

THE FAIRFIELD COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

2016

The Fairfield County Democratic Party Principles

As the Fairfield County Democratic Party, we are proud to adopt these principles based on our belief in an Ohio and Fairfield County that values opportunity and equality for all its citizens, and respects both the self-reliance of individuals and the benefits of teamwork, to meet the challenges of a fair and just society.

To that end:

- ✓ We believe the best government is one that is efficient yet understanding—a government that is based not on systems or bureaucracies, but on people, ideas and values.
- ✓ We believe there is no substitute for fair and equal representation and strong public participation in a government chosen by election.
- ✓ We believe in a government that stands on the side of families—that listens, understands and addresses their concerns.
- ✓ We believe all reap benefits when we meet our challenges together.
- ✓ We believe in the equality of all citizens and condemn any discrimination.
- ✓ We believe in a society that strengthens families and protects our children.
- ✓ We believe in the rights of all to achieve economic security and find affordable housing; to seek good jobs at a livable wage; and protection for our workers in a growing and robust economy.
- ✓ We believe in a society that puts the health, safety and prosperity of its citizens first—one that promotes excellence in education, choices in quality health care and a healthy environment for all citizens.
- ✓ We believe in a society that values community and protects all citizens from violence and crime.
- ✓ We believe in a society that respects our elders who deserve the right to retire with the resources they need and have earned to support themselves in their golden years.
- ✓ We believe in pursuing these ideals with honesty and integrity, with respect for the freedoms that we are proud to call our own.

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the Fairfield County Democratic Party in order to organize and perpetuate a representative, effective and responsible party organization at all levels in Fairfield County, Ohio, affiliate with and advance the interest of the Democratic Party for the State of Ohio, and nationally, to sustain and advance the principles of democracy and uphold human and civil rights and constitutional government, do establish this Constitution and By-Laws.

Fairfield County Democratic Party Constitution and By-Laws

ARTICLE I. NAME, MEMBERSHIP AND ELIGIBILITY FOR OFFICE.

Section 1. Name

The name of this organization shall be the Fairfield County Democratic Party.

Section 2. Membership

Membership in this party shall be open to all residents of Fairfield County in the State of Ohio who support the Constitution of the United States of America, the Constitution of the State of Ohio and the Constitution, By-Laws and Principles of the Fairfield County Democratic Party. No person may be a member or may vote on any motion, resolution, nomination or election at any meeting of the Fairfield County Democratic Party, who does not meet the aforesaid qualifications or who is registered as a member of any other political party with the Board of Elections at that time.

Section 3. Eligibility for Party Office

Any person who meets the membership requirements of Article I, Section 2, is eligible for election to party office, except as hereafter limited. There shall be no minimum age requirement for party office, save where prescribed by law and he or she shall be an elector.

Section 4. Qualifications

In the event that any person's qualifications as a member of the Fairfield County Democratic Party, or eligibility for party office, must be determined, the same challenge procedure shall be followed to determine his or her qualifications as provided by the Election Laws of Ohio.

ARTICLE II. CONSTITUTION AND LAWS

Section 1.

Nothing herein shall conflict with the Constitution of the United States of America, the laws of the United States of America, the Constitution of the State of Ohio, the laws of the State of Ohio, and the Ohio Democratic Party Constitution and By-Laws. Any matter which conflicts with any of the aforesaid shall be of no force and effect. All constitutional provisions and laws of the United States and the State of Ohio are hereby incorporated by reference and made a part hereof. Each clause of this Constitution and By-Laws shall be considered separately and the illegality or enforceability of any one clause shall not affect any other clause.

ARTICLE III. CENTRAL COMMITTEE—EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1.

The controlling committee of the Fairfield County Democratic Party shall be the County Central Committee consisting of such membership as shall be elected according to the laws of the State of Ohio. The County Central Committee shall elect a County Executive Committee, which shall have such powers as are granted it by the County Central Committee, as are provided by law and by this Constitution and By-Laws.

Section 2.

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The members-elect of the party's Central Committee shall meet not earlier than six nor later than fifteen days following the date of the certification of the primary election at a suitable place and time in Lancaster, Ohio, to be designated by the retiring chair of the Committee. Notice of such meeting, giving the place and time shall be sent to each member-elect by the retiring secretary of the Committee by mail and a copy of the notice shall be posted in the Office of the Fairfield County Board of Elections at least five days prior to any such meeting. If the retiring secretary does not issue the call within the time required by law, any five members-elect may do so. The meeting shall be called to order by the retiring chair or secretary or if such officer is absent, then by a member of the Committee designated by the Democratic Members of the Fairfield County Board of Election. A temporary chair and secretary shall be chosen and the Committee shall proceed to organize by the election of a chair, vice chair, secretary and such other officers as the Committee may desire.

Section 3.

The County Central Committee shall then elect two members to the Executive Committee from each ward in the City of Lancaster, and two members for each six precincts within the Townships with a minimum of two for each Township. If a member of the Executive Committee is absent two (2) successive meetings without being excused by the Chair or for a valid reason, s/he may be removed from the Executive Committee, by the Executive Committee.

Section 4.

The County Central Committee shall confer upon the County Executive Committee all power and authority of the County Central Committee and the County Executive Committee shall be authorized to act for the County Central Committee in all things pertaining to the welfare, business, operation and organization of the County Central Committee and the Fairfield County Democratic Party during the period of its existence, which shall continue until the 6th day after the certification of the next County Central Committee at the succeeding primary election. Any vacancies which may occur in the County Executive Committee or in the County Central Committee shall be filled by a majority vote of the County Executive Committee. A vacancy on the Executive Committee shall be filled by the duly-elected members of the Executive Committee.

Section 5.

The County Executive Committee shall then be called to meet immediately upon its election and shall proceed to nominate and elect a chair who need not be a member of the County Central or Executive Committee. A Democrat in good standing may be selected. This Chair must have been a registered democrat for the last five years. The Chair shall automatically become a member of the Executive Committee.

Section 6.

The County Executive Committee shall then immediately proceed to elect a vice-chair, secretary and treasurer of said committee. The Vice-Chair shall be of the opposite gender as the chair.

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Section 7.

The Executive Committee members may nominate and elect twenty one (21) At-Large Executive Committee members. Six(6) such members shall be from the City of Lancaster and fifteen (15) from the County. These At-Large Executive Committee members must be Democrats in good standing under the criteria specified in Article 1, Section 2. At-Large Executive Committee Members will be elected by the Executive Committee at reorganization.

BY-LAWS

CHAPTER 1. OFFICERS

Section 1.

The Chair's duties shall be those of chief executive officer and s/he shall be subject to the direction of and responsible to the County Executive Committee. The Chair shall appoint other personnel as s/he deems necessary, subject to confirmation by the County Executive Committee

Section 2.

The Vice-Chair shall act as the chair in case of the death, resignation, incapacity, removal or absence of the chair and shall, in such event, have the same powers, duties and responsibilities as the chair until such time as the County Executive Committee shall properly elect a new chair. In the event of the vacancy of the Chairmanship, the Vice Chair shall, at the next regular meeting of the Executive Committee, schedule a special meeting to elect a new chair to be held within 30 days.

Section 3.

The Secretary shall be in charge of all the official documents of the Executive Committee and the preparation of the necessary notices, minutes and other documents. S/He shall preserve such files and records and open them for examination and, at appropriate times, at the request of any duly-elected member of the County Executive Committee under such rules and regulations as are prescribed by said Executive Committee. All minutes of the preceding term shall be submitted to the newly-elected Secretary at the reorganization meeting.

Section 4.

The Treasurer shall have custody of the funds of the party and shall render up-to-date financial reports to each meeting of the County Executive Committee. The Treasurer shall be accountable for all receipts and expenditures of the party, filing appropriate reports as needed.

1. No bills are to be paid unless presented to and approved by the Executive Committee. No monies shall be reimbursed unless the expenditure was approved in advance by the Executive Committee.
2. The Treasurer's books shall be audited with every change of Treasurer and at the end of each term.

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- A. The Executive Committee Chair shall appoint a chair of the auditing committee, who in turn, shall appoint two additional members.
3. The Party shall carry a general liability policy to cover the treasurer and the party from harm.

CHAPTER 2. COOPERATION

Section 1.

The Chair of the Fairfield County Democratic Party Executive Committee shall consult with, and co-operate with the various precincts or ward committeemen, and all officers of all officially authorized Democratic Clubs of Fairfield County within their duly chartered areas of jurisdiction.

Section 2.

The Central Committeemen of the precincts or wards and the presidents of the various chartered Democratic Clubs shall consult with, and co-operate with, the Fairfield County Democratic Party Executive Committee and its chair on all matters relating to the business of the Fairfield County Democratic Party in their respective areas of jurisdiction of the Central Committeemen or officers of Chartered Democratic Clubs. The County Central Committee shall meet no fewer than three times each calendar year.

CHAPTER 3. MEETINGS

Section 1.

The County Central Committee shall meet after its election, as required by law and this Constitution and By-Laws. The County Executive Committee shall meet immediately upon its election by the County Central Committee and must have a minimum of ten monthly meetings in each calendar year. The County Executive Committee may be called to meet by the Chairman or by a minimum of one-third of the membership of the said Committee.

Section 2.

Notice of any meeting, specifying time and place, shall be sent in writing through the United States mail to all members of the Committee not less than five days in advance of the meeting, unless the member notifies the secretary that they want to opt out of the mailings and receive notice by email instead, unless provided by law. Notice shall be given not less than three days prior to said meeting, if by telephone by the Executive Chair, or any officer on the Executive Committee.

Section 3.

Minutes shall be taken of all meetings of the County Central Committee and the County Executive Committee.

Section 4.

Twenty-five members shall constitute a quorum for the Central Committee and ten members shall constitute a quorum for the Executive Committee. This would insure against individual boycotts

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and encourage better attendance and participation at the meetings. No business shall be conducted without a quorum present.

Section 5.

Voting shall be done by voice vote unless otherwise agreed upon, unanimously, by the Committee present.

CHAPTER 4. PRE-PRIMARY ENDORSEMENTS

Section 1.

At any time, the Fairfield County Democratic Party Executive Committee may make pre-primary endorsements for any local or district office providing 60% vote of the members of the committee present and voting on such question so determine. However, No endorsements shall be made without the candidates being screened by the screening committee. Candidates must be filed with the board of elections as candidates. Candidates must ask the screening committee for the endorsement. After the candidate is screened and forwarded by the screening committee, with their recommendations, they may be voted on by the executive committee. At any meeting at which endorsements are to be discussed, ample notice shall be given each member of the committee. Voting on endorsements should take place on or before the last executive committee meeting before the primary.

Section 2.

The screening committee shall consist of two members from the Central committee, appointed by its chairman, two members of the Executive committee, appointed by its chairman, and one member of the Executive committee elected by its members. The term of each member of the screening committee shall be two years, in staggering terms (one member from Central for one year and one for two years, one member from Executive committee for one year, and one for two years, the elected member shall serve two years).

Section 3.

The Screening Committee shall meet and elect one member of their members as chair of the committee. The committee shall meet as required to perform its appointed task. The committee shall establish procedures for their committee.

Section 4.

The screening committee shall interview candidates for endorsement and make a determination of:

1. Recommended for endorsement
2. neutral—neither recommended nor not recommended
3. not recommended for endorsement

Section 5.

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No endorsements shall be made in Central Committee races.

CHAPTER 5. FINANCE

Section 1.

The County Central Committee members of the Fairfield County Democratic Party shall be asked to assist in the raising of monies for the benefit of the Fairfield County Democratic Party Executive Committee and its endorsed Democratic Party candidates.

Section 2.

The Fairfield County Democratic Party shall make no expenditures to individual candidates in the primary. Only individual candidates who have been qualified by the Board of Elections shall be eligible to receive funds from the Fairfield County Democratic Party. The Fairfield County Democratic Party shall make no expenditures to candidates outside of the current election cycle. Nor shall the Fairfield County Democratic Party make any expenditures for legal fees incurred by the candidates or any Democratic Club or member not officially authorized by the Executive Committee.

CHAPTER 6. PARTY UNITY

Section 1.

All members of the party, candidates for office, party officers, party committees and organizations, and elected Democratic officials shall support the principles of the Fairfield County Democratic Party.

CHAPTER 7. STATE CONVENTION, PARTY STRUCTURE—NATIONAL GUIDELINES, PARTY STRUCTURE—STATE GUIDELINES

Section 1.

The provisions for a State Convention of the Ohio Democratic Party, Party Structure—National Guidelines and Party Structure—State Guidelines as adopted in Article X, Article XI and Article XII of the Ohio Democratic Party Constitution and By-Laws adopted on August twenty-ninth, nineteen hundred and ninety-eight and reaffirmed in two thousand and three are incorporated herein and made a part of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Fairfield County Democratic Party.

CHAPTER 8. OATH OF OFFICE

Section 1.

All officers of the Fairfield County Democratic Party Central Committee and Executive Committee shall be required to take an oath of office to support the Constitution of the United States of America, the Constitution of the State of Ohio, the Constitution and By-Laws and the principles of the Ohio Democratic Party and the Constitution and By-Laws of the Fairfield County Democratic Party.

CHAPTER 9. ROBERTS RULES OF ORDER

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Section 1.

Any matters regarding the conduct of the affairs of the Fairfield County Democratic Party Central and Executive Committee not governed by this Constitution and By-Laws or by the convention rules or by the laws of the State of Ohio shall be governed by Roberts Rules of Order.

CHAPTER 10. AMENDMENTS

Section 1.

This Constitution and By-Laws may be amended by a majority of the members of the Executive Committee of the Fairfield County Democratic Party at any meeting called for that purpose. Amendments proposed under this Section must be submitted in writing and copies thereof sent to each member of the said Committee at reasonable time prior to the meetings.

Section 2.

This Constitution and these By-Laws shall be reviewed every five years and edited and reviewed as desired by the Committee in office at that time. An adopted, revised copy shall be filed with the Ohio Democratic Party, Ohio Secretary of State, and the Fairfield County Board of Elections.

Section 3.

This Constitution and By-Laws supersede any other and shall take effect immediately upon adoption by the Committee.

In the year 2014 the Fairfield County Democratic Party Executive Committee made revisions to the Constitution and By-Laws of the Democratic Party of Fairfield County, Ohio. All changes and revisions to the Constitution and By-Laws of the Democratic Party of Fairfield County, Ohio, were voted on and passed by the Executive Committee in the year 2014. The procedure for revision in the By-Laws, Chapter 10 was followed.

Fairfield County Democratic Executive Committee Michael K. Oatney, Chairperson

Constitution and By-Laws Revision Committee Paul Johnson, Chairperson Charlotte Owens, David Bornino

Adopted by the Fairfield County Democratic Party on Thursday, February 20, 2014

Revised by the Fairfield County Democratic Party on Thursday February 18, 2016