



SPOTSYLVANIA COUNTY DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE

**THE SPOTSYLVANIA COUNTY
DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE (SCDC)
BYLAWS**

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Spotsylvania County Democratic Committee Bylaws

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ARTICLE I ORGANIZATION

Section 1.1 Name

The name of this organization shall be the Spotsylvania County Democratic Committee, hereafter referred to as SCDC.

Section 1.2 Statement of Principle

The Spotsylvania County Democratic Committee endorses the principles contained in the Democratic Party of Virginia Party Plan and in the Charter of the Democratic Party of the United States, bound always by the United States Constitution and the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

ARTICLE II AUTHORITY

SCDC is organized under the authority of and in accordance with the Democratic Party of Virginia Party Plan. Nothing in these bylaws is intended to conflict with either the Code of Virginia and/or the Democratic Party of Virginia Party Plan. If any such conflict should occur, the Code of Virginia and/or the Democratic Party of Virginia Party Plan shall have precedence. Any applicable principle or provision in the Democratic Party of Virginia Party Plan not covered by these bylaws shall be embraced and applied as required.

All activities of SCDC, including mass meetings, primaries, conventions, and fund raising shall be conducted in accordance with the Democratic Party of Virginia Party Plan.

ARTICLE III PURPOSE AND RESPONSIBILITY

The purpose of SCDC shall be to conduct the affairs of the Democratic Party of Virginia in Spotsylvania County, including the nominating process for and support of Democratic candidates in Spotsylvania County and to encourage the registration of and voting by eligible residents of the County. SCDC shall adhere to and implement state and national party policies and platforms.

ARTICLE IV BIENNIAL REORGANIZATION

Section 4.1 Time of Reorganization

SCDC shall be elected by Democratic voters of Spotsylvania County by Mass Meeting or Caucus every two years. The reorganization process begins in an odd numbered year. The window for the reorganization is the period between December 1st in the odd numbered years and the 15th of the following January. SCDC must determine the date of the reorganization meeting and communicate that information to the State Party by November 15th of each odd numbered year.

Section 4.2 Caucus

The mass meeting or caucus may be held on Saturday or any other weekday evening. Any waiver of the time requirements stated above must be approved by the State Party Chair or the Steering Committee. The Chair shall give at least seven (7) days' notice but not more than two weeks before the mass meeting. The notice shall be a paid political advertisement in the main local newspaper or an advertisement posted on the SCDC web page. The advertisement, or other form of notification, will meet all requirements as specified by the Virginia Democratic Party Plan or current DPVA policy. No fees may be charged for attending the caucus. All attendees must meet state party requirements for participation in the caucus.

Section 4.3 Declaration of Candidacy for Membership

The Declaration of Candidacy Form for election to SCDC shall be completed in writing, signed, and filed with the Chair prior to convening of the mass meeting called for the purpose of reorganization of SCDC. There shall be a \$25.00 filing fee which shall accompany the signed Declaration of Candidacy Form. The SCDC Chair shall give ten (10) days' notice of the mass meeting in order that maximum participation by all Democratic voters may be encouraged. Those persons filing but not elected to SCDC will be refunded the \$25.00 filing fee.

ARTICLE V MEMBERSHIP

Section 5.1 SCDC Membership

Membership shall be limited to those persons signifying that they are registered to vote in Spotsylvania County, that they are Democrats, that they believe in the principles of the Democratic Party, and that they will do all within their power to aid in the victory of Democratic Party nominees in all local, state, and national elections, except as otherwise provided in the Virginia Democratic Party Plan.

There shall be no limit on the number of members who actively serve in SCDC.

Section 5.2 Eligible Members

Each precinct should be represented by at least one voting member who shall be at the time of his/her election a resident of the precinct.

Section 5.3 Dues and Filing Fee

An initial filing fee of \$25 is required to join SCDC. Any person who pre-files for membership upon reorganization of SCDC or thereafter and pays the required fee is exempt from that year's dues. The filing fee may be prorated on a monthly basis. Dues are paid annually in the amount of \$25 by the last day of January of the odd year. Dues may be pro-rated on a monthly basis. The filing fee and dues may be waived for financial hardship upon a confidential written request to the SCDC Chair.

The filing fee and dues are waived for full-time college students.

Section 5.4 Election of Members of SCDC

Members of SCDC shall be elected at regular meetings or at any special meeting called by the Chair. Prospective members shall file a Membership Application Form with the Chair no less than 15 days before the next meeting. Nominations may be made by any eligible voting member. Prospective members shall be approved by a simple majority of members in attendance.

Section 5.5 Ex Officio Members

Each Democratic State or local elected official representing a Spotsylvania County District shall be a voting ex officio member of SCDC.

Any Spotsylvania County registered voter who is a member of the Central Committee (DPVA) shall, upon election, become a voting ex officio member of SCDC.

Such members shall complete the required membership forms and pay any required filing or membership fees.

Section 5.6 Attendance at Committee Meetings

The absence without justification of any member from three (3) consecutive meetings shall change the status of that member to a non-voting Associate Member. The Executive Committee shall approve the change and notify the member of the change of status. The Executive Committee shall have the option of retaining the member's voting status if the member is engaged in activities directly supporting the mission of the SCDC or for other legitimate reasons.

Section 5.7 Associate Members

An Associate member may become a Voting Member upon approval by the Executive Committee and may then vote at the next meeting that s/he attends.

ARTICLE VI NON-MEMBER AFFILIATES and FRIENDS

Section 6.1 Non-Member Affiliates

Affiliates shall consist of persons who wish to support SCDC but who are not eligible to become members. Affiliates may attend meetings, stand at the polls, and participate in committee activities. Affiliates are not eligible to vote at committee meetings and are not counted for purposes of determining a quorum.

Section 6.2 Friends

Friends of SCDC are those who are eligible but do not wish to become members. They support SCDC and receive the same privileges as those described for Affiliates. Friends are not eligible to vote at Committee meetings and are not

counted for purposes of determining a quorum.

ARTICLE VII OFFICERS

Section 7.1 Officers

The officers of the Committee shall consist of a Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary.

Section 7.2 Election of Officers

Following the election of its members as provided in Article IV, SCDC shall elect a chair, secretary, treasurer, and such other officers as it deems necessary no later than January 15th. The date, time, and place of the meeting where the election of officers will occur shall be made known to committee members in advance following the notice requirements in Section 4.2. Should the meeting take place immediately following the adjournment of the caucus to elect committee members, or within seven (7) days thereafter, notice of the meeting shall be included in the public advertisement for the caucus. All officers elected by SCDC shall be residents of and registered to vote in the Spotsylvania County.

The secretary shall submit to State Party headquarters within five (5) days of his or her election the names, addresses, emails and telephone numbers of the officers and members of SCDC. The secretary shall submit a list of any changes to the SCDC list every six (6) months thereafter until the next committee election.

Candidates for the positions of Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, or Secretary must declare their candidacy in writing to the SCDC Executive Committee no later than 5:00 pm, five (5) days before the date set for the election of officers and must be a member of the reorganized SCDC. If there are no advance nominations submitted, nominations will be taken from the floor and voted on by a simple majority of members present.

Section 7.3 Interim or Office Vacancies

Vacant officer positions of Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary shall be voted on and filled at a regular meeting.

In the event of a vacancy in the Chair position at any time after the biennial reorganization, the Vice Chair shall assume the position of Chair for the remainder of the two-year term. An election for Vice Chair will be conducted to fill the vacant Vice-Chair position per Section 7.2 above.

Written or electronic notice shall be given to members not less than seven (7) days but not more than two (2) weeks prior to the election to fill a vacancy.

Section 7.4 Duties of the Chair

The duties of the Chair shall include (1) presiding at all meetings of SCDC, (2) establishing ad hoc committees, (3) appointing chairpersons of standing committees, and (4) delegating authority to permit SCDC to function without

undue interruption or delay. The Chair shall administer and execute all rules adopted by SCDC.

The Chair shall serve as ex officio member of all standing committees and will cast a vote in the event of a tie. The Chair may appoint a parliamentarian, Sergeant-At-Arms and any other positions necessary to carry out the responsibilities of SCDC. The Chair shall preside at regular monthly SCDC meetings.

Section 7.5 Duties of the Vice Chair

The Vice Chair shall perform all of the duties of the chair in the absence of the chair or as delegated by the Chair and serves as a voting member of the SCDC Executive Committee.

Section 7.6 Duties of the Secretary

The duties of the Secretary shall include (1) accurately recording minutes of regular, special, and executive committee meetings, (2) distributing all minutes to members, (3) recording and reporting attendance at meetings, (4) maintaining the SCDC Membership list, and (5) performing other duties appropriate for the office as assigned by the Chair.

Section 7.7 Duties of the Treasurer

The duties of the Treasurer shall include: (1) supervision over receipts and expenditures of SCDC, (2) presenting monthly financial reports of expenditures and funds received, (3) maintaining accounts and disbursing funds as authorized by the Chair, (4) developing an annual budget and presenting same to the Executive Committee for review during the month of January and approval by the SCDC Committee at the February meeting, (5) acting as the primary contact with banks and other financial institutions, (6) acting as the primary contact with the postal service and maintaining the post office box, (7) filing quarterly financial reports, as required by law, to the State Board of Elections, and (8) collecting annual dues.

ARTICLE VIII EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 8.1 Members

The Executive Committee shall consist of the elected officers (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer). When voting on or conducting the business of SCDC, a quorum of three members is required.

Section 8.2 Duties

The Executive Committee shall exercise general supervision over the affairs of SCDC and will meet at least monthly. The Chair or a designated representative shall conduct meetings of the Executive Committee. Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be called by the Chair, except that special meetings may be called at the request of any two members of the Executive

Committee. The chair shall also invite Chairs of Standing Committees to the Executive Committee meetings as needed to conduct the business of SCDC. A record of meetings shall be recorded by the secretary and made available to the membership upon request.

The Executive Committee may not amend these Bylaws or act in a manner contrary to any duly passed motions or decisions enacted by SCDC.

ARTICLE IX STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 9.1 Standing Committees

The SCDC Chair shall appoint chairs of the standing committees following the biennial reorganization. The Standing Committee Chairs shall report to the Executive Committee as requested by the Chair of the Executive Committee.

- A. Fund Raising – responsible for taking appropriate actions to raise funds required for the operation of the SCDC.
- B. Technology – responsible for maintaining the SCDC web page, social media outlets, and managing the set up for virtual meetings of SCDC.
- C. Precinct Operations – responsible for (1) identifying and training Democratic volunteers sufficient to staff every Precinct in the County all day on Election Day, (2) recruiting and training Precinct Captains and Poll volunteers, (3) maintaining the Precinct Captains Handbook, and (4) determining the needs for VAN reports for canvassing, phone-banking and recruiting poll workers.
- D. Membership – responsible for (1) increasing membership and member engagement and retention, (2) helping members find roles within SCDC, (3) recruiting members to volunteer service on one or more standing committees, and (4) coordinating membership and party building events throughout the year. The Membership Committee Chair shall work with the SCDC Secretary to monitor membership as detailed in Article VII, Section 7.6.
- E. Outreach – responsible for (1) working to widen diverse public participation of County residents and organizations in the SCDC, (2) generating interest in the Party and SCDC, (3) overseeing voter registration, and (4) coordinating SCDC participation in community events.
- F. Candidate Search and Development – responsible for identifying and recruiting Democratic candidates for local, state and federal offices and supporting their development as candidates. Once candidates are selected, this committee will serve as the central point of contact between the candidates and the SCDC and provide such support as needed to ensure the candidates' success.

G. Ad Hoc Committees – The SCDC Executive Committee shall appoint special committees as needed to conduct the business of SCDC.

Section 9.2 Duties of Standing and Ad Hoc Committees

Standing Committee and Ad Hoc Chairs shall work with the Executive Committee to recruit members. Each Standing Committee shall report to the Executive Committee. Each Standing Committee shall prepare a yearly plan for the work of SCDC, report their progress, as requested, and prepare a summary report at the end of each year. The Standing Committee Chair or their designee shall work with the Executive Committee to report plans, progress, and year-end reporting to the general membership.

ARTICLE X EXPENDITURES

Expenditures in excess of \$225.00 shall be approved by the Executive Committee and reported to the membership. The following expenditures are exempt from the \$225 limitation: expenditures included in the approved budget and payment of fees to the State Party, District Committees, and payments to others generated by action of the State Party and the District Committees. The SCDC Chair shall approve other expenditures of less than \$225.

ARTICLE XI MEETINGS

Section 11.1 Monthly Meeting

SCDC shall meet monthly. The Chair may call a special meeting as needed. A meeting may be called by at least ten percent of the Quorum members provided the call is filed with the Chair at least fifteen (15) days before the proposed meeting date.

Section 11.2 Notification of Meeting

The Chair shall notify members of any meeting at least seven (7) days in advance. The Chair may call a special meeting with at least seven (7) days' notice to the membership.

All meetings are open to the general public as observers.

ARTICLE XII QUORUM

A quorum of thirty percent (30%) of the members of SCDC shall be required to take any action, except to adjourn a meeting to another time or place. Proxy voting by any Committee member in any meeting or caucus will not be permitted. Associate Members, Affiliates, and Friends shall not be counted in determining a quorum.

ARTICLE XIII BYLAWS

Section 13.1 Bylaws Requirements

SCDC shall have a set of bylaws available for its membership upon request. Such bylaws shall be submitted to the State Party headquarters for review as to form and consistency with the Democratic Party of Virginia Party Plan. The SCDC chair shall submit such bylaws to State Headquarters within 90 days of their election as chair.

Section 13.2 Bylaws Committee

The Chair shall appoint a Bylaws Committee consisting of at least three members. The Bylaws Committee shall be responsible for study, review, and updates requiring amendment to these bylaws. Recommendations for changes shall be considered in accordance with the procedures, as stated in Section 13.3.

SCDC Bylaws will be available to all members on the SCDC Website.

Section 13.3 Amendments to Bylaws

These bylaws may be amended by SCDC at any regular or special meeting. A copy of the amended bylaws will be published on the SCDC website. The Chair shall notify members at least seven (7) days in advance of any meeting to consider changes and/or additions to these bylaws. A two-thirds vote of those members present and voting shall be required for the adoption of an amendment except those required by Section 13.4. Corrections of clerical errors shall not be considered amendments and can be made at any time.

Section 13.4 Update of Bylaws

The chair shall direct the Bylaws Committee to update the Bylaws in accordance with any changes to the Virginia Code or the Democratic Party of Virginia Party Plan. These changes will be presented to SCDC per Section 13.3.

ARTICLE XIV VOTER ACTIVATION NETWORK (VAN)

The Chair shall designate those who are authorized to access the VAN database. The VAN is the sole property of the Democratic Party of Virginia and shall not be used for personal or commercial purposes. Data compiled from the database is to be used for official business of SCDC and released as stated in the current VAN Policy Document. Information contained in the VAN database consists of State Voter Files and any use, other than stated herein, or abuse of such information is subject to state law.

ARTICLE XV WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

The Chair shall appoint a Digital Presence/Technology Committee Chair to maintain SCDC website and social media outlets. The website is the sole property of SCDC.

ARTICLE XVI COMMUNICATION POLICY

The Executive Committee shall disseminate information on behalf of SCDC. Members desiring to share information (e.g., editorials, blogs, issue papers, social media posts, etc.) in the name of SCDC with the public, members, affiliates, and friends of SCDC shall forward the information to the Chair for release.

Only the Executive Committee or their designee is authorized to release information in the name of SCDC (i.e., press releases, web page, press conferences, etc.). The SCDC USPS mailing list and e-mail lists are to be used for SCDC business only and not for commercial or promotional purposes. Standing Committee Chairs shall have access to the membership and email mailing lists.

The Executive Committee maintains the SCDC mailing lists (Executive Committee, Members, and Friends).

Article XVII PARTY SUPPORT

No Committee member or officer of the SCDC shall publicly support, endorse, or assist any candidate opposed to a Democratic nominee. If a member of the SCDC is accused of undertaking such public activity, the SCDC shall vote on whether the member has undertaken such public activity. The member's removal from SCDC shall be automatic if SCDC finds that the member has engaged in such public activity. Such action shall not be taken without at least ten (10) days' written notice to the accused member and an opportunity for him or her to refute such charges.

Article XVIII CANDIDATE SUPPORT

SCDC and its members are not required to support any candidate (1) who is publicly supporting a nominee on the ticket of any other political party in any general election where Democratic candidates for office appear on the ballot, or (2) who publicly supports any other candidate opposed to a Democratic nominee.

ARTICLE XIX NOMINATION AND ENDORSEMENT OF CANDIDATES

The role of the local Committee in nominating candidates for President, US Senators, US Congressman, VA Senate, VA House is defined by the Democratic Party of Virginia Party Plan. SCDC will support the Democratic Nominees in General Elections except as noted in ARTICLE XVIII of these Bylaws.

SCDC shall manage the process for nominating and electing Democrats to Constitutional Offices and the Board of Supervisors for Spotsylvania County. Nomination may be made by primary, caucus, or convention according to the Party Plan.

In Elections where there is no Democratic Candidate on the ballot (whether the office

is partisan or non-partisan), SCDC may endorse a candidate running as an Independent provided the Independent candidate(s) requests the endorsement of SCDC and agrees to support the candidates on the Democratic Ballot.

The Executive Committee will compile a list of all races in which there is no Democratic Candidate and will recommend which (if any) candidate(s) to endorse and will provide a rationale for the recommendations. The recommendation will be brought to a vote of the entire committee at a regular or special meeting. The Chair of SCDC will announce the meeting at least ten (10) days in advance. A simple majority of the members attending the meeting will determine the outcome.

ARTICLE XX REMOVAL OF OFFICERS OR MEMBERS

SCDC may vote to remove from office or membership any person whose performance of duty is detrimental to SCDC's operation. A minimum of two (2) officers or (five) 5 members is required to bring a proposal for the removal of any member. Those charged under this article must receive a written notice of pending action at least ten (10) days prior to the charge being heard by the Executive Committee. The written notice shall describe the rationale for proposed removal. The Executive Committee will present its recommendation to the full Committee, in a session with members only, at the next general Committee meeting for final action. A simple majority of those voting members in attendance shall determine the outcome. The committee's decision may be appealed to the District Committee or DPVA Steering Committee.

Definitions

Ad Hoc Committee: An interim committee appointed by the Chair to address specific tasks or issues.

Bylaws: Rules that govern how SCDC operates and describe the duties and responsibilities of its members.

Candidate: An individual who has been formally nominated for a particular position within SCDC and has met the necessary requirements of membership.

Central Committee: Virginia State Democratic Committee

Day: A calendar day

Declaration of Candidacy: The formal process by which members submit a written request to be considered for election to SCDC in a reorganization year.

Endorsement: An official expression of support or approval for a candidate, policy, or action.

Executive Committee: The Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer tasked with managing SCDC business.

Membership

- **Members** have full voting rights provided they have met the necessary filing and attendance requirements.
- **Associate** members have limited voting rights and/or privileges.
- **Ex Officio members** are members of SCDC who have all the same rights, privileges and obligations as any other committee member.

Nomination: The formal process of proposing a candidate for election or appointment to a position within SCDC.

Non-Member: Any individual or entity that does not meet the qualifications for membership or has not been formally admitted as a member of the SCDC. Non-members may participate in certain activities or programs as permitted by the organization but shall not have the rights, privileges, or obligations of members, including voting rights or eligibility to hold office.

- **Friends** of the organization are individuals, groups, or entities who support the mission, programs, or activities. Friends are not formal members and do not possess voting rights or eligibility to hold offices within the organization.
- **Affiliates** are individuals, organizations, or entities that collaborate with the organization to support its mission, vision, and programs. Affiliates are not considered members and do not possess voting rights or governance authority within the organization.

- **Proxy voting:** A process that allows a person (the **principal**) to designate someone else (the **proxy**) to cast a vote on their behalf at a meeting. This applies to members, directors, or others authorized to vote under the bylaws. Neither SCDC nor DPVA allow proxy voting.

Quorum: The minimum number of voting members required to be present at a meeting to legally conduct business. SCDC requires 30% of membership to meet the Quorum.

Reorganization: The formal process in which the structure, governance, or operations of the organization are significantly changed or restructured. SCDC conducts biennial reorganization in odd numbered years..

Standing Committee: A permanent group responsible for recurring tasks, such as finance, governance, fundraising, or program oversight.

VAN - Voter Activation Network: A database for voter outreach used for organizing and tracking voter files.