Committee that meets as needed and is made up of the officers and other County Committee members added as necessary by vote of the County Committee.

## **ARTICLE XI. RECOGNITION OF OTHER DEMOCRATIC ORGANIZATIONS**

Pursuant to DPA Bylaws, Article 2.02, #11, which states:

Each county committee shall submit a plan for community outreach to promote the Democratic Party in the county which may include the recognition of chapters of the county committee or partnering with affiliated groups.

**Section 1.** The Democratic Party of Benton County recognizes and welcomes affiliation with other Democratic organizations operating in Benton County.

**Section 2.** Upon request, an organization may affiliate with the County Committee, with a majority of votes cast in favor of affiliation by those present at the regular meeting at which the request is considered.



## ARTICLE XII. AMENDMENTS

**Section 1.** Proposals for amendments to these bylaws shall first be referred to the Rules, Bylaws and Procedures Committee, which shall report its recommendations to the next regular County Committee meeting or special meeting called for that purpose.

**Section 2.** These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members of the County Committee present at a meeting. Written or electronically sent notice setting forth the proposed amendment has been given to all County Committee members at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of the meeting at which the amendment(s) is presented and written copies will be given to those in attendance. The amendment(s) will be voted on at the next meeting.

**Section 3.** These bylaws shall be in full force and effect upon their adoption and shall supersede all laws, rules, motions, and policies of a contrary nature with the exception of the Rules of the Democratic Party of Arkansas.

***Note on Standing Rules:*** Any member of the County Committee, having given sufficient notice, shall be allowed to review all records of the Democratic Party of Benton County, including but not limited to official filings, financial transactions, and minutes of the County Committee meetings and any attachments. During such a review, records will remain in the custody of the responsible officer.

Adopted by majority vote of the County Committee on January 8, 2018.