

# Kent County Democratic Party Bylaws

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## Article I. Name

This organization shall be known as the Kent County Democratic Party

## Article II. Purpose

The purpose of the Kent County Democratic Party is to promote the philosophy of the Democratic Party and to elect Democrats who support this philosophy; and further, to unite and to aid in the activities of all party members, precinct delegates, committees, officeholders, candidates and all other Democrats working to promote wide and active participation in the Democratic Party.

# Article III. Fundamental Principles

## Section 1

All public meetings of the Kent County Democratic Party shall be open to all members of the Democratic Party regardless of actual or perceived race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, economic status, religion, ethnic identity, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, physical appearance, or disability.

## Section 2

No test for membership in, nor any oaths of loyalty to, the Kent County Democratic Party shall 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 actual or perceived race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin economic status, religion, ethnic identity, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, physical appearance or disability.

## Section 3

The time and place for all public meetings of the Kent County Democratic Party shall be publicized fully and comprehensively in such manner as to assure timely notice. Such meetings must be held in places accessible to all party members and large enough to accommodate all interested persons.

## Section 4

The Kent County Democratic Party, shall support the common good without discriminating on the grounds of actual or perceived race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, economic status, religion, ethnic identity, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, physical appearance or disability.

## Section 5

The Kent County 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 Kent County Democratic Party officers and representatives on all levels. Publication of those procedures shall be done in such a fashion that all prospective and current members of the Kent County Democratic Party will be fully and adequately informed of the pertinent procedure in time to participate in each selection procedures at all levels of the Kent County Democratic Party organization.

## Section 6

The Kent County Democratic Party shall publicize fully and in such a manner as to assure notice to all interested parties a complete description of the legal and practical qualifications for

all officers and representatives of the Kent County Democratic Party. Such publication shall be done in a timely fashion so that all prospective candidates or applicants for any elected or appointed position within the Kent County Democratic Party will have full and adequate opportunity to compete for office.

## Section 7

Proportional voting shall be used in the election of delegates and alternates to any convention, and members of the County Executive Committee.

## Section 8

All rules and bylaws of the Kent County Democratic Party shall be consistent with the rules of the Michigan Democratic Party and shall be available on request in writing to any member of the Kent County Democratic Party.

## Section 9

The unit rule, (a rule of procedure at a National Convention under which a state's entire vote must be cast for the candidate preferred by a majority of the State's delegates as defined by the American Heritage Dictionary), is prohibited at all levels of the Kent County Democratic Party.

## Section 10

No rule shall be adopted at any level of the Kent County Democratic Party which would require a person to cast a vote or be recorded as voting contrary to that person's judgment.

## Section 11

On all questions of procedure not resolved by the rules of the Michigan Democratic Party or these bylaws, the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall prevail.

## Section 12

The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of any unit, Committee, Caucus or Convention of the Kent County Democratic Party shall be of the opposite sex.

## Section 13

Votes shall not be taken by secret ballot at any meeting of the Kent County Democratic Party at any level.

# Article IV. Membership

## Section 1

Membership of the Kent County Democratic Party shall consist of:

1. All duly elected and accredited Kent County Democratic precinct delegates residing in Kent County.
2. Members of the Michigan Democratic Party residing in Kent County.
3. Persons who donate and join the Kent County Democratic Party.
4. The Executive Committee, and Officers, all of whom must be members of the Michigan Democratic Party

## Section 2

Precinct delegate shall be apportioned and selected in accordance with the rules of the Michigan Democratic Party.

## Section 3

The Kent County Democratic Executive Committee shall be organized in accordance with the rules of the Michigan Democratic Party and the statutes of the State of Michigan governing county executive committees, being Michigan Compiled Laws (MCL) Section 168.599, Michigan Election Law Act 116 of 1954 as amended.

# Article V. Meetings

## Section 1

The regular meetings of the Kent County Democratic Party Executive Committee shall be held monthly at the location and time designated in the meeting notice. At least five (5) days' notice shall be given of the date, time and place of the meeting. Notice may be given by mail, phone, handout, web-post, or email.

## Section 2

The quorum for all Executive Committee members shall be a minimum of 25 (twenty-five) of the voting members present.

## Section 3

Special meetings of the Kent County Democratic Party Executive Committee may be called by the Chairperson as deemed necessary or by petition of at least 50% of the Executive Committee members required for a quorum. At least five (5) days' notice shall be given of the date, place, time, and purpose of the special meeting by US mail, phone, or email.

## Section 4

Subject to the rules of the Michigan Democratic Party and these bylaws, all meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order (latest addition).

# Article VI. Officers and Executive Committee

## Section 1

One third ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) of the Executive Committee shall automatically consist of the most recent nominees for countywide office, the county commission, the State House, the State Senate, and the US House whose districts include all or part of the county. The County Convention shall elect the balance of the Executive Committee which shall consist of twice the number of automatic members.

Each even-numbered year within twenty (20) days following the November election the delegates to the County Convention shall convene at the call of the county chairperson for the purpose of electing part of the Executive Committee. Persons eligible to be nominated must be Members of the Michigan Democratic Party on or before November 1st of the year in which the County Convention is held. Each member of the Kent County Democratic Executive Committee shall be a member of the Kent County Democratic Party and shall attend meetings of the Executive Committee.

If a vacancy occurs in the position of delegate-elected members of the Executive Committee, the remaining delegate-elected members fill the vacancy. The Executive Committee may fill a vacancy in any of its offices.

The Executive Committee shall meet monthly at a regularly scheduled meeting and shall keep minutes of all meetings which shall be available to all Party members.

## Section 2

The statutory members of the Executive Committee may vote to expand the membership of the Executive Committee with Associate Members. Expansion of the Executive Committee with Associate Members is encouraged for the purpose of achieving more participation and representation or to honor key supporters.

An Associate Member shall sit as part of the Executive Committee and shall have both voice and vote in all issues considered, except elections to the Executive Committee, the Officers of the Executive Committee, the bylaws or bylaw amendments, the Associate Executive Committee members, or any statutory matter which may become before the Executive Committee.

An Associate Member shall hold a valid Michigan Democratic Party membership and a Kent County Democratic membership at the time of assuming the duties of the position.

The statutory members of the Executive Committee shall elect the Associate Members of the Executive Committee in January of odd numbered years (the January following the County Convention) to a 2-year term.

The statutory members of the Executive Committee may elect additional Associate Executive Committee members at any monthly Executive Committee meeting for the time remaining in terms ending in January of odd numbered years.

The statutory members of the Executive Committee may fill Associate Member by majority vote.

### Section 3

The Chairperson shall preside at all Executive and County meetings, and have such other duties as usual to the office of County Chairperson, or that may be required by this organization.

### Section 4

Officers shall be selected in accordance with rules of the Michigan Democratic Party within thirty (30 ) days of the County Convention. Officers shall be chosen as provided by the statutes of the State of Michigan governing the election of county party officers, being Michigan Compiled Laws (MCL) Section 168.599, Michigan Election Law Act 116 of 1954 as amended.

The Executive Officers shall consist of: Chairperson, First Vice-Chairperson of the opposite sex, Second Vice-Chair, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, and two (2) At-Large members.

A vacancy in an officer position shall be filled by a majority vote of the statutory members of the Executive Committee present at a meeting of the Executive Committee subsequent to the meeting at which the vacancy was announcing.

### Section 5

Vacancies in the Recording Secretary of the Treasurer positions may be filled, by appointment of the Officers, on an interim basis, until the next scheduled monthly meeting of the Executive Committee to fill the respective vacancy by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

### Section 6

The officers of the Kent County Democratic Party are prohibited from serving concurrently as paid political staff members of a political candidate campaign committee.

## Section 7

Vice-Chairpersons shall assist the Chairperson in the discharge of his/her duties, and the first Vice-Chairperson shall assume the duties and responsibilities of the Chairperson in his/her absence.

## Section 8

The Secretary shall keep an accurate record, prepare minutes and, publicize notice of the Executive Committee monthly meetings. He/she shall prepare and keep a record of the full membership of the Executive Committee, a record of the elected precinct delegates, members in the Michigan Democratic Party residing in Kent County, Standing Committees, and all special committees. He/she shall be responsible for keeping and preserving the records, minutes, correspondence, and the property of the Kent County Democratic Party, other than as provided in Section 9 of this article; and he/she shall be responsible for their immediate delivery at the end of his/her term to the newly elected secretary.

## Section 9

The Treasurer shall be responsible for all financial receipts and expenditures, for the deposit and maintenance of funds in a bank, and for the withdrawal of funds from a bank. Checkbooks, passbooks, and all other records of receipt, expenditures, payables, receivables, deposits or withdrawals shall be reconciled by the Treasurer each month. A report, in writing and in a form suitable for attachment to the minutes of the proceedings kept by the Secretary, and shall be made by the Treasurer at the meeting of the Executive Committee, and made available to the Kent County Democratic Party and shall comply to generally accepted accounting principles.

## Section 10

No part of the income or assets of the Party shall be provided to any of its Members except for the reimbursement of actual expenses, and reasonable compensation for services if the Executive Committee approves.

## Section 11

The Treasurer shall be responsible for reporting all receipts and expenditures to the appropriate government regulatory agencies.

The Treasurer shall cooperate and assist in any review or audit of the books and accounts authorized by a majority vote of members of the Executive Committee present at a meeting. There shall be at least one audit a year, performed by an audit committee of three dues paying members of the Michigan Democratic Party residing in Kent County. One member shall be appointed by the Chairperson, and two members shall be selected by the Executive Committee. The results of all audit or reviews shall be reported in writing and in a form suitable for attachment to the minutes of the proceedings kept by the Secretary.



Each request for reimbursement of expenses shall be supported by a receipt or invoice. No checks shall be drawn to cash or to the drawer as payee, unless there is documentation of special circumstances.

In the expiration of his/her term of office, the Treasurer shall immediately deliver to the newly elected Treasurer all the funds, books, and records for which he/she was responsible, currently balanced and reconciled.

Within ten (10) days the Treasurer (elected or newly appointed) shall file with the Secretary of State and amended statement of organization.

## Section 12

An Executive Committee member may resign by written notice to the committee, which resignation is effective upon its receipt by the committee.

# Article VII. Committees

## Section 1

The Chairperson, subject to the approval of the majority vote of the Executive Committee, shall appoint the committee and committee Chairpersons necessary for the work of the organization.

The Chairperson shall be an exofficio member of all Standing Committees except the Nominating Committee and shall not appoint or be a member of the Nominating Committee. The Treasurer shall be an Ex Officio member of the Finance Committee. The Secretary shall be an Ex Officio member of the Membership Committee.

## Section 2

Standing Committees shall include the following:

1. Political Organizing (Sub-committees are Nominations, Candidate Recruitment, Elections, Voter Education & Voter Registration, Grass Root Development).
2. Finance Committee (Sub-committees are Fundraising, Compliance).
3. Rules, Bylaws Policy and Resolutions (Include Parliamentarian).
4. Membership Committee.

## Section 3

The Nominating Committee shall have seven (7) members: Three (3) of which will be selected by the officers and four (4) of which shall be selected by the Executive Committee. The Nominating Committee shall begin their work no later than the last week of August (in even numbered years).

The Nominating Committee will be actively and publicly, at the September and October Executive Committee monthly meetings:

1. Request and publicize the names of recently elected precinct delegates willing to serve on the Executive Committee (election(s) to be held at the time of the November County Convention) and/or
2. Request and publicize the names of recently elected precinct delegates willing to serve in one of the seven officer positions of the Kent County Democratic Party (elections to be held at the December monthly Executive Committee meeting).
3. Make it known that nominations for the respective positions or officers from among the recently elected precinct delegates are accepted from the floor of the convention or meeting.

## Section 4

The Finance Committee shall seek and obtain input from all committees, sub-committees, and other entities that will impact the income and expenses of the Kent County Democratic Party.

## Section 5

The Finance Committee shall prepare a rolling two-year budget annually of projected income and expenses to be presented to the Executive Committee by the Committee Chair or designated representative at the time of the April monthly meeting for approval.

All non-budgeted expenditures shall be reviewed by the Finance Committee and/or officers prior to the monthly Executive Committee meeting with a written resolution for consideration.

## Section 6

For each Fundraising Committee event, county meeting, and County Convention there shall be a sign-in:

1. There shall be a cashier at the event, other than the Treasurer, who is responsible for accurately recording and delivering to the Treasurer all receipts received at the event.
2. The cashier's tallies and records shall be checked independently by a person other than the cashier and the Treasurer.
3. All receipts received at the event shall be deposited on the first business day after the event.
4. A report of the event in the same detail and form as the regular Treasurer's report shall be made by the Treasurer or by the Chairperson of the event at the next meeting of the Executive Committee and to each subsequent meeting to the Executive Committee until the books on the fundraiser are closed.

## Article VIII. Order of Business

The agenda for meetings of the Executive Committee and full membership of the Kent County Democratic Party shall be determined by the Chairperson and will be provided to all persons in attendance in attendance prior to the meeting.

## Article IX. Affiliates

### Section 1

Organizations, clubs, and any other groups, both existing and to be established, in Kent County, requesting affiliation with the Kent County Democratic Party shall submit their request along with a copy of their bylaws in writing to the Rules Committee. The Rules Committee shall formulate a recommendation according to the rules of the Michigan Democratic Party and the policies of the Kent County Democratic Party Executive Committee within 30 days of receipt of the request by the County Party's Recording Secretary. If found to be proper and in the best interests of the Democratic Party, a Certificate of Affiliation shall be issued to the organization subject to approval by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee, at any time for just cause, after proper hearing, may revise, suspend, or revoke the Certificate of Affiliation.

### Section 2

No organization in Kent County shall claim or imply any association or affiliation with, or sanction by, the Democratic Party until it has complied with the bylaws and policies of the Kent County Democratic Party, and has received its certification of affiliation, and it shall take no action in conflict with these bylaws and policies after affiliation.

### Section 3

Affiliated organizations shall be approved for that two year term of the Executive Committee.

## Article X. Amendments

### Section 1

Proposals for changes of amendments to these bylaws shall first be referred to the Rules and Bylaws Committee which shall report its recommendations to the next regular Executive Committee meeting or special meeting called for that purpose.

## Section 2

After the Kent County Democratic Executive Committee has received the report of the Rules Committee, the proposed amendment and the recommendation of the Rules Committee shall be communicated to the Kent County Democratic Party Executive Committee by US Mail, handout, or electronic notice at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of the meeting at which the amendment will be subject to vote. The amendment may then be finally considered and adopted by a two-third ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote of the statutory members of the Kent County Democratic Executive Committee present at the meeting.

## Section 3

These bylaws shall be in full force and effect upon their adoption and shall supersede all previous bylaws, rules, motions and policies of a contrary nature with the exception of the rules of the Michigan Democratic Party.

## Article XI. Dissolution

In the event of dissolution of the Kent County Democratic Party, all real and personal property will revert to the benefit of the Parent Organization of the Michigan Democratic Party.

## Revision History

October 10, 2012

### **Article VI. Officers and the Executive Committee, Section 1, 2nd Paragraph**

Each even-numbered year within twenty (20) days following the November election the delegates to the County Convention shall convene at the call of the county chairperson for the purpose of electing part of the Executive Committee (~~all of which are precinct delegates~~).