

## DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF VIRGINIA

# VIRGINIA DEMOCRATIC PARTY PLAN

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*Authorized and paid for by the Democratic Party of Virginia.*

## ARTICLE 8. DEMOCRATIC COUNTY AND CITY COMMITTEES [*excerpt*]

### **Section 8.1 Time of Election**

A Democratic Committee shall be elected for each county and city by the Democratic voters during the period between the first Saturday in December in odd numbered years and the second Wednesday of the following January. City and County Democratic Committees must determine the date of their reorganization meeting and communicate that information to the State Party by November 1 of each odd numbered year.

### **Section 8.2 Caucuses**

Caucuses for the purpose of the election of such committees shall be held on Saturday or, if provided by county or city committee bylaws, on any other weekday evening. Any waiver of this requirement as to the time for elections must be granted by the State Party Chair or the Steering Committee.

### **Section 8.3 Committee Membership**

The existing committee shall in each case determine the basis of representation of the committee; however, each precinct shall be represented by at least one full voting member of the committee who shall be at the time of his or her election a resident of that precinct.

### **Section 8.4 County and City Committee Elections**

County and city committees shall elect their members by caucus. Any candidate for election to the county or city committee who has duly filed and who is unopposed shall be declared elected. A caucus shall be held to vote on the candidates in contested elections for the remaining positions on the county or city committee.

### **Section 8.5 Appeals**

Any ten (10) Democratic voters of a county or city who feel that the Democratic committee for that county or city has been elected in a manner inconsistent with the Party Plan may, within fifteen (15) days after such election, appeal in writing to the chair of the congressional district committee for the district in which the county or city is situated. If the county or city is divided into two or more congressional districts, the chairs of these district committees shall meet and establish a procedure for considering such appeal. The district committees may jointly hear the appeal, establish a subcommittee composed of equal members from each committee to conduct a hearing and make recommendations to the full committees, or designate one district committee to hear the appeal. The district committee(s) may sustain the election of the county or city committee, or order a new election in which case said election shall be held under

the direction of the district committees. The decision of the district committee(s) may be appealed to the Steering Committee.

Any person aggrieved by any decision, action or failure to act by a county or city committee may appeal to the district committee for the congressional district in which the county or city is situated, disposition of such appeal shall follow the procedure outlined in the previous paragraph when the county or city is divided between two or more districts. The decision of the congressional district committee(s) may be appealed to the Steering Committee.

#### **Section 8.6 Officers**

Following the election of its members as provided herein, each new county or city committee shall elect a chair, secretary, treasurer, and such other officers as it deems necessary no later than the second Wednesday in January. The date, time and place of the meeting where the election of officers will occur shall be made known to committee members in advance following the notice requirements in Section 9.5. Should the meeting take place immediately following adjournment of the caucus to elect committee members, or within 7 days thereafter, notice of the meeting shall be included in the public advertisement for the caucus. The secretary shall submit to State Party headquarters within five (5) days of his or her election the names, addresses, emails and telephone numbers of the officers and members of the committee. The secretary shall submit a list of any changes to the committee list every 6 months thereafter until the next committee election.

#### **Section 8.7 Bylaws**

Each county or city committee shall have a set of bylaws available for its membership upon request. Such bylaws shall be submitted to State Party headquarters for review as to form and consistency with this Plan. It shall be the responsibility of the county or city committee chair to submit such bylaws to State Headquarters within ninety (90) days of his or her election as chair.

#### **Section 8.8 Responsibilities**

It shall be the duty of every county and city committee, as well as each officer and member thereof, to seek the registration of voters, to perfect the Democratic organization within the county or city, and to do all within their power to aid in the victory of the Democratic Party's nominees in all elections. Committee members should know and understand their responsibility under Section 10.8 and the exception stated in Section 10.9.

#### **Section 8.9 Removal**

A county or city committee may remove from both office and membership any person found guilty of neglect of any duty imposed upon him or her. Such action shall not be taken without at least ten (10) days written notice to the accused member and an opportunity for him or her to refute such charges in a hearing before a subcommittee of the county or city committee. The decision of the county or city committee may be appealed to the district committee.

#### **Section 8.10 Vacancies**

Each county and city committee shall fill any vacancy occurring in its membership.

#### **Section 8.11 Meetings**

All meetings of the county or city committee shall be open to the public. Such meetings may be called as follows:

- a) upon call of the chair of the committee; or
- b) by at least ten percent (10%) of the members of the county or city committee if the signed call is filed with the chair at least fifteen (15) days before the proposed meeting date; or
- c) by a vote of the county or city committee at a properly convened meeting of the committee.

### **Section 8.12 Nomination**

Each county or city committee shall prescribe the methods to be used within such county or city to nominate candidates for county, city and local offices, and to elect members of said committee and delegates and alternates to party conventions. Such nominations and elections shall be made by primary, convention or caucus. Except, when an incumbent candidate for an office in a city or county was nominated by a primary, a primary shall be held for that office unless all incumbents of that party for that office consents to a different method. Whenever a county or city committee determines that such nominations of elections shall be by primary, the primary shall be held in conformity with this Plan and applicable Virginia election laws.

### **Section 8.13 Nomination Conventions**

In the election of delegates and alternates to any county, city, district or state convention, it shall be the duty of the county or city committee to prescribe whether such election shall be by precinct, magisterial or equivalent district, ward, county or city caucus or convention. The county or city committees shall also determine the number of delegates and alternates to which each precinct, magisterial or equivalent district, or ward shall be entitled pursuant to the Call to Convention and Delegate Selection Plan issued for said Convention.

### **Section 8.14 Dues**

Every county and city committee shall be responsible for paying to the treasurer of the Central Committee in a timely manner the annual dues provided for under Section 4.15 under this Plan. Congressional District Chairs shall assist in the collection of such dues.

### **Section 8.15 Ex-Officio Members**

Each member of the Central Committee shall, upon election, become a voting ex-officio member of the Democratic committee of the county or city in which he or she resides. Such members shall pay any required filing or membership fees unless waived by the county or city committee.

### **Section 8.16 Combination of County and City Committees**

Any county or city committee may be joined with any contiguous county or city committee and operated jointly under the following conditions and the following procedures:

- a) Each committee to be joined must vote for the combination by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting; or
- b) The proposed combination must be ratified by a two-thirds vote in a duly announced caucus to be held in each of the counties or cities to be combined; and
- c) The county or city desiring to combine must present to the Steering Committee a petition requesting approval of the combination.

If the required two-thirds majority is obtained in each of the committees to be combined or in each of the caucuses for the counties or cities to be combined, upon approval by the State Steering Committee, the functions of such county and city committees shall be combined in one joint committee. However, the combination of committee functions shall not include the nominating process for candidates for city, county, and local offices. For such nominations, only the representatives of the counties or cities served by the office in question shall participate in setting the method of nomination or in nominating such candidates.

Upon the petition of any ten (10) Democrats from any county or city served by a combined committee, the Steering Committee, after consideration, may dissolve the combined committee and order separate reorganization of the committees.