

# **Anishinaabek Caucus of the Michigan Democratic Party Bylaws**

*As Adopted, April 7, 2022*

## **ARTICLE I - NAME, MEMBERSHIP, MISSION, AND STATUS**

**Section 1** - This organization shall be known as the Anishinaabek Caucus of the Michigan Democratic Party (hereinafter “Caucus”).

**Section 2** - The membership shall consist of Native Americans, tribal leaders, allies, and supporters of Native American / Indigenous (hereinafter “Indigenous”) rights, sovereignty, and interests, who satisfy the membership requirements outlined in Article 3 of the Michigan Democratic Party (“MDP”) Rules. The membership of the Caucus shall consist of three classes of individual membership: (1) regular members, (2) associate members, and (3) special members.

1. **Regular Members:** Persons who are enrolled members of the twelve federally recognized Michigan Indigenous tribes or bands. Regular members in good standing shall be eligible to be elected as an officer of the Caucus’s Executive Board and shall have such other rights, privileges, and duties as the Executive Board may determine from time to time.
2. **Associate Members:** Persons who are enrolled members of any recognized North American Indigenous tribe or band. Associate members in good standing shall be eligible to be elected as an ancillary officer to the Caucus’s Executive Board and whose dues are current may have such rights, privileges and duties as the Executive Board may determine from time to time.
3. **Special Members:** Persons not otherwise eligible for regular or associate membership in the Caucus shall be eligible to apply for membership as special members of the Caucus. Special members in good standing may have such rights, privileges and duties as the Executive Board may determine from time to time.

**Section 3** - The principle mission of the Caucus shall be to promote the involvement of Michigan Indigenous peoples in the political process and the activities of the Michigan Democratic Party. The Caucus shall advocate for public policies which promote the needs of Anishinaabek Tribal Communities, and the State at large.

**Section 4** - The Anishinaabek Caucus shall be a non-profit organization and upon its dissolution, all assets and real or personal property of the Anishinaabek Caucus and its committees and work groups shall revert to the benefit of the Michigan Democratic Party. No part of the income or assets of the Anishinaabek shall transfer to any of its members or non-members except for the

reimbursement of actual expenses or reasonable compensation for services as approved by at least two of the Officers.

## **ARTICLE II - OBJECTIVES**

The primary objectives of the Anishinaabek Caucus are (1) to promote the interests and concerns of the Anishinaabek people and (2) to elect Anishinaabek Democrats and allies. We will support and encourage Anishinaabek candidates and allies at all levels of government; to recruit, train, support and elect Anishinaabek Democrats.

## **ARTICLE III - FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES**

**Section 1** - All public meetings of the Anishinaabek Caucus shall be open to attendance by 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, disability, or gender identity.

**Section 2** - No tests for membership in, nor any oaths of loyalty to, the Anishinaabek Caucus shall be required or used which has the effect of requiring prospective or current Anishinaabek Caucus members to acquiesce in, condone or support discrimination on the grounds of actual or perceived race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, economic status, religion, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, physical appearance or disability.

**Section 3** - The Anishinaabek Caucus shall announce in such a manner as to assure notice to all interested parties a description of the legal and practical qualifications for all officers and representatives of the Anishinaabek Caucus. The announcement shall be done in a timely fashion so that all prospective candidates or applicants for any elected or appointed position within Anishinaabek Caucus will have full and adequate opportunity to compete for office.

**Section 4** - Proportional voting shall be used in the election of the Officers and Executive Board of the Anishinaabek Caucus according to the State Directive on Proportional Voting.

**Section 5** - On all questions of procedure not resolved by these Bylaws or the Rules of Michigan Democratic Party, the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be used.

**Section 6** - Votes shall not be taken by secret ballot at any meeting of the Anishinaabek Caucus at any level. Voter intimidation or coercion will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

## **ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**Section 1** - The Officers shall be a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson of a differing gender of the Chairperson, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. They shall be enrolled Michigan citizens of a Federally Recognized Tribe and classified as a Regular Member within the Caucus. Furthermore, each Officer-elect shall serve two (2) year terms following election by majority vote at a full membership meeting of the Anishinaabek Caucus at the Michigan Democratic Party's Spring Convention in odd years. Vacancies among the Officers shall be filled by appointment of the Officers and subsequently elected by the membership.

**Section 2** - Vacancies among the Officers and the Executive Board shall be appointed temporarily by a majority vote of the membership and elected by proportional vote at the next statewide meeting of the Caucus members or in the congressional district with the vacancy.

**Section 3** - Suspension of an officer, committee chairperson, or committee member shall be effective upon notice from any two (2) Executive Board members due to, but not limited to, suspension or expulsion from the MDP, harassment, theft, unreasonable and prolonged absences, and other unethical behaviors. A prolonged absence is one which spans three consecutive meetings or more without communication and barring emergencies. Unethical behavior may encompass actions that are unlawful, illegal, that substantially violate these bylaws, or which derelict duties. If an officer is facing suspension, he/she/they must abstain from the vote but may submit a written statement to the Executive Board in his/her/their defense.

**Section 4** - Termination of any officer, committee chairperson, or committee member will be effective upon majority vote of the Executive Board in a public or closed meeting under the discretion of the Board.

If an officer is facing termination, he/she/they must abstain from the vote but may submit a written statement to the Executive Board in his/her/their defense. Vacancies that result from termination shall be filled according to temporary appointment by the majority of the Executive Board and confirmed upon majority vote of the membership at the next scheduled public meeting.

**Section 5** - Resignation of any officer, committee chairperson, or committee member will be effective immediately upon receipt of a written notice of resignation to the Executive Board. In the event that an officer, committee chairperson, or committee member does not wish to or cannot supply a written notice, verbal resignation may be accepted by at least one Board member. Vacancies shall be filled according to temporary appointment by the majority of the Executive Board and confirmed upon majority vote of the membership at the next scheduled public meeting.

**Section 6** - The Chairperson shall preside at all Executive Board meetings and Conventions, have such other duties as are usual to the office of Chairperson, or that may be required by this organization. The Chairperson in cooperation with the Vice Chairperson and the Treasurer will create and present an annual budget to the Executive Committee for approval, including fundraising plans, goals and expenditure purposes, and expected amounts. Brief quarterly budget updates will be created and presented to the Executive Committee.

**Section 7** - The Vice-Chairperson shall be a member of a differing gender from the Chairperson. The Vice-Chairperson shall assist the Chairperson in the discharge of their duties and shall temporarily assume the duties and responsibilities of the Chairperson in their excused absence.

**Section 8** - The Secretary of this organization shall keep an accurate record and minutes of the proceedings of all meetings. The Secretary shall keep and preserve all the books, documents, correspondence, records, minutes, effects, and any other property of this organization, and when a new Secretary is elected, the interim Secretary shall deliver to the Secretary-elect all the aforesaid items kept and preserved during the tenure of office within fifteen (15) calendar days. The Secretary shall see that proper notification is given to Caucus meetings.

**Section 9** - Together, the Treasurer and Designated Bookkeeper shall be responsible for the financial receipts and disbursements of this organization subject to the approval of the Executive Board.

**Section 10** - All members of the Executive Board shall have an electronically filed copy of their full name, current contact information (including email address, phone number, and residential home address), signature (for financial security purposes), and tribal citizenship verification.

**Section 11** - The funds of this organization shall be deposited in a Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (“FDIC”) or National Credit Union Administration (“NCUA”) Institution be drawn upon by checks signed by one of the three following officers: (1) Chairperson, (2) Vice-Chairperson, OR (2) Secretary; **AND** one of the two following two positions: (1) Treasurer OR (2) Designated Bookkeeper. The funds may also be drawn upon by debit card transactions agreed to through electronic mail (“e-mail”). The e-mail must have the subject line: “Financial transaction of the Anishinaabek Caucus”. It must be sent to all officers on the Executive Committee and the Designated Bookkeeper for reference and accountability.

**Section 12** - The Treasurer shall make financial reports to the Executive Board and the Caucus. When a new Treasurer is elected, the past Treasurer shall forthwith deliver to the Treasurer-elect the funds and all the books and records kept during his or her tenure in office within fifteen (15) calendar days.

## **ARTICLE V - MEETINGS**

**Section 1** - The regular meetings of the Anishinaabek Caucus Executive Board shall be on the date and at the location and time set forth in the meeting notice. The time and place for all public meetings of the Anishinaabek Caucus shall be publicized fully and in such a manner as to assure timely notice to all interested persons. At least three (3) calendar days’ notice shall be given of the date, time, and place of the meeting. Notice may be given by mail, phone, text message, social media, e-mail or other means of communication. Such meetings must be held in places accessible to all Anishinaabek Caucus members. In order to best accommodate our geographically diverse membership, meetings shall regularly be conducted electronically; including but not limited to video conferencing services such as Skype, Zoom, or Microsoft Teams. Virtual meetings may be recorded without notice and saved indefinitely at the

discretion of the Executive Board. Occasionally, meetings may be held in person such as at Michigan Democratic Party Conventions or other events. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the Executive Board.

**Section 2** - The special meetings of the Anishinaabek Caucus Executive Board shall be on the date and at the location and time set forth in the meeting notice. The time and place for all public meetings of the Anishinaabek Caucus shall be publicized fully and in such a manner as to assure timely notice to all interested persons. At least three (3) calendar day's notice shall be given of the date, time, and place of the meeting. Notice may be given by mail, phone, text message, social media, e-mail or other means of communication. Such meetings must be held in places accessible to all Anishinaabek Caucus members. In order to best accommodate our geographically diverse membership, meetings shall regularly be conducted electronically; including but not limited to video conferencing services such as Skype, Zoom, or Microsoft Teams. Virtual meetings may be recorded without notice and saved indefinitely at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Occasionally, meetings may be held in person such as at Michigan Democratic Party Conventions or other events. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the Executive Committee.

**Section 3** - The closed session of the Anishinaabek Caucus Executive Board is private and are held during a regular or special meeting. These closed sessions are limited to discussing matters of a sensitive nature such as, but not limited to, personal, legal, or Board member ethics issues, or where confidential consideration of party strategy is necessary. Only those individuals who serve on the Executive are permitted to attend. In order to best accommodate our geographically diverse Executive, closed session may be conducted electronically or in person in accordance with Article V Sections 1 and 2. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the Executive Committee. Information regarding the content discussed or voted upon at a closed session shall be shared as a brief synopsis of the content of the meeting with the broader membership and included in the minutes of the regular or special meeting. [Do you want to include limitations on what should be discussed in closed session? For example, it's normal to have personal issues, legal issues or Board member ethics issues held in closed session. But typically, for transparency, you don't want just anything to be in a closed session. Closed sessions are only appropriate for matters of a sensitive nature where discussion in open session would hurt a business interest, violate privacy, cause undo embarrassment, etc. The MDP rules only allow closed session, "where confidential consideration of party strategy is necessary.]]

**Section 4** - At least once per calendar year there shall be a full membership meeting of the Anishinaabek Caucus where the Officers and Executive Board shall report on Caucus activities. At least three (3) days' notice shall be given of the date, place and time of the meeting in such a manner as to assure timely notice to all interested persons. Notice may be given by mail, phone, text message, social media, e-mail, or other means of communication. [Just as an FYI the MDP requires that all meetings shall be publicized fully and in such a manner as to assure timely notice to all interested persons.]

**Section 5** - Special meetings of the Executive Board or full membership may be called by a majority of the Executive Committee or full membership, respectively. At least three (3) days'

notice shall be given of the date, place, time and purpose of the special meeting. Notice may be given by mail, phone, text message, social media, e-mail, or other means of communication.

**Section 6** - The full Caucus shall meet in conjunction with County, Congressional District, State Central Committee, and State Convention meetings at the date, time, and place established by the Executive Board. Anishinaabek Caucus committees and/or chapters that are active at the congressional district or county also can meet at the date, time and place of their choosing so long as proper advanced notice of at least seven (7) days are provided to their members and the public.

**Section 7** - 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 edition).

## **ARTICLE VI - ORDER OF BUSINESS for STANDING COMMITTEES and MAINTENANCE TEAM**

**Section 1** - The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson shall appoint the Maintenance Team and Committee chairpersons of the three Committees necessary for the work of the organization. Committee chairpersons shall be selected based on their experience and desire to help the Anishinaabek people; citizenship of a Federally recognized Tribe is not required. Individuals serving on the Maintenance Team shall be citizens of an American State or Federally recognized Tribe, or legally belong to a First Nations, Inuit, and Métis community of Canada recognized under § 35(2) of the Canadian Constitution Act (1982).

**Section 2** – In addition to the Maintenance Team, the Standing Committees will fall under three categories: Administrative, Outreach, and Furthering the Mission. These committees shall include the appropriate subcommittees. The Anishinaabek Caucus Board (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer) shall be an ex-officio member of all standing committees. The committees under these categories include the following:

### **Maintenance Team:**

1. The Designated Bookkeeper
  - a. The Designated Bookkeeper reviews all transactions to ensure documents, payments and information are in compliance and assists the Treasurer with quarterly reports.

### **Administrative Committees:**

1. Fundraising Committee:
  - a. Fundraising Committee Chairperson
    - i. Chair of committee is responsible for the recruitment of its members and organizing its membership into any relevant sub-committees that have specific responsibilities relative to fundraising initiatives, grant writing, and strengthening donor relationships.

2. Executive Oversight Committee:
  - a. Oversight Committee Chairperson
    - i. Chair of committee is responsible for the recruitment of its members and organizing its membership into any relevant sub-committees that have specific responsibilities relative to (1) Caucus Rules and Bylaws; (2) Compliance with 501(c) status, PAC status, and MDP rules; (3) Organization of Document Archives.

**Furthering the Mission Committees:**

1. Political Coordinating Committee
  - a. Political Coordinating Committee Chairperson
    - i. Chair of committee is responsible for the recruitment of its members and organizing its membership into any relevant sub-committees that have specific responsibilities relative to electoral activities.
2. Policy Committee
  - a. Policy Committee Chairperson
    - i. Chair of committee is responsible for the recruitment of its members and organizing its membership into any relative sub-committees that have specific responsibilities relative to resolutions and legislation and develops position statements that support the mission of the Caucus.

**Outreach Committees:**

1. Membership Committee
  - a. Membership Committee Chairperson
    - i. Chair of committee is responsible for the recruitment of its members and organizing its membership into any relevant sub-committees that have specific responsibilities relative to recruitment and retainment of members while maintaining active voting status rolls.
2. Communications Committee
  - a. Communications Committee Chairperson
    - i. Chair of committee is responsible for the recruitment of its members and organizing its membership into any relevant sub-committees that have specific responsibilities relative to marketing, website development, branding, and media.
3. Events Committee
  - a. Events Committee Chairperson
    - i. Chair of committee is responsible for the recruitment of its members and organizing its membership into any relevant sub-committees

that have specific responsibilities relative to organizing and managing events.

## **ARTICLE VII - ORDER OF BUSINESS**

At meetings the business of the organization shall proceed in the following order:

1. Call to Order (Time and Date)
2. Call of Officers
3. Approval of Proposed Agenda
4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting
5. Reports of Officers
  - A. Chair
  - B. Vice Chair
  - C. Secretary (Correspondence)
  - D. Treasurer (Financial Report)
6. Reports of Committees
7. Regional Directors
8. Chairs of Committees
9. Chairs of Work Groups
10. Other Officers
11. Unfinished Business
12. New Business
13. Schedule Next meeting date and time
14. Public Speaking – Each guest may speak for three (3) minutes
15. Adjournment

## **ARTICLE VIII - AMENDMENTS**

**Section 1** - Proposals for changes or amendments to these bylaws shall first be referred to the Rules and Bylaws Committee which shall report its recommendations to the next regular Caucus 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 Anishinaabek Caucus present at a meeting, provided that notice setting forth the proposed amendment(s) has been sent by mail, e-mail, and/or social media to all Caucus members at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of the meeting.

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

**Section 4** - These bylaws were approved by the statewide meeting of the Anishinaabek Caucus on April 7, 2022



We, the Officers of the Anishinaabek Caucus of the Michigan Democratic Party, verify by our signatures that these Bylaws are now in effect as of April 7, 2022.

Andrea Pierce, Chair  
Nat(haniel) Spurr, Vice Chair  
Julie Dye, Secretary  
Brandi Nehila, Treasurer

			
Andrea Pierce Chair	Nathaniel W. Spurr Vice Chair	Julie Dye Secretary	Brandi Nehila Treasurer

Revised 02/13/2019; 5/23/2019; 08/01/2019; 2/20/2021; 04/07/2022