

COUNTY CHAIR HANDBOOK

**Assembled by the Grassroots Volunteers of the
Republican Party of Texas SREC Party Organization Committee,
Cassie Daniel, RPT Organization Director, and County Chairs**

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REPUBLICAN PARTY OF TEXAS

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Dear County Chair,

Congratulations on your new position! County Chairs play a critical role in growing and maintaining our Party. I sincerely thank you for stepping up to fill this important position.

Your new position is one of importance and honor. From this day forward, you will serve as a leader for the voters in your county. They will look to you for guidance, mentorship, and vision. I have no doubt that you will excel in this position.

We hope that this manual will assist you in your new role as the political leader of your county.

The present and future success of the Party is dependent on the efforts of our local leaders. I am tremendously grateful for your willingness to serve your county.

I look forward to working alongside you and your county party as we continue to fight for our conservative values. Please do not hesitate to contact our office if there is anything we can assist with.

God bless you and God bless Texas,

Tom Mechler

Chairman,
Republican Party of Texas

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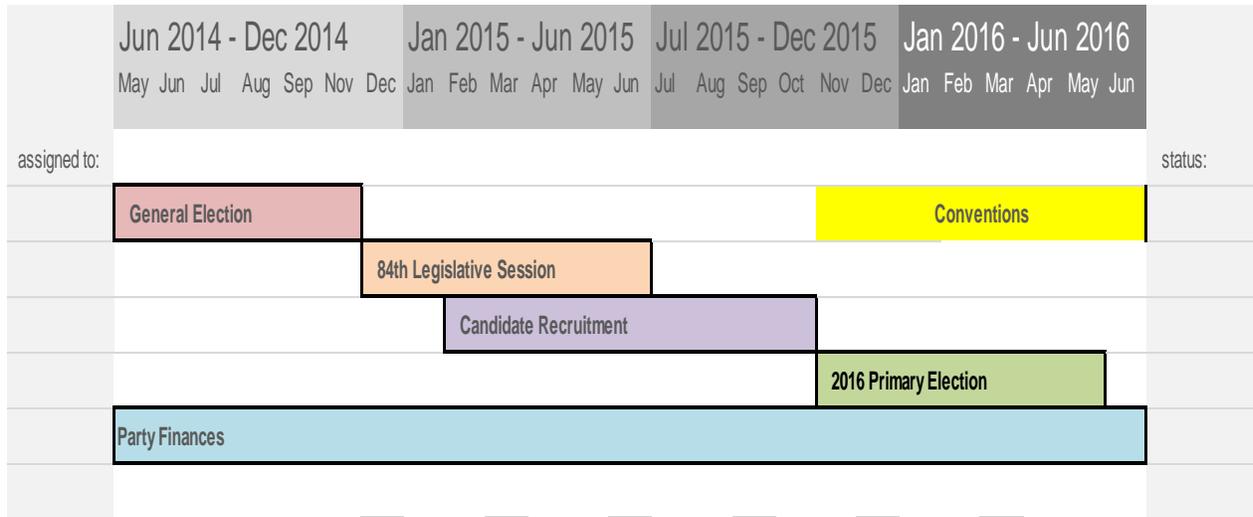
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2016 Election Calendar

Item	Date
First day to file for a place on the primary ballot for precinct chair candidates.	Tuesday, September 15, 2015
First day to file for all other candidates for offices that are regularly scheduled to be on the Primary ballot.	Saturday, November 14, 2015
Filing deadline for candidates; filing deadline for independent candidates to file intent declaration.	Monday, December 14, 2015 at 6:00 PM
First Day of Early Voting	Tuesday, February 16, 2016 (First Day after President's Day holiday)
Last Day to Apply for Ballot by Mail	Friday, February 19, 2016 (NEW LAW: 11th day before election day; regular ABBM and FPCA)
Last Day of Early Voting	Friday, February 26, 2016
Last day to Receive Ballot by Mail	Tuesday, March 1, 2016 (election day) at 7:00 p.m. (unless overseas deadline applies)
Precinct Conventions	Any date between the closing of the polls on March 1 and the start of the county/district convention on March 19. Set by each individual county executive committee.
County and District Conventions	March 19, 2016 (date set by RPT Rule)
Republican Party State Convention - Dallas	May 12-14, 2016 (date set by RPT)
Republican National Convention – Cleveland, OH	July 18-21, 2016 (date set by RNC)
Election Day 2016	November 8, 2016

Information regarding the statutory dates and deadlines were taken from the Texas Secretary of State website at <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/laws/march-primary--election-calendar-2016.shtml>.

2014-2016 Sample Republican Party Organization Cycle and Deadlines



Quarter 1 (Jan 2015-June 2015): Legislative Session; Candidate recruitment

Quarter 2 (July 2015-Dec 2015): Candidate recruitment; Primary election preparation and administration; Convention planning

Quarter 3 (Jan 2016-June 2016): Primary election administration; Conventions; voter registration

Quarter 4 (July 2016-Dec 2016): General election, voter registration, and GOTV efforts

All quarters: fundraising and finances

Documents Governing our Party

Texas Election Code

The Texas Election Code is the set of laws passed by the State Legislature governing Texas elections, voting systems, candidates and political parties. When you see “Section” references in this manual, they are referring to the Texas Election Code. The Texas Election Code is also available online at www.capitol.state.tx.us or www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us. These websites also have a link to all of the Texas Statutes as well as to the Texas Constitution. Note that these laws do not reflect the most recent legislative session until the spring following a legislative session.

Republican Party of Texas Rules

Per the Texas Election Code, the Republican Party of Texas has adopted rules to govern the conduct of precinct, county/senatorial district, and state meetings and conventions. These rules continue in effect unless changed at a state convention or by the SREC. Therefore, the rules in effect at any given time will be dated as of June of the last state convention year or the date in which the SREC voted on an amendment to the rules. It is important to note that the RPT Rules do not, and cannot, conflict with the Texas Election Code. RPT Rules may be accessed online at www.texasgop.org.

Republican Party of Texas Platform

The Republican Party of Texas has a statement of basic beliefs that outline its political philosophy. This platform is adopted at each state convention. The platform in effect at any given time will be dated as of June of the last state convention year as voted on by the delegates at the State Convention. Additionally, the State Republican Executive Committee often passes resolutions that speak to current issues. The current RPT Platform may be accessed at www.texasgop.org.

State Party By-Laws and County Party By-Laws

The State Republican Executive Committee has adopted bylaws which direct the conduct of the State Party. Copies of the bylaws are distributed to each SREC Member.

County executive committees also adopt bylaws to direct the conduct of their county party at the beginning of each term of the County Executive Committee (beginning in June of even-numbered years). Bylaws should address the special needs found in the individual county, but also cover items such as frequency of county executive committee meetings, who may convene a meeting, duties of officers, the number of precinct chairs necessary to constitute a quorum for conducting non-election code business, and the establishment of permanent and special committees. The bylaws provide a clear outline for conducting party business.

Required Deadlines within RPT Rules

1. RPT Rule 8: Each County Executive Committee (CEC) shall hold its organizational meeting within 45 days after the term of office begins for the county chair. The date the term begins is 20 days after the run-off election date in even-numbered years. The County Chair is required to call this meeting. The CEC is required to adopt by-laws and may adopt supplemental rules. The County Chair is required to provide 14 days' notice of the organization meeting by U.S. mail to each elected precinct chair. (June even-numbered years)
2. RPT Rule 19: Date, time, and place for the precinct conventions shall be set by the County Executive Committee or the County Chair if the CEC fails to act. The date, time, and place must be announced prior to the date of the primary election. (no later than January even-numbered years)
3. RPT Rule 22: The permanent precinct convention chairs must deliver their completed precinct convention materials to the county chair. In counties with Senatorial District conventions, the county chair is required to deliver the materials for the precincts within each SD to the SD Convention Chair within 6 days. (March even-numbered years during convention process)
4. RPT Rule 23A: In a county with more than one Senatorial District, the CEC may elect to hold their SD conventions in consolidated location and may choose to set a ratio to adjust the delegate entitlement. The CEC meeting to make these decisions must take place no later than the deadline to draw the ballot order for candidates. (no later than mid-December odd-numbered years)

Election Administration and Statutory Deadlines

The County Chair plays a major statutory role and has many legal requirements with the administration of elections. These are covered in separate training materials provided by both the Secretary of State and RPT, but it would be wise to develop a calendar for yourself and the County Executive Committee to follow along and track these important deadlines. Some of the election administrative responsibilities of the County Chair include:

- Accepting applications from local candidates for the Republican Primary Election
- Administering the county's Republican Primary Election
- Managing Primary Election Funds
- Encouraging voters to participate in elections
- Submitting names for Election Judges and the Early Voting Ballot Board
- Supporting ballot integrity
- Appointing and approving poll watchers

Party Structure

Before we go into the best practices for organizing and working your county and precincts, it is important to have a general understanding of the Republican Party structure at the county, state, and national levels, as well as to understand the convention process.

Below is a graphic that shows how the foundation of everything in the Republican Party is the grassroots volunteers. There is no Republican Party without the grassroots.



NATIONAL PARTY ORGANIZATION: Republican National Committee (RNC)

The RNC is composed of all state party chairs plus one committeeman and one committeewoman from each state and U.S. territory. RNC Officers are elected by the RNC membership. Texas Republicans elect their RNC committeeman and committeewoman at the state conventions held in presidential election years.

National Committeeman ♦ State Chair ♦ National Committeewoman

STATE PARTY ORGANIZATION: State Republican Executive Committee (SREC)

The SREC is composed of the State Chair, Vice Chair, and one man and one woman from each of the 31 state senatorial districts (SDs). Delegates elect this committee at the state convention held in late spring of even-numbered years. All convention delegates elect the State Chair and a State Vice-Chair. Each SD elects a Committeeman and Committeewoman to represent their respective district, which is then ratified by the convention. Officers are either elected or appointed, according to SREC bylaws. Ex officio members of the SREC include the National Committeeman and Committeewoman, Party officers and Auxiliary representatives. SREC members help organize and oversee Party activities in their respective SDs.

**State Chair ♦ State Vice-Chair
Committeeman & Committeewoman from each SD**

COUNTY PARTY ORGANIZATION: County Executive Committee (CEC)

The County Chair and Precinct Chairs are elected by popular vote at the Republican primary election held in March of each even-numbered year. Voters residing in each of the county's voting precincts elect their respective Precinct Chairs. Together, they comprise the County Executive Committee. Officers are either elected or appointed, according to CEC bylaws. Ex officio members of the CEC include the SREC members in the county's SD(s) and appointed Party officers.

County Chair ♦ Precinct Chairs

PRECINCT ORGANIZATION: Precinct Chairs and Volunteers

The only elected Party official in the precinct is the Precinct Chair. The Precinct Chair recruits volunteers and organizes them in the way most fitting to the precinct. The precinct is the smallest unit of our Party; however, it is the most essential unit. It is here, at the grassroots level, that voters are identified and turned out on Election Day.

Precinct Chair ♦ Volunteers

AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

Auxiliary organizations work in cooperation with the formal Party organization to bring specific groups of citizens into the Republican Party. They often serve as an intermediary step in getting people to assume leadership positions with County Executive Committees or with campaigns. Auxiliaries complement and add to the strength of the Party organization. For a list of current official RPT auxiliaries, visit www.texasgop.org.

Role of the County Chair

Republican Elections¹

- Accepting applications from local candidates for the Republican Primary Election
- Administering the county's Republican Primary Election
- Managing Primary Election Funds
- Encouraging voters to participate in elections
- Submitting names for Election Judges and the Early Voting Ballot Board
- Supporting ballot integrity
- Appointing and approving poll watchers

Republican Conventions

- Organizing, supervising, and encouraging participation in Precinct and County/Senatorial District Conventions
- Submitting delegates and alternates elected to serve at the State Convention
- Submitting resolutions to be considered by the Platform Committee at the State Convention

County Executive Committee

- Recruiting and providing training for Precinct Chairs
- Appointing officers and committees as needed
- Calling and presiding over all County Executive Committee meetings and ensuring that meetings are held at least quarterly
- Maintaining minutes of all meetings and a roster of all committee members

Represents the County Party and spreads the Republican message

- Being a spokesperson to the local media by answering questions and putting out press releases, newsletters or letters to the editor
- Speaking to organized groups and individual voters in your community about the work the County Republican Party is doing and how others may get involved
- Keeping RPT Headquarters and SREC members informed of County Party activities

Manager of the County Party

- Setting up a headquarters, where possible and financially feasible
- Acting as a support and information source for local candidates
- Helping form Republican clubs where appropriate and working closely with those clubs

Builds the Republican Party

- Promoting a positive image of the Party through local media and by word of mouth
- Maintaining rapport with community business, neighborhood, and civic groups
- Welcoming newcomers to the area and having them register to vote

¹ Election Administration information is covered in separate materials developed by the Secretary of State and RPT. Please read these materials as there are many deadlines and statutory requirements to follow.

Becoming a County Chair

Qualifications to be a County Chair:

- 1) be a qualified voter of the county (Sec. 161.005)
- 2) not be a county, state, or federal public officeholder or candidate for such office, and
- 3) in a general election year, be affiliated with the Republican Party through voting in the Republican primary election or runoff or by oath of affiliation (Sec. 162.001 – 162.012)

Methods for becoming a County Chair: (Sec.171.022)

Election for two-year term. Candidates for County Chair run for office in the Primary Election each even-numbered year. A one-page notarized application must be submitted to the County Chair (yourself, if you are seeking re-election) within a one-month filing period. Individuals may also run as write-in candidates (Sec. 171.0231). The winner is determined by majority vote of those voting in the Primary Election.

Appointment to fill vacancy. Any eligible person may be appointed to fill a County Chair vacancy at any time. Appointment is by majority vote of the County Executive Committee present at a properly called meeting with a quorum (171.024-5). If no County Executive Committee is in place, the State Chair may appoint a county chair with the State Executive Committee confirming the appointment (171.027).

Resigning the Office of County Chair

We hope you will serve out your full term as County Chair. However, some situations make it necessary to leave early. Please see “Statutory Requirements of the CEC” section for filling vacancies.

- *Change of residence.* A County Chair must be a registered voter in that county. Moving one’s voter registration outside the county creates an automatic vacancy.
- *Loss of voting rights.* Examples would be death or final conviction of a felony.
- *Becoming a candidate or officeholder.* Immediately upon filing to run for a county, state, or federal office or being appointed to such position means a person may no longer serve as County Chair (Sec. 161.005(b)). This provision does not apply to service in non-partisan offices (e.g. school board, city council, etc.).
- *Abandonment.* Allows the State Republican Executive Committee to pass a resolution at a public meeting instructing the State Chair to send a letter to a County Chair stating the reasons for removal. The county chair is sent a letter by certified mail from the RPT to notify them of the action taken to declare their position abandoned and the county chair has seven days to respond to the letter. If the County Chair is unresponsive, the county chair position is declared vacant (Sec. 172.029).

In all cases (other than abandonment), please provide a written resignation letter, signed and dated, to your Executive Committee Secretary, your County Clerk, RPT Headquarters and the Secretary of State’s Office.

Making the Transition

If you must resign, make every effort to replace the office so there will not be a vacancy through recommending a successor to the county executive committee or State Chair. Once the office has been replaced, please provide the following information to your Executive Committee Secretary, your County Clerk, RPT Headquarters and the Secretary of State's Office:

- Your written resignation letter, signed and dated
- A copy of the minutes where the new County Chair was appointed
- Contact information for the new County Chair (including name, mailing address, email, phone and fax, if applicable)

After the new County Chair takes office, you have 30 days to transfer all party documents and records to them (Sec. 171.028). Failure to do so is a criminal penalty. You may retain copies for your own records.

What Makes an Effective County Chair

Be Active

The County Chair should participate in volunteer activities with campaigns and with the county executive committee. It's hard to ask someone to volunteer if the chair is not willing to donate time. Block walking, phone banking and some general election campaign strategy shows a County Chair "leading from the front."

Be Impartial

The County Chair should maintain an appearance of impartiality and neutrality during contested Primary elections as well as disputes within the County Party. One of the keys to success as a Chair is the ability to be an arbitrator between various factions while also exerting leadership to resolve conflicts. The mere appearance of "taking a side" could damage not only your credibility, but could severely degrade both the enthusiasm and morale of your County Executive Committee. This could extend also into your volunteer and ultimately your Republican voter base. Keep in mind "Grow the Party not Divide the Party".

Be Inclusive

Remember, your mission is to GROW OUR PARTY and it doesn't help anyone to exclude potential volunteers or supporters based on a disagreement or conflicting personalities. If someone wants to help elect Republicans, they should be welcomed into your group. If their idea of helping Republicans is different than your idea, that's okay. Listen to them and consider their opinions and, if necessary, redirect them in the same direction as the rest of the group to get the job done.

Be Organized

Running your Primary Election is a statutory obligation of the County Chair. It is important to keep accurate documentation of any contracts that have been signed, locations for polling, commitments from election judges and most important, receipts. These are all items that will potentially be examined by a third party and you will want to make sure they are able to understand that you have run an efficient Primary Election.

As Election Day approaches, you will need to get in touch with your volunteers on a more regular basis. It is important to stay organized to maximize your efforts. If you have contact information for all of your volunteers and potential volunteers in the same place, it will be easier for you to contact them quickly. The more organized you are with your walk lists, call lists, mail outs, etc, the more enjoyable an experience the project will be for your volunteers; and they will be more likely to want to continue helping.

Be Responsive

As the County Chair, your contact information is on the RPT website and with the Secretary of State's Office. You will receive calls from your precinct chairs as well as from volunteers whom you do not know. You will also receive calls from campaigns asking for your help. It is important that you answer calls or return voicemails and emails.

Precinct Chairs

You are not alone! Precinct Chairs are the members of your County Executive Committee (CEC). Each individual voting precinct is entitled to be represented by one Precinct Chair on the CEC. The Texas Election Code establishes the position of Precinct Chair and assigns them specific duties (primarily found in TEC Sections 171.021 – 171.073).

Your County Party will be strengthened by training Precinct Chairs thoroughly, providing them with information on political events, equipping them with the tools to expand our Party and involving them in the decision-making process of the Party. No County Chair alone can do the job of growing the Party and delivering our message. Listen to, recruit, train, and utilize Precinct Chairs to share the workload – then watch your efforts to grow the Party multiply!

RPT publishes a *Precinct Chair Handbook* which you should also review. A copy for you to reproduce and distribute to your Precinct Chairs may be obtained by contacting RPT.

Goal of the Precinct Chair

The primary goal of each Precinct Chair must be to build and grow the Republican Party in his or her neighborhood. Each Precinct Chair needs to become a subject matter expert on his/her area and what it will take for Republican candidates to win there. The job is year in and year out – not just before an election. Precinct Chairs who are doing an effective job will produce: 1) an increase in the precinct's turnout in the Republican primary, 2) an increase in the number of straight ticket Republican votes cast in that precinct in the General Election, and 3) deliver our message to non-active and non-traditional Republican voters.

Functions of the Precinct Chair

Recruit Volunteers. A Precinct Chair's most vital function is to recruit, train, supervise, and encourage a team of Neighborhood Coordinators and Block Walk Captains.

Coordinate Activities. The Precinct Chair serves as a critical link in the communication chain between grassroots voters in the precinct and elected officeholders, the Republican Party, and Republican candidates.

Get Out The Vote. The objective of precinct work is to help provide a winning margin for Republican candidates by:

- Educating voters through literature distribution and personal contacts which advocate support for Republican candidates.
- Contacting all unregistered potential Republican voters and getting them registered.
- Contacting all registered voters to determine their political preference and how they will vote in the upcoming election and recording this data in voter vault. A GOP Data Center training and application can be received from either you, your SREC or the Republican Party of Texas.
- Encouraging Republican-favorable voters to vote in the early voting period.
- Making the maximum effort to get Republican-favorable voters to the polls by assisting them in any way possible.

Election Judge or Clerk. Precinct Chairs often serve as Election Judges or Election Clerks in the Republican Primary, Runoff, and the General Election. If the Precinct Chair is not able to do so, they should help recruit someone to perform that duty. Working at the polls on Election Day is a great way for a Precinct Chair to meet and greet neighbors. Serving in this capacity will enable the Precinct Chair to become familiar with the great amount of work that goes into conducting an election and also to become recognized as a political leader by voters in the neighborhood. Counties have the option to appoint Election Judges biennially for a two-year term or annually for a one-year term.

Maintain Records. Precinct Chairs should maintain records of their precinct's volunteers, contributors, voting history, and Republican AND Democratic primary voters. Whenever a Precinct Chair leaves office, those records should be immediately turned over to the new Precinct Chair or to the County Chair.

Tools of the Precinct Chair

In order for Precinct Chairs to do their job, they must be supplied with the proper tools. It is your duty as County Chair to see to it that your Precinct Chairs are given or directed to the following resources:

- Platforms of the Republican AND Democratic parties. (Comparative Analysis when delivering our point of view)
- County Executive Committee bylaws.
- County Executive Committee roster (know their fellow Precinct Chairs)
- Map of their precinct boundaries and all districts affecting their precinct (e.g. Constable, Justice of the Peace, County Commissioner, State Representative, State Senate, State Board of Education, U.S. House).
- Lists of all registered voters in the precinct, past Republican Primary and Runoff voters, and Democratic Primary and Runoff voters (these can be accessed via GOP Data Center).
- List of all Republican officeholders with contact information.
- List of any candidates in upcoming elections with contact information.
- List of local volunteers and/or Precinct Convention attendees.
- Historical election results for that precinct (last 4 election cycles minimum)
- Voter registration cards.
- Typical polling location(s) for the precinct and county. (Your County Clerk should have this)

County Chairs sometimes encounter Precinct Chairs who are ineffective, or even disruptive. In many cases, such Precinct Chairs have been given little productive work to do, have been given few tools, and have no real idea what they are expected to accomplish. Train your Precinct Chairs, equip them, and welcome them as an important part of the County Party machine!

Role of the County Executive Committee

The Texas Election Code establishes County Executive Committees to run local political parties. The County Executive Committee (CEC) consists of the County Chair and the Precinct Chairs. Bylaws adopted by a CEC may permit the appointment of additional officers (i.e. Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, etc). The Election Code permits only County Chairs and Precinct Chairs to vote on election code business. Officers may or may not be Precinct Chairs.

General statements concerning the operation of a County Executive Committee are difficult to formulate due to the extreme differences between counties in population, demographics, and party strength. However, a few words of advice are common to all.

Every County Party should adopt and follow written bylaws to govern its organization and procedures. Sample bylaws are included in this manual. Variations should be considered in order to meet local needs.

The key success of many effective County Executive Committees is a committee system. Not every County Party will need a committee for every purpose; however, committees that fill vacancies for Precinct Chairs, recruit and assist candidates, and finance and fundraising can be highly beneficial.

Responsibilities of a committee should be clearly defined (often as a part of the bylaws) and accountability should be maintained. Committees should perform most of the study and deliberation involved in their area of responsibility and make recommendations for approval by the County Executive Committee. Each committee should meet at least once between meetings of the County Executive Committee, and the chair of each committee should present a report of the activities of his/her committee to the Executive Committee. A well-functioning committee system should result in relatively short and effective meetings of the County Executive Committee.

It is recommended that the County Executive Committee meet quarterly at a minimum. Meetings should include a report from the County Chair; reports from committee chairs; brief reports from representatives of Republican clubs; remarks by any Republican officials or candidates in attendance; adoption of any action or appointments as required by the bylaws; and any new business items. A sample meeting agenda is included in this manual.

A social hour before or after the Executive Committee meeting is often an enjoyable and constructive event, facilitating informal discussion of business and the establishment of good working relationships among Party volunteers.

Statutory Requirements of the CEC

Executive Committee members should spend most of their time promoting the Republican Party and working to elect Republican candidates to office. However, the Texas Election Code does mandate certain other responsibilities.

Overseeing Primary Election

The county executive committee is to oversee the conduct of the primary election and primary runoff election (Sec. 172.111(b)). In larger counties, it may be possible to hire a Primary Elections Administrator and staff to be paid with state government funds (see Texas Administrative Rules published by SOS). The CEC also approves the Primary Election Judges (Sec. 32.006).

Conducting Conventions

Every two years, Executive Committee members are to set the date, time and locations for their precinct conventions and the time and location for their county or senatorial district conventions (Secs. 174.022 & 174.063).

Filling Vacancies on the County Executive Committee

When there is a vacancy in the office of County or Precinct Chair, it is the responsibility of the Executive Committee to appoint someone to fill the vacancy. Appointment is by majority vote of Executive Committee members attending a properly called meeting at which a quorum is present (in this situation, a quorum is the majority of the membership). The Secretary calls the meeting to fill a County Chair vacancy. The person appointed serves until the end of the executive committee's term. (Secs. 171.024 & 171.025).

Making a Nomination for a Vacancy of Nominees

Following a Primary Election, it sometimes happens that a nominee of the Republican Party withdraws from the ballot, passes away, or is declared ineligible to serve. Depending on the office and circumstances, it may be the duty of county executive committee member(s) to appoint a replacement nominee. Members eligible to make the replacement nomination are determined by the type of district affected. (Section 145.036)

Office covering a portion of one county – Precinct Executive Committee: the Precinct Chairs in that part of the county (Chapter 171, Subchapter D)

Office covering only one entire county – County Executive Committee: the County Chair and all Precinct Chairs of the county (Chapter 171, Subchapter B)

Office covering more than one county – District Executive Committee: the County Executive Committee members of the counties or portions of the counties that live in the Senate District (Chapter 171, Subchapter C).

Making a nomination for an Unexpired Term

Following a Primary Election, it sometimes happens that an incumbent officeholder, whose office is not to be on the ballot that year, leaves office (voluntarily or involuntarily). Depending on the office and circumstances, it may be the duty of county executive committee member(s) to appoint a Republican nominee to run in the November General Election. Members eligible to make a

nomination are the same as in the section above for making a replacement nomination. (Sec. 202.006)

Sample CEC Bylaws

(Bylaws should be adjusted to meet the needs of your county.)

ARTICLE I NAME

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the _____ County Republican Executive Committee, hereinafter referred to as the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE II PURPOSE

Section 1. The purpose of the Executive Committee shall be:

- (a) to establish general policy of the Republican Party in the county, subject to direction of the biennial County/Senatorial District Convention;
- (b) to represent the Republican Party of this county, state, and nation, articulating the Party's candidates;
- (c) to cooperate in carrying out programs initiated by the Republican Party of Texas, including but not limited to:
 1. conducting a Republican Primary in as many election precincts within the county as practicable, but, at a minimum, having a voting location in each County Commissioner's precinct; and
 2. organizing a coordinated effort, including Get-Out-The Vote, preceding each general election, to publicize the Party's candidates.

Section 2. The Executive Committee is charged with the responsibility of observing all laws of the State of Texas and these United States in fulfilling the purposes stated in this Article.

ARTICLE III MEMBERS

Section 1. The voting members of the Executive Committee when conducting official business required by the Texas Election Code shall be the County Chair and the Precinct Chairs. Officers and Committee Chairs who are not Precinct Chairs may serve as ex-officio (non-voting) members of the Executive Committee.

Section 2. To qualify to hold the office of Precinct Chair, a person must be a qualified voter residing within the bounds of the entity represented and cannot be a holder of elected public office at the county, state, or federal level or candidate for such office.

Section 3. The term of office shall be for two (2) years, commencing on the twentieth (20th) day after the Run-Off Primary Election Day, as provided for in Section 171.022(c) of the Texas Election Code.

Section 4. Any vacancy in the office of County Chair or Precinct Chair shall be filled by the Executive Committee. A majority of the total membership of the Executive Committee must participate in filling a vacancy and the person selected must receive a majority of the votes cast of

those members participating in the election, as provided by Section 171.024(a) of the Texas Election Code [see Section 171.024(c) for exception.]

ARTICLE IV OFFICERS

Section 1. Officers of the Executive Committee shall be the County Chair, County Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary. The Chair shall appoint the Treasurer immediately upon assuming office. The County Vice-Chair shall be appointed by the County Chair, and in no case shall the office of Vice-Chair be vacant more than ninety (90) days. The Secretary shall be elected by the Executive Committee following commencement of term of office.

Section 2. The term of office of the officers shall be concurrent with that of the Executive Committee, except in the event of a vacancy in the office of County Chair (at which time the appointed officers shall serve only until election a new County Chair).

Section 3. A vacancy in the office of County Chair shall be filled in accordance with the provisions of Section 171.025 of the Texas Election Code. A vacancy in the office of Secretary shall be filled by the Executive Committee following notice of the vacancy, or at a special meeting called for that purpose.

Section 4. Duties of officers shall be those prescribed by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Executive Committee and by these bylaws, as listed below:

- A. County Chair.** The County Chair shall be the Executive Committee's presiding officer and official spokesman. The Chair shall perform these duties required by the statute and by these bylaws and by the Rules of the Republican Party of Texas. The Chair shall be an ex-officio member of all county Standing and Special Committees. The County Chair may be a member of the Texas Republican County Chair Association and any assessments or dues are to be paid by the County Executive Committee.
- B. County Vice-Chair.** The County Vice-Chair shall assist the Chair as requested in the performance of the duties of the office, and, in the event of the death of the Chair, or their inability or unwillingness to serve, the Vice-Chair shall serve as acting Chair until the Chair resumes their duties or until the election of a new County Chair.
- C. Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall be responsible for keeping systematic records and for complying with any applicable state and federal statutes with regard to reporting contributions and expenditures. The Treasurer shall prepare a current report of financial conditions for presentation to the Executive Committee at each regularly scheduled meeting.
- D. Secretary.** The Secretary shall carry out the usual duties of that office, keeping an up-to-date role of the Executive Committee's members and ensuring that each member receives timely notices of meetings. A permanent file containing minutes of the Executive Committee meetings shall be maintained. In the event of a vacancy in the office of County Chair, the Secretary shall call a meeting of the Executive Committee for the purpose of electing a new County Chair, as provided for in Section 171.025 of the Texas Election Code. The Secretary is authorized to receive applications for a place on the Primary Ballot, as provided for in Section 172.022(a)(2) of the Texas Election Code.

ARTICLE V MEETINGS

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall meet at least once a quarter.

Section 2. In each even-numbered year, one of the regular meetings shall be an organizational meeting to be held within sixty days of the date the Executive Committee takes office.

Section 3. Regular meetings shall be called by the County Chair with a minimum of ten days' notice to each Executive Committee member. Per RPT Rules, organizational meetings are to be called with a minimum of fourteen days' notice. Emergency meetings may be called by the County Chair with a minimum of five days' notice to each Executive Committee member.

Section 4. A special meeting must be held on petition of a minimum of twenty-five percent of Precinct Chairs. Notice of such meeting must be provided to every member of the Executive Committee and held no earlier than five days after presentation of the petition to the Secretary and/or County Chair.

Section 5. All meeting notices must be in writing and include the date, time, and location of the meeting. A notice must include a statement of any business requiring a vote of the Executive Committee to be conducted at the meeting. Official action may be taken only on items listed on the notice unless unanimous consent is received from Executive Committee members present at the meeting to waive such requirement.

ARTICLE VI COMMITTEES

Section 1. The County Chair shall appoint the chairs of any Standing Committees deemed necessary to carry out policies of the local Party.

Section 2. Each committee is authorized to develop procedures for conducting the business within that committee's jurisdiction, subject to review and amendment by the full Executive Committee.

Section 3. A committee members or members may be removed from a committee upon request of the committee chair or the County Chair.

ARTICLE VII PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Section 1. The rules contained in the most current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the Executive Committee in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules promulgated by the Republican Party of Texas, or any state or federal statutes.

ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

Section 1. These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members of the Executive Committee present and voting at a properly called meeting of the Executive Committee by giving notice at the previous regular meeting, or by mailing written notice to each Executive Committee members at least seven (7) days in advance of a Regular or Special Meeting called for that purpose.

Sample CEC Meeting Agenda

(It is recommended that you prepare and distribute an agenda for each CEC meeting.)

Date of Meeting
Start Time of Meeting
Location of Meeting

The Agenda for the _____ County Republican Executive Committee meeting will be as follows:

Call to Order – *County Chair*

Invocation – *Committee Member, Officer or Volunteer*

Pledge of Allegiance – *Committee Member, Officer or Volunteer*

Introductions of Officeholders, Candidates and Special Guests – *County Chair or Vice-Chair*

Presentation of the Minutes – *Secretary*

Chair's Report – *County Chair*

Treasurer's Report – *Treasurer*

Any other Officer Reports

Committee Reports – *each Committee Chair*

Other Business

Public Comments by Non-Executive Committee Members (limit two minutes each person)

Note: From time to time, you may have a request from an elected official or candidate to speak to your executive committee. You should develop rules in advance to accommodate these requests as your business allows. It is recommended that you give speaking opportunity to all Republican elected officials as requested.

Announcements (as allowed by County Chair)

Adjournment – *County Chair* (following motion for adjournment)

Suggested CEC Standing Committees

Any of these committees may be combined or split into smaller groups.
All committees meet at the call of the County Chair or the Committee Chair.

Budget Committee

Responsible for preparing a budget, either annually or biennially, for submission to the County Executive Committee for approval. May work with the Candidate Committee to recommend County Party fund donations to specific Republican candidates or causes. Should consult the Texas Ethics Commission before taking any actions in order to remain compliant with Texas finance laws.

Finance Committee

Responsible for planning and directing County Party fundraising activities. If you have a Treasurer, including them in this committee would be advantageous.

Volunteer Committee

Develops and maintains a list of volunteer workers to support Republican activities in the county. May coordinate with the Candidate Committee to provide this to local candidates and/or to organize volunteer efforts such as phone banks and block walking. May coordinate with the Finance Committee to arrange fundraising events that require volunteers. Continually shows appreciation to volunteers for their service.

Headquarters Committee

Maintains and operates a county headquarters that is run by Executive Committee members or volunteers (may be combined with Volunteer Committee); creates a staff schedule to man the office and phones, makes sure bills are paid, keeps the area clean, decorates or puts up signage, etc. Also see “County Party Headquarters” section.

Vacancy Committee

Responsible for interviewing qualified persons and recommending them to fill vacancies on the County Executive Committee with the assistance and cooperation of the County Chair.

Party Organization Committee

Coordinates the improvement of the Party structure at the local level. Develops and conducts periodic training programs for Precinct Chair, campaign workers, and party supporters. Responsible for developing programs for implementation by the Precinct Chair, such as voter identification and voter registration efforts.

Rules Committee

Responsible for periodically reviewing the County Executive Committee Bylaws and/or Standing Rules and recommending amendments or revisions to the CEC as needed.

Candidate Committee

Responsible for recruiting and encouraging qualified and “electable” persons to seek public office on the Republican ticket. Offers practical assistance and advice to the candidates relevant to fundraising, organization, advertising, etc.

Suggested County Party Activities

Candidate Coffees. Host your elected officials to meet their constituents. While this is beneficial during the election year, it can happen anytime. It's helpful to the elected official to stay involved in the community and it's helpful to the party that local voters get to know their elected officials and the great work they are doing every day. Also, voters always enjoy hearing from their elected officials at times "other than before election day".

Phone Banks. A great way to ID voters and then to follow up with turnout calls during early voting and before Election Day. Feed your volunteers; pizza and water is pretty cheap. Even better, get someone to donate these items.

Voter Registration in Targeted Republican Neighborhoods. Do not sit in front of Walmart with a Voter Registration table. Instead, walk house to house in neighborhoods with a greater than 70% ORVS. Or, call the RPT; they can help you with the new movers list – people who voted Republican in another state and have recently moved to Texas. These people need to be registered to vote. But first, become familiar with voter registration guidelines.

Election Day Poll Workers. Recruit volunteers to stand at the polls and hand out literature. This is especially helpful for local races.

Voter Turnout Efforts. Make sure the county voter file is current. Call your voters and ask how they plan to vote in November. If Republican, make sure you block walk their house and call them during early voting and before Election Day. During early voting, you can get a list from your county clerk each day with the names of people who have already voted. Compare that to your Republican voter list and continue calling and block walking the houses that have not yet voted.

Sign Committees. No use in one person for each campaign delivering signs to the same location. Invite candidates to drop their signs at your headquarters and encourage the public to come by and pick up their yard sign(s) of choice. Also, for the larger signs, recruit a few volunteers to contact local Republican owned business with good traffic and ask permission to post campaign signs. These volunteers should work with the campaigns to put up signs at approved locations. No sense in sending one person from each campaign when a few people can do it for all the campaigns.

Literature Drops. Work with volunteers and campaigns to pull together walk maps and campaign literature to drop at houses before early voting begins. Record information gathered from the resident about their voting intentions and either follow up with turn out efforts or take them off your list if they plan to vote Democrat. Share that information with local campaigns and in voter vault.

County Party Headquarters

Setting up a County Party Headquarters can be beneficial for organization and community access, and to house paid staff or volunteer workers. This is by no means obligatory. Attaining a headquarters is a milestone and maintaining one is a large responsibility. Note: SOS may allow state funding for the cost of your headquarters during the time of the Primary Election.

Recommendations for Building Space & Location

- Find building space that will adequately hold your staff members or volunteers, office equipment and supplies, and a small amount of storage. Space for a meeting table and chairs is also useful. You don't want your volunteers to be cramped, but you also do not want to pay for unneeded space.
- A safe, central location that it is easy for people to find and park at is ideal. This way people know where to stop by for information or to volunteer to help.

Keeping Records

- Whether you use a computer, filing cabinets, or both, you always want to keep good records of party activities. This includes finances, standard operating procedures, executive committee meeting minutes, party officer and employee history/contact information, volunteer lists, photos, and anything else that will benefit those who work with you and will come after you.
- Remember to keep a 'Sign In' list of volunteers who come in to work on a project. Date, Name and Time.

Technology

- It is recommended, but not required, that parties have at least one computer at their headquarters. Communicating online saves money, postage and labor for you and for others trying to get in touch with you (like the RPT and SOS). The SOS will allocate funds during a Primary Election cycle to buy a computer, subject to legislative appropriations. This needs to be approved by the SOS prior to purchase and is accounted for in your Primary financing.
- Although person-to-person interaction is often the most effective, email is sometimes the most efficient. There are many websites that offer free email addresses such as Yahoo.com, Google.com and Hotmail.com.
- Setting up a party website is a great way to post information, advertise events and sign up volunteers. You can also create portals on your website to receive contributions, memberships, or reservations for events.
- Telephones are a must. Be sure to set up a phone line with voicemail, even if it is a cell phone. Publish this number on your website.

Meeting, Event, or Volunteer Space

- If space allows, a county party headquarters can be a great place to hold executive committee meetings, staff meetings or one-on-one meetings (with candidates, donors, etc.).
- A headquarters could also be a place for gatherings, lunches and other events.
- A county party headquarters is the perfect place to host phone banks, block walks or mail centers to assist with local campaigns.

Political Items

- Campaigns will want to drop off bumper stickers, yard signs and campaign literature at your headquarters for people to pick up or for you to distribute. This is acceptable, but it is up to the county chair's discretion. Some parties also like to print their own t-shirts or hats to distribute in the community. Consider your amount of storage space for items like these.

County Party Finance

Funding the local Party organization can be a leader's most challenging experience. However, with proper planning and organization, it can become a smooth-running operation that not only produces much-needed funds, but one that adds enthusiasm and energy to the local Party and its activities.

Effective fundraising requires the use of proven formulas, supplemented by creativity and local initiatives. Budgeting and organization cannot be stressed enough. Before anyone will contribute to an organization or a project, they want to know how the money is going to be spent and the expected results.

***Please see the Texas Ethics Commission Campaign Finance Guide for Political Parties at www.ethics.state.tx.us and consult regularly on Party Finance activity.

Developing a Finance Plan

The first step in writing a finance plan is having a detailed budget. The budget is the keystone of the overall county strategy because it defines in specific terms what the County Party intends to accomplish. If the amount of money to be raised and spent is not known, others cannot be expected to understand their responsibility and contribution to the total.

A finance plan should include a list of all projects to be undertaken, as well as cost estimates with specific deadlines for payment. Having a committee assigned to this task is suggested, as this is a cumbersome task for one person to handle. The chair of this committee should be an individual with great organizational and leadership skills; this person could possibly be your Party Treasurer. Having a good cross-section of members is helpful for brainstorming different fundraising ideas and for each member to implement the finance plan according to their talents.

Raising money, regardless of the type of fundraising, depends on one activity - asking for it! A common reason for budget shortfalls is that people are reluctant to ask for a contribution. When considering who to appoint to the Finance Committee, look to those who have previously demonstrated a willingness to ask for money. In many cases, persons who have done well in business are good money raisers. Also, ask the committee members themselves to contribute first. They will be more effective in raising money if they have made a personal donation.

Fundraising

There are many ways to raise funds, but the best way for your County Party to do so depends on your particular community. Consider the likes and dislikes of your community members. Consider how they have been responsive in the past, regardless if it was related to fundraising. Do your

community members often show up for dinner events? If so, perhaps a dinner where a local official is asked to speak, will bring in ticket sales which can profit your Party. Are bake sales popular in your neighborhood? If so, recruit the best bakers in town and set up a table in a well-attended area. Are people generally responsive to phone calls? If so, get your committee members to dial for dollars! These are just a few ideas. The best brainstorming will come from within your Finance Committee and CEC.

Bank Accounts

1) If there was a County Chair anytime in the past, there may be a bank account still in existence. Contact the former chair, if available, and ask them to accompany you to the bank to have the signature card changed. Be sure all past bills are paid. If no former chair is available, check with any current or former officers or Precinct Chairs (especially a Treasurer), or check with every bank in your area. Take a photo ID plus documentation of your election or appointment as County Chair (or you may request a letter from RPT confirming your election or appointment).

2) Be sure that the bank account has an Employer Identification Number (EIN).

It is not recommended that you use your Social Security number. If the account does not have an EIN number, you can obtain one from the IRS. Please visit their website at www.irs.gov. From here you can search "EIN" for more information, or find the phone number for your local IRS office.

3) If there is a current Treasurer, decide whether to retain them or appoint a new one. In either case, be sure they are able to keep a checkbook, maintain financial records, and file required reports when required. Then, decide whether to use one or two signatures on the checks. Party bylaws can stipulate dollar amount ceilings applicable to single and/or two signatures. Two signatures are good for protection, but remember that two officers will not always be available. Allowing checks up to a certain dollar amount to be signed with only one signature may be more workable.

4) Use the same methods as above when opening a Primary Election account. Primary election funds are the responsibility of the County Chair and may be used ONLY for primary election expenses, and any remainder must be returned to the state by July 1 of that election year. (Some county parties will maintain a small amount of their own money in the account in order to keep it open.) Misuse of Primary Election funds is a criminal offense. Responsible handling of this area will help ensure the ability to obtain monies from the SOS for the next Primary Election. (This will be explained further in the RPT Primary Election Manual issued in odd-numbered years, and also materials from the SOS.)

Suggested Financial Records

The Treasurer (or if none, the County Chair) needs to maintain financial records containing monthly reports of all transactions. A summary should be given to the County Chair as well as included in the minutes of County Executive Committee meetings. Records may be maintained in a notebook or on a computer- the information is important, not the format. Sometimes the report may simply be "NO ACTIVITY", but a report is still beneficial.

Components of financial records will include bank statements, previous Treasurer Reports, lists of those who have paid Party dues, donor lists, lists of persons who have bought tickets to fundraisers, fundraising budgets, etc.

Financial records should be taken to Executive Committee meetings in order to have information available for questions. The balance in the Party accounts, as well as any other financial information, is confidential. Keep these records secure, and do not discuss details outside of CEC meetings. If you have guests attend your CEC meetings, you may ask them to leave the room when discussing financial matters.

The Primary Election Process

Political parties hold a primary election in March of even numbered years. Currently, only two parties hold Primary Elections – the Republican Party and the Democrat Party.

In Texas, registered voters may vote in either political Party's Primary; however, a voter may vote in only one Party's Primary in each election cycle. If a voter votes in one party's primary, he may not vote in the other party's run-off election in that same year. Registered voters who do not vote in the primary election may vote in a run-off election of either party that year.

Voting in the Republican Primary

Republican Primary voters nominate the Republican candidates who will appear on the General Election ballot, elect their Precinct Chairs, and elect their County Chair. Thus, Primary voters have a greater influence on the final outcome of the General Election than those who only vote in the general election.

Those who vote in the Republican primary election (either in person or by mail) are eligible to be selected as delegates to the various Republican Party conventions held that year.

Affiliating with the Republican Party

Texas does not have voter registration by political party. A voter becomes a Republican by voting in the Republican Primary or Republican Primary Run-Off or by taking an Oath of Affiliation with the Republican Party in an even-numbered year. Only voters who affiliate may participate in the Republican Party conventions that year.

Oath of Affiliation

The Oath of Affiliation with a political party, as defined in the Texas Election Code is: "I swear that I have not voted in a primary election or participated in a convention of another party during this voting year. I hereby affiliate myself with the _____ Party."

Party Switchers

As the Republican Party continues to become more dominant, many elected officials are choosing to "switch" parties and run in the Republican primary. Sometimes these officeholders are doing it because they realize that the Republican Party better reflects their conservative values. Others do it

only to get re-elected with no intention of actually governing as a conservative. The County Chair and the State Party must accept all applications for candidates who submit their completed paperwork and filing fee or signatures in lieu of a filing fee. In short, there is nothing you can do to stop Democrats from switching parties and filing to run for office as a Republican.

There are several ways you can welcome a conservative elected official into the Republican Party. If you and your executive committee desire to do so, you can host a press event to announce the switch and welcome the elected official into the Republican Party; you can also host a reception giving the newest Republican an opportunity to meet donors and activists in your county. There is no requirement that you do these things but it is required that you accept their completed application to run as Republican.

Republican Convention Process

RPT Rules governing conventions may be found at www.texasgop.org.

In Texas, political parties hold their own conventions in election years. In even-numbered years, Texas Republicans hold precinct conventions, county or senatorial district conventions, a state convention, and in presidential years, a national convention.

Purpose of Conventions

The purposes of the conventions are to:

1. Choose delegates and alternates to the next higher convention level, when applicable; and
2. Consider resolutions or statements on policy issues to send to the next higher convention and/or for eventual inclusion in the state or national Party platform.

Delegates and Alternates

Delegates are persons elected at a convention to represent the body electing them at the next higher convention level, except at the highest convention level in a given year where they simply serve as the representatives of the body that elected them. Alternates are elected to serve in the event that a delegate cannot or does not serve. In order to be elected a delegate or alternate to a Republican convention, the person must be a registered voter in the represented area and have voted in the most recent Republican primary election.

Please visit www.texasgop.org/ for more information about the state convention and the role of delegates and alternates.

Resolutions

A resolution is a formal statement or expression of an opinion put before or adopted by an assembly. Resolutions are offered by delegates for discussion and may address any topic. Resolutions passed

by delegates at a convention are sent to the next convention level for consideration. Resolutions may eventually become part of the Party's platform.

Please visit www.texasgop.org for more information about resolutions.

Convention Governing Rules

Texas conventions are governed by Roberts Rules of Order (Newly Revised) and the RPT Rules. Per the Texas Election Code, the Republican Party of Texas adopts rules at each state convention to govern the conduct of precinct, county/ senatorial district, and state meetings and conventions. The current RPT Rules will be effective until new rules are adopted at the next State Convention. RPT Rules may be accessed online at www.texasgop.org. It is important to note that the RPT Rules do not, and cannot, conflict with the Texas Election Code.

Precinct Conventions

Held anytime between the closing of the polls on the Primary Election Night and the start of the county or district convention on the 3rd Saturday after the Primary Election. The date, place, and specific starting time within each county are to be set by the county executive committee on the day of the drawing for position on the general primary election ballot. Conventions are usually held at the precinct polling location, but may be held at any location within the county as long as each precinct has an opportunity for an individual convention. The date, time, and locations are set by each individual county executive committee. Purpose: to elect delegates and alternates to the county/senatorial district convention and propose resolutions for the county/senatorial district convention to consider.

The Precinct Chair (or in their absence, any registered Republican voter from the precinct) may convene the convention. Eligible participants are those who voted in the Republican Primary (early or on Election Day) or affiliated with the Republican Party and reside in that precinct. Minutes of the proceedings (forms are provided to the County Chair by RPT to distribute to Precinct Chairs) must be delivered to the County Chair within three days or mailed within two days.

Please visit www.texasgop.org/ for information about the precinct convention process.

County/Senatorial District Conventions

Held the third Saturday after the Primary Election. The time and location is to be set by the county executive committee, but the date is set by Party rule. Purpose: to elect delegates and alternates to the state convention and propose resolutions for the state convention to consider.

A county convention is held when the county is completely within one senatorial district. A senatorial district convention is held when the county is divided between two or more senatorial districts. The incumbent County Chair (which may be different than the one elected in the primary election) is the temporary county convention chair for a county convention. The temporary senatorial district convention chair is to be elected by the members of the district executive committee within that particular county's senatorial district. Delegates are those elected from their precinct convention. Minutes of the proceedings (forms are provided to the temporary county and SD convention chairs by RPT) must be delivered to RPT within 5 days.

Action Item

The county chair is responsible for calling the executive committee meeting in which the date, time, and location of the precinct conventions will be held. The county chair is responsible for calling the executive committee meeting in which the time and location of the county/senatorial district convention will be held and whether a county will hold a consolidated senatorial district convention at a single location. The county chair is responsible for calling the executive committee meeting in which the membership of the district executive committees elect the temporary district convention chairs within their county. The deadlines and notifications requirements for holding this meeting are described in the RPT Rules.

State Convention

Held in spring of even-numbered years, following a Primary Election (May 2016). The specific date, time and location are to be set by the State Republican Executive Committee. Purpose: to elect one man and one woman from each senate district to serve on the State Republican Executive Committee, elect a State Chair and Vice-Chair, and adopt the State Party platform.

In presidential election years, the state convention also elects one man and one woman to serve on the Republican National Committee, elects delegates and alternates to the national convention, and elects representatives to the Electoral College.

For an overview of RPT State Conventions, please visit www.texasgop.org/about-rpt-conventions.

National Convention

Held in July of presidential election years. The specific date, time and location are to be set by the Republican National Committee. Purpose: to nominate candidates for President and Vice President of the United States and adopt the National Party platform.

Resources for the County Chair

Don't forget to ASK FOR HELP! The RPT structure provides us all support. It is our responsibility and privilege to utilize that structure by growing the Party in our areas and communicate with each other!

County Executive Committee & Party Officers

In addition to your Precinct Chairs, Party Officers can assist with the leadership and smooth functioning of the County Executive Committee. Officer appointments are generally the responsibility of the County Chair (this should be covered in your CEC Bylaws). Typical officers are Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, and perhaps a Sergeant at Arms, Parliamentarian, etc. Officers should be given job descriptions that state the specific tasks for which they will be responsible. Officers may also serve as Precinct Chairs, but it is not required. Appointing non-Precinct Chairs as Officers expands the Party, spreads out the workload, and gives more people a stake in making your County Party successful. However, only the County Chair and Precinct Chair may vote on official and statutory CEC business.

CEC Committees

Appointing committees also helps to divide up the workload and can provide additional means of participation for volunteers who are neither Precinct Chairs nor Officers. However, Chairs or Officers may serve on committees if you like, and it is suggested that Executive Committee members serve as the Committee Chairs. Committees may be established on either a standing (permanent) or temporary basis. Suggested standing committees are covered in this manual. Temporary or special committees might be established for special events or specific responsibilities that only are needed during a portion of the election cycle.

Primary Elections Administrator

The most time-consuming task confronting every County Chair is conducting the Primary Election and Runoff. The Secretary of State (SOS) may provide funds for you to hire a Primary Elections Administrator for the months leading up to the Primary Election. Consult with the SOS before making this hire. If approved, include the request on the initial cost estimate you file with them. Staff members may also be hired depending on the polling places a county will need. The SOS will also hold a training session for County Chairs and/or Elections Administrators in the fall prior to the Primary Election. Attendance is strongly encouraged.

County Party Staff

If additional help is needed (other than for the Primary) and can be afforded, hiring a full-time staff can also be helpful to the County Chair. Staff positions may include an Executive Director, Political Director, Communications Director, General Counsel, Accountant, Web Designer, Receptionist, and/or any assistants to these positions.

Republican Party of Texas Staff

RPT staff is available to answer questions during regular business hours, Monday through Friday. The RPT Headquarters is located in downtown Austin and the phone number is 512-477-9821. RPT conducts training sessions for County Chairs before the Primary and General Elections. Campaign, Grassroots/Activist, Communications and GOP Data Center voter database training are also available upon request.

State Republican Executive Committee (SREC)

Each state senate district is represented by one man and one woman who oversee the Party organization in that area. They are volunteers who can assist your county party in many ways with personal, hands-on attention.

www.TexasGOP.org

The RPT website hosts a wealth of information on party news and activities, as well as contact information for elected officials and party leadership organizations. Other resources include RPT Rules, RPT Platform, the Party Structure and the Convention Process. Visiting and directing others to our website is a great way to stay informed.

“GOP Data Center”

GOP Data Center was developed by a private vendor on contract with the RNC, and the RNC is the national administrator. The data is updated by the RPT to assist grassroots leaders and candidates in contacting voters. The system will give you contact information about registered voters in your area and also identify voters by Party and issue affiliations. This resource is not for general distribution. It is available to County Chair, Precinct Chair and candidates, however you must submit a request and be approved to use it. Request/Access forms are available through the RPT Headquarters or your SREC member. To maintain control over who can use the system, your ability to access the data system has a time limit, and will expire after the General election of even numbered years. You may sign up as a new user or renew.

Auxiliary Organizations

Work in cooperation with the formal Party organization to bring specific groups of citizens into the Republican Party. They often serve as an intermediary step in getting people to assume leadership positions with County Executive Committees or with campaigns. Auxiliaries complement and add to the strength of the Party organization. For a list of current official RPT auxiliaries, visit www.texasgop.org/auxiliary-organizations.

Texas Republican County Chairmen’s Association (TRCCA)

TRCCA is a voluntary association which assists County Chairs in all aspects of performing their duties. The group frequently conducts regional and statewide training workshops. All County Chairs may attend and participate in TRCCA activities, but only dues paying members are permitted to vote on business matters. Officers are elected every two years at a TRCCA meeting held in conjunction with the Republican State Convention. Visit their website at www.trcca.org.

Texas Secretary of State (SOS)

The Secretary of State is the chief election officer for the State of Texas. You will work most closely with the Elections Division which provides assistance and advice to election officials on the proper conduct of elections. This includes hosting seminars and elections schools, providing calendars, primary election funding, and legal interpretations of election laws to election officials. They also provide assistance to the general public on voter registration and other election issues. You may contact the Elections Division at 1-800-252-VOTE or elections@sos.state.tx.us. Visit the SOS website at www.sos.state.tx.us.

Texas Ethics Commission (TEC)

The Texas Ethics Commission (TEC) is the agency responsible for enforcing Texas ethics laws. Some political parties must submit regular reports to the TEC regarding contributions and expenditures as well. County Chairs should receive regular notice of any upcoming filings (make sure your contact information is current with RPT). County Chairs should obtain a copy of the TEC Campaign Finance Guide for Political Parties to have on hand at all times (copies also available from RPT). More information about TEC or ethics filings can be obtained at www.ethics.state.tx.us or by calling 1-800-325-8506.

Texas Legislative Council (TLC)

TLC serves the Texas Legislature and legislative agencies, but also serves as an information resource for state agencies and the citizens of Texas. You may view and print election district maps from their website, www.tlc.state.tx.us, or contact them at 512-463-1155.

Also see “Governing Documents” section on Page 3.

Glossary of Political Terms

These are terms either used in this manual, or you may hear used by campaigns or other field workers.

BALLOT INTEGRITY – Ballot integrity efforts are those which ensure that proper voting rules and procedures are maintained at polling places, in order to prevent fraudulent voting. Ballot integrity committees are often put together at the state and local levels, and send volunteers to monitor polling places.

BENCHMARK POLL – Conducted early in a campaign to establish name identification, determine areas of demographic strength (and weakness) and identify key issues to be emphasized throughout the effort. This is usually the largest poll of the campaign and will also have the first “ballot test.”

BLOCKWALK – Form of voter contact where supporters are organized and go door-to-door in precincts to visit with voters, collect information about their beliefs and advocate for a candidate or political party. This is considered one of the most effective forms of voter contact when done using informed, enthusiastic volunteers. Some campaigns may hire paid walkers in order to cover more ground, but this should be done only when volunteer resources are not sufficient.

BRUSHFIRE POLL – Conducted in the middle of a campaign to determine progress in establishing name identification and any movement in the ballot test. It is also an opportunity to spot check any new issues that may have arisen.

CAMPAIGN MANAGER – Campaign managers are appointed by political candidates to manage their campaigns. The campaign manager has responsibility for the smooth functioning of the candidate’s campaign, leaving the candidate free to run for election, instead of seeing to the details of his/her campaign. Specific responsibilities include: keeping the campaign on track and on plan; management of finances; recruiting volunteers; production and distribution of campaign literature and ads; scheduling appearances and events; fundraising; and providing the candidate with pertinent information on issues.

CAMPAIGN PLAN – The most important document a campaign creates detailing the strategy, structure, message, budget and timeline. It is the roadmap to victory and keeps the campaign accountable and on track.

CAUCUS – For our Party’s purposes, a caucus is a breakout meeting during a convention. At the State Convention, delegates caucus by Senatorial District to elect the permanent members of the different convention committees; to elect a State Committeeman and State Committeewoman; and to recommend a man and a woman for State Chair and State Vice-Chair. In presidential years, delegates also caucus by Congressional District to elect delegates to the National Convention and Presidential Electors, and to nominate a National Committeeman and a National Committeewoman.

COLLATERAL – A term used to describe campaign materials such as push cards, door hangers, signs, bumper stickers, etc. that support the candidate.

COUNTY ELECTION BOARD – A County Election Board is established in each county for the General Election for state and county officers, a Special Election for an officer regularly elected at the General Election, and any other election ordered by a county authority held at county expense. The Board consists of the County Clerk as Chair, County Judge, Voter Registrar, Sheriff, and County Chair of each political party required to nominate candidates by Primary Election. The Election Board appoints the members of the Signature Verification Committee from a list submitted by the County Chairs of the parties holding Primary Elections and approves the procurement of election supplies necessary to conduct elections.

COUNTY ELECTIONS COMMISSION – The County Elections Commission consists of the County Judge as Chair; the County Clerk as Vice Chair; the County Tax-Assessor-Collector as Secretary; and the County Chair of each political party that made nominations by Primary Elections for the last General Election for state and county officers. The Commission is tasked with administering the election. If a county chooses to employ an Elections Administrator, that person is appointed by the Elections Commission.

ELECTION JUDGE, GENERAL ELECTION – At the recommendation of the County Chair, a voter of the precinct carried by that party’s candidate for Governor in the last general election is appointed by the County Commissioner’s Court to serve for a one or two year term as Election Judge of that precinct. The Election Judge conducts the election within the precinct, selects the election clerk, and maintains the sanctity of the ballot. Because of the high responsibility of the Election Judge, he/she is accorded the powers of a State District Judge while conducting the election.

ELECTION JUDGE, PRIMARY ELECTION – The County Chair, with approval of the County Executive Committee, appoints the Primary Election Judge for each precinct. The Election Judge of the Primary Election has all the powers and duties of the General Election Judge.

ENDORSEMENT – Candidates for election to public office frequently seek to demonstrate the support of grassroots constituents, or well-known influential persons, by requesting public use of their names. The intent is to demonstrate support in an effort to persuade other voters to vote for the candidate. Candidates often request the endorsement of the County Chair and/or Precinct Chairs in an effort to influence voters. It is at the prerogative of the County and/or Precinct Chair to endorse or not to endorse any Republican candidate running in a contested primary election race.

GENERAL ELECTION – General elections are held in even-numbered years for county, state, and federal offices. The elections are held on the first Tuesday following the first Monday in November. Nominees for these positions are chosen the previous spring in Party primaries.

GET-OUT-THE-VOTE (GOTV) – Describes campaign activities during early voting and the final 72-hours of a campaign that focus on turning out all identified supporters through mail, phones, block walking, etc.

GRASSROOTS – This is a common term used especially in Republican politics to refer to local party leaders and activists. These leaders are the building blocks of the Party.

GROSS RATING POINT (GRP) - Gross Rating Points measure the total volume of delivery of your message to your target audience. It represents the percentage of the target audience reached by an advertisement.

GUBERNATORIAL – Of or relating to a governor. A “gubernatorial election” is the election in which the Governor is elected.

MICRO-TARGETING – Micro-Targeting is a new tool for candidates and campaigns that allows them to reach voters with tailored messaging using a combination of consumer data, advanced marketing techniques and traditional political targeting.

NOMINEE – A nominee is the candidate selected by voters in a Republican or Democrat party primary election to seek election in the general election. In Texas, a nominee must receive a majority of votes cast the primary election.

PLATFORM – Platforms are statements of grassroots sentiment and historic party principles. Platforms are adopted at State and National Conventions. At the State Convention, the permanent Platform Committee is charged to recommend the Party Platform to the full Convention for debate, amendment, and ultimate adoption by the delegates. Go to www.texasgop.org “About the Party.”

PRIMARY ELECTION – Primary elections in Texas are organized and conducted by the Republican and Democrat Parties, and are financed by the State of Texas. Texas holds its primaries the second Tuesday in March in even-numbered years. Primary elections determine each party’s nominee for county, state, and national General Elections. A majority of the vote is required to win a Primary election. If no majority is obtained, a Primary Runoff is held two months later between the two candidates receiving the most votes.

O.R.V.S. – “Optimal Republican Voting Strength”. This is a formula based on past election results to predict how a district will perform for Republican candidates in upcoming elections.

OVERVOTE – A ballot showing the selection of more candidates or choices than are allowed in a given race or referendum.

PHONE BANK – An organized phone center where volunteers gather to make calls to potential voters to identify their political beliefs, advocate for a candidate or party or turn out the vote. Phone banks can be done by a paid vendor or by supporters from home, but they are most effective when done using informed, enthusiastic volunteers at a central location and supervised by the campaign.

PRECINCT (PCT) – The voting precinct is the smallest political subdivision within a county. A secondary use of the word “precinct” refers to the divisions of a county from which the County Commissioners, Justices of the Peace and Constables are elected.

REPUBLICAN – Texas has no voter registration by party preference. A person affiliates with the Republican Party most often by voting in a Republican Primary Election. Voter registration cards are stamped at the Primary Election site to designate in which party’s primary the voter participated. Affiliation may also be accomplished by taking the oath designated in Election Code section 162.007.

SWING VOTER – A voter who does not commit to voting for one Party, but is swayed by different candidates and issues. Each Party works to have these voters “swing” in their direction during elections

TRACKING POLL – These are conducted near the end of the campaign. They will measure the ballot test and determine if the money being spent on media and campaign activities is working and getting the desired effect.

UNDERVOTE – A ballot that has been cast but shows no legally valid selection in a given race or referendum.

UNIVERSE – The group of voters that you are targeting for various mail or grassroots activities when pulling a list from the voter file.

VOLUNTEER DEPUTY VOTER REGISTRAR – A Volunteer Deputy Voter Registrar is a person officially authorized to register people to vote and to deliver signed applications to the County Voter Registration office. A Volunteer Deputy Registrar may never have been convicted of a felony and may work only in the county and only for the two-year term in which he or she is sworn. Texas law now requires a training course prior to being sworn in as a Volunteer Deputy Voter Registrar.

72-HOUR TASK FORCE – A program created after the Bush vs. Gore election, aimed at increasing voter contact during the final 72-hours of the campaign to turn out Republican voters. The term is used in Texas to describe the massive GOTV mobilization of our identified supporters during the two weeks of early voting in addition to the final 72-hours. An effective 72-hour program should be the most intense period of the campaign for grassroots activities and should continue right up until the polls close on Election Day.