



# **2018 County Convention Guide**

# Introduction

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Following the precinct caucuses, the County Convention Committees meet to prepare for the County Convention.

In 2018, the County Convention is on **March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2018**.

Before Caucus Night, your county party should:

- Select a location for the County Convention
- Name Temporary Chairs for the Convention Committees
- Determine the date, time, and location for the first Convention Committee Meetings

Immediately after Caucus Night, your county party will:

- Assemble a list of all Convention Committee Members and provide the list to the appropriate Temporary Committee Chair
- Assemble a list of all Delegates and Alternates (including Youth Delegates) to the County Convention and provide the list to the Temporary Credentials Chair

All other work for the County Convention is officially the responsibility of the Convention Committees.

This guide more fully explains the roles and requirements of the committees and offers suggestions to committees and county parties to help in the planning and execution of your County Convention.

# Timeline

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TBD After  
Caucuses

County Convention Committees meet

## **MARCH**

March 13

*Suggested:* All Convention materials finalized and printed, as needed:

- Convention Call: Must be mailed to all Delegates and must contain the date, time, and location of the Convention; a credential document which includes an Alternate designation form; instructions for accessing the electronic version of the Convention Booklet (if applicable); and instructions for obtaining a paper version of the Convention Booklet (if said booklet is not mailed to all Delegates)
- Alternate Notice: can be mailed or sent electronically to Alternates and must include the date, time, and location of the Convention
- Convention Booklet: includes the rules for the convention, the report of the Platform Committee, the agenda for the convention, the report of the Arrangements Committee which should contain a Request for Accommodation Form (this booklet may be distributed electronically but must be sent in paper form if a Delegate so requests)

March 14

Deadline for County Convention Committees to nominate members to their District Convention Committee

Deadline for credentials challenges to be made

- March 17 Deadline for Arrangements Committee to distribute County Convention Information (which includes: Convention Call, Alternate Notice, Convention Booklet)
- March 24 County Convention
- March 26 Deadline to submit information to IDP: Delegates and Alternates to the District/State Conventions, District Convention Committee Members, County Affirmative Action Chair

----- District/State Convention Timeline Overview-----

- March 31 First day for District Convention Committees to meet

**APRIL**

- April 13 Deadline for Dist. Committees to nominate people to State Committees (IDP Const., Article V, Section 3.b)
- April 18 Deadline for District Convention credentials challenge to be made (IDP Const., Article X, Section 1)
- April 21 Deadline to distribute District Convention booklets (7 days prior – IDP Const., Article XII, Section 9)
- April 27 Deadline for State Chair to appoint Temporary State Convention Committee Chairs (IDP Const., Article VIII, Section 6)
- April 28 District Conventions

**JUNE**

- June 16 State Convention

# Who's Who of the County Convention

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## **CONVENTION OFFICERS**

**Temporary Convention Chair** – (appointed by the County Chair)  
The position of temporary Convention Chair opens the convention and presides over the convention until a permanent Chair is elected.

**Permanent Convention Chair** – (elected by the Convention)  
An effective Convention Chair moves the convention through the required processes smoothly, competently and has a basic awareness of parliamentary procedure. A Permanent Chair should remain neutral on the question of electing delegates by preference group or by the convention as a whole. If the Chair is an accredited Delegate, they can still vote on all motions.

**Parliamentarian** – (appointed by the Convention Chair)  
The Parliamentarian serves as technical counsel to the Chair on parliamentary procedure. Normally the Chair appoints the Parliamentarian in order to assure they have a good working relationship. This person should understand the rules and procedures of the convention as well as Robert's Rules of Order.

**Secretary** – (elected by the Convention)  
The Secretary has the responsibility to make an accurate record of the decisions reached. It may be helpful to electronically record the proceedings.

**Sergeants-At-Arms** - (appointed by the Convention Chair)  
A Sergeant-at-Arms may assist the Chair in maintaining order in the convention hall, especially in large conventions. One or more Sergeants-at-Arms may be appointed by the County Chair or the Temporary Convention Chair, or may be nominated by the Rules/Nominations Committee.

## **COMMITTEES**

**Arrangements Committee** - This Committee has the responsibility of arranging appropriate facilities and equipment for the conducting of the County Convention (ensuring compliance with the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act), causing the Convention Booklet to be created and made available to Delegates, and responding to Requests for Accommodation.

**Credentials Committee** - The Credentials Committee is responsible for ensuring that delegates and alternates are eligible to participate, and for the seating of delegates and alternates. Members of this Committee staff the registration tables. They also report on any disputed delegate and/or alternate subject to a vote of the convention delegation, pursuant to Article X of the Iowa Democratic Party Constitution. The Credentials Committee also prepares the envelopes for registration (as described in the following section) and provides each delegate with a “credential” which identifies the delegate to the Rules Committee as a person eligible to vote during the Convention.

**Rules and Nominations Committee** - The Rules and Nominations committee drafts such rules and regulations as are necessary to conduct the business of the convention. Members of this committee also oversee elections on voting.

**Platform Committee** - The County Platform Committee reviews individual planks from the precinct caucuses and provides a Platform Committee Report for consideration by the convention delegation.

**NOTE:** These committees meet shortly after Caucuses to begin planning. The first order of business for each County Convention Committee shall be to elect a Committee Chair. The Platform

Committee may elect topic and/or subcommittee chairs as needed.

## **ELECTED POSITIONS**

**District/State Convention Delegates** – The County Convention delegation will elect Delegates to represent the county at the District and the State Convention. (The same delegates elected to the District Convention are also delegates to the State Convention.)

**District/State Convention Alternates** – The County Convention delegation will elect Alternates to represent the county at the District and the State Convention if a Delegate is unable to attend all or part of either convention. An Alternate who gets seated at the District Convention is still an Alternate to the State Convention.

**County Affirmative Action Chair** – This position shall promote the recruitment of new members into the county Democratic Party and encourage their full participation with particular concern toward those groups that have been historically under-represented within the Iowa Democratic Party.

## **OTHER PEOPLE AT THE CONVENTION**

**Youth Delegates** – These delegates are older than 13 but will not be 18 by Election Day and should be provided special programming that could include: Youth Platform development, election of Youth Delegates to the District/State Convention, and other activities designed by the county party.

**Observers** – Public observers are welcome to observe any proceedings of the County Convention as long as they do not disrupt or interfere with the Convention.

# Arrangements Committee

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## **PRIMARY DUTIES**

- Arrange the physical space of the convention (i.e. design the layout and setup chairs, tables, etc)
- Arrange and oversee the setup of systems to be used at the convention (i.e. projectors, screens, PA system, etc)
- Respond to Requests for Accommodation
- Prepare a report for the Convention Booklet
- Publish and distribute the Convention Booklet

Per the IDP Constitution, Article XII, Section 9: *The Arrangements Committee 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 booklet may be distributed as a paper booklet or in electronic format no later than seven (7) days prior to the start of the convention.*

The Arrangements Committee has 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. An example of an Alternate Designation Form is attached as Attachment A. This credential must be mailed no later than seven (7) days prior to the start of the convention. (However, it is recommended that you send it earlier, perhaps 14 days prior to the start of the convention.)

b. The booklet will be published in a computing neutral format (e.g. PDF or rich text format) and be easily available for public download. The credential document will include instructions for downloading the booklet and a Request for Accommodation Form. A sample Request for Accommodation Form is attached as Attachment B.

c. The electronic booklet **must not**, under any circumstances, include any credential or alternate designation documents. Be aware that possession of a convention booklet without the appropriate credential documents does 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 intended to be received no later than three (3) days prior to the start of the convention. Delegates who request a paper copy shall not be charged any additional fees for a printed booklet.

If the Arrangements Committee chooses to publish printed booklets only, the booklets must include the delegate's credential documents, alternate designation forms, and Request for Accommodation Form. It should be indicated in the Call how someone can obtain a large print book (see Accessibility Guide for Guidelines) or forms.

For its own report, the Arrangements Committee should include:

- Logistical details about the Convention (i.e. time, location, parking information, relevant lunch information, etc)
- Suggested Delegate fee and how to pay
- Request for Accommodation Form

# Credentials Committee

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## PRIMARY DUTIES

- Prepare delegate packets
- Collect delegate fees
- Check-in delegates and alternates
- Manage the seating of delegates and alternates, according to the Rules of the Convention
- Respond to Credentials Challenges
- Assist with gathering the list of names and information for of those people who get elected as Delegates/Alternates to the District/State Convention

The Credentials Committee shall prepare a delegate packet containing, at a minimum, the delegate's name and/or identification number, and corresponding ballots and badge.

Ballots must be identified with the name of the voting delegate or a delegate number assigned specifically to that delegate. Secret ballots and proxy voting are prohibited under the Constitution of the Iowa Democratic Party.

When the delegate arrives the delegate's name should be checked on the Delegate List before receiving his or her Delegate Packet.

A fee may be suggested for each attending delegate and alternate to cover convention costs. Fees should be collected at the same time that delegates and alternates receive their credentials. **Please remember, convention committees cannot mandate a delegate fee.**

# Platform Committee

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## **PRIMARY DUTIES**

- Compile and sort planks that were passed at Caucuses
- Prepare a Platform Report

The Iowa Democratic Party Bylaws, Article I Section 1, limit the length of the platform to 500 words for the Statement of Principles and 3000 words for the Statement of Issues.

# Rules and Nominations Committee

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## **PRIMARY DUTIES**

- Write rules to govern the actions of the Convention
- Conduct elections and oversee vote tabulation

The Rules Committee should draft rules and regulations that are necessary to conduct the business of the convention. These include, but are not limited to:

- the adoption of the platform and ratification of resolutions,
- the nomination of Delegates to the District and State Conventions, district convention committee members, and the County Affirmative Action Chair,
- administering the alignment and realignment of preference group members at the convention,
- counting all ballots taken during the convention process,
- conducting all elections that take place, and,
- such other business as the convention may wish to consider.

Rules Committees may find it helpful to refer to the call books of the previous two county conventions for guidance in preparing the rules.

## **Elections to the District/State Convention**

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Delegates and Alternates who are elected at the County Convention are elected to *both* the District and State Conventions.

The number of Delegates to elect is based on a formula of proportional representation.

In a non-Presidential year, County Conventions typically elect Delegates/Alternates as a whole county delegation. However, while 2018 is not a presidential election year, it is possible that county conventions may divide by preference groups to elect their Delegates, Alternates, and District Convention Committee Members.

### **Determining whether your County Convention will divide by Preference Groups**

Under the Iowa Democratic Party Constitution, in non-presidential years conventions may divide by:

- candidates for a particular office;
- issues; or,
- some other category.

If a convention chooses to form preference groups, it can only divide into ONE category. For example, your convention may divide by preference groups for Governor, in which case it cannot divide by preference groups for Congress or issue.

Under the party Constitution, conventions may only break into preference groups if 15% or more of the delegates that are

present vote to do so. This vote can only occur after all delegates have been seated and a quorum is declared. Therefore, we **do not** recommend that conventions register delegates by preference group as it will not be known at registration whether the convention will break into preference groups or on what basis.

### **Dealing with a Motion to Divide into Preference Groups**

Once all delegates have been seated and a quorum is declared a delegate may rise and move to divide into preference groups based on a particular category.

If the delegate fails to indicate a category, the Convention Chair should, before the motion is seconded, ask the delegate her or his basis for dividing into preference groups.

For example:

 **Delegate: *I move to break into preference groups.***

**Chair: *By why category do you wish to divide—for example, Governor? Congress? Or on some other basis?*** 

 **Delegate: *I move to break into preference groups by candidate for Governor.***

**Chair: *There is a motion to divide into preference group by Governor's candidates. Is there a second?*** 

Presuming it is seconded, there is no debate and the Chair should go right to a vote of the full convention as to whether to break into preference groups on that basis. If 15% or more of delegates present and voting vote in favor of dividing into preference groups, then the Convention must break into Preference Groups.

However, the basis for division will not yet be set, as more delegates may favor some other basis for division (for example, candidates for Congress rather than by candidates for Governor).

If the Convention votes to break into preference groups on the basis of one category, the Chair should ask the Convention whether it wishes to break into preference groups based on any other category. If another category is moved, a vote should be taken to determine if 15% or more of the delegates that are present and voting wish to break into preference groups based on that category.

For example:

**Chair: *The motion to break up by Governor candidates passes with 18% support. Is there a motion to break into any other category?***



**Delegate: *I move that we go into groups based on Congressional candidates.***

**Chair: *Is the motion seconded? (It is).***  
**Chair: *The motion is seconded. Raise your hand if you want to break into preference groups around Congressional candidates.***



The Chair will once again ask if there is a motion to break into any other category of preference group. The same process will follow, until no more motions to divide into preference groups are made.

If more than one category of preference groups received 15% or more support, the Chair must then take a vote to determine which office will be the basis for preference group break-out. The office with the greatest number of votes will prevail.

For example:

- A motion to divide by Governor candidates was made and seconded
- 18% of delegates supported that motion
- Another motion was made and seconded to divide by Congressional candidates
- 16% of delegates supported that motion
- No more motions to divide by preference group were made

- A vote was conducted between breaking out by Governor's race and breaking out by Congressional race
- 55% voted to break out by Governor, while 45% voted to break out by Congress

The Convention will break into preference groups based on candidates for Governor. It may be preferable to use paper ballots for this vote.

### **Elections by Preference Groups**

If the County Convention divides into preference groups, the first task will be determining viability – the number of delegates required for any preference group to be viable. The formula for determining viability is:

- If the Convention elects **3 Delegates**: Total attendees  $\div$  6 = viability
  - If the Convention elects **4 or more Delegates**: Total attendees  $\times$  0.15 = viability
- NOTE: for viability, always round up to the nearest whole number

To determine whether groups are viable, it is recommended that County Conventions conduct a vote by ballot for the initial alignment, rather than have delegates move across the room and gather into preference groups. For example, if the Convention breaks down by preference group for candidates for Governor, each delegate will be asked to vote for one candidate, or choose "Uncommitted." That initial vote will determine initial viability.

Following that initial vote and the announcement of the viability threshold and the viability status of any preference groups, viable and non-viable preference groups will be assigned places to gather for realignment. Delegates will be free to realign as they see fit, but any delegate who remains in a group that doesn't have sufficient members to meet the viability threshold at the end of realignment will not be able to participate in any vote to be held within a viable preference group. The suggested time for realignment is 15-30 minutes.

## **Awarding Delegates by Preference Groups**

After the realignment period, it is now time to allocate delegates to viable preference groups based on their relative strength. To do this:

1. Count the number of people in each preference group
2. Multiply the number of people in a preference group by the total number of delegates the county is electing.
3. Now, divide that number by the total number of Convention Delegates who were seated (the number that was used to determine viability).
4. Round that number up if it is a decimal of 0.5 or greater; round down if it is a decimal of 0.5 or less.
5. The rounded number is the number of delegates that preference group will elect.

$$\frac{\begin{array}{l} \# \text{ of members} \\ \text{in a} \\ \text{preference} \\ \text{group} \end{array}}{\begin{array}{l} \text{Total \# of eligible Convention} \\ \text{Attendees present} \end{array}} \times \begin{array}{l} \text{Total \# of} \\ \text{delegates} \\ \text{elected at the} \\ \text{Convention} \end{array} = \begin{array}{l} \# \text{ of} \\ \text{delegates} \\ \text{to be} \\ \text{elected} \end{array}$$

It is recommended that you review your 2016 County Convention Booklet for an example of rules which apply to elections by preference group. A copy of sample rules from 2016 can be found at [www.iowademocrats.org](http://www.iowademocrats.org). Remember, though, that even if your County Convention divides by preference group, the election of the County Affirmative Action Chair is by the entire Convention delegation.

## Guidance on Rounding Delegate Math

If the total number of delegates is **LESS** than the number to be elected:

- An additional delegate will be awarded to the group with the highest decimal below 0.5 (the group with the decimal below 0.5 but closest to it).

For example:

*Scenario: There are 100 seated delegates at this county convention. This convention will be electing 7 delegates to the District/State Convention. Viability threshold is 15 ( $100 \times 0.15$ )*

Group	# of members in Group	Math	# of Delegates group will elect	After rounding	Final
Roses	20	$(20 \times 7) / 100$	1.40	1	2
Daisies	18	$(18 \times 7) / 100$	1.26	1	1
Lilacs	27	$(27 \times 7) / 100$	1.89	2	2
Tulips	19	$(19 \times 7) / 100$	1.33	1	1
Daffodils	16	$(16 \times 7) / 100$	1.12	1	1
	<b>100</b>			<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>

**Roses gains the delegate because it has the largest decimals that did not round up.**

**NOTE:** In a case where two or more preference groups are tied for the same additional delegate, a coin toss shall determine which preference group is awarded the additional delegate.

If the total number of delegates is **MORE** than the number to be elected:

- A delegate will be subtracted from the preference group with the lowest decimal above 0.5 (the group with the decimal above 0.5 but closest to it)
- NOTE:** A preference group with only one delegate cannot lose its only delegate.

For example:

*Scenario: There are 100 seated delegates at this county convention; it is electing 8 delegates to District/State. Viability threshold is 15 ( $100 \times 0.15$ ).*

Group	# of members in Group	Math	# of Delegates group will elect	After rounding	Final
Roses	18	$(18 \times 8) / 100$	1.44	1	1
Daisies	20	$(20 \times 8) / 100$	1.60	2	2
Lilacs	22	$(22 \times 8) / 100$	1.76	2	2
Tulips	19	$(19 \times 8) / 100$	1.52	2	1

Daffodils	21	$(21 \times 8) / 100$	1.68	2	2
	<b>100</b>			<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>

*Tulip loses one of its delegates because its decimal is above 0.5 but closest to it.*

## **Elections by the Entire Convention Delegation**

If the County Convention doesn't divide into preference groups, then all elections will be by the entire convention delegation. It is recommended that you refer to your 2014 County Convention Booklet for an example of the rules which you could use to govern elections by the entire convention delegation. A copy of that book can be found at [www.iowademocrats.org](http://www.iowademocrats.org).

## **Forms & Other Helpful Documents**

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Included as attachments are several forms you may wish to consider including with your Convention Booklet. Some of them are referenced above. The entire list includes:

### Sample items to include in your Booklet

Attachment A: Alternate Designation Form

Attachment B: Sample Call to Convention

Attachment C: Sample Order of Business

### Preference Group Guidance

Attachment D: Preference Group Decision Tree

Attachment E: Delegate Math Worksheet

### Accessibility and Accommodation:

Attachment F: Accessibility Guide Best Practices

Attachment G: Instructions for Request for Accommodation Form

Attachment H: Request for Accommodation Form

Attachment I: Instructions for Response

Attachment J: Response Form

### Constituency Caucuses:

Attachment K: Instructions for Distribution & Completion of Constituency Caucus Interest Form

Attachment L: Constituency Caucus Interest Form

Attachment M: Robert's Rules of Order Summary you may wish to include in your Booklet