

# Constitution of the Iowa Democratic Party

*As Amended by the 2014 State Convention*

## **Preamble**

We, the people of the Iowa Democratic Party, in order to organize and perpetuate a representative, effective, and responsible party organization in the State of Iowa, advance the interests of the Democratic Party nationally, sustain and advance the principles of social justice and democracy, and uphold civil rights, civil liberties, and constitutional government, do establish this Constitution of the Iowa Democratic Party.

## **Article I - Name and Membership**

*Section 1 - Name:* This organization shall be known as the Iowa Democratic Party.

*Section 2 - Eligibility to Participate:* All persons at least 18 years of age as of the date of the next General Election who are residents of Iowa, who support the purposes of the Iowa Democratic Party, and who are registered Democrats, or who register at the time of their request to participate in the process in question as Democrats, shall be eligible to participate as members of this organization.

*Section 3 - Young Persons:* All young persons who are not eligible to vote in the next General Election, who are residents of Iowa, and who support the purposes of the Democratic Party of Iowa shall be eligible to participate as full party members except for voting and holding of elective positions within the party, or as restricted by Iowa law.

*Section 4 - Members:* Unless specifically denied such right by law, all members of the Iowa Democratic Party shall be eligible to participate in all activities of the Party; shall be eligible to be elected as delegates to conventions; shall be eligible to be elected to an office in the Iowa Democratic Party; and shall be eligible to vote on any motion, resolution, nomination, or election affecting the Iowa Democratic Party at any meeting, caucus, conference, or convention in the state, districts, counties, or precincts, provided, however, that such person shall have been elected to a position of such authority and that at the time of such service, holding office, and/or voting, such person shall be a resident within the geographic boundaries of the political subdivision he or she represents.

## **Article II - Precinct Caucuses**

*Section 1 - Party Foundation:* Precinct caucuses shall compose the foundation of the organizational structure of the Iowa Democratic Party.

*Section 2 - In Even-Numbered Years:* precinct caucuses shall be held each even-numbered year upon a call issued by the State Chair of the Iowa Democratic Party, which call shall be subject to the approval of the State Central Committee of the Party. The State Chair shall issue the call at least 90 days before the date of the precinct caucuses. The call shall be issued to all County Central Committee officers and all major news media in the state. The call shall also specify the dates and times for the County, District, and state conventions. A precinct caucus shall be convened for each

precinct within the state. In presidential election years County Central Committees shall arrange for the caucus sites according to the following priority order:

- a. Precinct caucuses shall be held at public meeting facilities or sites used for public meetings located within the precinct boundaries where possible.
- b. If no public meeting facility is available within the precinct boundaries, a public meeting facility in an adjacent or nearby precinct may be used. In non-presidential years, county central committees may arrange for several precinct caucuses to meet at a common site. Each precinct will conduct separate business at that site. Public meeting facilities shall be used whenever possible. Notification of each precinct caucus shall be as prescribed by law.

*Section 3 - Responsibilities:* Those members of the Iowa Democratic Party in attendance who are eligible to vote at a caucus, as provided by the Statutes of the State of Iowa shall:

- a. Elect by majority vote precinct committeepersons who shall serve on the County Central Committee. The number of precinct committeepersons shall normally be two for each precinct. County Central Committee Constitutions may provide for additional Central Committee Members based on the weighting required by Article VIII, Section 7. The initial elections to fill such additional positions shall occur at the precinct caucuses of an even-numbered year.
- b. May elect by majority vote, alternate precinct committeepersons who shall serve, as specified herein, on the County Central Committee in place of elected precinct committeepersons unable to fulfill their responsibilities.
- c. Elect delegates and alternate delegates to represent the precinct in a County Convention.
- d. Discuss and may indicate priorities regarding such issues of national, state, and local importance or interest as those in attendance may determine. Resolutions or issue statements adopted by a precinct caucus shall be forwarded to the County Platform Committee in the manner and as directed in the packet of information provided by the Party.
- e. Elect by majority vote (from the delegates and/or alternate delegates to the County Convention) members and alternate members of the Platform Committee and the Committee on Committees for such Convention - to represent and cast the votes to which the precinct is entitled on those committees and their subcommittees. Alternate members of the convention Committees may only replace an elected member from the same precinct who is unable to fulfill their responsibilities.
- f. Transact such other party business as may come before it.

*Section 4 - Meetings in Odd-Numbered Years:* Meetings shall be held upon the call of the State Chair with the approval of the State Central Committee; in the first quarter of odd-numbered years, within precincts and/or jointly in centralized convenient locations within counties, and by vote of those members of the Iowa Democratic Party in attendance, shall:

- a. Discuss and may indicate priorities regarding resolutions on such issues of national, state, and local importance or interest as those in attendance may determine; and forward such resolutions to the County and State Platform Committees for such action as their members may wish to take.
- b. Nominate a committeeperson if a vacancy has occurred in that post between the election year caucus and the off-year meeting. The committeeperson nominated at the off-year meeting shall stand for election by the County Central Committee, and if elected, serve until the completion of the term of the predecessor.

### **Article III – County Central Committees and Conventions**

*Section 1 - County Central Committees - Structure:* The County Central Committee, composed of committeepersons elected at the precinct caucuses, shall meet and organize at their biennial organizational meeting. Members term of office shall begin immediately following the start of the biennial organizational meeting and shall continue for two years until the successor is elected and qualified; unless he or she is sooner removed by the County Central Committee for non-residency, inattention to duty, incompetence, or support of a candidate for public office who is running against a candidate nominated by the Iowa Democratic Party.

The biennial organizational meeting shall take place in the odd numbered years at a time set by the County Central Committee between March 1 and April 1.

Members of the County Central Committee assembled shall forthwith elect a Chair, a Vice-Chair, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and such other officers as they may deem necessary. Such officers need not be selected from County Central Committee membership; however, they shall be qualified voting members of the Iowa Democratic Party. The term of office for each officer shall begin immediately upon election by the County Central Committee, and shall continue for two years, and until the successor is elected and qualified; unless he or she is sooner removed by the County Central Committee for non-residency, inattention to duty, incompetence, or support of a candidate for public office who is running against a candidate nominated by the Iowa Democratic Party.

Vacancies on the Committee shall be filled as soon as possible from alternate precinct committeepersons as per Article II, Section 3, Subsection B following majority vote of the County Central Committee attending any official committee meeting provided that due notice of such election was previously given. An alternate precinct committee person may also serve as a substitute at a regular meeting or portion of a central committee meeting if the elected committee member is unable to attend.

If no alternate precinct committeepersons are elected at the precinct caucuses, the vacancy shall be filled as soon as possible and by majority vote of County Central Committee attending any official committee meeting provided that due notice of such election was previously given.

The term of office of alternate County Central Committee members elected to fill a vacancy pursuant to either of the two preceding paragraphs, shall begin immediately following their election and shall continue until the successor is elected and qualified; unless he or she is sooner removed by the County Central Committee for non-residency, inattention to duty, incompetence, or support of a candidate for public office who is running against a candidate nominated by the Iowa Democratic Party.

*Section 2 - County Central Committees - Meetings:* County Central Committees shall meet at least once every three (3) months. The Committee may, by majority vote of those committee members attending any official committee meeting, direct the Chair to call regular meetings at times and places selected by the Committee. The Chair shall cause notice of such meetings to be mailed (postal or electronic) to each member and officer of the Committee at least seven (7) days before the date set for each meeting. Upon receiving a petition signed by twenty-five (25) percent of the members of the County Central Committee, the Chair shall call a special meeting which must be held within twelve (12) days of the receipt of such petition. The Chair shall cause notice of such meetings to be mailed (postal or electronic) to each member and officer of the Committee at least seven (7) days before the date set for such meeting.

*Section 3 - Conventions/Responsibilities:* County Conventions by vote of the accredited delegates shall:

- a. Elect delegates and alternate delegates to the State Convention. Such delegates and alternate delegates so elected shall also represent the county at the Congressional District Convention. No delegates to District or State Conventions shall represent less than one vote.
- b. Approve, adopt, and may indicate priorities regarding county resolutions.
- c. Elect members and alternates to Congressional District Convention Committees. At least ten (10) days prior to the County Convention, each of the convention committees shall nominate individuals to serve on the corresponding committee of the District Convention. At the County Convention further nominations may be accepted. Elected alternates to District Convention Committees may only replace an elected convention committee member from their own county.
- d. Transact such other party business as may come before the convention.

#### **Article IV - Legislative District Organization**

No provision in the Constitution shall prevent Legislative Districts from organizing for purposes consistent with the Constitution and regulations set down by the State Central Committee.

#### **Article V - Congressional District Committees and Conventions**

*Section 1 - Congressional District Central Committees:*

- a. Congressional District Central Committees shall exist. The membership shall consist of the District Committee persons on the State Central Committee, and one person for each 5,000 votes cast for the Democratic

- candidate for Congress in the last two General Elections. Each county shall have at least three members.
- b. One member shall be the County Chair or the Chair's designee. Others shall be elected by the County Central Committee at their first regular meeting following their biennial organizational meeting specified in Article III, Section 1.
  - c. The Chair of the District Central Committee shall be elected by the District Central Committee from among the District Committeepersons on the State Central Committee. The primary purpose of the District Central Committee shall be the election of a Democratic member of Congress. The District Central Committee shall also be responsible for assisting the election of legislators from districts which cross county lines.
  - d. Each County may elect alternates to the district committee to serve as substitutes at District Central Committee meetings if the elected committee person is unable to attend. The number of alternates should not exceed twice the number of apportioned county representatives to the district committee. It is the responsibility of the county chair and the elected representative to notify an alternate if they are to be a substitute for them at a given meeting.
  - e. The District Central Committee shall hold a minimum of one meeting every three months. A report of the financial status of programs of the State Central Committee as well as a financial status of the district shall be presented.
  - f. The District Central Committee shall conduct a district workshop in odd-numbered years which shall be open to all active Democrats. This workshop may be one of the required meetings.
  - g. The Chair of the District Central Committee shall propose programs of activities for the Committee.

*Section 2 - Conventions, Call and Apportionment:* Congressional District Conventions, composed of delegates elected at County Conventions to represent their respective counties at such District Conventions, shall be held each even-numbered year within the Congressional Districts. The State Chair shall, subject to the approval of the State Central Committee, issue a call for such conventions in the same manner and at the same time that the call for precinct caucuses is issued. The number of votes to which each county shall be entitled in such conventions shall be the same as for the State Convention as based upon the weighting required by Article VIII, Section 7.

*Section 3 - Conventions, Responsibilities:* District Conventions, by vote of their accredited delegates present, shall:

- a. Elect eight district committeepersons, by majority vote, four of whom shall be men and four of whom shall be women, who shall represent such district on the State Central Committee of the Democratic Party of Iowa, and whose terms of office shall commence immediately following the next State Convention, and shall continue for two years, and until his or her successor is elected and qualified.

- b. Elect from the delegates and/or alternate delegates from such District to the State Convention, members and alternates of all committees for such Convention, to represent and cast the votes to which such District is entitled on such committees. At least fifteen (15) days prior to the District Convention each of the Convention Committees shall nominate individuals to serve on the corresponding committees of the State Convention. At the District Convention further nominations may be accepted. Elected alternates to State Convention Committees may only replace an elected convention committee member from their own district.  
The number of members and alternates on all committees to the State Convention from each Congressional District shall be determined by the State Central Committee for the Iowa Democratic Party, in advance of the District Conventions, based upon the weighting requirements of Article VIII, Section 7.
- c. Transact such other party business that may come before them.

*Section 4 - Convention Committees' Formation and Responsibilities:*

- a. Each District Convention shall be lead by District Committees on Arrangements, Credentials, Rules and Nominations, and Platform.
- b. The State Chair shall, in consultation with the State Central Committee, apportion membership on the above District Convention Committees to the counties within each district in keeping with the provisions of Article VIII, Section 7.
- c. Members of the above District Convention Committees shall be elected by county conventions; the right to elect District Convention Committee members being apportioned to preference groups within county conventions which divide into preference groups, else election shall be by the convention as a whole.
- d. At their first meeting each District Convention Committee shall elect a number of members to a Temporary similar State Convention Committee as needed, and as provided herein. The fruits of the work of the Temporary Committee shall be provided to the Permanent State Convention Committee before the first permanent Committee meeting - sufficiently in advance for timely consideration.
- e. Each District Convention Committee shall nominate to the District Convention those members of the committee which it recommends be elected to serve on the corresponding permanent Committee of the State Convention; election being apportioned to preference groups within District Conventions which divide into preference groups, else election shall be by the convention as a whole.
- f. Each District Convention Committee shall make a report to the District Convention for the consideration and action of the District Convention.
- g. Members of State Convention Committees shall carry to their State Committee meetings reports of the priority concerns and formal actions of the District Convention and Committee for the consideration of the State Committees. Such reports shall include recommendations on how to

improve the Iowa Democratic Party's Caucus/Convention Process in future years.

*Section 5 - National Convention Delegates' Election:* In each Presidential election year, District Conventions shall elect their District's proportionate share of 75% of Iowa's delegates and alternate delegates to the National Democratic Presidential Convention. The State Central Committee shall determine the number of delegates to be elected from each District according to the weighting requirements of Article VIII, Section 7.

## **Article VI - State Central Committee and Convention**

*Section 1 - State Central Committee Authority:* The State Central Committee of the Iowa Democratic Party shall be the governing body of the Party when the State Convention is in adjournment; however, such actions by the State Central Committee shall be in accord with the expressed policies of the State Convention and the provisions of this Constitution.

*Section 2 - State Central Committee Structure:* The State Central Committee shall be composed as follows: The District Committeepersons from each Congressional District, the National Committeepersons, the Chair of the State Affirmative Action Committee, the President of the Iowa Young Democrats, State Rules Chair, State Platform Chair, and the Black, Latino, Pacific Islander/Asian, Disability, Stonewall, American Indian, and Armed Forces Veterans caucuses representatives. These Committee members shall be entitled to vote on all policy matters not in conflict with the Code of the State of Iowa. The Black, Latino, Pacific Islander/Asian, Disability, Stonewall, American Indian, and Armed Forces Veterans caucuses shall consist of all of each minority's delegates respectively to the State Convention. Each Caucus shall meet one half hour after the start of the seating of delegates on the day of each State Convention and shall then elect a Caucus Chair by a majority vote and a Caucus Vice-Chair, also by a majority vote, to be their representatives on the State Central Committee. The results of the said elections shall be reported to and ratified by the entire Convention. Both the Caucus Chair and Vice-Chair shall be members of the State Central Committee. The Caucus Vice-Chair shall only vote in the absence of the Caucus Chair.

*Election of officers:* The Committee shall meet and organize no later than thirty (30) days following the adjournment of the State Convention. Members of the state Central Committee shall elect a Chair, Vice-Chair, a Secretary, and a Treasurer and such other officers that they may deem necessary within ninety (90) days following the general election. Such officers need not be members of the State Central Committee however, they must be eligible members of the Iowa Democratic Party. The term of office of each officer shall be for two years and until his or her successor is elected and qualified.

*Meetings of Committee:* The State Central Committee shall meet at least once every three (3) months. Meetings of the Committee may be called by the Chair as deemed necessary. Regular meetings at stated times and places may be scheduled by a majority vote of the Committee in attendance at an official meeting. A special meeting of the Committee may be called by any ten (10) members of the Committee, provided they

cause to be mailed to all other members and officers of the State Central Committee a signed petition designating the time and place proposed for such meeting, which shall be held no less than five (5) days after the mailing of the petition. The State Chair shall cause five (5) days notice by mail or three (3) days notice by electronic mail or telephone, to be given to each member and officer of the Committee for all other meetings, regular or special. Quorum: The State Central Committee shall conduct no business in the absence of a quorum, which shall consist of a simple majority of the voting members.

Elected and Party Leaders: The Democratic floor leader in the House of Representatives and Senate of the Iowa General Assembly, and the Democrats holding offices of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Speaker of the House, the elected representative of the Democratic County Elected Officials Organization, and the elected representative of the Association of Democratic County Executives shall be extended an invitation and may attend all meetings regular or special of the State Central Committee in ex-officio, nonvoting status.

*Section 3 - Members' Terms and Vacancies:* The term of office of a member of the State Central Committee shall begin immediately following the adjournment of the State Convention and shall continue for two years and until his or her successor is elected and qualified. When there is a vacancy on the State Central Committee which has occurred other than at the expiration of a regular term, a new member shall be elected by a majority of votes cast by the County Chairs and County Vice-Chairs of the Congressional District in which the vacancy occurs. These County Central Committee officers shall cast the number of votes allotted to their respective counties in the last previous State Convention. If a Chair and Vice-Chair from the same county cannot agree on a candidate, each shall be allowed to cast one-half of the number of votes to which their county is entitled for the candidate of his or her choice.

A member of the State Central Committee may be removed by majority vote of the State Central Committee for failure to attend three consecutive State Central Committee meetings without a valid excuse, non-residency, or for support of a candidate for public office who is running against a candidate nominated by the Iowa Democratic Party.

Officer Vacancies: Vacancies in the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and other elective offices of the State Central Committee shall be filled by the State Central Committee upon a majority vote of the members present and voting at an official meeting for which prior notice of the election was properly made in the call for the meeting.

National Committeepersons: The allotted number of National Committeepersons shall be elected by a majority vote of the delegates to the State Convention held during presidential years. The term of office shall be for a period of four years and until their successors are elected at the next Presidential Convention. Vacancies in the office shall be filled by the State Central Committee upon a majority vote of the members present and voting at an official meeting for which prior notice of the election was properly made



in the call for the meeting. The National Committee person so elected by the State Central Committee shall serve out the term of the vacancy except in the event the vacancy occurs prior to the State Convention in a non-presidential year. Then the term so filled shall expire at the close of the State Statutory Convention next following such vacancy and the delegates at that Convention shall elect the National Committee person to fill out the remaining term of vacancy.

*Section 4 - State Chair and Vice-Chair:* The State Chair's duties shall be those of a chief executive officer. The Chair of the Iowa Democratic Party may be paid a salary or serve in a voluntary capacity. Candidates for the Office of Chair must report prior to the election, to the central committee, whether they intend their service to be paid or to be voluntary. He or she may provide for the employment of any office personnel necessary. Employment of personnel by the State Chair shall be subject to the approval of the State Central Committee. The State Vice-Chair shall assume the duties of the State Chair during that officer's absence.

*Section 5 - Secretary:* The Secretary shall be in charge of all files and records of the Party, and it shall be his or her duty to prepare necessary documents, and preserve such files and records as may be necessary.

*Section 6 - Treasurer:* The Treasurer, in concert with the State Central Committee, shall determine who shall have custody of the funds for the Party which shall be under the control of the State Central Committee. He or she shall cause written accounts of receipts and disbursements to be prepared prior to each regular meeting of the State Central Committee. These written accounts shall be a record of all receipts and disbursements subsequent to the last previous report and shall be presented to the members of the State Central Committee at each regular meeting. He or she shall also make a report of total receipts and disbursements subsequent to the last previous State Convention, to each State Convention. Bonds and Audit: The Treasurer, and any other officer or employee who may be responsible for the handling of the State Central Committee funds shall be under bond, the amount to be determined by the State Central Committee. The State Central Committee shall cause an audit of all financial records and transactions of the State Central Committee accounts to be made by a certified public accountant at least once in each calendar year, and at such other times as may be directed by the State Central Committee. A copy of each audit shall be sent to each member and officer of the State Central Committee upon completion.

*Section 7 - State Convention Powers:* The State Convention is the supreme governing body of the Iowa Democratic Party.

*Section 8 - State Convention Call:* Each even-numbered year the State Chair shall, subject to the approval of the State Central Committee of the Party, issue a call for the State Convention in the same manner and at the same time as the call for precinct caucuses, setting forth:

- a. The number of delegates to which each county shall be entitled in that Convention shall be based upon the weighting required by Article VIII, Section 7.
- b. The time and place of such convention.
- c. All other available information and documents necessary for the conduct of such convention.

The State Chair shall cause such call to be mailed to all members of the State Central Committee, and to the Chair and Vice-Chair of each County Central Committee.

*Section 9 - State Convention Responsibilities:* The State Convention by vote of its accredited delegates present, shall:

- a. Approve, adopt, and may indicate priorities with respect to a party platform.
- b. Determine all other matters of party concern.
- c. In each year, when the election of the office of President of the United States is to be held, the State Convention shall:
  - 1) Elect 25% of the delegates and alternate delegates to the National Democratic Convention and,
  - 2) Elect the National Committeepersons by majority vote of the convention.
- d. In each year, when the election of the office of Governor of the State of Iowa is to be held, the State Convention delegates shall ratify the Democratic nominee for Lieutenant Governor who shall be nominated by the Democratic nominee for Governor.

*Section 10 - Convention Committees:* The State Convention shall be led by State Committees on Arrangements, Credentials, Rules and Nominations, and Platform. Each Committee shall consist of those members elected at the Congressional District Conventions and all members shall be entitled to cast one vote. The Committees shall initially meet at a time and place selected by the State Chair, which shall be at least twenty-five (25) days prior to the date designated for the convening of the State Convention. All meetings shall be open to the public; shall be widely publicized by the State Chair, and shall be held in places easily accessible to those wishing to attend meetings of the Committees.

The Platform Committee membership shall also include the Democratic Governor or the Governor's representative, the Democratic leader of the Senate, the Democratic leader of the House, and such at-large members as may be selected by the State Chair with the approval of the State Central Committee of the Party. In no event, shall the at-large members of the committee constitute more than twenty percent (20%) of the elected members of the Committee. The Committee shall consider but not necessarily include in its report, all platform planks and resolutions adopted at Congressional District Conventions held in that year. A copy of the party platform proposed by the Platform Committee shall be distributed to each delegate elected to the State Convention not less than seven (7) days prior to the date designated for the convening of the State Convention.

*Section 11 - State Convention Committee Vacancies:* The State Chair shall, in concert with and subject to the approval of the State Central Committee of the Iowa Democratic Party appoint such special convention committee members that have not been elected by the District Conventions at least twenty-five (25) days prior to the day designated for the convening of the State Convention. The State Chair shall appoint members to such committees from a list of nominees for each Congressional District. Each Congressional District shall be represented on each committee and members of said committee shall be evenly distributed, as nearly as possible, among the Congressional District.

## **Article VII - Restrictions on Delegates Prohibited**

*Section 1 - Instructions:* No delegate to any County, District, State, or National Convention may be bound to the instructions of the precinct caucus, County, District, or State Convention by which such delegates were elected.

*Section 2 - Unit Rule:* No delegate may be required, by a majority of the members of his or her delegation, to vote as a majority determines, under the "Unit Rule."

*Section 3 - Restrictions:* No delegate certified by the Credentials Committee to any County, District, State, or National Convention shall be in any manner prohibited or restricted from voting on any matter before such convention.

*Section 4 - Fees:* No delegate's right to fully participate or vote in any convention shall be dependent on the payment of a delegate fee.

## **Article VIII - Delegate and Committee Selection Procedure**

*Section 1 - Proportional Representation:* All caucuses, conventions, committees, and Democratic Party Officials shall take such practical steps as may be within their legitimate power to assure that all caucuses, conventions, and committees shall include: men, women, various age groups, racial minority groups, economic groups, and representatives of identifiable geographically defined populations - all in reasonable relationship to the proportions in which the groups are found in the populations of the respective constituencies. In the spirit of the above, all caucuses, conventions, and committees will also endeavor to include citizens of all national origins, ethnic identities, religions, sexual orientations, gender identities, and disabilities.

*Section 2 - Majority and Minority Viewpoints:* Delegates to all conventions shall reflect, as accurately as possible, the varying majority and minority viewpoints of those engaged in the delegate selection process. A convention or precinct caucus shall, when at least 15% of the delegates present desire to form a single preference group, (except for the purpose of selecting national delegates in which case the proportion shall be set by the Democratic National Convention delegate selection rules); divide into groups in order to elect delegates, alternate delegates, and convention committee members and alternate members to the next level under the following provisions:

- a. The number of representatives to the succeeding convention to be apportioned to each group shall be determined by taking the ratio of each preference group's size, the size of the total precinct caucus or

convention, and applying that ratio to the total number of representatives to be chosen.

- b. In presidential years, each precinct caucus and convention shall be apportioned by presidential candidate preference group if a vote of at least 15% of the Democrats present vote to do so.
- c. In other years, each precinct caucus and convention may be apportioned by candidate, issue, or other category.
- d. Nominations shall be made, as appropriate, by each preference group according to the prevailing situation at the time of each precinct caucus or convention.
- e. No more than a simple majority of the national convention delegates or alternate delegates shall be elected at one time.
- f. When convention delegates and alternates are elected by preference group, and more than six (6) representatives of the convention's committees are to be elected, those committee members and alternate members shall be apportioned to the preference groups in the same manner as the delegates.
- g. Convention rules shall contain clear provisions for achieving gender balance within preference groups in keeping with the National Democratic Party requiring that the Iowa delegation to the National Convention be gender balanced as a whole, and within each presidential preference group. The chair of the Committee on Rules and Nominations shall explain the provisions for achieving gender balance to the convention.

*Section 3 - Naming Own Replacement:* In case a delegate may be temporarily or permanently absent from the proceedings of any convention, the delegate may choose a temporary or permanent replacement from among the alternates of the delegate's preference group. If the delegate refuses or is unable to select a replacement, the delegation shall choose one of the alternates from the same preference group to replace that delegate. Elected convention alternates need not be present to be accredited.

*Section 4 - National Convention Delegates:* Candidates for the position of delegate or alternate delegate to the Democratic National Convention shall be required to submit a petition which is to be filed with the State Chair twelve (12) days before the Convention or the Chair of the Rules and Nominations Committee at the Convention by the time state in the published rules. Each petition shall include a signed statement of support for a Democratic Candidate for President and also be signed by one percent of the delegates to the convention. Each presidential candidate's state or district representative, as appropriate, shall have an opportunity to approve or disapprove the inclusion of each National Delegate candidate in a process outlined in the Delegate Selection Plan. A valid petition for the national delegate position shall be considered a valid petition for the national alternate delegate position.

*Section 5 - Nominee of the Party:* In all cases where a Convention or Committee must elect the nominee of the Party, the nominee shall be elected by a majority vote of those

delegates or committee members present and voting. In the instance of a reconvened Convention, the delegates and alternates shall be those originally elected to the Convention; preference affiliations of alternates being of no consequence unless such affiliations pertain to candidates for the office in question.

Legislative District Nominations: In those instances where a nominating convention crosses county lines, the delegates shall be the precinct committee members from each precinct included in that legislative district. Each delegate present shall cast an equal share of the votes apportioned to the member's precinct based on the number of votes cast for the Democratic candidate for the same office in the most recent general election. The nominee shall be elected by attaining a majority of those votes cast under this procedure.

*Section 6 - Temporary Chair:* The Temporary Chair of each caucus or convention or other Party committee shall be designated by the County Chair, by agreement among the district committee persons, or by the State Chair, corresponding to the level of the caucus, convention, or committee.

Said designees are automatically nominated for election to the position of permanent chair of the caucus, convention, or committee.

Said designees shall work with the person(s) making the appointment and the staff of the Iowa Democratic Party (at the state convention level) well before the first meeting of the caucus, committee, or convention to expedite the work to be done by all. The state chair shall designate the temporary chairs of the state convention committees before the scheduled date for the congressional district conventions.

*Section 7 - Apportionment of Delegates:* Apportionment of delegates to conventions and to district and state convention committees shall be according to a formula which gives equal weight to the Democratic votes cast in the most recent electoral contests for United States President and the Governor of Iowa.

## **Article IX - Affirmative Action Committees**

*Section 1 - Structure:* The State Affirmative Action Committee shall consist of one member from each Congressional District elected every two years at district conventions, three members appointed by the State Chair and approved by the State Central Committee, and the Chair of the State Affirmative Action Committee to be elected every two years at the state convention. The District Affirmative Action Committees shall consist of the State Affirmative Action Committee members elected at the district conventions who shall serve as Chairs of their respective district committees, and one member from each county within the congressional district elected every two years at county conventions. The County Affirmative Action Committee shall consist of the District Affirmative Action Committee members elected at county conventions who shall serve as Chairs of their respective county committees and two or more additional members elected by County Central Committees at the first regular meeting following their biennial organizational meeting specified in Article III, Section 1.

*Section 2 - Responsibilities:* The Affirmative Action Committees shall promote recruitment of new members into the Iowa Democratic Party and encourage their full participation in the caucus/convention, platform-development, and delegate-selection processes, and within central committees and other party organizations with particular concern toward those groups which have been historically under-represented within the Iowa Democratic Party.

## **Article X - Credentials Challenges**

*Section 1 - Initiation:* Any Democrat may challenge any delegate or alternate certified to any convention by notifying the County, District, or State Chair in writing at least ten (10) days before the date of the Convention. At the same time a copy of the challenge shall be sent by the challenger to the delegate or alternate who is challenged.

*Section 2 - Contents:* A challenge shall include the basis for the challenge, the name and address of the challenged delegate or alternate, and the name and address of the challenger.

*Section 3 - Notice:* The Chair notified of the challenge shall send all challenges to the Credentials Committee Chair of the Convention in question and to the delegates or alternates who are challenged as soon as possible after they are received.

*Section 4 - Call of Meeting:* The Chair of the Committee on Credentials shall convene the committee at a publicized location at least one hour before the time when the Convention is to meet. Both the challenged delegate/alternate and the challenger shall be notified of the meeting time and place.

*Section 5 - Committee Consideration:* The Committee on Credentials shall consider any statements from the challenger, from the delegate or alternate being challenged and from any other person who wishes to testify on the challenge. In hearing a challenge, the Committee on Credentials may allot a period of time within which the challenger and challenged shall be granted equal time to make their statements.

*Section 6 - Report to Convention:* In case of an appeal of the Credentials Committee findings, the Credentials Committee shall report to the Convention the name of the delegate or alternate who it believes is entitled to participate in the Convention. A minority of the Committee on Credentials may present a minority report of the challenge to the Convention. When a number of challenges are to be resolved, the Committee on Credentials shall report on each in alphabetical/numerical order by County or by precinct in which the delegates or alternates being challenged reside.

*Section 7 - Convention Action:* The Convention shall vote on the report of the Committee on Credentials on each challenge being made. The report of the Committee on Credentials on each challenge must be approved by a majority vote of the Convention before a delegate or alternate being challenged may participate in the Convention. No challenged delegate or alternate may vote on the report of the Committee on Credentials which involves the delegate's challenge.

## **Article XI - Minority Reports**

Upon a vote of 10% of the elected members of any Convention Committee, a minority report of the Committee shall be prepared and presented to the full convention.

## **Article XII - General Provisions**

*Section 1 - Code of Iowa:* The relevant sections of the Code of Iowa election laws are made a part of this Constitution. No provision of the Constitution is meant to supersede or abrogate any of the provisions of the Statutes of Iowa.

*Section 2 - Absentee Ballots:* No voting by absentee or proxy ballot shall be permitted at any meeting or convention of the state, district, county, or precinct organizations or at any meeting of any organization affiliated with and subordinate to the Iowa Democratic Party unless specifically authorized by a 2/3 majority vote of the State Central Committee of the Iowa Democratic Party.

*Section 3 - Secret Ballot:* No secret ballots shall be used by elected representatives at any convention or central committee meeting.

*Section 4 - Quorum:* No convention shall elect delegates to the next level convention in the absence of a quorum of at least forty (40) percent of the accredited delegates to the convention.

*Section 5 - Open Meetings:* All meetings of Democratic Central Committees and Conventions, and of their committees, shall be open in the same manner as an agency of the state government is required to hold open meetings.

### *Section 6*

#### *Subsection A - Platform Committees:*

Subsection A – Party Platforms: The Platform Committees of the County, District, and State Convention may be continuing bodies that may act as organizing committees to advocate the enactment of their platforms. The State Central Committee shall be responsible for enactment of the provisions of the State Party Platform by:

- a. Researching public statements, voting records, and performance of official duties of elected officials within their constituencies;
- b. Developing proposals for legislative action in keeping with the Iowa Democratic Party Platform;
- c. Giving guidance to the Democratic Party Leaders and to the Democratic Elected Officials regarding the Iowa Democratic Party's position on matters of legislative priority or public policy as set forth in the State Party Platform;
- d. Making preliminary preparations for the next caucus/convention process of platform development.

In these efforts, the State Central Committee shall work in close cooperation with Democratic elected officials. For purposes of Platform Committee reports, word limits shall not be changed between January 1 and June 30 in an election year (during the caucus to convention cycle).

Any public hearing on the platform shall not be held on the same day as the convention.

*Subsection B - Rules Committees:* The Rules Committees of the County, District, and State Conventions shall work in consultation with the other convention committees to produce fair and efficient rules for their convention.

*Section 7 - Chartered City:* Any organization functioning as a Democratic City Central Committee in a special chartered city shall be governed by this Constitution and the rules and procedures of the Iowa Democratic Party. The rules and procedures of a City Central Committee cannot be in conflict with the rules and procedures of the Iowa Democratic Party with the exception of those specifically covered by the laws of the State of Iowa.

*Section 8 - Accessibility:* Where possible and giving priority to all Democratic polling places, caucus sites, district convention sites, state convention sites, and meeting sites are to be totally accessible to the handicapped.

*Section 9 - All County, District, and State Convention organizing committees* duly elected under the applicable provisions of the Code of Iowa, this Constitution and Iowa Democratic Party By-Laws shall publish a booklet containing the reports of the Arrangements, Rules and Nominations, Credentials, and Platform committees, and such other information as may be deemed necessary for the operation of the convention. The Arrangements committee shall cause this booklet to be physically distributed as a paper booklet or distributed in electronic format no later than seven (7) days prior to the start of the convention. The Arrangements committee shall have the option of publishing the booklet in electronic format under the following conditions:

- a. A separate paper credential document, which shall include an alternate designation form and instructions for obtaining a paper version of the booklet, must be mailed to each duly elected delegate to the convention. This credential will be mailed no later than fourteen (14) days prior to the start of the convention.
- b. The electronic booklet will be published in a computing platform-neutral format and be easily available for public download. The credential document will include instructions for downloading the booklet.
- c. The electronic booklet will under no circumstances include any credential or alternate designation documents. Possession of a convention booklet without the appropriate credential documents shall not constitute evidence that the possessor has been elected as a delegate.
- d. All convention committees publishing electronic booklets must provide paper copies to any delegate on request no later than seven (7) days prior



to the start of the convention. The credential document shall include instructions informing delegates how to obtain a paper copy of the booklet and the responsible party to contact to get a paper booklet.

- e. Delegates who request a paper copy shall not be charged any additional fees for a printed booklet.

All convention committees who choose to publish printed booklets rather than electronic booklets shall continue to include their credential documents and alternate designation forms with their booklets and shall continue to distribute their booklets by physical means as described above.

### **Article XIII - Affiliated Organizations**

*Section 1 - Terms of Affiliations:* Organizations subordinate to and affiliated with the State Central Committee, or any County Central Committee, may be recognized and encouraged, provided written consent of the State Central Committee and the appropriate County Central Committee is obtained.

*Section 2 - Youth Caucuses:* Iowa Democratic Party Youth Caucuses may be created to promote and encourage the ideals of the Iowa Democratic Party. The Iowa Democratic Youth Caucuses may organize activities, formulate viewpoints, aid in campaigns, and aid in any other functions to the betterment of the Iowa Democratic Party.

### **Article XIV - Amendments**

This Constitution may be amended at any State Convention by a majority vote of the accredited delegates assembled in the Convention. All proposed amendments must be in writing and submitted by an elected delegate to the State Convention, and be delivered to the State Chair not less than thirty (30) days prior to the State Convention, and be included in the convention booklet distributed to all delegates to the State Convention.

### **Article XV - By-Laws**

*Section 1 - Adoption and Amendment:* By-laws of the Iowa Democratic Party shall be adopted/amended by a majority vote of the State Central Committee following at least three weeks notice (of the proposed by-laws, the time and the place of the meeting) to all members of the State Central Committee and its officers, and to all County Central Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs. They can also be amended as is the Constitution as in Article XIV.

*Section 2 - Scope:* By-Laws shall be in conformity with the provisions of this Constitution, shall be designed to advance the purposes of the Iowa Democratic Party as stated in the Preamble, and shall not abridge the right of precinct caucuses, conventions, convention subcommittees, convention caucuses, central committees, and central committee subcommittees to elect their own leadership and representatives - but they may specify procedural rules, committee roles, and leadership roles to be observed by those groups within the party.