

CONNECTICUT DEMOCRATIC STATE PARTY RULES



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CONNECTICUT DEMOCRATIC STATE PARTY RULES

PREAMBLE

1. All public meetings at all levels of the Democratic Party in Connecticut should be open to all members of the Democratic Party regardless of race, sex, age, color, creed, national origin, religion, ethnic identity, sexual orientation, economic status, philosophical persuasion or physical disability (hereinafter collectively referred to as "status").
2. No test for membership in, nor any oaths of loyalty to, the Democratic Party in Connecticut should be required or used which has the effect of requiring prospective or current members of the Democratic Party to acquiesce in, condone or support discrimination based on "status".
3. The time and place for all public meetings of the Democratic Party in Connecticut on all levels should be publicized fully and in such a manner as to assure timely notice to all interested persons. Such meetings must be held in places accessible to all Party members and large enough to accommodate all interested persons.
4. The Democratic Party in Connecticut, on all levels, should support the broadest possible registration without discrimination based on "status".
5. The Democratic Party in Connecticut should publicize fully and in such manner as to assure notice to all interested parties a full description of the legal and practical procedures for selection of Democratic Party officers and representatives on all levels. Publication of these procedures should be done in such fashion that all prospective and current members of this State Democratic Party will be fully and adequately informed of the pertinent procedures in time to participate in each selection procedure at all levels of the Democratic Party organization.
6. The Democratic Party in Connecticut should publicize fully and in such manner as to assure notice to all interested parties, a complete description of the legal and practical qualifications of all positions as officers and representatives of the State Democratic Party. Such publication should be done in timely fashion so that all prospective candidates or applicants for any elected or appointed position within this State Democratic Party will have full and adequate opportunity to compete for office.
7. The Democratic Party in Connecticut in electing its delegates to the National Convention, at both the district and state levels, shall attempt to reasonably reflect the apportionment of women, young people, and minority group members of the registered Democrats in each district and the state.
8. The Democratic Party in Connecticut shall adopt an affirmative action plan designed to encourage full participation by all Democrats in the delegate selection process and in all Party affairs, with particular concern for African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, Asian/Pacific Americans, women and youths.
9. Any person eighteen (18) years of age or more, who is an enrolled Democratic elector, may participate in any and all party meetings, caucuses and conventions and may be elected to any Party office except where specifically prohibited by law.

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ARTICLE I : **STATE CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

Section 1: Duties and Responsibilities

The State Central Committee shall be the governing body of the Connecticut Democratic Party between conventions. It is authorized and empowered to take such action and render such decisions as may be necessary to carry out fully and adequately the decisions and instructions of the convention and to promote the aims and principles of the Democratic Party at the national, state and local levels.

State Central Committee members shall (a) be the liaison between state and local party officials, (b) establish communications with the Town Committee or committees within their district, (c) assist within their local Democratic Party organizations in the election of their candidates and education of their voters, (d) disseminate statements of national and state party policy, and (e) participate in other activities as the member deems appropriate.

Section 2: Composition of State Central Committee Members

The Democratic State Central Committee shall be composed of two representatives, one man and one woman, elected from each senatorial district in the state for a term of two years in the manner prescribed by Article I, Section 3. Members of the State Central Committee shall hold office from the first session of the State Convention following their election, until the beginning of the next state convention, or until they otherwise vacate their office. State Central Committee Members must reside in the district from which they were elected for their entire term. If the State Central Committee Member moves from the district from which they were elected during the elected term, their seat will be declared vacant by the State Chair and shall be filled under Article I, Section 4.

Section 3: Election of State Central Committee Members & State Convention Committees

The State Convention delegates from each senatorial district shall meet at least fifteen (15) days but not more than twenty-five (25) days prior to the first session of each State Convention, at a time and place to be designated by the State Central Committee members from the district. One of the State Central Committee members from the district shall act as a temporary chair of the meeting. Upon due notice, the delegates to the State Convention from each senatorial district, who shall not exceed the number of delegates representing each town or portion of a town at the state senatorial convention in that senatorial district, shall meet and select by a majority vote of those present and voting, a man and woman member of the State Central Committee, who may or may not be delegates to said convention. These delegates will also select from their numbers a vice-president and secretary for the State Convention, and shall also select one member for each of the following convention Committees: 1. Committee on Credentials; 2. Committee on Permanent Organization; 3. Committee for Rules and Resolutions; 4. Committee on Platform (when one is necessary in accordance with Article III, Section 11); and 5. Such other committees as shall have been determined by the State Central Committee. Such elections shall be certified by the secretary of such meeting to the Secretary of the State Central Committee within five (5) days subsequent to such meeting.

If said meeting has not been held in the period prescribed above, it shall be called by the Chair of the

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State Central Committee, to be held prior to the opening of the State convention, at a place and time to be designated by the State Chair. All elections made by such meeting shall be certified by the secretary of the meeting to the Secretary of the State Central Committee prior to the first session of such convention.

Section 4: Vacancies in State Central Committee Membership

Vacancies, however arrived at, in the membership of the State Central Committee shall be filled by a majority vote of those present and voting at a special meeting of state convention delegates from the preceding state convention from the senatorial district in which the vacancy has occurred. This special meeting shall be held within sixty (60) days after a vacancy arises. The remaining representative on the State Central Committee from said senatorial district shall set a time and place for said meeting and written notice of said meeting shall be sent to each state convention delegate, in good standing, from said senatorial district and the vacancy shall be filled by a majority vote of those present and voting at said meeting.

In order to be eligible to be a participant in the special meeting, the State Convention delegates must be in good standing, which is defined as being a valid Democratic elector, residing in the district at the time the special meeting occurs. A delegate in good standing may appoint an Alternate for such special meeting, subject to the provisions of Article VII, Section 7. If a delegate is not in good standing, his/her Alternate to the prior State Convention, if in good standing and if appointed prior to the adjournment of the State Convention, shall participate in his/her place. If neither the delegate nor the alternate is in good standing, no new appointment shall be made.

Section 5: Election and Composition of State Central Committee Officers

Not earlier than the 10th day, nor later than the 24th day of January, in every odd-numbered year, the State Central Committee shall meet and shall elect a Chair and Vice Chair, one of whom shall be a male and the other a female. The Committee at the same meeting shall elect a Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and any other Officers the Committee deems necessary. Beginning on the first day of February of the same year, officers shall commence their two year term. Officers need not be members of the State Central Committee. Each officer shall have the duties usually incident to the office of that name, and such other duties as the Committee may from time to time prescribe.

Section 6: Vacancies in State Central Committee Officer Positions

When a vacancy occurs in any of the aforementioned offices, the State Central Committee shall within 60 days elect a successor to fill the unexpired term, by a majority vote of those present and voting at a meeting duly noticed and held for such purpose,

Section 7: Meetings

Meetings of the State Central Committee shall be held at least six (6) times yearly and may be held at any time upon call of the State Chair, or by vote of the Committee, or within ten (10) days of the receipt by the State Chair of a written request signed by not less than twenty (20) members of the Committee and stating the purpose for which such meeting is to be called. The call of the meeting shall contain a

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statement of the business to come before such meeting and will be sent to all Town Chairs at the same time and in the same manner as it is sent to the members of the Committee. Minutes of all meetings of this committee will be sent by mail to all members of this committee and to all Town Chairs.

Section 8: Quorum

Two-fifths (2/5) of the membership in good standing of the State Central Committee shall constitute a quorum at any meeting.

Section 9: Proxies

Any member of the State Central Committee who is unable to attend any meeting of said committee may give his or her proxy in writing to any enrolled Democratic elector of either gender within his or her senatorial district, which proxy shall be filed with the secretary of the meeting, and the proxy may participate as a full member of the Committee until the meeting is adjourned.

Section 10: Financial Report

The Treasurer of the Committee shall send an annual financial report to all members of the State Central Committee and all Town Chairs within sixty (60) days of the close of the fiscal year.

ARTICLE II: **DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE**

Section 1: Selection of Members and Terms

There shall be elected to the Democratic National Committee, in the year of the election of President of the United States, such number of National Committee members as have been apportioned to the State of Connecticut pursuant to the By-Laws of the Democratic Party of the United States. With exceptions noted elsewhere, each such member shall serve for a term of four (4) years or until a successor has been duly selected.

Section 2: Membership

Of the National Committee members to be elected, two (2) shall be the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Democratic State Central Committee. The remaining members of the National Committee, who shall be registered Democrats in the State of Connecticut but need not be elected delegates to the National Convention, shall each be elected individually by a majority vote of the delegates to the Democratic State Convention to be held in the year of the Presidential election.

Section 3: Change in Office

In the event that the Chair or Vice-Chair of the State Central Committee is succeeded in office prior to the expiration of his or her National Committee term, his or her successor in office at the State Central Committee shall fill the remainder of such National Committee term.

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Section 4: Vacancy in Membership

Except as provided in Section 3 of this Article, when a vacancy occurs in the office of National Committee Member, the State Central Committee shall within 60 days elect a successor to fill the unexpired term, by a majority vote of those present and voting at a meeting duly noticed and held for such purpose,

ARTICLE III: **CONVENTIONS**

Section 1: Convention Calls

The State Central Committee, at a meeting called for such purpose, shall fix:

- A. The date, time, and place of meeting of the state convention;
- B. The date, time, and place of meeting of the congressional district conventions; and
- C. The date of the senatorial, assembly and probate district conventions in senatorial, assembly and probate districts that cross one or more town lines. Only the State Central Committee members representing any part of a senatorial, assembly or probate district shall fix the time and place of conventions in such districts.

Each such convention shall originate by call of the Chair of the State Central Committee or his/her designee.

Section 2: Convention Dates

Each convention held to endorse candidates for state or district office to be voted upon at a state election shall be convened in the even numbered years and shall be convened not later than the ninety-eighth day and closed not later than the seventy-seventh day preceding the day of the primary for such office. All congressional district conventions shall be held on the same day. All senatorial district conventions shall be held on the same day. All multi-town assembly district conventions shall be held on the same day. All multi-town probate district conventions shall be held on the same day. No congressional, senatorial, assembly, or probate district convention shall begin later than the twenty-first (21st) day following the close of the state convention.

Section 3: Delegate Representation

At each congressional, senatorial, assembly, and probate district convention, each town or portion of the town to be represented at that convention shall be entitled to one (1) delegate for each five-hundred (500) or fraction thereof derived from the average of the following factors: (a) Democratic registration as shown on the last list published by the Office of the Secretary of the State, and (b) votes cast for the Democratic candidate for President in the last preceding presidential election. At each State Convention, each town shall be entitled to the sum of the delegates representing each such town at the several senatorial district conventions whereat each such town is represented, and each town's delegation shall include a number of delegates residing in each of said senatorial districts equal to the number of delegates representing said town at each of such senatorial district conventions.

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Section 4: Delegate List

It shall be the duty of the Chair of each Town Committee to send to the Secretary of the State Central Committee, on forms furnished by the State Central Committee, a list, in duplicate, of the delegates to each convention duly chosen from his or her town, properly attested by the Democratic Registrar of Voters. Such list shall be mailed or delivered no later than the one hundred thirty-second day preceding the day of the primary for such state or district office.

Section 5: Convention Roll

The temporary roll of each convention shall be comprised of the duly chosen delegates to such convention as filed with the Secretary of the State Central Committee by the Town Chair.

Section 6: Temporary Chairs

The State Central Committee shall elect a Temporary Chair for each State Convention at least sixty (60) days prior to such convention. The Temporary Chairs of all congressional, senatorial, assembly, and probate district conventions shall be chosen by the State Central Committee members representing all or part of such a district, and shall be chosen at least thirty (30) days prior to such convention. The Temporary Chair shall assume the administrative duties to call and arrange for each district convention, but, in the event that he or she fails timely to do so, such duties shall forthwith be assumed by the State Chair or his or her designee. The Temporary Chair need not be a delegate to the convention he or she chairs. A Temporary Chair while serving as such shall have the additional right to cast a vote dissolving a tie, but this provision shall not affect his or her right to vote as a delegate in the first place. He or she shall serve until the election by the convention of a permanent Chair.

Section 7: Sessions

The times, length and agenda of the State Convention shall be determined by the State Chair, with the approval of the State Central Committee.

Section 8: Qualification of Delegates

Each delegate or alternate shall be an enrolled Democratic elector residing in the district which he or she represents.

Any person who has not yet attained the age of 18 years, but who will have attained the age of 18 years on or before the day of a regular election, who is otherwise qualified to be an elector and who has applied for admission as a Democratic party elector in such manner as may be prescribed by law, may qualify and serve as a delegate for any state, local or district convention set forth under these rules and as eligible by residency, for the nominations of candidates in said regular election.

Section 9: Alternates

- A. Each delegate to a convention elected in conformity with law and with these rules may, if

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in good standing, designate in writing an alternate delegate to act for him or her in his or her absence at any convention or other meeting of delegates held under these rules. Such appointment of an alternate shall cease to be effective upon adjournment of the respective convention or meeting, except as otherwise provided in Article I, Section 4. In the absence of such alternate delegate, the Town Chair shall have the right to fill vacancies in delegations to conventions during conventions and until the respective convention adjourns. This right to fill vacancies shall cease upon adjournment of the convention.

Section 10: Challenges to Delegates

- A. Prior to the opening of the State Convention, five percent (5%) of the enrolled Democrats or five hundred (500) enrolled Democrats in any town (whichever is less) may challenge any delegate or delegates elected from their town.
- B. The challenge shall be provided to the State Democratic Headquarters by registered or certified mail, and must be received by Headquarters at least seven days before the opening of the State Convention. A copy of the challenge shall be sent to all delegates challenged and to the Town Chair from the municipality from which each challenged delegate was elected.
- C. State Democratic Headquarters shall notify the Committee on Credentials and a meeting of said committee shall be called to order at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the first session of the convention, and both sides shall be allowed equal time to present their case.
- D. The committee shall issue a decision prior to the convening of said convention. No challenged delegate may vote on the report of the committee involving his or her respective challenge, nor shall a challenged delegate participate as a committee member with respect to his or her respective challenge.

Section 11: Pre-Convention Platform Committee and Rules Committee

- A. When, in accordance with these rules, a Platform Committee is to be formed, then the State Chair, not less than ten (10) weeks prior to the opening of the State Convention, shall appoint two (2) persons from each state senatorial district to a Pre-Convention Platform Committee which shall conduct hearings on the platform and recommend a platform to the Platform Committee of the Convention.
- B. Not less than ten (10) weeks prior to the opening of each State Convention the State Chair shall appoint a Pre-Convention Rules Committee to recommend changes in the Democratic State Party Rules and to recommend convention rules to the Rules Committee of the Convention.

Section 12: State Convention Committees

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The committees of the State Convention shall include a Committee on Credentials; a Committee on Permanent Organization, a Committee on Rules and Resolutions, and such other committees as shall be determined by the State Central Committee. There shall be a Committee on Platform at each State Convention wherein a candidate for governor shall be nominated. The memberships of each committee shall be elected in accordance with Article 1, Section 3. The committees shall fulfill the following functions along with any others designated by the State Central Committee:

- A. Credentials - Report on all challenges to delegates in accordance with Article III, Section 9, above.
- B. Permanent Organization - To nominate the Permanent Chair and Permanent Secretary of the State Convention and to appoint the Sergeants-at-Arms and the Pages of the State Convention.
- C. Rules and Resolutions - To propose changes deemed necessary in these rules and to propose procedures for the State Convention and such resolutions as shall be deemed necessary or appropriate by the committee.
- D. Platform - To present to the State Convention a platform and such resolutions deemed appropriate by the committee. A draft of the platform shall be prepared by a Preliminary Platform Committee appointed by the Chair of the State Central Committee which Preliminary Platform Committee shall hold public hearings throughout the state and prepare its draft at least two weeks prior to the opening of the State Convention.

Any member of any committee shall be allowed to make a minority report to the convention on any matter decided by his or her committee. The function of each committee shall end with adjournment of the State Convention.

Section 13: Endorsement of Candidates

- A. The State or Congressional District Convention shall endorse a candidate for nomination to each of the statewide offices or congressional district office, as the case may be. Candidates so chosen shall run in the primary as party-endorsed candidates; provided any such candidate shall be the nominee of the Democratic Party for the office for which he or she is a candidate if no other person has received at least fifteen percent (15%) of the votes of the convention delegates present and voting on any roll call vote taken for endorsement or proposed endorsement of a candidate for such office, or if no other person receives two percent (2%) of the signatures of registered Democrats in the state or congressional district, or if no valid opposing candidacy has been filed for nomination to such office by four o'clock p.m. on the fourteenth (14th) day following the close of the convention.
- B. The State Senatorial, Assembly or Judge of Probate District Convention shall endorse a Candidate for nomination to each of the state senate, assembly, or judge of probate offices, as the case may be. The only requirement to participate in a caucus shall be that the candidate is a registered Democrat in the applicable district. Candidates so chosen shall run in the primary as party-endorsed candidates; provided any such candidate shall

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be the nominee of the Democratic Party for the office for which he or she is a candidate if no other person has received at least fifteen percent (15%) of the votes of the convention delegates present and voting on any roll call vote taken for endorsement or proposed endorsement of a candidate for such office, or if no other person receives five percent (5%) of the signatures of registered Democrats in the district, or if no valid opposing candidacy has been filed for nomination to such office by four o'clock p.m. on the fourteenth (14th) day following the close of the convention.

Section 14: Nomination and Selection of Party Endorsed Candidates

- A. Candidates for nomination may be proposed from the floor of the convention by any delegate. Whenever two (2) or more candidates for nomination to any office are proposed, the vote as between them shall be taken by roll call.
- B. The secretary of the convention shall call the roll and keep a true record, in writing, of the vote of each delegate entitled to vote and voting at the convention, and shall at the conclusion of the roll call, announce the result of the vote. The secretary shall file such record at the headquarters of the State Central Committee where it shall be preserved for a period of six (6) months after the adjournment of the convention and such record shall be open to public inspection at all reasonable times.
- C. To obtain the endorsement of a convention, a candidate must receive a majority of the votes of the convention delegates present and voting. In the event that a vote taken on the selection of a party endorsed candidate results in a tie, such tie shall be dissolved by the vote of the permanent chairperson of the convention, but this provision shall not affect his or her right to vote as a delegate in the first place.

Section 15: Certification of List.

The secretary of each convention shall prepare an accurate list, printed by hand or typewritten, of the candidates endorsed by the convention, and also of any candidates receiving at least fifteen percent (15%) of the votes of the convention delegates present and voting on any roll call vote taken on the endorsement or proposed endorsement of a candidate, whether or not the party endorsed candidate received a unanimous vote on the last ballot, with the names, street addresses and towns of the person so endorsed or receiving fifteen percent (15%) of the votes and the title of the office for which each person is a candidate. This list shall be certified by the permanent chairperson and the secretary of the convention and shall be delivered to the Secretary of the State by the chairperson of the convention not later than forty-eight (48) hours after the close of the convention. Together with such list, said chairperson shall also file with the Secretary of the State the names, street addresses and towns of persons selected as the nominees for Presidential Electors. Copies of such lists shall be delivered to the Secretary of the State Central Committee.

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Section 16: Plurality Vote Determinative of Nomination.

Whenever a primary for nomination to a state or district office is to be held under the provision of the State Primary Law, as the same may be amended from time to time, the nominee of the Democratic Party for such office shall be the person receiving a plurality of the votes cast.

Section 17: Presidential Electors.

In the year of a presidential election, Presidential Electors shall be nominated at the State Convention by a majority vote of the delegates present and voting.

Section 18: National Convention Delegates.

Delegates to National Conventions shall be elected in accordance with Democratic National Party Rules. The delegate selection process should be completed early enough to enable delegates to participate fully in National Convention Committees.

Section 19: Unit Rule.

The unit rule shall not be permitted at any convention.

ARTICLE IV: **VACANCIES & ELECTIONS**

Section 1: Vacancy in Nomination

- A. If a nomination has been made for an office and the nominee thereafter but prior to ten (10) days before the opening of the polls on the day of the election for which such nomination has been made, withdraws his or her name, or for any reason becomes disqualified to hold the office for which he or she has been nominated, the vacancy shall be filled as prescribed in statute, except as otherwise provided herein. If a nominee dies prior to twenty-four (24) hours before the opening of the polls on the day of the election for which such nomination has been made, the vacancy shall be filled as prescribed by statute, except as otherwise provided herein.
- B. In the case of an office for which all the electors of the state may vote, the vacancy shall be filled by the State Central Committee, meeting upon no less than five (5) days' notice.
- C. In the case of the office of congressman, the vacancy shall be filled by the members of the State Central Committee representing territory within the congressional district, meeting upon no less than five (5) days' notice.
- D. In the case of the office of judge of probate, state senator, state representative, convention delegate, or any other office not otherwise specifically provided for herein, the vacancy shall be filled by reconvening the body which previously decided the party endorsement for the office, meeting upon no less than five (5) days' notice, except that where the previous endorsing body was a caucus, the town committee shall be convened to fill the vacancy.

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The provisions of this section shall also apply in the case of a town's State Convention delegation not properly apportioned as required by Art. III, Sec. 3. In the event of such improper apportionment, the endorsing body shall fill any vacancies for under-represented senatorial districts and shall correspondingly reduce the number of delegates from over-represented senatorial districts.

- E. If a vacancy in a nomination under subsection (c) or (d) of this section shall occur in a multi-town district less than sixty (60) but prior to ten (days) before the opening of the polls on the day of the election for which such nomination has been made or, in the case of the death of a nominee, prior to twenty-four (24) hours before said opening of the polls, in such case the vacancy shall be filled by the State Central Committee members and Town Chairs for the district within which the vacancy has occurred meeting upon no less than three (3) days' notice. If such vacancy shall occur less than eight (8) days prior to said opening of the polls, reasonable notice shall suffice. In filling a vacancy under the provisions of this subsection (e), each participating Town Chair shall be entitled to cast the number of votes to which his or her town was entitled in the body which previously decided the party endorsement.
- F. If a vacancy in a nomination under subsection (d) of this section shall occur in a single-town district less than sixty (60) but prior to ten (days) before the opening of the polls on the day of the election for which such nomination has been made or, in the case of the death of a nominee, prior to twenty-four (24) hours before said opening of the polls, in such case the vacancy shall be filled, meeting upon no less than three (3) days' notice, by the town committee of the town within which the vacancy has occurred or as the local party rules may otherwise provide. If such vacancy shall occur less than eight (8) days prior to said opening of the polls, reasonable notice shall suffice.
- G. Where a State Central Committee member or Town Chair who is called upon under subsection (e) of this section to fill a vacancy does not reside within the district for which a vacancy is to be filled, he or she shall appoint a representative who is a voter in said district to act in his or her place for the purpose of filling such vacancy.
- H. No candidate shall be deemed to have withdrawn until a letter of withdrawal signed by such candidate is filed as prescribed by statute, except as otherwise provided herein.

Section 2: Tie Vote in Filling Vacancy.

- A. The Chair of the State Central Committee shall have the right to cast a vote to dissolve a tie when a vacancy in an endorsement or nomination is to be filled by the State Central Committee.
- B. When a tie vote occurs among members of the State Central Committee or Town Committee Chairs in filling a vacancy under the provisions of this Article, the State Central Committee member who is senior in terms of cumulative service as a State Central Committee member representing the district within which the vacancy occurs, or a portion thereof, shall have the right to cast a vote to dissolve the tie.

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- C. If seniority of two or more State Central Committee members is identical for the purposes of dissolving a tie under this Article, the member who shall dissolve the tie shall be determined by random process.

Section 3: Certification of Filled Vacancy.

- A. Whenever a vacancy in a nomination for a state or district office, is filled, pursuant to this Article, the action shall immediately be communicated to the Chair of the State Central Committee, who shall certify the same as prescribed by statute, except as otherwise provided herein. In the absence of the Chair, such certification shall be made by the Secretary of the State Central Committee.
- B. Whenever a vacancy in a nomination to an office for which only the electors of a single town may vote is filled, the Chair or Secretary of the Town Committee shall immediately certify the same as prescribed by statute, except otherwise provided herein. Certification of such nomination to fill a vacancy due to death or disqualification shall include a statement setting forth the reason for such vacancy.

Section 4: Vacancy, Presidential Elector, Delegate, Alternate Delegate to National Convention

Any vacancy in the position of delegate or alternate delegate to the Democratic National Convention shall be filled in accordance with the Connecticut Delegate Selection Plan. A vacancy in the position of presidential elector shall be filled by the State Central Committee, meeting upon no less than five (5) days' notice, if such vacancy occurs prior to the election at which presidential electors are to be chosen.

Article V: **FINAL COMMITTEE TO RESOLVE ENDORSEMENT DISPUTE**

- A. Any dispute concerning endorsements for any office, or for delegate or for town committee member or officer, and any dispute concerning the interpretation and effect of party rules and procedures must first be referred to the State Central Committee members in the applicable district for local resolution. In order to expedite any such disputes, State Central members may seek legal opinions from Counsel for State Central. If the parties involved cannot bring about a resolution to their differences, then the issue may be referred to the State Party Chairman in writing asking that the issue be resolved through a Dispute Resolution Committee. If the dispute is brought before a Dispute Resolution Committee, the issuing of a previous legal opinion by State Central Counsel concerning the dispute shall not prohibit said Counsel from advising the Dispute Resolution Committee.
- B. A Dispute Resolution Committee shall be composed of no less than three (3) nor more than five (5) members of the State Central Committee, appointed by the chairperson thereof, none of whom shall represent the district or districts concerned. The decision of the committee shall be conclusive and binding upon all parties.

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- C. The committee shall be appointed **no later than five (5) business** days after the Democratic Party Chair receives a written request for the resolution of a dispute pursuant to this article. The committee shall set a time and place for a hearing of said dispute within five (5) business days of its appointment. The parties to the dispute shall receive **notice** at least seven (7) business days prior to the hearing **unless exigent circumstances warrant less notice**. The Committee shall issue its decision within three (3) days of the close of the hearing, and a written copy of such decision shall be filed with the State Central Committee, and provided to each party to the dispute. However, when exigent circumstances arise, the State Chairman shall have the authority to modify these requirements.

ARTICLE VI: **EFFECT OF PRIMARY LAW**

The nominations of the Democratic Party to all public offices and the election in each town of Democratic Town Committee and delegates to conventions shall be made in all respects in accordance with state statute, as may be amended from time to time, provided that no person may contest in a primary for any State or District office unless such person has received at least fifteen percent (15%) of the votes of the convention delegates present and voting in at least one roll call vote at a duly called and conducted convention for the endorsement of candidates for such offices, in accordance with the provisions of Article III of these rules, or such person has received two percent (2%) of the signatures of registered Democrats in the State or congressional district, or five percent (5%) of the signatures of registered Democrats in the State Senatorial, Assembly or Judge of Probate district.

ARTICLE VII: **RULES GOVERNING THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY IN ALL TOWNS**

The following rules shall govern the activities of the Democratic Party in each town of the state, whether or not the local party has adopted its own rules, and any local party rule to the contrary notwithstanding.

Section 1: Election of Town Committees

- A. Party endorsed candidates of any local party for Town Committee members shall be selected by the enrolled members of such party in caucus in such manner as local party rules may provide. Notice of the time, place and purpose of said caucus shall be given to all enrolled Democratic voters of the municipality at least five (5) days, but not more than fifteen (15) days, in advance of the caucus by publication of the same in a newspaper having general circulation in the municipality.
- B. The payment of dues shall not be a requirement for the endorsement or election of a candidate for any local party or Town Committee position. A Town Committee may be endorsed and elected on a district basis as such rules may prescribe. At any caucus duly called for the endorsement of members of a Town Committee, nominations for such Town Committee members may be made by (1) presentation to the caucus of a full slate composed of a number of persons equal to the number of Town Committee members prescribed by local party rules and (2) by nomination of individual candidates. In the

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endorsement of such candidates, voting shall be in accordance with the local party rules, but in no event shall a member of the caucus vote for a greater number of candidates than those to be elected. In the event no endorsement is made by the above stated method, then there shall be no endorsement and election to such Town Committee shall be made by direct primary as provided by law. No person shall be elected to or shall hold the position of Town Committee member unless he or she is a registered member of the Democratic Party.

Section 2: Primary Date

On the first Tuesday in March in each even-numbered year, each Town Committee if needed shall hold a primary for the election of Town Committee members. Said primaries shall be conducted in accordance with the Connecticut General Statutes.

Section 3: Terms of Members

Unless otherwise provided in this Article, members of the Town Committee shall serve for a term of two (2) years, commencing on the Wednesday after the first Tuesday in March in each even-numbered year and ending on the first Tuesday in March of the next even-numbered year.

Section 4: Election and Call of Organizational Meeting

- A. Not more than thirty (30) days following the day fixed for the holding of a primary for the election of Town Committee members, the Chair of the Town Committee in office at the time of said primary shall call a meeting of the newly elected Town Committee for the purpose of electing such officers of the Town Committee as are prescribed in local party rules. If such Town Chair fails, for any reason, to call such meeting by the end of the prescribed thirty-day period, the Vice-Chair in office at the time of the primary shall call the meeting within 48 hours.
- B. If, for any reason, the Vice-Chair does not call the meeting within the prescribed 48-hour period, the State Central Committee members in the district shall call the meeting within the next 48 hours. When the meeting must be called by the Vice-Chair or a State Central Committee member, the call of the meeting will be valid notwithstanding any otherwise applicable rule concerning time and notification of town committee meetings.

Section 5: Quorum

Two fifths (2/5) of the membership of the Town Committee shall constitute a quorum at any meeting.

Section 6: Slate Endorsement

- A. At any caucus or Town Committee meeting duly called for the election of delegates to any convention, nominations for said delegates may be made (1) by presentation to the caucus or Town Committee of a slate composed of a number of persons not exceeding

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the number of such delegates to which the town is entitled under the state rules of the Democratic Party or (2) by nomination of individual candidates.

- B. In the **selection** of such **delegates**, each member of the caucus or Town Committee member present and voting shall vote for a number of **delegates** not to exceed the number of a full slate as defined above.
- C. The voting for delegates to each convention shall be done by individual convention.

Section 7: Increased Membership.

The Town Committee, at a meeting called for the purpose, may, by majority vote of those present and voting, increase its membership, provided that all new members shall be duly elected by the time of the next primary date in the state election calendar, shall begin in office the next day, and shall continue in office only until the next date for election of town committee members.

Section 8: Town Committee Meetings

In accordance with the Charter of the Democratic National Committee, all meetings of Democratic Town Committees, subcommittees and all other Democratic Party committees shall be open to the public, and votes shall not be **taken** by secret ballot.

ARTICLE VIII:

RULES GOVERNING THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY IN TOWNS NOT HAVING LOCAL PARTY RULES

The following rules shall govern the activities of the Democratic Party in each town of the state in which no rules have been adopted by the local Democratic Party or have not been filed in accordance with Article IX. Where alternate sections bearing the same number are given, the applicable one, as indicated in the margin, shall govern.

TOWN COMMITTEE

Section 1: Composition

For Towns Not Divided Into Voting Districts:

The Town Committee shall consist of not less than ten (10) members, who shall be elected at large. Representation should be given to each section of the town.

For Towns Divided Into Voting Districts:

The Town Committee shall consist of not less than three members from each of the voting districts of the town. The members of the Town Committee shall be elected to vote from their respective voting districts. In the vote in a primary for the election of Town Committee members from a voting district, only persons currently registered as members of the Democratic Party in such voting district shall be eligible to vote.

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Section 2: Terms of Members

Members of the Town Committee shall serve for a term of two (2) years, commencing on the day following the day established for holding a primary for the election of said Town Committee members and ending with the day established for the holding of a primary for the election of the members of the succeeding Town Committee.

The provisions of this section shall apply notwithstanding the lack of cause for a primary to elect said members.

Section 3: Vacancy

Any vacancy on the Town Committee, arising from any cause including failure to elect, may be filled by the Town Committee by a majority vote of those present and voting at a meeting called for that purpose.

OFFICERS

Section 4: Election and Call of Organizational Meeting

Not more than thirty (30) days following the day fixed for the holding of a primary for the election of Town Committee members, the Chair of the Town Committee in office on the day of said primary shall call a meeting of the newly elected Town Committee for the purpose of electing such officers of the Town Committee as are prescribed in local party rules.

If such Town Chair fails, for any reason, to call such meeting by the end of the prescribed thirty-day period, the Vice-Chair in office at the time of the primary shall call the meeting within 48 hours.

If, for any reason, the Vice-Chair does not call the meeting within the prescribed 48-hour period, the State Central Committee members in the district shall call the meeting within the next 48 hours. When the meeting must be called by the Vice-Chair or a State Central Committee member, the call of the meeting will be valid notwithstanding any otherwise applicable rule concerning time and notification of town committee meetings.

Section 5: Qualifications

The officers of the Town Committee need not be members of the committee.

Section 6: Term

Officers so elected shall hold office until their successors have been elected.

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Section 7: Duties

Each of such officers shall have the duties usually incident to his or her office and such other duties as the Town Committee may from time to time prescribe. In the event that a vote is taken that shall result in a tie, such tie vote shall be dissolved by the vote of the Chair of the Town Committee, but this provision shall not affect his or her right to cast any vote, as a member of the Town Committee, to which he or she is otherwise entitled.

Section 8: Filing List of Officers and Members

Within one week after organization of the Town Committee, the Secretary shall file with the Secretary of the Democratic State Central Committee and with the town Democratic Registrar of Voters a list of the names and addressees of the officers and members of the Town Committee.

Section 9: Vacancy in Town Committee Office

If there shall be a vacancy in any office of the Town Committee, arising from any cause, the Town Committee may fill the same by a majority vote of those present and voting, at a meeting called for that purpose.

Section 10: Meetings, Minimum Meetings

The Town Committee shall meet at least four times a year.

Section 11: Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Town Committee may be called upon written request, signed by twenty percent (20%) of the members of the committee, presented to the Chair. Upon receipt of such request, the Chair shall instruct the Secretary to give reasonable notice of the time and place and purpose of such meeting to all members of the committee.

ENDORSEMENT OF CANDIDATES FOR MUNICIPAL OFFICE AND TOWN COMMITTEE MEMBERS, AND ELECTION OF DELEGATES TO CONVENTIONS

Section 12: Selection of Party Endorsed Candidates

A. For Towns of Five Thousand (5,000) or More Population Under the Last Federal Census

The enrolled members of the Democratic Party in the municipality, at a caucus called for the purpose, shall, by majority vote of those present and voting, select party endorsed candidates for the Town Committee. The Town Committee, at a meeting called for the purpose, shall, by a majority vote of those present and voting, elect delegates to conventions and select party endorsed candidates for all other offices. In the endorsement of any person for an office, or election of a delegate, for whom only the electors of a political subdivision of the municipality may vote, only the members of the Town Committee elected from said political subdivision may participate.

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B. For Towns of Less Than Five Thousand (5,000) Population Under the Last Federal Census

The enrolled members of the Democratic Party in the municipality, at a caucus called for the purpose, shall, by a majority vote of those present and voting, select party endorsed candidates for each municipal office and for Town Committee members, and shall elect delegates to conventions. In the endorsement of any person for an office or for a position as committee member, or election of a delegate, for whom only the electors of a political subdivision of the municipality may vote, only the enrolled members of the Democratic Party in such political subdivision may participate. The time and place of holding all such caucuses shall be determined by the Town Committee, and notice of the time, place and purpose of any such caucus shall be given to all enrolled Democratic voters of the municipality at least five (5) days, but not more than fifteen (15) days, in advance of the caucus by publication of the same in a newspaper having general circulation in the municipality and by posting the same on the public sign post in said municipality. The time of any such caucus shall be fixed so as to comply with the provisions of the Connecticut General Statutes. The Chair of the Town Committee shall be the temporary chairperson of all such caucuses and shall preside until the meeting has selected its permanent chairperson. In like manner, the Secretary of the Town Committee shall act as secretary at all such caucuses until the meeting has selected its permanent secretary.

Section 13: Slate Endorsement

At any caucus or Town Committee meeting duly called for the election of delegates to any convention, nominations for said delegates may be made by (1) presentation to the caucus or Town Committee of a slate composed of a number of persons not exceeding the number of such delegates to which the town is entitled under the state rules of the Democratic Party or (2) by nomination of individual candidates. In the election of such delegates, each member of the caucus or Town Committee member present and voting shall vote for a number of candidates not to exceed the number of a full slate as defined above. The voting for delegates to each convention shall be done separately for each convention.

Section 14: Party Endorsed Candidates for Municipal Office

Candidates for municipal office chosen as provided in Section 12 above, shall run in the primary for such office as party endorsed candidates; provided any such candidate shall be the nominee of the Democratic Party for the office for which he or she is a candidate if no valid opposing candidacy has been filed for nomination to such office by four o' clock p.m. on the twenty-first (21st) day preceding the day of the Democratic primary for such office.

Section 15: Party Endorsed Candidates for Town Committee

Candidates for Town Committee members chosen as provided in Section 12 above, shall run in the primary for Town Committee members as party endorsed candidates; provided such candidates shall be deemed elected as members of the Town Committee if no valid opposing candidacies have been filed for Town Committee members by four o' clock p.m. on the twenty-first (21st) day preceding the day of the Democratic primary for Town Committee members.

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Section 16: Insufficient Endorsements

If, for any reason, sufficient endorsements of candidates for municipal office or Town Committee members are not made, any eligible person may seek to become a candidate in accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. §9-405 and §9-406, 9-372 et seq.

Section 17: Certification of Party Endorsed Candidates and Elected Delegates

The Secretary and the Chair or presiding officer of the Town Committee, caucus or convention, as the case may be, shall certify to the municipal clerk the names and street addresses of the party endorsed candidates selected, and delegates elected, as provided in Sections 12 and 13 above. Such certification shall include the title of the office or position as committee member for which each person is endorsed and the date upon which the primary is to be held, or the convention for which the delegate has been elected. In the case of the endorsement of a person for an office or for a position as committee member, or election of a delegate, for whom only the electors of a political subdivision of the municipality or for a senatorial district located entirely within the municipality may vote, the Secretary of the Town Committee shall certify to the municipal clerk the name or number of such political subdivision or senatorial district.

Section 18: Date of Party Endorsement of Candidates

Each party endorsement of a candidate to run in a primary for the nomination of candidates for municipal office or for election as Town Committee members shall be made within the time frame established by the Connecticut General Statutes. Said endorsement shall be certified to the clerk of the municipality by the following two officials: the Chair and Secretary of the Town Committee, the permanent chair and secretary of the caucus or the permanent chair and secretary of the convention.

Section 19: Tie vote

A. For Towns of Five-Thousand (5,000) or More Population Under the Last Federal Census

In the event that a vote taken on selection of a party endorsed candidate results in a tie, such tie vote shall be dissolved by the vote of the Chair of the Town Committee, but this provision shall not affect his or her right to cast any vote as a member of the Town Committee in the first place.

B. For Towns of Less Than Five-Thousand (5,000) Population Under the Last Federal Census

In the event that a vote on the selection of a party endorsed candidate results in a tie, such tie vote shall be dissolved by the vote of the permanent chairperson of the caucus, but this provision shall not affect his or her right to cast any vote as a member of the caucus in the first place.

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Section 20: Vacancies in Party Endorsed Candidacy

- A. If a party endorsed candidate for nomination to a municipal office or for election as Town Committee member, prior to twenty-four (24) hours before the opening for the polls at the primary, dies, or prior to ten (10) days before the day of the primary withdraws his or her name from nomination, or for any reason becomes disqualified to hold office or position for which her or she is a candidate, an endorsement may be made to fill such vacancy by the Town Committee, by a majority vote of those present and voting, at a meeting called for that purpose; provided if the original endorsement was made by the members of the Town Committee elected from only one political subdivision of the municipality, only such members shall participate in the endorsement to fill such vacancy.
- B. The Chair of the Town Committee may cast a vote on such endorsement to break a tie, but this provision shall not affect his or her right to cast any vote, as a member of the Town Committee, to which he or she is otherwise entitled. The Secretary of the Town Committee shall immediately certify the endorsement to fill such vacancy to the Democratic Registrar of Voters.
- C. No candidate shall be deemed to have withdrawn until a letter of withdrawal signed by such candidate is filed with the municipal clerk.

NOMINATIONS: ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND DELEGATES

Section 21: Plurality Vote Determinative of Nomination

The nominations of the Democratic Party to all offices and the election of members of the Town Committee and delegates to conventions shall be made in all respects as provided in the State Primary Law, as the same may be amended from time to time. At a primary for nomination to a municipal office or for election of Town Committee members the winner shall be determined by a plurality of votes cast.

Section 22: Vacancy in Nomination.

If a nomination has been made for a municipal office and the nominee thereafter, but prior to twenty-four (24) hours before the opening of the polls on the day of the election for which such nomination has been made, dies, withdraws his or her name, or for any reason becomes disqualified to hold the office for which he or she has been nominated, a nomination to fill such vacancy may be made by the Town Committee, by a majority vote of the Town Committee members present and voting at a meeting called for that purpose. The Chair of the Town Committee may cast a vote on such nomination to break a tie, but this provision shall not affect his or her right to cast any vote, as a member of the Town Committee, in the first place. In the case of a withdrawal, said nomination shall not be valid until the candidate who has withdrawn has filed a letter of withdrawal, signed by such candidate, with the Secretary of the State, and also has filed a copy with the municipal clerk. The Chair of the Town Committee shall certify the nomination to fill such vacancy to the Secretary of the State, and shall file a copy with the municipal clerk. Such certification of a nomination to fill a vacancy due to death or disqualification shall include a statement setting forth the reason for such vacancy.

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Section 23: Definitions

As used in these rules, "municipal office" means any elective office of a town, city or borough and the offices of justice of the peace, state representative in an assembly district composed of a single town or part of a single town, state senator in a senatorial district composed of a single town or part of a single town, and judge of probate in a probate district composed of a single town. The other terms used in these rules shall have the same meanings as in the State Primary Law, as the same may be amended from time to time.

Section 24: Special Caucuses.

Special caucuses may be called for any lawful purpose by a majority of the Town Committee or by not less than ten percent (10%) of the registered Democratic voters in the town. The call for any such special caucus shall be in writing and signed by each of the persons issuing the same, and notice of the time, place and purpose of said special caucus shall be given to all registered Democratic voters in the town, at least five (5) day in advance of such caucus, by publication in a newspaper having circulation in said town and by posting on the public sign post.

ARTICLE IX: **FILING OF LOCAL RULES**

Section 1: Within seven (7) days after party rules or any amendments to party rules are adopted by the Democratic Party in any town, a copy of the same shall be filed with the Secretary of the State and with the town clerk and with the Secretary of the State Central Committee. Any amendments so filed shall set forth in full the section to be amended. Matter to be omitted or repealed shall be surrounded by brackets, and new matter shall be indicated by capitalization. Adopted party rules or amendments shall not be effective until sixty (60) days after the filing with the Secretary of the State.

Section 2: Convention for Vacancy Elections

- A. The date, time and place of meetings of state or district conventions held to endorse candidates to be voted upon at vacancy elections, and the days for holding primaries for the purpose of electing delegates to such conventions, shall be fixed by the Chair of the State Central Committee, and published in accordance with the Connecticut General Statutes.
- B. In the case of a vacancy in the office of United States Senator occurring sixty (60) or more days before the state election, but after the close of the State Convention held for the endorsements of candidates for the state offices to be filled at such election.

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ARTICLE X: **AMENDMENTS TO LOCAL PARTY RULES**

Local party rules may be amended by one of the three following methods:

1. By a caucus of the enrolled Democratic electors of the municipality called in the same manner as a caucus for selecting party endorsed candidates as provided in Section 12 of Article VIII of these rules.
2. By a convention of delegates chosen by the enrolled Democratic electors of the municipality in a manner prescribed in the local party rules of each municipality.
3. By the Democratic Town Committee at a meeting called in the same manner as a Town Committee meeting for selecting party endorsed candidates as provided in Section 12 of Article VIII of these rules, or as provided in local party rules.

In any municipality in which the Town Committee has not so adopted and filed such rules or amendments, the Chair of the Town Committee in any municipality consisting of one voting district, or in the event of his or her failure to act, the Vice-Chair, shall call a caucus within twenty (20) days upon filing with the Registrar of Voters of such party in such municipality a petition signed by at least five percent (5%), but no more than five hundred (500), of its enrolled party members, to take action on such petition.

In all other municipalities, the Chair of the Town Committee, or, in the event of his or her failure to act, the Vice Chair, shall call a convention within twenty (20) days upon the filing with the Registrar of Voters of such party in such municipality of a petition signed by at least five percent (5%), or at least five hundred (500) (whichever is less), of its enrolled party members, to take action on such petition.

Such convention shall consist of three (3) delegates from each voting district elected at a caucus of the enrolled party members of that district. It shall be the duty of the Town Chair, or, in the event of his or her failure to act, the Vice Chair, to call such caucuses, which shall be held on the same day, designating the time, place and day by publishing said call in a newspaper having a circulation in such municipality, at least five (5) days before the day of such caucuses.

In the event the enrolled Democratic electors or the Town Committee in any town shall fail to adopt a method for amending the local party rules as provided by the Connecticut General Statutes, then in that event, the method of amending said local party rules of said municipality shall be the same method used to select party endorsed candidates until such time as a method of amendment is lawfully adopted and filed by the proper authority.

ARTICLE XI: **COVERAGE**

A copy of these rules shall be filed with the clerk of each municipality and shall be deemed to cover the operations of the Democratic Party in that municipality until such time as the party within such municipality adopts a rule or amendment on the same subject matter, consistent with these rules and the Connecticut General Statutes, and files the same with the clerk of the municipality and the Secretary of the State.

ARTICLE XII:
AMENDMENTS TO STATE PARTY RULES

Section 1:

These Rules may be amended by any State Convention. The State Central Committee, at a meeting duly called for such purpose, by a vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of its entire membership, may make such amendments and only such amendments, as may be made necessary by changes in the laws of the United States or the State of Connecticut or by the National Democratic Party Rules. Any changes or amendments made by the State Central Committee shall be in force only until the next succeeding State Convention, at which they must be submitted for ratification or rejection.

Section 2:

Nothing herein shall be construed to permit the State Central Committee to alter the basis of representation at conventions as provided in Section 3 of Article III of these rules unless such alteration be required by change in the laws of the United States or of the State of Connecticut or by the National Democratic Party Rules.

ARTICLE XIII:
ROBERT'S RULES GOVERNING

Robert's Rules of Order (newly revised) shall be construed as applicable, controlling and conclusive on parliamentary issues, except as herein otherwise provided.

Amended July, 1986
Amended July, 1994
Amended July, 1996
Amended July, 2000
Amended May, 2004
Amended May, 2006
Amended May, 2010