

Portage County Democratic Party

Central Committee Handbook

This document supersedes all prior publications of the Central Committee Handbook of the Portage County Democratic Party as of June 7, 2021. Corrections to this document should be submitted to the Portage County Democratic Party Secretary.

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INTRODUCTION & JOB DESCRIPTION

The Portage County Democratic Central Committee (PCDCC) is comprised of elected and appointed representatives known as Precinct Committeepersons (PC) from each of the 129 precincts in Portage County. As an elected official, the Committeeperson is the voice of the people in the precinct and a communication link between elected officials, the Democratic Party, and the citizens of Portage County. The role of the PC is to encourage community involvement at a grassroots level by providing information and an opportunity to participate in the political process.

To become a Precinct Committeeperson

- You must be a registered voter who lives in the precinct.
- You must have voted in a Democratic Primary in one of the prior two years.
- You cannot have voted in any other Party's Primary in the prior two years.
- You must be elected within your precinct, or appointed by the Democratic Party.

If interested in becoming a PC, contact the Portage County Democratic Party via:

- Email: info@portagedemocrats.org
- Phone: 330-298-DEMS (3367)

Term of Office

- Elections for PC's are held every (4) four years, in the even-year Primary where candidates for Ohio executive offices (i.e., Governor) are chosen.
- If a precinct is vacated, an appointment may be made by recommendation of the Chair with approval by the Central Committee.

Job Responsibilities

The following basic functions are the responsibility of every Precinct Committeeperson:

1. Attendance & Participation in PC Meetings
2. Getting to know the voters in your precinct
3. Communication & Outreach
4. Organizing and participating in Democratic campaign activities
5. Recruiting Precinct Election Officials (Poll Workers) for the Board of Elections
6. Registering Voters
7. Report to the Secretary/Chair of the Central Committee if you move out of your precinct.

ATTENDANCE

Every Central Committee Member is expected to:

1. Attend all scheduled meetings to help organize the party's leadership structure and assist with other items that affect the party.
2. Attend any meeting to vote to fill a vacancy on the PCDDC.
3. All Democratic Committee Officers, Standing Committee Chairs and/or Ad Hoc Chairs must be present to provide reports and updates on any Central Committee activities.
4. If unable to attend a meeting notify the Party Secretary by 12:00 noon of the meeting date to explain the absence.
 1. Absence of two (2) meetings in a calendar year will require the Party Chair (or their designee) to reach out to the member to assist with any issues that may prevent attendance.
 1. Continued absence of a PCDDC member will require the Executive Committee to work with the Central Committee Member to determine whether or not the member wishes to continue their membership.
5. Precinct Committee Members who miss four (4) meetings in a calendar year may be referred to the Portage County Democratic Party Chair for censure, as outlined in Section #2021-05 of the PCDDP Bylaws.

PARTICIPATION

As a Central Committee Member you are a direct link between the Party and the voters. Committee members have many opportunities to participate in the political process. We are only as strong as the efforts of Committee members choose to be. It takes a collective where people with different skills can come together and do amazing things.

The Leadership of the Portage County Democratic Party asks each member to select at least one of the following volunteer opportunities:

1. Serve as an Elected Officer; or
2. Serve on a special committee; or
3. Serve on a standing committee; or
4. Volunteer at the Democratic Party Headquarters; or
5. Volunteer at official Democratic Party events

Additionally, Committee members are encouraged to share Democratic Party events and volunteer opportunities via social media when possible.

COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH

As a precinct committeeperson, one of your most important responsibilities is getting to know the residents of your precinct and to serve as a contact point between them and the Portage County Democratic Party.

The first step is finding out who your voters are! **You can pull a list of registered Democrats in your precinct from the Board of Elections website, or request a copy from the Membership Committee.**

Once you've gotten to know the people in your precinct, it is imperative that you keep the lines of communication open! Find a way to introduce yourself, like going door-to-door, writing letters, calling voters, or sending postcards with important information.

You can also share important updates on social media, like upcoming events hosted by candidates.

Finally, be sure to stay in constant contact with the Central Committee at large. Attending Central Committee meetings for general updates and committee reports, and be sure to check your email for regular updates from the Party.

GETTING TO KNOW THE VOTERS IN YOUR PRECINCT

Now that you know who your voters are, it's time to get to know them better! There are several ways to get to know the people in your precinct. Some examples include:

1. Attending city council or township trustees meetings on a regular basis (as they can be good sources of information regarding local concerns). If you are unable to attend, read the minutes of the meetings.
2. Volunteering in your community at a local food bank, church, school, or other community based organization.
3. Hosting an event in your community for a local candidate (obviously a democratic candidate) or issue.
4. Setting up a voter registration or absentee ballot application event.
5. Sending letters or making phone calls to the Democrats in your precinct of an appropriate age to see if they would like to be a Precinct Election Official.
6. Canvassing door-to-door for your favorite Democratic candidate.

Any or all of the above suggestions will give you a great idea as to the issues facing residents in your precincts and the information collected will allow you to tailor your messages to those concerns when advocating for the election of a candidate.

The heart of Democracy lies in all citizens' right to vote for candidates of their choice and on issues that affect their lives. There are two responsibilities every PCDC member must endeavor to accomplish – Recruiting Precinct Election Officials (Poll Workers) and Registering Voters.

RECRUITING PRECINCT ELECTION OFFICIALS

Each July, the Portage County Board of Elections will send you a letter containing all of the Democrats in your precinct and a list of all of Precinct Election Officials (PEO's) who worked in your precinct the previous year. Committee members must call each PEO on the list to confirm that they are willing to work as a PEO for the upcoming year.

You are REQUIRED to return your list to the Portage County Board of Elections.

You should also send a letter to the remaining Democrats in your precinct to ask if they would consider being a PEO, outlining how to apply, and providing a registration form.

NOTE: You can find a sample letter and the registration link in our member portal online.

Committee Members also have the option to become a Precinct Election Official themselves, and are encouraged to do so where possible.

REGISTERING VOTERS

Committee Members should constantly work to register as many people to vote in their precinct as possible. To accomplish this, you can:

1. Learn how a person can register to vote. (ADD a link to a training page)
2. Send a Voter Registration Form to new neighbors who have moved into your precinct, and people who have dropped off your list. (ADD a link to a voter registration form)
3. Make sure your own voting status is maintained.
4. Schedule Voter Registration events throughout the year.
5. It is the Committee Member's primary legal responsibility to return any completed voter registration cards/form to the Portage County Board of Elections **within ten (10) days of completion** and before the next scheduled voter registration deadline (the dates announced by the BOE as the closing date of registration). **Failure to do so is a violation of the law.**

It is advantageous to deliver voting information personally as a way to get to know your neighbors. You can also answer any questions about change of address, absentee ballots, poll location, and your community

For additional materials on voter registration, copies of required forms, and other resources, visit the PCDP member portal online.

REGISTERING VOTERS (CONTINUED)

Individuals are qualified to register prior to voting in Ohio. Individuals can register to vote if they meet all the following requirements:

1. They are a citizen of the United States.
2. They will be at least 18 years old on or before the day of the general election.
3. They will be a resident of Ohio for at least 30 days immediately before the election in which you want to vote.
4. They are not incarcerated (in jail or in prison) for a felony conviction.
5. They have not been declared incompetent for voting purposes by a probate court.
6. They have not been permanently disenfranchised for violations of election laws.

Completed voter registration forms MUST be returned no less than 30 days prior to the next scheduled election to participate.

Voter Registration and Information Update Form

I am: Registering as an Ohio voter Updating my address Updating my name

1. Are you a U.S. citizen? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No 2. Will you be at least 18 years of age on or before the next general election? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If you answered NO to either of the questions, do not complete this form.			
3. Last Name John		First Name Hancock	
4. House Number and Street (Enter new address if changed) 210 S. Meridian Street		5. City or Post Office Ravenna	
7. Additional Mailing Address (if necessary)		6. ZIP Code 44266	
9. Birthdate (MM/DD/YYYY) (required) 01/23/1937		8. County (where you live) Portage	
10. Ohio Driver's License number OR Last Four Digits of Social Security number (one form of ID required to be listed or provided) 1776		11. Phone Number (voluntary)	
12. PREVIOUS ADDRESS IF UPDATING CURRENT REGISTRATION - Previous House Number and Street			
Previous City or Post Office		Previous County	
Previous State		Previous State	
13. CHANGE OF NAME ONLY Former Legal Name		Former Signature	
14. I declare under penalty of election falsification I am a citizen of the United States, will have lived in this state for 30 days immediately preceding the next election, and will be at least 18 years of age at the time of the general election.		Your Signature ↓ John Hancock Date (MM/DD/YYYY) 01/13/2021	

FOR BOARD USE ONLY
SEC4010 (rev. 4/15)

City, Village, Twp.

Ward

Precinct

School Dist.

Cong. Dist.

Senate Dist.

House Dist.