

# Shawnee County Democrats Central Committee Bylaws

(Including Structure and Scope of Standing Committees,  
Legislative Oversight Committee, and Role of Precinct Committee Persons)

**As adopted November 19, 2024**



**BYLAWS OF THE DEMOCRATIC CENTRAL COMMITTEE  
OF SHAWNEE COUNTY**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>PREAMBLE</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>ARTICLE I – NAME</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>ARTICLE II – PURPOSE</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>ARTICLE III – MEMBERS</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>CHAIRPERSON</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>VICE CHAIRPERSON</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>SECRETARY</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>TREASURER</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>ARTICLE V – EXECUTIVE BOARD</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>ARTICLE VI – COMMITTEES, STANDING OR OTHER</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>ARTICLE VII – ENDORSEMENT OF CANDIDATES IN DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY     ELECTION</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>ARTICLE VIII – ADOPTION OF BYLAWS</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>ADDENDUM 1 – STANDING COMMITTEES</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>ADDENDUM 2 – LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>ADDENDUM 3 – PRECINCT COMMITTEE PERSONS</b>	<b>8</b>

## **PREAMBLE**

These bylaws are established to attain the goals of equity, justice, diversity, and compassion in fulfilling the mission of the National Democratic Party and the Kansas Democratic Party (KDP). The Central Committee of Shawnee County affirms that the Democratic Party is the party of the people; and that all people are equal and entitled by right to live and labor freely with dignity within the State of Kansas and the United States of America. To attain these stated goals and rights, the Central Committee of Shawnee County Democrats issues and adopts the following articles.

## **ARTICLE I – NAME**

The name of the organization shall be Shawnee County Democrats. The governing body of **the** Shawnee County Democrats is the Democratic Central Committee of Shawnee County.

## **ARTICLE II – PURPOSE**

The purpose of this organization shall be to strengthen the Democratic Party and to support the election of Democratic candidates to local, state, and national offices.

## **ARTICLE III – MEMBERS**

**SECTION 1** – The Central Committee shall consist of two (2) types of members A and B: A) Two (2) Democratic Precinct Committee persons, one male and one female, from each of the precincts in Shawnee County, Kansas; **and** B) One (1) registered Shawnee County Democrat may be appointed by the Chair to serve as an Ambassador (non-voting) not to exceed one (1) for each Ward. The Executive Board, prior to their serving, must confirm type B members appointed by the Chairperson.

**SECTION 2** – The Central Committee shall meet as required by Kansas Democratic State Committee Bylaws or more often as the Chair may direct or by petition of 30% of the members.

**SECTION 3** – In the event of a vacancy, or where no Precinct Committeeperson has been elected, the County Chair shall exercise the Chair’s authority to appoint persons to vacant precinct committee positions with preference given to recommendations by Ward Captains. The Chair shall provide a window of no less than two weeks for recommendations for replacement precinct committeepersons to be made.

**SECTION 4** – Ward Captains shall be nominated and elected by the Precinct Committeepersons of their Ward.

To be eligible for election as a Ward Captain, the person must be a Democratic Precinct Committeeperson for that particular Ward. The Ward Captain’s role is to assist Shawnee County Democrats in coordinating communication relevant to the election of Democrats, as approved by the Central Committee. If no Ward Captain is elected by the Precinct Committeepersons at a Central Committee meeting, the Chair may appoint a Ward Captain to serve until the next meeting of the Central Committee.

Ward Captains represent the Precinct Committeepersons of their Ward at the monthly Shawnee County Democrats’ Executive Board meeting. Ward Captains organize the Precinct Committeepersons of their Ward to assist in the manner set above. They have the same responsibilities in their own precinct as the various Precinct Committeepersons of their Ward, in addition to representing the Ward as a whole.

## **ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS**

**SECTION 1 – ELECTED OFFICERS** – The elected officers of the organization shall be a Chair, a Vice Chair, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. Officers will be registered Democrats in Shawnee County. Officers will be elected according to Kansas Democratic State Committee Bylaws.

### **SECTION 2 – CHAIR**

- a. The Chair shall be the chief executive officer of the organization and shall supervise the affairs and activities of the organization.
- b. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the general membership of the Central Committee and Executive Board meetings.
- c. The Chair shall be considered the voice of the Party and empowered to speak on its behalf.
- d. The Chair may appoint to the Executive Board a Parliamentarian and standing committee chairs with the advice and approval of the Executive Board to serve at the pleasure of the Chair.
- e. The Chair shall notify all members of the Executive Board within seven (7) days prior to each Executive Board meeting.
- f. The Chair shall notify all members of the Central Committee of meetings in the time and manner prescribed by Kansas Democratic State Committee Bylaws and rules of the Democratic National Committee.
- g. The Chair may establish such committees as the Chair may deem necessary and appoint committee members to the committees who shall serve at the pleasure of the Chair.
- h. The Chair may appoint non-voting Ward Ambassadors who must be Shawnee County Democrats to assist Ward Captains with their responsibilities.
- i. The Chair shall provide a report detailing the strategic plan and goals of the County Party during the first quarter of the biennium.

### **SECTION 3 – VICE CHAIR**

- a. The Vice Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair in the absence of the Chair or upon the resignation of the Chair until a new Chair is elected in accordance with State Committee Bylaws.
- b. The Vice Chair shall perform such other duties as the Chair may direct.
- c. The Vice Chair shall be responsible for maintaining engagement with the members of the County Party on the membership roster. This will include all individuals who provide financial support to the County Party.
- d. The Vice Chair shall coordinate with the Treasurer to maintain the County Party's list of contributors.

### **SECTION 4 – SECRETARY**

- a. The Secretary shall record minutes of all meetings.
- b. The Secretary shall cause the recording and maintain the official records of the organization, including records of all Central and Executive Committees and records of all actions relating to permanent procedures and policies.
- c. The Secretary shall maintain and keep up-to-date rosters of the Executive Committee and Precinct Committee persons and perform such other duties as the Chair may direct.

## **SECTION 5 – TREASURER**

- a. The Treasurer shall have charge of all funds of the organization and shall report to the members at each regular meeting of the Central Committee and Executive Board. It shall be the Treasurer’s duty to make all disbursements of funds for valid bills from **the** bank account maintained in the organization's name.
- b. The Treasurer shall be prohibited from incurring debts in excess of funds on hand without the express approval of the Executive Board. The Chair shall have the authority to authorize unplanned or emergency expenditures without Executive Board approval.
- c. The Treasurer shall file all legally required campaign finance reports.
- d. The Treasurer shall provide monthly reports for all deposits to and withdrawals from the County Party account to the Executive Committee.
- e. The Treasurer shall perform such other duties as the Chair may direct.
- f. The Treasurer must have or acquire a working knowledge of Campaign Finance Regulations and Reporting Requirements as set forth by the Kansas Governmental Ethics Commission.
- g. The Treasurer or the Chair shall make deposits and withdrawals and record all transactions in the financial records.
- h. The Treasurer will make available monthly to the internal Audit Committees appropriate documents including financial reports, expense summaries, and income summaries.

## **ARTICLE V – EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**SECTION 1** – The Executive Board shall implement policies promulgated by the Central Committee and may take such action and initiate such policies as it may deem appropriate, provided such action and policies are not in contravention of law, or the policies of the Central Committee.

**SECTION 2** – The Executive Board shall consist of the elected officers of the organization, a Ward Captain elected to the Central Committee from each Ward within the City of Topeka, and one representative from each of the four rural areas of the County outside the city: (a) that area north of the Kansas River and east of Highway 75; (b) that area north of the Kansas River and west of Highway 75; (c) that area south of the Kansas River and east of Highway 75; (d) that area south of the Kansas River west of Highway 75; all Democratic office holders elected in partisan elections residing in Shawnee County; and such other appointed members as are provided for in Article IV, Section 2(d).

- a. The representatives from each Ward and Rural Area shall be elected by the Central Committee members of each Ward and the four Rural Areas at the County reorganization meeting, or in an interim election as necessary. Every affiliated caucus of the State Democratic Party organized in Shawnee County may select a delegate to the Executive Board and have voting privileges.
- b. The Executive Board shall meet at least monthly.
- c. At all Central Committee meetings, the most recent version of Roberts Rules of Order shall prevail. For elections of officers, the Chair will appoint a Rules Committee to establish the rules to govern the election. All rules will comply with Kansas law, National Democratic Party, and State Committee rules.

- d. A quorum of the Executive Board will be nine (9) members of the Executive Board including at least one officer of the Central Committee of Shawnee County. No Executive Board member may have more than one vote.

## **ARTICLE VI – COMMITTEES, STANDING OR OTHER**

**SECTION 1** – The Chair of each Committee shall be a voting member of the Executive Board.

**SECTION 2** – The "Shawnee County Democrats Standing Committees' Structure and Scope, February 17, 2015" is attached as Addendum 1. The following committees may be convened by the Chair or by a simple majority of Executive Board members requesting said Committee(s) be established.

Those committees are Communications, Events, Legislative Oversight, Rules and Bylaws, Steering, and Voter Registration. The Budget Committee is a standing committee and is convened biennially. The internal Audit Committee is a standing committee and meets monthly.

**SECTION 3** – The Budget Committee shall consist of the Chair, the Treasurer, and member of the Executive Board. They shall devise a budget for a two-year period from January after an even-numbered General Election year through December of the next even-numbered General Election year. The budget shall require the approval of the Executive Board prior to the expenditure of Central Committee funds.

**SECTION 4** – An internal Audit Committee will be appointed by the Chair, none of whom will be members of the Executive Board. Their duty shall be to review the financial records of the Central Committee monthly for an internal audit. The Audit Committee may cause an external audit to be conducted biennially and shall work with the auditors to ensure its timely and accurate completion. This Committee shall elect its Chair from its members.

**SECTION 5** – In the case where a Legislative Oversight Committee is convened, it must adhere to the "Procedures of the Legislative Oversight Committee" as outlined in Addendum 2 attached herein.

## **ARTICLE VII – ENDORSEMENT OF CANDIDATES IN DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY ELECTION**

Shawnee County Democrats and its Central Committee and Executive Board shall not endorse a candidate in a contested Democratic primary election. Voter lists and other party resources shall be made equally available to all candidates in a contested primary. However, any party officer or precinct committeeperson is free to personally endorse any candidate in a contested Democratic primary so long as the endorsement is personal and does not include that person's party title.

## **ARTICLE VIII – ADOPTION OF BYLAWS**

These Bylaws shall take effect upon the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Central Committee present and voting.

## **ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS**

Amendment of these bylaws shall be by affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of those members of the Central Committee present and voting, provided that ten (10) days notice of said proposed amendment(s) will be sent by U.S. mail or electronically to members of the Central Committee or picked up at the office and provided further that said proposed amendment(s) shall be submitted by petition of at least fifteen (15) members of the Central Committee or upon recommendation of the Executive Board.

Originally submitted and approved this date: June 13, 2015; March 1, 2019; amended November 19, 2024.

# ADDENDUM 1

## STANDING COMMITTEES' STRUCTURE AND SCOPE

### COMMITTEES, STANDING OR OTHER

The Chair may create and appoint members to the following committees:

- Communications
- Events
- Legislative Oversight (see Addendum 2)
- Rules and Bylaws
- Steering (meets only at the beginning of biennium)
- Voter Registration

All committees, standing or other, report to the Executive Board.

### AUTONOMY OF COMMITTEES

Committees of the Central Committee are authorized to meet as needed and work within the scope of their authority or as directed by the Chair or Executive Board of the Central Committee.

### ROLES OF COMMITTEES

**Communications Committee** – The aim of the Committee is to facilitate communication between the Shawnee County Democrats, the Central Committee, and the public.

The Communications Committee will produce a newsletter to inform Shawnee County Democrats and the public at large of items of interest and maintain an active social media presence and maintain the Shawnee County Democrats email list, the website, and coordinate with other committees to produce timely and effective communications with media and the public at large.

**Events Committee** – The Events Committee will procure venues for the two main fundraising events – the annual FDR bean feed and the summer picnic. The Committee will plan for and recruit volunteers to staff these two events as well as coordinate with the Communications Committee to advertise these events, and other committees as may be affected by those events, i.e., Voter Registration.

**Rules and Bylaws Committee** – The structure and rules of the Rules and Bylaws Committee are:

- a) The Rules and Bylaws Committee shall consider all proposed amendments to the rules and bylaws of the Central Committee, as recommended by the Executive Board or Precinct Committee members. These amendments are subject to adoption by the Committee, which may also include any committees established by the Executive Board or Chair under the authority of the current bylaws.
- b) Recommendations for amending the bylaws or establishing new rules for the Central Committee must be submitted to the Rules and Bylaws Committee at least ten (10) days before the Executive Board meeting. The Chair or Secretary of the Executive Board is responsible for forwarding these proposals to the Rules and Bylaws Committee members at least seven (7) days before the Executive Board meeting. The Executive Board will act to send those recommendations to the next full meeting of the Central Committee for their consideration having been recommended by a simple majority of both the Executive Board and the Rules and Bylaws Committee.
- c) The Rules and Bylaws Committee is tasked with creating additional rules as needed to supplement the bylaws, provided they do not conflict with or detract from these bylaws,

the Charter of the Democratic Party of the United States, its bylaws or the delegate selection rules currently in effect as adopted by the Kansas Democratic Party. The Committee will conduct the balloting and decide on any question presented to it by the Chair regarding the rules and bylaws, parliamentary procedure, balloting, or other questions.

- d) The Chair of the Rules and Bylaws Committee will be the Parliamentarian of the Central Committee and as such should be familiar with the current version of Roberts Rules of Order. The Chair will be decided upon by a majority vote of the members of the Committee when the County reorganizes every even-numbered election cycle. Therefore, all members of the Committee should be well versed in parliamentary procedure.

**Steering Committee** – The Steering Committee meets only at the beginning of the biennium to formulate views and advise the County Chair and the Executive Board on matters of strategic and operational importance to the Shawnee County Democrats as a whole. In addition, the Steering Committee acts as counsel and advisor to the Chair on matters and activities relating to achievement of the objectives of the Shawnee County Democrats:

- a) To identify and respond to strategic opportunities, threats and other developments in the environment in which services are provided and standards are established ensuring that the efforts of the Shawnee County Democrats continue to be effective in protecting the public interest and strengthening public confidence our stated goals.
- b) To identify and respond to the need for change to the Shawnee County Democrat’s procedures and practices so that they continue to support the development of high-quality standards that serve the public interest in a transparent, efficient and effective manner.
- c) To counsel and advise the Chair on matters and activities relating to achievement of the objectives of the Shawnee County Democrats.

**Voter Registration Committee** – The Voter Registration Committee will register voters at every opportunity in compliance with current Kansas statutes. Voter Registration Drives will be conducted, as will training sessions for Precinct Committeepersons as needed so the Precinct Committeepersons will be in compliance with Kansas statutes.

## **ADDENDUM 2**

### **LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

**LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE** – The Legislative Oversight Committee has been established by the Chair as a special Committee charged with observation, study, and reporting on legislation processed during the legislative session which concerns the principles of the Kansas Democratic Party outlined in its most recent platform document.

The Chair of the Legislative Oversight Committee reports directly to the Chair and the Central Committee. It is recommended that the Executive Board, at the beginning of each legislative session, provide direction to the legislative liaison if the Executive Board is interested in having all bills tracked which pertain to the party principles as outlined in the platform document or tracking of bills which pertain to specific topics.



## ADDENDUM 3

### PRECINCT COMMITTEEPERSONS (PCPs)

**What is a committeeperson?** A Committeeperson (man or woman) represents the Shawnee County Democratic Party on behalf of a specific precinct. An elected or appointed Precinct Committeeperson also serves as a member of the Shawnee County Democrat Central Committee.

**Why become a precinct committeeperson?** If you are interested in making a real change in your community; if you want your voice and the voices of your neighbors to be heard; if you are tired of complaining and want to actually DO something; and if you believe that our democracy is worth preserving, you owe it to yourself and to your state to become a Precinct Committeeperson. In turn, you will receive the satisfaction of knowing that you made a contribution that will impact your life and the lives of everyone around you. Consider turning your concerns into action by becoming a Precinct Committeeperson.

**How does a person become a committeeperson?** To qualify as a Precinct Committeeperson, the individual must first be a registered Democrat. (This can be done when registering to vote or by changing your registration at the Election Office.) There is no cost involved in registering as a Democrat; however, you cannot change party registration 21 days prior to or following the Primary Election.

**How to file for precinct committeeperson?** To be placed on the primary ballot, the individual must file the 'Precinct Committeeman/Committeewoman Candidate's Declaration of Intent' form with either the County Election Office or with the Secretary of State's Office. The form must be notarized and filled out in its entirety. The deadline for filing this form changes from time to time but filing before June 1 is recommended. There is no fee for filing this petition or for having your name placed on the ballot.

If you miss the deadline for filing, you may run a write-in campaign. If you obtain the vote of at least five (5) people in your precinct and there is no other candidate, congratulations!

The Chair, Vice Chair, or the PCP Committee Chair of the Shawnee County Democratic Party Executive Committee may provide you a list of Democrats in your precinct. This will be useful in identifying potential supporters. There is typically one person elected from each gender. If you win the Primary Election, you will become the Democratic Committeeperson for your precinct at that time.

The third way to become a Precinct Committeeperson occurs when the Primary Election has passed without a registered Democrat pursuing placement of their name on the ballot to represent a certain precinct. After the elected Precinct Committeepersons have voted on re-organization (within thirty days of the Primary Election, or if postponed at that meeting, within 30 days of the General Election), the Chair of the County Democratic Party may appoint a registered Democrat to serve as Precinct Committeeman/Woman for the remainder of the two-year term. Precinct Committeemen/Women serve a two-year term.

**What is the role of a precinct committeeperson?**

Precinct Committeepersons represent the Democratic Party within their voting precincts and communicate the concerns of their neighbors to the Democratic Party. This grassroots representation is at the heart of our democracy and the basis for all other elected positions. Not all Precinct Committeepersons will be able to bring the same level of time and energy to the position. Despite the differing levels of commitment, it is always preferable to have the position filled.

**What are the responsibilities to the Shawnee County Democratic Party?** As a grassroots organizer for the Democratic Party, the PCP is expected to:

- 1) help with the Party's marketing or outreach efforts within the precinct, i.e., get out the vote;
- 2) choose replacements if elected officials leave office during their term;
- 3) elect the County Party Officers; and
- 4) actively support the endorsed candidates of the Democratic Party.

**What are the responsibilities to the voters in his/her precinct?** As a representative of the Democratic voters in his/her precinct, the PCP is expected to:

- 1) actively seek out and register new voters within the precinct;
- 2) stay in touch with constituents by any means possible; listen to their concerns and bring those concerns back to the Ward Captain or Executive Board; and
- 3) recruit PCPS.