

By-Laws of the 34th District Democrats

as passed by the 34th District Democrats on May 13, 2009
document updated on 27 July 2009

Purpose

This organization is dedicated to increasing participation of the citizens of the 34th District in governmental affairs, increasing the efficiency of government and implementing the ideals and principles of the Democratic Party in order to provide for all the people, the highest degree of justice, opportunity, and general welfare.

Article I: Policy

Section 1. In January of every odd numbered year, this organization shall reorganize pursuant to the by- laws of the King County Democratic Central Committee (KCDCC) and the Democratic Party of the State of Washington.

Section 2. These by-laws are superseded by the by-laws of the entities listed in Section 1.

Section 3. The governing principle of this organization which shall guide our policies and actions is to promote the ideas of the Democratic Party, especially via the election of Democratic candidates who support those concepts, and/or the platforms of the county, state, and national Democratic Party.

Section 4. This organization shall support nominees of our party who qualify under the guidelines of these by-laws, and who merit it by their records and reputations. This organization may also endorse primary candidates.

Section 5. Proxy votes or absentee ballots are not acceptable for conducting any business of this organization.

Article II: Membership

Section 1. All 34th District precinct committee officers (PCOs) are voting members of this organization.

Section 2. The election of PCOs shall be governed by the laws of Washington State and KCDCC.

Section 3. Other residents of the 34th District are qualified to become voting members, provided that they are:

- a. legal resident of the 34th District;
- b. will publicly and truthfully declare themselves to be Democrats;
- c. and pay dues.

Section 4. Other Democrats from outside the district who pay dues may be non-voting members.

Section 5. Dues shall be set by the Executive Board and ratified by a majority vote of the membership.

Section 6. Inability to pay the full amount of dues shall not be a bar to membership in this organization. In that instance, a qualified member shall be credited with having paid dues if they have paid any amount between \$3.00 and \$15.00.

Section 7. The membership year shall be January through December.

Section 8. PCO vacancies may be filled via a majority vote of eligible PCOs present and voting. Twenty (20) PCOs or twenty (20) percent of eligible PCOs, whichever is less, shall constitute a quorum sufficient to approve new PCOs.

Article III: Meetings

Section 1. Membership meetings shall be held each month on a set day established by the Executive Board.

Section 2. A meeting shall be duly authorized when written notice has been mailed to the members of the date, time, location, and purpose of the meeting, at least nine days in advance.

Section 3. A quorum shall consist of 20 voting members, or 20 percent of the voting membership, whichever is less.

Section 4. Executive board meetings shall be held each month, and the membership shall be notified of the date, time, and location.

- a. A quorum shall consist of five board members
- b. A special executive board meeting may be called by a majority of executive board members.

Section 5. A special membership meeting may be called for a specific purpose(s) by written request of 25 voting members, or majority of the Executive Board. Special meetings are subject to these by-laws.

Section 6. All meetings of this organization shall be open to the membership.

Article IV: Executive Board

Section 1. The executive board shall consist of the elected officers, the elected state and county delegates, the elected county alternate delegates, the appointed parliamentarian, and the appointed standing committee chairs.

Section 2. The elected officers shall be elected at the biennial reorganization meeting in January by a majority of the eligible voters present and voting.

- a. Only PCOs are eligible to vote for chair, vice chairs, delegates, and alternates.
- b. All voting members may cast votes for treasurer and secretary.
- c. All elections shall be conducted for one office at a time.

Section 3. All board members shall be voting members of this organization.

Section 4. Delegates and alternates shall be elected in accordance with the state and county by-laws, including the designated divisions by gender. The position title is committeeman or committeewoman.

Section 5. The parliamentarian shall be appointed by, and serve at the pleasure of, the chair.

Section 6. The chair of the organization shall appoint standing committee chairs, which shall be confirmed by a majority vote of the members.

Section 7. Members of the executive board shall serve beginning with their election or appointment and until the biennial reorganization meeting, resignation, or removal from office.

Section 8. Officers elected at reorganization time may be removed from office for just cause, provided that:

- a. the chair receives and validates a written petition signed by 20 PCOs that lists specific charges and asks for removal;
- b. the membership is given 30 days notice in writing of the pending vote; and
- c. that a Majority of the PCOs present (elected and appointed) approves the removal. The person so removed shall be notified by mail of this action if s/he is not present for the vote results.

Section 9. Standing Committee chairs may be removed by the chair but that removal has to be confirmed by a majority of the membership at the next meeting.

Section 10. Removal of District Chair. The legislative district chair may be removed only by the majority vote of the elected precinct committee officers in the chair's district. (as per RCW 29A.80.061)

Section 11: The board shall submit a budget to the membership for adoption and set the proposed agenda for meetings. The board may propose and/or recommend policies, resolutions, and endorsements to the membership.

Article V: Officers

Section 1. The Chair:

- a. leads the executive board, presides over all meetings, is the chief executive officer of the organization, is the spokesperson for the organization, is an ex-officio member of all committees, may appoint ad hoc committees and their chairs, delegates to other organizations deemed appropriate, and any other duties as implied by the title;
- b. represents the district as a member of the KCDCC executive board;
- c. is authorized to declare vacant an office where the holder has failed to attend three consecutive membership and/or executive board meetings, provided that said board member has been notified in writing of his/her removal; and may accept a board member's resignation.

Section 2. The first vice chair:

a. succeeds the chair in the event that s/he resigns or is removed from office until a special election is held. The vacant office shall be filled as set forth herein at the next regular meeting following written notice to the membership. The acting chair is eligible to be elected chair at that time;

b. presides over all meetings at the direction of, or absence by, the chair; acts as a spokesperson for the organization at the direction of the chair; provides any administrative duties as deemed appropriate by the chair; serves as an alternate delegate for the chair on the KCDCC executive board; and any other duties as implied by this title.

Section 3. The second vice chair succeeds the first vice chair in the event that s/he becomes the chair; performs any administrative duties deemed appropriate by the chair, and any other duties as implied by this title.

Section 4. The secretary is responsible for the minutes, any administrative duty deemed appropriate by the chair, and any other duties implied by this title.

Section 5. The treasurer is the chief financial officer of the organization and shall receive and disburse all funds of the organization, shall maintain proper financial records, including filing of PDC reports, submitting a financial report each month for distribution to the membership, and submitting an annual financial report in a timely fashion, for distribution to the membership.

Article VI: Committees

The standing committees shall be specified in the rules of the Executive Board.

Article VII: Endorsements

Section 1. This organization may choose to endorse a Democratic candidate for any public office. This organization may endorse candidates of judicial races. This organization may also endorse ballot measures or referenda or initiatives or signature campaigns. Candidates who ask to be endorsed are required to complete and return any questionnaire presented, or designated by this organization. Judicial candidates need not answer any questions that would breach the Canons of Judicial Conduct.

Section 2. More than one candidate for the same office may be endorsed. Motions for sole endorsement are out of order.

Section 3. The executive board may establish in its rules the procedures governing the endorsement time line and process and shall send written notice of the rules to the members (newsletter is considered written notice for this purpose.) Adoption shall be by majority vote. Any rules so adopted shall remain in effect until amended or replaced.

Special Note: The organization adopted special endorsement rules. [Click here to see them as a PDF document.](#)

Section 4. The Executive Board, by a two thirds vote, may recommend endorsements to the membership. In that event, the membership may adopt the endorsement by a majority vote of eligible members.

Section 5. Unless otherwise provided by the rules, voting shall be by a hand count or a signed ballot if requested by a voting member, with two tellers appointed by the chair who are acceptable to the concerned parties, and where applicable, observers from each campaign directly involved may monitor the count.

a. Only members in good standing by the end of the prior month's meeting may vote, except that any member who had paid dues in the previous calendar year may vote if the membership is renewed at or before the meeting where the endorsement takes place.

b. Candidates may select two people, one of which may be the candidate, to speak on their behalf. Each speaker will have two minutes.

c. Motions for endorsement shall allow all candidates to be nominated before proceeding to a vote.

Section 6. The endorsement of ballot issues shall follow this same procedure.

Section 7. This organization shall support and publicize its endorsements in such ways it deems appropriate and necessary.

Article VIII: Resolutions

Section 1. Resolutions for consideration by the 34th District shall be submitted in writing, signed by the proposer, to the Secretary prior to or at the Executive Board meeting at which they will be considered. The Executive Board shall schedule the resolution for consideration at a subsequent meeting of the 34th District and may research and recommend action on the resolution.

Section 2. If a resolution involves an issue or activity of a Standing Committee, the Executive Board may forward the resolution to the Committee for comment and/or clarification prior to the 34th District meeting at which it will be considered.

Section 3. Resolutions shall be published or summarized in the newsletter prior to the meeting at which they will be considered.

Section 4. The requirement for advanced written submission of a proposed resolution to the Executive Board may be suspended by a two-thirds vote of the membership present and voting at a duly called regular meeting. All such resolutions must be submitted to the Secretary in writing, signed by the proponent. Those resolutions adopted under suspension of the rules must be published or summarized in the next newsletter.

Section 5. Censure shall be defined to be an official public statement by the Party disapproving the conduct of a member, Party official, elected official, or candidate seeking Democratic endorsement. Censure shall be by resolution and shall require a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting. Notice requirements for a censure resolution may not be waived. Separate written notice shall be given to any person subject to censure at least 10 days prior to the meeting

at which the action will be considered and the person shall be given an equal opportunity to respond in the newsletter. The Executive Board shall be responsible for researching the facts of the case.

Section 6. The vote shall be by a show of credentials or a voice vote at the discretion of the chair. The chair shall appoint two tellers to report the tally.

a. The chair will first recognize the maker of the resolution for the purpose of speaking on its behalf. Speakers will alternate con and pro thereafter. The maximum time allotted each speaker is two minutes. The maximum number of speakers will be a total of four.

b. The Executive Board may propose special rules for consideration of a resolution. Such rules shall be presented at the beginning of the meeting and voted on at the time the agenda is considered.

Article IX: Accounts and Contributions

Section 1. This Organization shall maintain one non-exempt bank account which shall comply with the PDC reporting requirements.

Section 2. All income shall be deposited into the non-exempt account.

Section 3. Expenses of the Organization

a. All expenses for normal operations, party-building, get-out-the-vote activities, and direct campaign contributions may be paid from the non-exempt account.

b. Candidate or ballot issue contributions, including the specific dollar amount, must be approved by a majority of Organization members. Organization endorsement of a candidate or issue shall be a prerequisite for contributions.

c. Contributions for candidates or ballot measures require two signatures on checks drawn on organizational accounts.

Section 4. A three member committee selected at-large by the membership shall meet annually to review the organization accounts, PDC and FEC reports. The committee must make a written summary of their findings which shall be available for review by the members, either by printing it in the newsletter, if possible, or at the next meeting.

Section 5. Use of the District PCO and Membership Lists. The 34th District Organization respects the privacy of its membership. There are, however, uses of membership information that furthers the goals of the membership and the organization. To this end, the following policies shall guide release of membership information:

- a. A PCO list, which contains information that is public record, shall be available upon request to a District PCO without charge.
- b. A PCO list, which contains information that is public record, shall be available upon request to an endorsed candidate or endorsed issue campaign without charge.
- c. A District member list, which is a list of PCOs and individuals who have paid dues to the organization, shall be available to an endorsed candidate or campaign.

- d. The executive board, by two thirds vote, may release the member list to 34 th District legislators or other elected officials known to be Democrats.
- e. A list of PCOs and members who are eligible voters shall be available to any member running for a position on the Executive Board, or any member seeking appointment to the Legislature.
- f. (Added by Amendment at the May 13, 2009 District Meeting): “To foster community and enhance grassroots political organizing, all members are entitled to and will have access to the membership list for non-commercial use upon a two-thirds vote by the Executive Board.”

The basic member information available on the list will be the name, precinct represented if a PCO, address, phone and e-mail address if available.

Article X: Conduct of Business by the Executive Board

The Executive Board is authorized to conduct business either at its regular monthly meeting or via electronic means, e.g. electronic mail, at the discretion of the Chair. The Secretary shall archive copies of decisions made by electronic mail, for example, by including the text of such messages in the minutes of monthly Executive Board meetings or other appropriate means.

Article XI: Amendments

These by-laws may be amended at any membership meeting by a two-thirds majority vote, provided that written notice of the proposal is mailed to each member as part of the meeting notice for the meeting at which the amendment is to be considered.

Article XII: Parliamentary Authority

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern this organization, except where otherwise provided.