



## Glossary of Political Terms

**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.

**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.

**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 convention meeting. 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 Chairman and State Vice Chairman. 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.

**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 Chairman, a voter of the precinct carried by that party’s candidate for Governor in the last general election is appointed by the County Commissioners’ 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 Chairman, 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.

**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.

**GUBERNATORIAL** – This word means of or relating to a governor. A “gubernatorial election” is the election where the Governor is elected.

**MICROTARGETING** - MicroTargeting 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 with recommending the Party Platform to the full Convention for debate, amendment, and ultimate adoption by the delegates.

**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 run-off is held 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 year in which he or she is sworn.

**72-HOUR TASK FORCE** – A program created after Bush vs. Gore, 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.