

Delegates, Conventions and Party Committees for State, District and County Parties

The following are rules for delegates, conventions and committees of major political parties that are established in Michigan Election Law. These rules are extensively footnoted with hyperlinks to the statutes that apply. A ~~strike through~~ indicates that a rule has been waved.

Major Political Parties

Michigan's two major political parties are the Republican and the Democratic Party. These are the parties whose candidate for the office of secretary of state received the highest and the second highest number of votes in the last general election.¹

Party Committees

The state central committee² and the county committee³ are the principle committees of the party with additional committees organized for representative, senatorial and judicial districts⁴.

Precinct Delegates

In all counties, voters nominate delegates to the county conventions of their party.⁵ To be a candidate for delegate to the county convention a person must be a qualified and registered elector residing with, as well as having his or her actual bona fide residence within, the election precinct for which he or she desires to become a candidate.⁶ A person must be 18 years of age or older to be eligible to be a candidate for election as a precinct delegate.⁷

An election precinct is a political subdivision situated entirely within a city or township and has no more than 1 polling place. If there is only one election precinct in a city or township, its boundaries are the same as the city or township in which it is situated.⁸

Delegates to the county conventions are nominated and elected at a primary election held in even numbered years. The number of delegates to the county convention to which each precinct of the county is entitled is certified to the board of election commissioners by the chairperson of the county committee on or before April 1.⁹

¹ [MCL 168.16](#) "Major political party" defined.

² [MCL 168.597](#) State central committee

³ [MCL 168.599](#) Executive committee ... county committee ...

⁴ [MCL 168.601](#) and [MCL.602](#)

⁵ [MCL 168.621](#) Party convention delegates; nomination.

⁶ [MCL 168.624](#)(2) Delegate to county ... conventions; qualifications ...

⁷ [MCL 168.612](#) Precinct ... delegate; age.

⁸ [MCL 168.654](#) Election precincts; definition.

⁹ [MCL 168.623a](#)(1) ... number of delegates to county convention ...

The allotment of delegates to each precinct is made to insure, as near as is practicable, equal apportionment based upon the total vote cast for the candidate of the party for either president of the United States or secretary of state at the last general November election when elections for those offices were held, whichever is later. However, each precinct is allotted at least 1 delegate.¹⁰

A candidate for precinct delegate must file an [affidavit of identity](#) with the county clerk. The affidavit must be received by the county clerk before 4:00 PM on the thirteenth Tuesday before the primary election.¹¹

A write-in candidate for precinct delegate must file a [declaration of intent](#) with the city or township clerk before 4:00 PM on the Friday before the election or with the election inspectors at the polling place before the close of polls on Election Day.¹²

County Conventions

County conventions at which delegates to a state convention are to be selected are held on the date designated by the state central committee and at the time and place that the county committee, through the chairperson, designates.¹³

The Fall County Convention

The county convention held in even numbered years for the purpose of electing delegates to the fall state convention is called the “fall” county convention.¹⁴

The fall county convention is held not less than 8 days nor more than 25 days after the August primary.¹⁵

All county conventions are held on the same day throughout the state. The date is set by the state central committee and included in its call for the state fall convention.¹⁶

The call for fall state convention is issued at least 60 days before the August primaries.¹⁷

The place and hour of meeting of the fall county convention is set by the county committee and included in its call for the fall county convention. The call for fall county convention is issued not less than 45 days before the August primaries.¹⁸

The fall state convention held in even numbered years nominates candidates for state office.¹⁹

¹⁰ [MCL 168.623a](#)(3) ... allotment and apportionment of delegates ...

¹¹ [MCL 168.624](#)(2) Delegate to county ... conventions ... affidavits of identity ...

¹² [MCL 168.737a](#)(3) Write-in vote ... write-in candidate for precinct delegate ...

¹³ [MCL 168.522](#) County conventions; time and place ...

¹⁴ [MCL 168.596](#) Fall convention and spring conventions; definition.

¹⁵ [MCL 168.592](#)(1) County conventions in even number years ... time ...

¹⁶ [MCL 168.592](#)(2) County conventions in even number years ... designation of date ...

¹⁷ [MCL 168.591](#)(1) Commencement of state convention in even numbered years ... issuance of calls.

¹⁸ [MCL 168.592](#)(2) County conventions in even number years ... designation of ... place, and hour of meeting; issuance of call ...

The Spring County Convention

The county convention held in odd number years for the purpose of electing delegates to the spring state convention is called the “spring” county convention.²⁰

The spring state convention is held not less than 37 days before the first Monday of April in every odd numbered year. The spring county convention is held not less than 7 days before the spring state convention. All county conventions are held on the same day throughout the state. The date is set by the state central committee in its call for the spring state convention.²¹

The place and hour of meeting of the spring county convention is set by the county committee and included in its call for the spring county convention. The call for spring county convention is issued not less than 15 days before the spring county convention.²²

The spring state convention held in odd numbered years selects a state central committee consisting of 2 men and 2 women from each congressional district.²³

County Conventions – Seating Delegates

All persons duly elected and certified as delegates must be seated at the county conventions. A person refusing to seat a duly elected and certified delegate is guilty of a misdemeanor.²⁴

A person nominated as a candidate of the party for county office is a delegate at large to the fall county conventions held in the year of the candidate's nomination and to all county conventions held during the term of office for which the candidate was nominated.

A person nominated as a candidate of the party for state legislative office is a delegate at large to the fall county convention held in the year of the candidate's nomination in each county or part of a county contained in the legislative district and to all county conventions held during the term of office for which the candidate was nominated.

The number of delegates at large is in addition to the number of delegates specified in the call for the fall county convention. If a person is elected both a delegate at large and a precinct delegate, a vacancy exists and may be filled.²⁵

Vacancies in precincts resulting from the death of a delegate, the written resignation of a delegate to the chairperson of the county committee, the removal of a delegate's residence from the precinct, or any other reason may be filled for the balance of the unexpired term by a majority vote at the county

¹⁹ [MCL 168.591](#)(1) Commencement of state convention in even numbered years ...

²⁰ [MCL 168.596](#) Fall convention and spring conventions; definition.

²¹ [MCL 168.594](#) County convention in odd years ...

²² [MCL 168.594](#) County convention in odd year; time and place, issuance of call ...

²³ [MCL 168.597](#) State central committee ...

²⁴ [MCL 168.624](#)(2) Delegate to county ... conventions ... seating of delegates; violation as misdemeanor ...

²⁵ [MCL 168.599](#)(5) ... delegates at large ...

convention of the delegates elected and serving. A delegate vacancy may only be filled by a registered elector of the precinct in which the vacancy occurs.²⁶

County Conventions – Electing a Permanent Chair

The convention is called to order by the chairperson of the county committee. The chairperson acts as temporary chairperson until the delegates elect a permanent chairperson. A permanent chairperson is elected before any other business is transacted.²⁷

The chairperson of the county committee, acting as the temporary chairperson of the county convention, reads or has someone else read the list of elected delegates and delegates at large which is furnished by the county clerk. Before reading the list, the chairperson of the county committee deletes from the list the names of delegates that have been certified by the county clerk as disqualified and adds to the list the names of delegates elected to fill a vacancy for the balance of an unexpired term.²⁸

When the name of each delegate on the list is called, the delegate states his or her choice for permanent chairperson. The person receiving the majority of the votes of the delegates present becomes the permanent chairperson of the fall county convention.²⁹

The convention may fill any vacancy occurring in any delegation to the fall county convention by a majority vote of the delegates present. A vacancy may not be filled by any person not a qualified, registered elector residing in the precinct in which the vacancy occurs.³⁰

The convention prescribes the rules and regulations for the conduct of its affairs.³¹

County Conventions – Electing Delegates to the State Convention

A person must be age 18 years or older to be selected as a delegate to the state or national conventions of the party.³²

The county convention chooses the number of delegates to the state convention that it is entitled to choose by the state central committee.³³

~~The delegates to the county convention from each precinct, city, township or district choose the number of delegates to the fall state convention that have been apportioned to precinct, city, township or district.~~³⁴

²⁶ [MCL 168.624d](#) Filling vacancies in precincts.

²⁷ [MCL 168.522](#) County conventions ... election and duties of chairperson ...

²⁸ [MCL 168.522](#) County conventions ... election and duties of chairperson; vacancies ...

²⁹ [MCL 168.522](#) County conventions ... election and duties of chairperson ...

³⁰ [MCL 168.522](#) County conventions ... vacancies ...

³¹ [MCL 168.522](#) County conventions ... rules and regulations.

³² [MCL 168.612](#) ... convention delegate; age.

³³ [MCL 168.592](#)(2) and [MCL 168.594](#)

³⁴ [MCL 168.595](#) Delegates to state conventions; apportionment ...

~~A district for the choosing of 1 delegate may be formed by joining 1 or more contiguous precincts of the same city or township or any cities or township with 1 or more contiguous cities or townships.³⁵~~

~~The county committee apportions to the various precincts, cities, townships or districts the number of delegates it will elect to the fall state convention to which the county is entitled by the state central committee. The apportionment of delegates is included in its call for fall county convention.³⁶~~

~~If any precinct, city, township or district fails elect its apportioned delegates to the fall state convention, the fall county convention elects delegates to which that precinct, city, township or district was entitled.³⁷~~

~~In addition to the delegates to the fall state convention chosen by the fall county convention, all incumbent members of the state legislature are entitled to attend the fall state convention as delegates at large of the county in which they maintain their legal residence. Delegates at large do not have alternates. Delegates at large may attend the convention of the county, counties or portions of counties which they represent in the state legislature and choose to vote in any or all of said county or district caucuses, but have on 1 vote on the floor of the state convention.³⁸~~

Precinct Delegates Reconvene to Elect an Executive Committee

~~Within 20 days following the November election delegates to the fall county convention reconvene at the call of the county chairperson to select members to the executive committee of the party for the county.³⁹~~

~~Delegates select a number of persons equal to the number of county offices and state legislative offices for which candidates were nominated in the last 2 preceding fall primary elections to become members of the executive committee of the party for the county.⁴⁰~~

~~Immediately following the selection of members of the executive committee, including the filling of vacancies, the secretary of the county committee certifies the names and addresses of the persons chosen to the county clerk who immediately notifies each person chosen.⁴¹~~

Executive Committee – Constitution of

~~Together with the delegate-appointed members, the persons most recently nominated at the last 2 preceding fall primary elections for county offices and state legislative offices constitute the executive committee of the party for the county.⁴²~~

³⁵ [MCL 168.595](#) Delegates to state conventions ...

³⁶ [MCL 168.595](#) Delegates to state conventions; apportionment ...

³⁷ [MCL 168.595](#) Delegates to state conventions; apportionment ...

³⁸ [MCL 168.595a](#) Delegates to state conventions; legislators as delegates at large ...

³⁹ [MCL 168.599](#)(1) Executive committee; selection by delegates ...

⁴⁰ [MCL 168.599](#)(1) Executive committee; selection by delegates ...

⁴¹ [MCL 168.599](#)(2) Executive committee; selection by delegates ... certification of names and addresses ...

⁴² [MCL 168.599](#)(1) Executive committee ...

When a new nomination is made for a county or state legislative office, the new nominee replaces the former nominee as a member of the executive committee.⁴³

If a vacancy occurs in the position of delegate-appointed member of the executive committee, the remaining delegate-appointed members fill the vacancy.⁴⁴

Executive Committee – Election of Officers

Within 30 days following the fall county convention the executive committee, acting without the officers of the county committee who are not otherwise members of the executive committee, meets and selects a temporary chairperson and temporary secretary.⁴⁵

The temporary officers serve only during the selection of the officers of the executive committee who also serve as the officers of the county committee for the 2 years beginning on January 1 next.⁴⁶

Candidates for legislative offices consisting of more than 1 county may give a written proxy to other members of the executive committee.⁴⁷

The executive committee appoints a chairperson, a vice-chairperson who shall be of the opposite sex of the chairperson, a secretary, and a treasurer.⁴⁸

The executive committee may appoint as many other officers as it considers proper to carry out the purposes of the committee, and may fill a vacancy in any of its offices.⁴⁹

County Committee

Within 45 days after January 1 of each odd numbered year, the executive committee selects a county committee for the party, the committee consists of not less than 2 members from each township and 2 members from each election precinct in the county.⁵⁰

The term of service of a county committee is 2 years and until the selection of its successor.⁵¹

The chairperson, secretary and other officers of the executive committee of the party in the county are also the chairperson and secretary of the county committee in that county.⁵²

⁴³ [MCL 168.599](#)(1) Executive committee ... replacement of former nominee ...

⁴⁴ [MCL 168.599](#)(1) Executive committee ... vacancy ...

⁴⁵ [MCL 168.599](#)(3) Executive committee ... temporary officers ...

⁴⁶ [MCL 168.599](#)(3) Executive committee ... temporary officers ...

⁴⁷ [MCL 168.599](#)(3) Executive committee ... proxy ...

⁴⁸ [MCL 168.599](#)(3) Executive committee ... appointment of officers ...

⁴⁹ [MCL 168.599](#)(1) Executive committee ... vacancy ...

⁵⁰ [MCL 168.599](#)(4) Executive committee ... county committee ...

⁵¹ [MCL 168.599](#)(4) Executive committee ... county committee ...

⁵² [MCL 168.593](#), [MCL 168.598](#) and [MCL 168.599](#)

The county committee has the right to appoint additional officers which in its judgment are proper to carry out the purposes of the committee, and has power to fill vacancies which may occur in the membership of the committee or in any of its offices.⁵³

Between meetings of the county committee the executive committee has the power and performs the duties of the county committee, including the filling of vacancies in nominations.⁵⁴

The county committee issues the call to fall county convention not less than 45 days before the August primaries.⁵⁵

The county committee issues the call to spring county convention not less than 15 days before the convention.⁵⁶

The county committee apportions to the various precincts and townships of the county the delegates to upcoming conventions.⁵⁷

In a county comprising a single representative, senatorial or judicial district, the county committee is also the representative, senatorial or judicial district committee.⁵⁸

In a county comprising more than 1 representative or senatorial district, the members of the county committee residing in each representative or senatorial district constitute a committee of the representative of senatorial district which elects its chairman and other officers. The chairman has the right to vote on all questions arising in the committee.⁵⁹

Congressional District – Conventions, Caucuses and Committees

At the spring congressional district conventions and the caucuses held at the time of the spring state convention in every odd numbered year, a congressional district chairperson, a vice-chairperson of the opposite sex of the chairperson, a secretary, a treasurer, and a committee of 15 members to serve for 2-year terms or until their successors are duly elected and qualified.⁶⁰

No person is allowed to vote or hold any office or position in any congressional district committee or organization unless he is at that time a resident of that congressional district, except members of the state legislature whose districts are located in whole or in part in the congressional district.⁶¹

⁵³ [MCL 168.599](#)(4) Executive committee ... county committee ...

⁵⁴ [MCL 168.599](#)(4) Executive committee ... county committee ...

⁵⁵ [MCL 168.592](#)(2) County conventions in even numbered years ... issuance of call ...

⁵⁶ [MCL 168.594](#) County convention in odd years ... issuance of call ...

⁵⁷ [MCL 168.595](#) Delegates to state conventions; apportionment ...

⁵⁸ [MCL 168.601](#) County comprising single congressional or judicial district; county committee.

⁵⁹ [MCL 168.602](#) County comprising more than one congressional district; county committee.

⁶⁰ [MCL 168.600](#) Congressional district conventions and caucuses; election and terms of officers and committee.

⁶¹ [MCL 168.600a](#) Congressional district officers; residence requirement, exception.

Fall State Convention

The state convention held for the purpose of nominating candidate for state offices to be voted for at the November election is known as the “fall” state convention.⁶²

The fall state convention is held in even numbered years and commences not less than 60 days before the general November election.⁶³

The state central committee forwards by mail to the chairman of each county committee the call to fall state convention showing the number of delegates to which each county is entitled.⁶⁴

The call is issued at least 60 days before the August primaries.⁶⁵

The date, time, and location of the state convention are designated by the state central committee in its call for a state convention.⁶⁶

The state central committee apportions delegates to the counties in proportion and according to the number of votes cast for the candidate of the party for secretary of state in each of the counties at the last November election. An additional number of delegates are allocated to each county equal to the number of incumbent legislators nominated by the party and residing in the county.⁶⁷

Spring State Convention

The state convention held not less than 37 days before the first Monday of April in every odd numbered year is known as the “spring” state convention.⁶⁸

The state central committee forwards by mail to the chairman of each county committee the call to spring state convention showing the number of delegates to which each county is entitled.⁶⁹

The day, hour and place of meeting are designated by the state central committee in the call issued by the state central committee.⁷⁰

The state central committee apportions delegates to the counties in proportion and according to the number of votes cast for the candidate of the party for secretary of state in each of the counties at the last November election.⁷¹

A certified copy of the call is immediately filed with the secretary of state.⁷²

⁶² [MCL 168.591](#) and [MCL 168.596](#)

⁶³ [MCL 168.591](#) and [MCL 168.598](#)

⁶⁴ [MCL 168.598](#) State central committee; forwarding copy of call for fall state convention ...

⁶⁵ [MCL 168.591](#) and [MCL 168.598](#)

⁶⁶ [MCL 168.591](#) and [MCL 168.598](#)

⁶⁷ [MCL 168.598](#) State central committee ... apportionment of delegates ...

⁶⁸ [MCL 168.593](#) and [MCL 168.596](#)

⁶⁹ [MCL 168.593](#) State conventions in odd years; issuance of call ...

⁷⁰ [MCL 168.593](#) State conventions in odd years ...

⁷¹ [MCL 168.593](#) State conventions in odd years ... apportionment of delegates ...

State Central Committee MCL 168.597

At the spring state convention in each odd numbered year, the party selects a state central committee consisting of 2 men and 2 women from each congressional district.⁷³

The state convention selects a chairman and 2 vice chairmen of the state central committee. The chairman and vice chairmen have the right to vote on all questions arising in the committee.⁷⁴

The state central committee appoints a secretary and a treasurer and such other officers as in its judgment may be proper and has the power to fill any vacancy that may occur in its membership or any of its offices.⁷⁵

The term of service of a state central committee continues until the election of its successor.⁷⁶

County Conventions in Presidential Election Years MCL 168.611

~~At least 90 days prior to the time set for the holding of the national convention, delegates who were elected at to the last fall county convention reconvene to elect delegates to a state convention.~~

~~The number of delegates elected is the same as the number elected to the last spring state convention.~~

All ~~county~~ conventions are held on the same day and time. The date, time and place are fixed by the state central committee.

At least 60 days prior to the time set for the holding of the national convention, delegates ~~elected by the county conventions~~ convene to elect delegates to the national convention.

~~Delegates to a state convention include only those delegate elected at a county convention.~~

Allocation of Delegates to National Convention

The allocation of all delegates and alternates to a national convention is made by the state central committee.⁷⁷

All delegates must be registered electors of the state. Delegates from congressional districts must be registered electors of those districts.⁷⁸

All national convention delegates must be chosen according to procedures and any other qualifications that are established by the state central committee. The procedures and qualifications may include, but

⁷² [MCL 168.593](#) State conventions in odd years ...

⁷³ [MCL 168.597](#) State central committee; members ...

⁷⁴ [MCL 168.597](#) State central committee ... officers ...

⁷⁵ [MCL 168.597](#) State central committee ... officers ...

⁷⁶ [MCL 168.597](#) State central committee ... term of service.

⁷⁷ [MCL 168.618](#) Allocation of delegates to national convention ...

⁷⁸ [MCL 168.618](#) Allocation of delegates to national convention; qualifications of delegates ...

are not limited to guarantees that discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, age, national origin, or economic status does not occur.⁷⁹

Election of Delegates to National Convention MCL 168.619

National convention delegates are elected on a basis that insures that the proportion of the total national convention delegation that is uncommitted or is committed to each presidential candidate equal, as near as is practicable, the proportion of the popular vote that was cast as uncommitted or for each respective presidential candidate of the party's total popular vote at the presidential primary election.⁸⁰

Before an individual may be elected as a delegate to the ~~state convention~~ or national convention, that individual must sign an affidavit indicating either the name of the candidate for president of the United States that he or she is bound to vote for at each state of the nominating process until the end of the first ballot at the national convention unless released from that commitment by the presidential candidate or that the individual is uncommitted regarding the candidates for president of the United States.⁸¹

~~Individuals seeking election as delegate to the state convention, or their designees, file the affidavit with the county chairperson or the chairperson of the district committee. The county chairperson or the chairperson of the district committee files a copy of that affidavit with the chairperson of the state central committee.~~⁸²

~~Individuals, or their designees, who have not filed an affidavit the county chairperson or the chairperson of the district committee and~~ are seeking election as a delegate to the national convention must file the affidavit with the chairperson of the state central committee.⁸³

If the individual names a presidential candidate in the affidavit, that individual must be certified by the presidential candidate or the presidential candidate's designee as a delegate committed to that presidential candidate.⁸⁴

If a vacancy occurs in the elected delegation, it is filled by an alternate selected by the caucus for the candidate to whom the original delegate was committed. The alternate is required to meet the same qualifications of the delegate being replaced.⁸⁵

A person who is a delegate at large to a state convention of the party by virtue of being a member of the state legislature does not participate in the selecting of delegates to the national convention but may participate in other convention business.⁸⁶

⁷⁹ [MCL 168.618](#) Allocation of delegates to national convention ... selection procedures.

⁸⁰ [MCL 168.619](#)(1) National convention delegates; basis of election ...

⁸¹ [MCL 168.619](#)(2) ... delegates ... affidavit ... and [MCL 168.562b](#) Election as delegate ... signing affidavit ...

⁸² [MCL 169.562b](#) Election as delegate to ... national convention... filing ...

⁸³ [MCL 169.562b](#) Election as delegate to ... national convention... filing ...

⁸⁴ [MCL 168.619](#)(2) National convention delegates ... certification ...

⁸⁵ [MCL 168.619](#)(3) National convention delegates ... vacancy ...

County Conventions to Elect Delegates to State Conventions Waived

The statutory requirements for the selection of delegates after the election of delegates to the county convention are waived if there is a conflict with a rule of the party.⁸⁷

These rules for delegates, conventions and party committees have been taken from Michigan Election Law by Ernest A Whiteside, 14224 S Dixie Hwy, Monroe MI 48161 (734) 735-0494; send email to ernie.whiteside@gmail.com. Whiteside is NOT an attorney. These rules are a best effort summary of the statutes organized for easy reading and are NOT legal advice. Those wishing to better understand the statutes are encouraged to utilize the hyperlinked footnotes and/or to read [Michigan Election Law Chapter XXV](#) and [Chapter XXVI](#) which are hyperlinked.

Very little effort has been made in this summary to compare the rules found in Michigan Election Law with the [Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party](#) or any of the District or County Parties. Strikethroughs are the result of Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party that allow all qualified voters who have been members of the Michigan Democratic Party for at least thirty days and all duly elected precinct delegates who are members at the time to be delegates to all state conventions of the party. Allocation of delegates to counties for election at county convention is only for the allocation of delegates who will set on the Credentials Committee and the Rules Committee.

⁸⁶ [MCL 168.619](#)(4) National convention delegates ... legislator ...

⁸⁷ [MCL 168.620a](#) Law applicable to selection of delegates ...