

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
OF THE BLACK HAWK COUNTY, IOWA
DEMOCRATIC PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

Preamble

The Black Hawk County Democratic Party Central Committee is the governing body of the Black Hawk County Democratic Party (BHCD), which comprises a diverse coalition of people who reside in and are registered as Democrats in Black Hawk County, Iowa. The Central Committee is affiliated with, and subordinate to, the Iowa Democratic Party Central Committee.

The purpose of BHCD is to seek, support, and elect to public office people who embrace our shared commitment to the following:

- democratic governance;
- a strong economy;
- economic opportunity and social justice for all;
- outstanding public education;
- a safe, secure community and healthy environment;
- a fair system of taxation;
- an honest, accountable, and transparent government that is firmly grounded in Constitutional law.

BHCD welcomes all people who share its purpose, values, and principles to participate in its public activities regardless of their age, place of residence, or political affiliation. Those who reside in one of Black Hawk County's established voting precincts are eligible to participate in precinct caucuses and in the County Convention. Only members of the Central Committee (CC) as described in Article III, Section 1.1 of the Constitution and Bylaws may vote in its meetings.

To view our Principals and Priorities statement see
[www.blackhawkdemocrats.com/priorities.](http://www.blackhawkdemocrats.com/priorities)

Article I Name and Affiliation

This organization shall be known as the Black Hawk County Democratic Central Committee (CC). It is affiliated with the Iowa Democratic Party (IDP) and subject to that organization's rules and regulations.

Article II Purpose and Duty

Section 1: Principles: The Black Hawk County Democratic Central Committee is charged with promoting the principles of democratic government, social justice,

civil liberties, and civic responsibility, and it shall work to elect to public office Democrats who embrace these principles.

Section 2: Precinct Caucuses and Conventions: The Central Committee is responsible for organizing and administering precinct caucuses and county conventions, pursuant to the caucus to convention requirements as set by the Iowa Democratic Party.

Section 3: Fiduciary Responsibility: The Central Committee is responsible for the ethical marshaling and distribution of its financial and other resources as it labors to fulfill its obligations under Sections 1 and 2 of this Article. To this end, the Chair may authorize individual expenditures not to exceed \$500.

Expenditures between \$500 and \$750 may be authorized by the Executive Board, and expenditures exceeding \$750 must be authorized by simple majority vote of the Central Committee at an official meeting where a quorum is present.

Article III Membership

Section 1.1 Voting Members: The voting membership of the Black Hawk County Democratic Central Committee shall be composed of two elected Precinct Committee Members (PCM) from each voting precinct within the county. When an elected PCM is unable to cast a vote at an official meeting of the CC, a qualified alternate (see Article IV: Section 1.1(B)) from the same precinct may vote in that person's stead.

Section 1.2 Ex officio Non-voting Members: Unless they are also Precinct Committee Members, non-voting members of the Central Committee shall be:

- The executive officers of affiliated organizations;
- All elected officers of the CC;
- All publicly elected Democratic officials from Black Hawk County;
- All Standing Committee Chairpersons;
- Any Democratic State or District Committee member whose legal residence is in Black Hawk County.

Section 2: Vacancies: A vacancy may occur in the voting membership of the BHCD Central Committee when a position is not filled at the precinct caucus or when a member is removed by a 2/3 vote of the membership present and voting for reasons of nonresidence, inattention to duty, incompetence, or support of a candidate for public office who is running against a candidate nominated by the Iowa Democratic Party. If such a vacancy occurs, the CC may, by a simple majority vote, fill it with a qualified member of BHCD residing in the precinct in which the vacancy occurs. An individual elected to fill a vacancy will serve for the remainder of the original term. No member shall be removed under this Section unless the member has been given written notice of the specific grounds at least fourteen (14) days before the removal vote and has been afforded the opportunity to be heard by the body at the meeting where the vote occurs.

Article IV Membership Meetings

Section 1: Precinct Caucuses:

Section 1.1: Caucuses in even-numbered years:

- A. Upon instruction from the Chair of the IDP, the BHCD County Chairperson or designee shall call to convene a precinct caucus for each precinct within the county. The CC shall arrange for the caucus site or sites in accordance with dates and rules laid out in *Code of Iowa* Section 43.4 and in the IDP Constitution. When there are fewer caucus sites than precincts, each precinct convening at a communal site shall conduct its own separate caucus.**
- B. Those members of BHCD in attendance, who are eligible to vote at a caucus, shall elect by majority vote in each precinct two committee members to the CC and as many representatives to the County Convention as are permitted by IDP regulations. They may also elect any number of alternates to serve on the CC when an elected representative is unable to do so. Additionally, they shall elect by majority vote members for the County Convention's Platform Committee and Committee on Committees for the County Convention to represent their precinct and cast the votes to which it is entitled, and they may elect alternates to serve if an elected representative is unable to do so. They shall then conduct any other business to come before them.**

Section 1.2 Caucuses in odd-numbered years:

- A. Upon instruction from the Chair of the IDP, the BCHD County Chairperson or designee shall call for a caucus or caucuses to be held during the first Quarter of odd-numbered years. The CC shall determine where each precinct will meet, within individual precincts or jointly in one or more centralized, convenient locations within the county.**
- B. Each precinct, by majority vote of those members of BHCD in attendance, shall discuss and may identify priorities regarding platform resolutions of such issues of national, state, and local interest as those in attendance may determine, and forward such resolutions to the County, District, and State platform committees as the members may wish to take; discuss organizing plans in accordance with the strategic plan of the CC; nominate a PCM to fill a vacancy on the CC from that precinct (the newly elected representative will not be seated on the CC until approved by a majority vote of the CC at its next scheduled meeting); nominate alternate committee members to the CC.**

Section 2: County Convention: Pursuant to the provisions of *The Code of Iowa*, Chapter 43, The Black Hawk County Democratic Party Convention shall convene in even-numbered years following the precinct caucuses at a date and time established by IDP and at a place designated by the BHCD Central Committee.

The BHCD Party Chairperson, or a designee, shall call the County Convention to order, and shall conduct an election of a permanent Chairperson who shall preside over the County Convention until adjournment. Delegates to the County Convention shall do the following:

- **adopt a Black Hawk County Democratic Party platform;**
- **elect delegates to the district and state party convention meetings according to the rules established by the IDP;**
- **elect delegates to the district and state party convention meetings according to the rules established by the IDP;**
- **elect members for various District Convention committees;**
- **conduct other business deemed to be in the interest of the BHCD.**

Section 3: Special Conventions: The Black Hawk County Democratic Central Committee when empowered by the Iowa Democratic Party shall call conventions of the Black Hawk County Democrats. For any such Special Convention the BCHD Chairperson or designee must give adequate notice not less than four, nor more than twenty, days of the impending special convention through both print and electronic media.

Section 4: Central Committee Meetings: The Black Hawk County Democratic Central Committee shall meet monthly at a scheduled date, time, and place announced by the CC unless the CC chooses to suspend or shift the meeting date by a two-thirds affirmative vote of members voting “aye” or “nay” at a regularly scheduled meeting. In case of emergency, the Chairperson at their discretion may cancel or reschedule a Central Committee meeting.

Section 5: Quorum: Twenty percent (20%) of members (excluding vacancies) shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting business at a regularly scheduled meeting of the CC.

Article V Offices

Section 1: Officers: The Officers of the Black Hawk County Democratic Central Committee shall include Chairperson; Vice-Chairperson; Secretary; Treasurer; and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Chair.

Section 2: Election and Term of Office: The Central Committee shall elect its Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, and other such officers as it deems necessary, at its biennial organizational meeting, which shall take place in the odd numbered years at a time set by the Central Committee between March 1 and April 1. They shall assume office upon election and serve a two-year term between Central Committee organizational meetings, or until their successors have been chosen. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Chair shall be elected at the County Convention in even-numbered years.

Section 3: Duties of Officers:

Section 3.1: Duties of Chairperson: The Black Hawk County Democratic Chairperson shall be the principal spokesperson for the Democrats of Black Hawk County. This officer shall do the following:

- call to order all Conventions of the County Democratic Party as provided for in Article IV, Section 2;
- preside over meetings of the CC;
- coordinate with the Vice-Chair the activities of affiliated organizations with those of the Central Committee;
- appoint the Chairpersons and members of standing committees with the approval of the Central Committee;
- appoint members of those special committees deemed necessary for the effective development of the County Party;
- engage or discharge personnel compensated by the Central Committee;
- present to the Central Committee for approval any matter deemed necessary for the effective operation of the County Party; and
- perform other duties designated by the Central Committee.

Section 3.2: Duties of Vice-Chairperson: The Black Hawk County Democratic Vice-Chairperson shall assume the duties of the Chairperson during the temporary absence of the Chairperson. This officer shall do the following:

- assume all duties of the Chairperson in the event the Chairperson is unwilling or unable to serve until another Chairperson can be elected; shall
- coordinate with the Chair the activities of affiliated organizations with those of the Central Committee; and shall
- perform other duties designated by the Chairperson.

Section 3.3: Duties of Secretary: The Black Hawk County Democratic Secretary shall record and publish the minutes of all conventions and all meetings of the Central Committee. Additionally, this officer shall do the following:

- prepare those documents, files, and records necessary for the operation of the Central Committee; shall
- prepare and maintain a membership roster of Central Committee members including contact information; and shall
- perform other duties designated by the Chairperson.

Section 3.4: Duties of Treasurer: The Black Hawk County Democratic Treasurer shall be the custodian of all funds of the County Party and may be placed under bond in an amount determined by the Central Committee. This officer shall do the following:

- determine where the County Party funds shall be deposited;

- make receipts and disbursements of funds according to Central Committee policy;
- draw upon the treasury to pay bills due within thirty days after receiving authorization for payment;
- make a report at each Central Committee meeting on the status of the County Party treasury; and
- perform other duties designated by the Chairperson and all duties required by state law.

Section 3.5: Duties of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Chair: The DEI Chair shall lead the BCHD's efforts to promote the recruitment of new members into the BCHD and shall chair the DEI Committee.

Section 3.6: Executive Board: The Executive Board shall include all elected officers of the CC. At its discretion, it may invite Committee Chairs, Team Leaders, elected officials, etc. to its meetings for purposes of clarifying or explaining specific issues, but such invited guests shall not be eligible to vote. The Executive Board is responsible for:

- a) Preparing the agenda for all meetings of the CC and distributing the agenda to the members of the CC at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting.
- b) Considering any proposal received from an individual member of the BHCD at least two weeks prior to a scheduled meeting and determining its fitness to be placed on the agenda for that meeting.
- c) Reviewing such recommendations received from established Committees and Teams at least two weeks before a scheduled meeting and ensuring that the recommendations are placed on the agenda together with the Executive Board's recommendation or concern.
- d) Advising and assisting the Chairperson in the efficient operation of the organizational machinery of the BHCD.

Section 3.7: Additional Officers: Nothing in this Article prevents the CC from electing additional officers to share the workload and responsibilities of elected officers. Additional officers, if any, are members of the Executive Board.

Section 4: Officer Vacancies: If an office of the Central Committee becomes vacant by resignation, death, or inability to serve, one of the remaining officers shall serve in an acting capacity. A special election to fill any vacant position shall be held at a meeting of the Central Committee no later than sixty (60) days after the vacancy occurs, with written or electronic notice of the election sent to all Precinct Committee Members at least fourteen (14) days in advance. Any person serving in an acting capacity who is a candidate in the special election shall transfer presiding duties for the conduct of that election to a neutral presiding officer selected by the Central Committee.

Article VI Committees

Section 1: Standing Committees: The Central Committee may establish Standing Committees and Special Committees as required for the effective operation of the BHCD. Potential Standing Committees may include Strategic Planning, Communications, Candidate Recruitment and Support, Fundraising and Events, Community Outreach and Engagement, Rules, Finance, Volunteer Coordination, etc.

Section 2: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee:

Section 2.1: Members: Black Hawk County Democrats are committed to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and shall maintain a committee dedicated to these principles, as mandated by the IDP. The CC shall elect two members to this Committee at its first regular meeting following the biennial organizational meeting or convention. The committee may recruit additional members.

Section 2.2: Duties: The DEI Committee shall promote recruitment of new members into BHCD and encourage their full participation in caucuses, central committees, conventions, platform development, and delegate selection processes, with particular outreach to those groups which have been historically under-represented within the BHCD.

Article VII *Ad Hoc* Teams

The CC may authorize *ad hoc* Teams to address particular issues, interests, and/or problems affecting the efficiency and wellbeing of the organization in its attempt to fulfill its Purpose and Duties as defined in Article II of the Constitution and Bylaws. An *ad hoc* Team's membership and term of service may be fixed or fluid as necessary to accomplish its mission. A Team will choose its leader, who shall ensure that notes are taken of its meetings and shall convey its recommendations to the Executive Board.

Article VIII Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws

Section 1: Amendments proposed to the Central Committee: Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws may be proposed from time to time. A proposed amendment, together with the written rationale for its adoption, must be submitted to the Executive Board, and it will not be considered for advancement until it has been placed on the Notice for a scheduled meeting of the CC. When it has been proposed at an official meeting of the CC where a quorum is present, by simple majority vote it may be debated, amended, substituted for, approved, or sent back to the proposing entity for further refinement. In any event, the first vote will be to advance the proposal to the following meeting. A final majority vote will not be taken until a second reading at a second scheduled meeting of the CC.

Section 2: Amendments proposed at a County Convention: The Constitution and Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds affirmative vote of delegates voting “aye” or “nay” at a regular Black Hawk County Democratic Convention.

Article IX Parliamentary Authority

All questions of parliamentary practice not determined by federal or state law, the rules of the national Democratic Party, the rules of the Iowa Democratic Party, or the Bylaws of the Central Committee shall be decided by the current edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order*.

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