

Precinct Convention Process and FAQ



Time and Date

- 2nd Tuesday in March [Election Code (EL) §181.061]
- No earlier than 7p and no later than 9p [EL §181.063 §174.022]

This year: 2020 March 8, 7p-9p

Before the Convention

- Decide if you will hold consolidated* or individual precinct conventions
- Secure publicly accessible location(s)
- 30 days before the convention, post notice of the convention time, date, and location on your county party's webpage or the commissioner's court bulletin board if no website maintained [EL §181.064 §174.023]

- **Print Forms you'll need:**

Download the documents at http://www.txgreens.org/convention_documents

- Attendance List – One per Precinct
- Affiliation Certificates
- Official Ballots (obtain from state party)
- Delegate List
- Minutes Form
- Copy of the Party Rules to be available for inspection
- Convention Notice Posting [EL §181.063 §174.022]

***What is the difference between a consolidated vs. individual precinct convention?**

Consolidated precinct conventions are individual precinct conventions held in one location. Ideally it will be easily accessible both by car and transit.

What do we do at the Precinct Convention?

Required:

- Fill out an Attendance List of qualified participants with voter registration numbers(VUID) – one list per precinct. Sign the list(s) make a copy, and deliver to the County Chair and the State Chair [EL §181.066 §181.067]
- Provide a numbered ballot for each participant by redacting candidates that the participant cannot vote for in general election (check voter ID card) on their official ballot. [EL §52.005 §52.062]
- Elect Delegates to the County Convention [EL § 181.062]
- Have participants cast votes on official ballots, and count the votes from the official ballots, posting ballot images online, and recording totals in the minutes. These votes bind the County, District, State and PNC delegates in their nomination of candidates at the respective Conventions. This is our “primary.” See Rules, Official Ballot and Instructions.
- Keep Minutes [EL §]
- Decide whether to create and elect a Precinct Executive Committee [EL § 181.066(d)]

Optional:

- Entertain Resolutions if any
- (If applicable) Inform attendees about the ballot access petition drive

WAIT, why can't i just go vote like in the primary elections and go home? Do I really have to do all this?

The ruling party made these rules way back in the day to keep people from participating in electoral politics outside of their party machine. The next ruling party left them as is. You can stay home instead, but that would be doing what they want from you. Yes, for your vote to count, for Green candidates to get a place on the General Election ballot in November, and to participate in upper level conventions you must do all this.

How do we get started?

1. Establish Temporary Precinct Chair, who is one of the following:
 - Precinct chair of previous Convention will be Temporary Chair,
 - Appointed by County Party Co-Chair, or
 - Eligible Participant, in absence of precinct chair
2. On admitting a person for participation in the convention, the temporary chair shall: [EL §162.007]
 - a. view voter's photo-id [EL §63.001],
 - b. administer to the person the following oath: "I swear that I have not voted in a primary election or participated in a convention of another party during this voting year. I hereby affiliate myself with the Green Party."
 - c. After they take the oath, stamp their card on the line provided for Party Affiliation. **Note: If it is stamped by another party, they are not eligible to participate.**
 - d. If they do not have a card, give them a completed and signed affiliation certificate that states:
 1. the name of the person to whom the certificate is issued;
 2. the name of the political party of the affiliation;
 3. the name and official position of the issuing authority;
 4. the party function at which the affiliation occurred, if applicable; and
 5. the date of affiliation.
3. Before conducting business, the temporary chair shall prepare a list containing the name, residence address, Voter Registration number (VUID) from their card (or date of birth if no card presented), of each person who is admitted to participate in the convention.

To REPEAT: Participants must not have voted in another primary or convention (A Class C Misdemeanor - see ** question below [EL §162.014, 162.011]) and provide:

- either: [EL §181.065 162.001 162.004 162.007]
 - a valid voter registration card, or
 - sign and receive an Affiliation Certificate
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4. The temporary chair shall call the convention to order, select a convention chair, and any other officers considered necessary to conduct the convention's business.
 - a. Convention business:
 - i. Elect Precinct Convention Chair and any other officers deemed necessary
 - ii. Elect Delegates to the County Convention (Delegates need not be present to be elected. Delegates are bound by official precinct ballot vote results at subsequent conventions.)
 - iii. Attain consensus on whether to elect a Precinct Executive Committee and, if so, assign duties as deemed appropriate.
 - iv. Participants cast official ballots for candidates.
 1. Advise voters to record their ballot id for their ability to verify their vote online.
 2. Create images of each completed ballot and upload into cloud space - one ballot per image
 3. Record the results of the ballots (Vote Count Instructions in Party Rules)

Important notes:

- EACH Precinct must have a Convention Chair, an attendance list, official ballots, county delegate list, and minutes
- IF you are the only one in your Precinct, then you are the Convention chair, the only one on the attendance list and the keeper of the minutes.
- There may be multiple Precincts at your meeting place, but they must all complete this paperwork in order for us to be in compliance with the Election Code and secure our place on the Ballot.

There can only be one precinct per attendance list and per each minutes!!!!

What needs to be on the ballots at the Precinct Convention?

Ballots at the precinct convention contain all races from President/Governor on down that have candidates filed and are up for election. Those results are binding to the County, District, State, and Presidential Nominating Convention (PNC) Convention Delegates as they cast their official vote to nominate candidates, or not, i.e., if NOTA wins.

For the down ballot races, people can only vote on those who they could vote for in November, i.e. county clerk would be on everyone's ballot in the county, Justice of the Peace precinct 2 would only be on those who could vote in that jurisdiction.

There are a number of specific legal requirements for what constitutes a Legal Ballot. We have implemented them in the Official Ballot Template provided in the Convention Documents link at http://www.txgreens.org/convention_documents. If you need assistance completing your county's ballot, contact the state party immediately and well in advance of the convention.

How do we nominate candidates?

Candidates are nominated at subsequent conventions, however, the election results from the Precinct Convention ballots are binding for the county, district, state, and national delegates in the nomination process. The various convention delegates will verify the precinct election results and nominate the candidate with the most votes. If NOTA receives the most votes, no candidate is nominated.

How do we handle resolutions?

Resolutions are introduced at the precinct convention level. Your county bylaws determine the threshold for voting if you don't have consensus. If you don't have county bylaws yet, use the state bylaws as a guide – generally 2/3 majority and abstentions don't count. If the resolution passed by consensus or the applicable vote threshold, it goes to the county convention for consensus/vote. If the resolutions are state or national related, they can be carried by the State delegates to the State Convention.

What goes in the minutes?

Who the functionaries were (temp. chair, perm. chair, etc.); what you did, e.g. voted on county delegates, voted on candidates, filled out attendance list, voted on resolutions, etc. See Minutes template at http://www.txgreens.org/convention_documents

MEGAIMPORTANT: What happens with all this paperwork?

The Precinct Convention Chair is responsible to ensure the convention materials are returned to the County Chair. The Minutes, Attendance List, Delegates List, and Ballots need to be returned to your County Chair no later than three (3) days after the convention. Also a copy of the precinct attendee lists must be sent to the State CoChairs no later than 3 days after the convention – if in the mail, within 2 days. Mailing address for the State CoChairs is: Green Party of Texas, PO Box 271080, Houston, TX 77277-1080 or email a scanned copy to cochair@txgreens.org.

Special Note Re Ballots:

To ensure the ballots are valid, archived, and available for independent voter-verification, post an image of each ballot into a publicly accessible cloud space, e.g. Google Drive, icloud, etc. before/during the vote count and before the ballots leave the voting place. Ballots not posted during the convention will be considered invalid. Voters should also record their ballot id for their own ability to verify their vote online.

Other Questions:

****If a participant actually voted in the primaries or another convention, what happens?**

Their participation is in violation of state election law and is a Class C misdemeanor for them [EL §162.014, 162.011]. Their vote is void [EL § 162.013]. Every voter should have recorded the ballot number of their ballot and so you should be able to pull the violator's ballot and retabulate. They will not be allowed to attend any of the other conventions as a delegate, so please inform the other level convention chairs if any violations occur. Ideally you would have access to the eligible voter roll to check prior to certifying their eligibility.

What is the primary purpose for the affiliation certificate?

For people who forgot their voter registration cards to legally attest that they are registered to vote and did not vote in a primary or convention of another party. This affiliation certificate is equivalent to marking their voter registration card "Green" and is required by state law. It must be presented at subsequent conventions if that person is a delegate.

How many delegates can we elect to the County Convention?

As of now, there is no state party rule on this so you may elect as many delegates as you want from your precinct to the county convention, unless your county has a rule in place. County parties should have a rule to state at least a minimum number of delegates. [EL §181.062]

How many delegates do we get to the State Convention?

It is based on your county population:

From GPTX Bylaws, Article IX, Section 9

F) Thus, delegates shall be apportioned according to county population as follows:

- 1 to 35,000 = 1 delegate
- 35,001 to 100,000 = 2 delegates
- 100,001 to 200,000 = 3 delegates
- 200,001 to 300,000 = 4 delegates
- 300,001 to 400,000 = 5 delegates
- 400,001 to 500,000 = 6 delegates
- 500,001 to 750,000 = 7 delegates
- 750,001 to 1,000,000 = 8 delegates
- 1,000,001 to 1,250,000 = 9 delegates
- 1,250,001 to 1,500,000 = 10 delegates
- 1,500,001 to 1,750,000 = 11 delegates
- 1,750,001 to 2,000,000 = 12 delegates
- 2,000,001 to 2,250,000 = 13 delegates
- 2,250,001 to 2,500,000 = 14 delegates
- 2,500,001 to 2,750,000 = 15 delegates
- 2,750,001 to 3,000,000 = 16 delegates
- 3,000,001 to 3,250,000 = 17 delegates
- 3,250,001 to 3,500,000 = 18 delegates

G) In determining the number of delegates allotted to each affiliated county, the State Executive Committee shall use the most recently published census data from the U.S. Census Bureau as of January 1st of the election year.

As acting county chair, do I qualify to be a delegate?

Yes, provided you are a qualified precinct delegate, i.e. didn't vote in a primary and are registered to vote in that precinct/county.

Is someone who voted in a Democratic primary in years past eligible to participate?

Yes. Voters are only disqualified if they voted in the current year's primary.

If we haven't already, what would be the first steps to officially affiliate as a County Party with the State Party?

From Article II, Section 2

C) County Green Party Affiliation with Green Party of Texas:

i. To affiliate with the Green Party of Texas, County Green Party organizations shall make an application in writing to the State Executive Committee. The application shall include written democratic bylaws and a list of the County Officers or Executive Committee.

- ii. The State Executive Committee has the authority to accept or reject any application for membership, subject to review by the next convention.

(If Applicable) Petition Drive? What?

If a party does not have ballot access, in order to obtain it, a party with state organization must have attendees at precinct conventions totalling 1% of all votes cast for Governor. This total can be supplemented by a ballot access petition. The day after the Precinct Convention is the first day of the petition process. It ends 75 days after! Please inform your attendees of the import of obtaining signatures from everyone they know. It is a great party building tool and educational campaign. Most Texans have NO idea how the system is designed to limit choice on the November ballot! See [Ballot Access Petition Info](#) for details.