

Monroe County Democratic Party Bylaws

Article I. Name

This organization shall be known as the Monroe County Democratic Party. It shall consist of the Monroe County Executive Committee, and enrolled members of the Michigan Democratic Party residing in Monroe County who are in good standing as defined in Article IV Section 1.

Article II. Purpose

Section 1 It is the purpose of the Monroe County Democratic Party to:

- a) Promote the philosophy of the Monroe County Democratic Party; promote the philosophy of the Michigan Democratic Party, and to elect Democrats who support this philosophy.
- b) Unite precinct delegates, activists, and all other Democrats for political action, and to encourage and promote wide active participation in Monroe County political action.
- c) Provide representation in government and a voice in the public discussion of issues for those generally under-represented, those without powerful and well financed lobbies, those without special access to decision making, those whose needs are overlooked, those whose opportunities are limited, those whose means for a minimum standard of living are not met, those whose liberty is jeopardized, those whose dignity is not sufficiently protected.
- d) Espouse the public interest in decisions made by government; in particular to advocate the rights of present and future generations to the natural resources of this land.
- e) Be vigilant in the defense of liberties guaranteed in the United States Constitution.
- f) Encourage the development of county democratic platforms and candidacies for public office, which support and detail these general purposes.
- g) Support the work of the Michigan Democratic Party in raising funds, expanding the Party, and work for the election of Democratic candidates.

Section 2 The Monroe County Democratic Party shall be a non-profit organization and upon its dissolution all assets and real and personal property of the Party and its committees shall revert to the benefit of the Michigan Democratic Party. No part of the income or assets of the Party shall inure to any of its members except for the reimbursement of actual expenses, reasonable compensation for services if the Party approves, or a contribution for electing a member to office if the Party so approves.

Article III. Fundamental Principles

Section 1 All public meetings of the Monroe County Democratic Party at all levels shall be open to all members of the Democratic Party regardless of actual or perceived race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, economic status, religion, ethnic identity, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, physical appearance or disability.

Section 2 No tests for membership in, nor any oaths of loyalty to, the Monroe County Democratic Party shall be required or used which has the effect of requiring prospective or current members of the Monroe County Democratic Party to acquiesce in, or condone or support discrimination on the grounds of actual or perceived race color, creed, sex, age, national origin, economic status, religion, ethnic identity, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, physical appearance or disability.

Section 3 The time and place for all public meetings of the Monroe County Democratic Party on all levels shall 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.

Section 4 The Monroe County Democratic Party, on all levels, shall support the broadest possible participation without discrimination on the grounds of actual or perceived race, color, creed, sex, age, nation origin, economic status, religion, ethnic identity, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, physical appearance or disability.

Section 5 The Monroe County Democratic Party shall publicize fully and in such a manner as to assure notice to all interested parties a full description of the legal and practical procedures for selection of the Monroe County Democratic Party officers and representatives on all levels. Publication of those procedures shall be done in such a fashion that all prospective and current members of the Monroe County Democratic Party will be fully and adequately informed of the pertinent procedure in time to participate in each selection procedure at all levels of the Monroe County Democratic Party organization.

Section 6 The Monroe County Democratic Party shall publicize fully and in such a manner as to assure notice to all interested parties a complete description of the legal and practical qualifications for all officers and representatives of the Monroe County Democratic Party. Such publication shall be done in a timely fashion so that all prospective candidates or applicants for any elected or appointed position within the Monroe County Democratic Party will have full and adequate opportunity to compete for office.

Section 7 Proportional voting shall be used in the election of delegates and alternates to any Convention, and proportional voting shall be used in the election of members of the Monroe County Executive Committee.

Section 8 All rules and bylaws of the Monroe County Democratic Party at all levels shall be consistent with the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party and shall be available on request in writing to any member of the Monroe County Democratic Party.

Section 9 The unit rule is prohibited at all levels of the Monroe County Democratic Party.

Section 10 No rule shall be adopted at any level of the Monroe County Democratic Party which would require a person to cast a vote or be recorded voting contrary to that person's judgment.

Section 11 On all questions of procedure not resolved by the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party or these Bylaws, the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be used.

Section 12 The Chair and Vice-Chair of any unit, Committee, Caucus or Convention of the Monroe County Democratic Party shall be of the opposite sex.

Section 13 Votes shall not be taken by secret ballot at any meeting of the Monroe County Democratic Party at any level.

Article IV. Membership

Section 1 Membership of the Monroe County Democratic Party shall consist of:

- a) All duly elected and accredited Democratic precinct delegates of this county.
- b) Enrolled members of the Michigan State Democratic Party, residing in Monroe County, who have been members for at least (sixty) 60 days. Precinct delegates, candidates and elected officials are exempt from the sixty (60) day advance membership requirement. However, precinct delegates, candidates and elected officials must be a member of the Michigan Democratic Party in order to vote at any Conventions, Caucus, or meeting of any unit of the Michigan Democratic Party at any level.
- c) The Monroe County Democratic Executive Committee and Officers, all of whom must be members of the Michigan Democratic Party. All precinct delegates will be delegates to all County and/or District Conventions during their term of office. In their precinct, delegates shall register Democrats to vote, identify other Democrats and recruit new State Party members, take information on issues and candidates to voters, help turn out the vote on Election Day and keep Party leaders informed about the issues which concern voters.

Section 2 Membership of the Monroe County Democratic Party shall be filed according to Michigan Statutes.

Section 3 All members shall be entitled to participate in the activities of this organization. All rights not reserved or given to the precinct delegates and the officers and Executive Committee members by law and these Bylaws shall be vested in the regular membership.

Section 4 Precinct delegates shall be apportioned and selected in accordance with the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party.

Section 5 The Officers and Executive Committee of the Monroe County Democratic Party shall be selected in accordance with the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party.

Article V. Executive Committee and Officers

Section 1 Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall be comprised of the following two groups.

- a) One third (1/3) of the Executive Committee shall be comprised of the candidates for County, State legislative and U.S. House of Representatives offices for which candidates were nominated at the most recent general election for that office whose districts include all or part of the county.
- b) The remaining two thirds (2/3) of the Executive Committee shall be comprised of individuals elected by Monroe County Precinct Delegates.

Section 2 Executive Committee Duties

- a) Attendance- Executive Committee members are expected to attend all meetings of the Monroe County Democratic Party.
- b) Volunteering - Executive Committee members are expected to volunteer time at/for the County Fair Booth, County Fair Parade, Bedford Trade Fair Booth, Annual Unity Dinner and election/GOTV efforts. Additional activities may be added to this list at the discretion of the Chair.
- c) Executive Committee members shall conduct themselves at all times as honorable ambassadors of the Democratic Party and shall support its platform, values, and endorsed candidates.
- d) Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held as defined by Article VI, section 1. All meetings of the Executive Committee shall be open meetings. All attendees may participate in discussions before the Executive Committee. Voting rights are vested solely in Executive Committee members.

Section 3 Removal for Cause

- a) Any Executive Committee Member who has more than four (4) unexcused absences at regularly scheduled meetings per calendar year may constitute grounds for removal pursuant to Article V, Section 3 (e) (i).
- b) The public endorsement for any candidate running on the Republican ticket by an Executive Committee member will constitute grounds for removal pursuant to Article V, Section 3 (g) (i).
- c) Any misconduct or willful neglect of any assigned duty may constitute grounds for a member's removal from the Executive Committee pursuant to Article V, Section 3 (e) (ii).
- d) A criminal conviction involving moral turpitude may constitute grounds for removal pursuant to Article V, Section 3 (e) (ii).
- e) Process for removal of an Executive Committee member shall be conducted as follows:

- i. Repeated Absences: Members who have four (4) unexcused absences at regularly scheduled meetings in a calendar year shall be notified in writing that an additional (fifth) unexcused absence anytime during the remaining calendar year may result in the member's removal. After the fifth unexcused absence, motions for removal and replacement may be made at a subsequent meeting of the Executive Committee. The motion may be passed by a simple majority vote of the Executive Committee members present.
 - ii. Misconduct or Neglect of Duties: Members guilty of misconduct or neglect of their duties may be removed by a 2/3 vote of the Executive Committee members present. The Executive Committee, including the member in question must be notified in writing of any and all allegations 14 days prior to the vote for removal. The member in question shall be afforded the opportunity to refute any and all allegations prior to the vote.
- f) Vacancies on the Executive Committee shall be filled by a majority vote of Executive Committee members present at a meeting held within sixty (60) days from vacancy.

Section 4 Officers

Officers of the Monroe County Democratic Party shall consist of Chair, Vice-Chair, Second Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. Officers shall be elected as provided in the Michigan Democratic Party Rules. Each even-numbered year within twenty days following the November election the delegates to the Fall County Convention shall convene at the call of the Monroe County Democratic Party Chair for the purpose of electing the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall then elect the Committee officers within 30 days of that convention.

Section 5 Officers Duties

- a) The Chair of the organization shall preside at all meetings, and transact such other duties as are usual to the County Chair, or that may be required by this organization, delegating any duties as he/she deems necessary. The Chair shall be the official spokesperson for the Monroe County Democratic Party.
- b) The Vice-chair shall be of the opposite gender from that of the Chair. The Vice-chair shall assist the Chair in the discharge of his/her duties, and shall assume the responsibilities of the Chair in his/her absence.
- c) The Second Vice-Chair of this organization shall assist the Chair and Vice-Chair in the discharge of their duties, and shall assume the responsibilities of the Chair/Vice-Chair in his/her absence.
- d) The Secretary shall keep accurate records and minutes of the meetings of the Executive Committee and General Membership.
 - i. The Secretary shall keep and preserve all the books, documents, correspondence, records, minutes, effects, and any other property of this organization.
 - ii. When a new secretary is elected, the past secretary shall immediately deliver to the newly elected secretary all the items kept and preserved during his/her tenure of office.
 - iii. The Secretary shall notify the General Membership of its meetings and the Executive Membership of its meetings.

- e) The Treasurer shall be responsible for the financial receipts and disbursements of the Monroe County Democratic Party subject to the approval of the Executive Committee. The funds of this organization shall be drawn upon by any two of the following officers: Chair, and Treasurer. In the absence of the Chair or Treasurer, the Vice Chair shall sign checks.
 - i. The Treasurer shall give financial reports to the Executive Committee as directed and shall make them available at all General Membership meetings.
 - ii. At the beginning of each new term of office, the Treasurer for the term ending shall present all funds and financial records of the Monroe County Democratic Party to the newly-elected Treasurer. The Executive Committee Chair shall assemble an Ad-hoc Committee for the purpose of reviewing these records. The outgoing Treasurer shall make himself/herself available to answer questions and provide explanations of any transactions and activities during their tenure.
 - iii. The Ad-hoc Committee may recommend to the Executive Committee an independent formal audit if needed.

Article VI. Meetings

Section 1 The regular meetings of the Monroe County Democratic Party shall be open to the General Membership. Date, time, and place of all meetings shall be set at the first meeting in January of each year. All business conducted at these meetings shall be voted upon by Executive Committee members and Officers in attendance, pursuant to Article IV, Section 1. At least five days' notice shall be given of the date, time and place of the meeting. Notice may be given by mail, telegram, fax or email.”

Section 2 A quorum shall exist at a regular meeting of the Monroe County Democratic Executive Committee when at least fifteen (15) eligible Monroe County Democratic Executive Committee members including two (2) officers are present. The quorum shall be verified at each meeting by individual signatures on a sign-in roster.

Section 3 The Executive Committee Chair reserves the right to call a special meeting of the Executive Committee in order to conduct business in a timely manner as necessary between regularly scheduled meetings. All Executive Committee members must be notified at least 5 days in advance of a special meeting. A quorum shall exist when 15 Executive Committee members including two (2) officers are present.

Section 4 Notice shall be given to all Executive Committee members and Officers of the Executive Committee meetings in writing at least seven (7) days in advance. Notice may be given by mail, telegram, fax or email.

Section 5 Subject to the Michigan Democratic Party Rules and these Bylaws, all meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order (current edition), which shall be the guide for all matters not covered in the Constitution and Bylaws of the organization.

Article VII. Committees

Section 1 The Executive Committee Chair, subject to the approval of the majority of the eligible Executive Committee members present and seated, shall appoint Standing Committees and committee chairs. The Executive Committee Chair shall appoint replacement committee members as needed to fill vacancies that arise. Eligibility to serve on Standing Committees shall be limited to members in good standing of the Monroe County Democratic Party pursuant to Article IV, Section 1 of these Bylaws. These committees shall report back to the Executive Committee at the regularly scheduled meetings.

Section 2 Standing Committees shall include the following:

- a) Rules and Bylaws Committee
- b) Membership Recruitment and Volunteer Committee
- c) Fundraising and Finance Committee
- d) Candidate Recruitment Committee
- e) Communications Committee
- f) Research and Political Action Committee
- g) Candidate Screening Committee

These committees shall include the appropriate subcommittees. The Chair of the Executive Committee shall be an ex-officio member of all Standing Committees.

Section 3 Standing Committees are defined as follows:

a) **Rules and Bylaws Committee**

The responsibilities of this Committee shall include drafting a set of proposed amendments to the Bylaws and then presenting them to the Monroe County Democratic Party for review and final adoption. Amendments can be proposed at any time and may originate within the Monroe County Democratic Party.

- i. When an Amendment is proposed; it shall be automatically referred to the Rules and Bylaws Committee for review. The Rules and Bylaws Committee should report back to the Monroe County Democratic Party any recommended changes for formal approval. Any disputes arising over the rules should be referred to the Rules and Bylaws Committee.
- ii. The Rules and Bylaws Committee shall review the Rules and Bylaws in their entirety by April 30 of odd-numbered years.

b) **Membership Recruitment and Volunteer Committee**

The responsibilities of this Committee shall include recruiting new members into the Monroe County Democratic Party, notifying and encouraging members to run as Precinct Delegates and recruiting volunteers as needed for Monroe County Democratic Party events.

- i. The Membership Chair shall serve for two years and their name shall be sent to the State Party's Finance Director in order to assist the Monroe County Democratic Party in conducting a successful membership campaign.

c) **Fundraising and Finance Committee**

The responsibilities of this Committee shall include the development and implementation of a two-year budget plan and the development of a fundraising plan that meets the goals set forth within that budget.

i. The Committee shall include the Treasurer.

ii. The Unity Dinner Committee will be a subcommittee of the Fundraising Committee.

d) **Candidate Recruitment Committee**

The responsibilities of this Committee shall include finding the best possible Democratic candidates from the Party's database and the local community.

e) **Communications Committee**

The responsibilities of this Committee shall include drafting press advisories as necessary for the Chair's approval and submitting them to the appropriate news agencies once approved; publication of the Committee monthly newsletter, and the development and maintenance of the Committee website. The Secretary will be included in this committee.

f) **Research and Political Action Committee**

The responsibilities of this Committee shall include effectively running election campaigns through research and coordination with the candidate recruitment committee.

g) **Candidate Screening Committee**

The responsibilities of this Committee shall include screening potential Democratic candidates and presenting recommendations to the Monroe County Democratic Party for approval.

i. This Committee shall consist of eligible Party members, including Precinct Delegates, who do not hold any other elected title nor are candidates for any other office.

ii. Activities of this Committee are further outlined in Article IX of these Bylaws.

Article VIII. Order of Business

The Monroe County Democratic Party meetings shall proceed in the following order:

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call of Officers
3. Reading of Minutes
4. Financial Reports
5. Reading of Communications
6. Chair's Report
7. Report of committees
8. Unfinished Business
9. New business
10. Good & Welfare
11. Adjournment

Article IX. Endorsements in Elections

Section 1 Candidate Qualification

- a) All qualified candidates seeking endorsement must be members in good standing of the Monroe County Democratic Party, as defined in Article IV, Section 1 of these Bylaws.
- b) Qualified candidates shall be screened by the Candidate Screening Committee.

Section 2 Primary Election Endorsement

- a) Candidate endorsement - The Monroe County Democratic Party may endorse qualified candidates for Federal, State and Local Offices.
- b) Persons seeking Primary endorsement from the Monroe County Democratic Party shall submit a request for endorsement in writing no later than ten (10) days after the filing deadline for that office as set by the Secretary of State.
- c) Requests shall be submitted in one of the following manners:
 - i. In writing to the Monroe County Democratic Party PO Box.
 - ii. In writing submitted at a meeting of the Monroe County Democratic Party.
 - iii. In an e-mailed message sent to the Chair of the Monroe County Democratic Party.
 - iv. The date of postmark/email is date of receipt
- d) All Candidate Screening Committee recommendations shall be presented to the General Membership for final approval of recommendation for endorsement. The recommendations shall be voted on by the General Membership at a regular meeting duly called for that purpose. Notice of this meeting will be given fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting in the manner described in Article VI Section 4 of these Bylaws.
 - i. Qualified candidates recommended by the Candidate Screening Committee for endorsement must receive a 2/3 majority approval of the General Membership present to receive Endorsement.

Section 3 General Elections Endorsement Procedure

- a) Candidate Endorsement - The Monroe County Democratic Party may endorse qualified candidates for Federal, State, and Local Offices. The Chair will submit to all Democratic primary winners who did not receive endorsement in the primary, in writing, notice of the endorsement procedure within three (3) days of the certification of the primary election.
- b) Persons seeking endorsement from the Monroe County Democratic Party, who did not receive endorsement in the primary, shall submit a request for endorsement in writing no later than ten (10) days after the Primary Election for that office as set by the Secretary of State.
- c) Requests shall be submitted in one of the following manner:
 - i. In writing to the Monroe County Democratic Party Post Office Box.
 - ii. In writing submitted at a meeting of the Monroe County Executive Committee.
 - iii. In an e-mailed message sent to the Chair of the Monroe County Democratic Party.
 - iv. The date of postmark/email is date of receipt

- d) Qualified candidates shall be screened by the Candidate Screening Committee. All recommendations for endorsement shall be presented to the General Membership for final approval of recommendation for endorsement.
- e) The recommendations shall be voted on by the General Membership at a regular meeting duly called for that purpose. Notice of this meeting will be given fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting in the manner described in Article VI Section 4 of these Bylaws.
 - i. The General Membership meeting for endorsements for the General Election may not occur until at least ten (10) days after the Primary.
 - ii. Qualified candidates recommended by the Candidate Screening Committee must receive 2/3 approval of the General Membership present to receive endorsement.

Article X. Appointments

No appointments or recommendations for appointment shall be made to any paid county board, commission, or committee unless the appointee is a member in good standing with the Monroe County Democratic Party (as defined in Article IV Section 1) and the Michigan Democratic Party.

Article XI. Amendments

Section 1 Proposals of changes or amendments to these Bylaws shall first be referred to the Rules and Bylaws committee, which shall report its recommendations to the next Regular meeting or special meeting called for that purpose.

Section 2 These Bylaws may be amended by a 2/3 vote of the Monroe County Democratic Party present and seated. Written notice that amendment(s) are proposed and written notice setting forth the proposed amendment(s) shall be given to all Monroe County Democratic Party members at least two weeks prior to the date of the meeting.

Section 3 These Bylaws shall be in full force and effect upon their adoption and shall supersede all motions and policies of a contrary nature with the exception of those provisions of the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party or the appropriate laws of the State of Michigan.

These Bylaws were adopted at a regular meeting of the Monroe County Democratic Party held on February 21, 2008.

Changes and Amendments – 2009-2010
Submitted and Approved _____

Changes and Amendments – 2008
Submitted: February, twenty-first, 2008
Approved: February, twenty-first, 2008

These rules, having been adopted as amended by the Monroe County Democratic Party on _____ shall supersede all previous rules and bylaws adopted by the Monroe County Democratic Party.

Dr. Denise Brooks, Chair

Sara Sweat Ziegler, Recording Secretary

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