

**Constitution of the Iowa First Congressional District  
Democratic Central Committee** Ratified 10 December 2011,  
Amended 3 December 2016

**Article I—Title**

The name of this organization shall be the Iowa First Congressional District Democratic Central Committee—Iowa, herein after referred to as the First District Committee.

**Article II—Aims and Purposes**

**Section 1.** The purpose of this organization shall be to perpetuate a representative, effective, and responsible Democratic party organization; to advance the interests of the Democratic Party at the county, congressional district, state, and national levels; to sustain and advance the principles of social justice and democracy; and to uphold civil rights, civil liberties and constitutional government.

**Section 2.** This organization shall be primarily concerned with the election of Democratic members of the United States Congress. Additionally, the organization shall be responsible for assisting the election of state legislators whose districts cross county lines within the First Congressional District, serving as a liaison between the county Democratic organizations and the Democratic State Central Committee, and providing a forum at which county leaders can discuss matters of mutual concern. This is not meant to exclude support of other races deemed important to the district. In odd numbered years, this organization shall conduct a district workshop.

**Section 3.** The First District Committee is an independent Democratic Party committee. The First District Democratic Convention, held biennially, shall be the supreme governing body of this organization. Nothing in this constitution shall abrogate the constitution of the Iowa Democratic Party or the Code of Iowa. To the extent that any provisions of this constitution is determined to be in conflict with the constitution or statutes of the state of Iowa; or rules and regulations of the national or state Democratic Party; that provision is deemed null and void.

**Article III—Authority**

**Section 1.** The highest ruling authority of the First District Committee between biennial conventions shall be the general membership.

**Section 2.** Between membership meetings, the highest authority shall be the Executive Board.

**Section 3.** Between Executive Board Meetings, the highest authority shall be the chairperson.

**Section 4.** Maximum disbursements between membership meetings shall not exceed \$100 as approved by the Chairperson and must be reported at the next membership meeting. This section shall not prevent the membership from authorizing prior approval of routine expenditures. No additional expenditures should be incurred between membership meetings, but the Executive Board can approve funding for unexpected necessary expenses up to \$500, which must be reported at the next membership meeting.

**Article IV--Membership**

**Section 1.** Membership in this organization shall consist of the eight (8) First District State

Central Committee persons, any other State Central Committee members living in the district, and one representative of each county for each 5,000 votes cast for the Democratic candidate for Congress in the last two General Elections. Each county shall have at least three representatives.

**Section 2.** One representative from each county shall be the County Chairperson or the Chairperson's designee; other representatives and alternates shall be elected by each County Central Committee at the first regular meeting following the County organizational meeting.

**Section 3.** Representatives are expected to attend all regular and special meetings. The County Chairperson shall be notified, by mail, should any representative fail to attend 3 consecutive meetings. The County Chairperson shall notify the District Executive Board of action taken. Representatives may be excused by the Executive board, for cause.

**Section 4.** Each county may elect alternates to the District Committee to serve as substitutes at District Central Committee meetings if the elected committee person is unable to attend. The number of alternates should not exceed twice the number of apportioned county representatives to the District Committee. It is the responsibility of the county chair and the elected representative to notify an alternate who is to be a substitute at a given meeting.

**Section 5.** A copy of this constitution shall be provided to each First District Committee person.

**Section 6.** A revised list of all First District Committee members and alternates shall be provided to each member within three (3) months after the County Conventions and Biennial Organizational Meetings.

**Section 7.** The organization may assess dues to each county based on the number of authorized members from that county.

#### **Article V--Executive Board**

**Section 1.** The Executive Board shall consist of the eight (8) First District State Central Committee persons, the vice-chairperson, secretary, treasurer, the affirmative action chair, and three members-at-large nominated by the chairperson from counties not otherwise represented on the executive board and ratified by the general membership. DNC and ~~Constituency Caucus members~~ Chairs/Vice-Chairs of the State Constituency Caucuses residing in the District, **if any**, may attend executive board meetings as **non-voting** ex-officio members.

**Section 2.** The Executive Board may convene prior to each meeting of the organization and make recommendations to the organization, including recommendations to revise or edit the meeting agenda.

**Section 3.** The Executive board shall serve as a candidate recruitment committee for the First District Congressional seat.

#### **Article VI—Officers**

**Section 1.** The officers of this organization shall consist of a chairperson who is a member of the State Central Committee, **;** **also** **The** **V**ice-**C**hairperson, **S**ecretary, and **T**reasurer who can be either First District State Central Committee **M**embers, First District **M**embers-at-large or other registered Democrats of the District.

**Section 2.** The chairperson shall preside at meetings and have general charge over the

affairs of the organization.

**Section 3.** The vice-chairperson shall assume the duties of the chairperson in the absence of the chairperson and assist the chairperson in the discharge of his/her duties. In the event the chairperson is unable or unwilling to serve, the vice-chairperson shall assume the office of chairperson until a new chairperson, who is a member of the State Central Committee, is elected at the next scheduled meeting.

**Section 4.** The secretary shall have custody of all books, records and papers of the organization, except those specifically required to be in the possession of the treasurer. The secretary shall be responsible for maintaining attendance, records and minutes.

**Section 5.** The treasurer shall have custody and keep account of all monies for the organization, and provide a financial report at each meeting. The treasurer shall be responsible for all reports required by federal and state campaign finance disclosure laws. Immediately after the election of officers, or any other time there is a change in the office of treasurer, the chairperson presiding at that meeting shall appoint a committee to audit the books and report at the following general meeting.

**Section 6.** Officers shall be elected at the first meeting of the organization following each First District Democratic Convention. Each term of office shall begin immediately following election and continue two (2) years. In the event any officer is unable or unwilling to serve, a new officer shall be elected at the next meeting after the vacancy occurs. Written notification of such vacancy and pending election shall be postmarked first class at least ten days prior to the election.

### **Article VII—Meetings**

**Section 1.** The First District Committee shall meet at least once every three months at a time and place agreed upon by the membership. The chairperson, or a majority of the Executive Board, may call special meetings as deemed necessary, and shall call a meeting within fifteen (15) days upon receipt of written petition of twenty (20) percent total membership representing at least three (3) counties. Items of business shall be so noted in the call.

**Section 2.** The secretary shall mail notice of meetings and minutes of the previous meeting to each member of the organization postmarked first class at least ten (10) days prior to the date for such meeting. E-mail is an acceptable notification alternative for those who select that method.

**Section 3.** All meetings of the organization shall be open to the public.

**Section 4.** No business of the organization shall be conducted in the absence of a quorum which shall consist of 20% of the total membership with at least five (5) counties represented.

**Section 5.** All Democratic polling places, Caucus locations and Convention sites and all Central Committee and Constituency Caucus Meetings at all levels are to be accessible to People with Disabilities for the purposes of the type of activity to be conducted at each site. It shall be the responsibility of the Temporary/Permanent Chair of any event to ensure that there is a timely and appropriate opportunity for those who have a need for an accommodation to request such, using a form on the First District website. It will be acceptable and encouraged for coordinators of any activity to anticipate requests for accommodation, whether received or not, and to act proactively. At no time will the members of the majority require a minimum number of people to make the same request

for it to be considered. Any materials in a printed format shall also be in the acceptable standard for large print (see definition).

**Section 6.** Members shall be entitled to full participation via conference call if they unable to physically attend the meeting. The District Executive Board should explore cost-sharing with the state to provide CART for conference calls.

### **Article VIII—Amendments**

Amendments to this constitution must be presented in written form at a regular meeting of the of the organization, and then approved by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at the following meeting.

### **Article IX—Ratification**

This constitution shall be ratified and take effect upon approval by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at a regular meeting of the organization.

### **First District Membership Index:**

#### ***First District Counties in Geographical Order:***

Worth, Mitchell, Howard, Winneshiek, Allamakee,  
Bremer, Fayette, Clayton,  
Blackhawk, Buchanan, Delaware, Dubuque,  
Marshall, Tama, Benton, Linn, Jones, Jackson,  
Poweshiek, Iowa

#### ***First District Counties in Alphabetical Order:***

Allamakee, Benton, Blackhawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Clayton, Delaware, Dubuque, Fayette,  
Howard, Iowa, Jackson, Jones, Linn, Marshall, Mitchell, Poweshiek, Tama, Winneshiek,  
Worth

#### **Possible Other State Central Committee members living in the District:**

Democratic National Committee people

State Rules Chair / Vice-Chair\*

Platform Chair/Vice Chair\*

Constituency Caucus Chair/Vice Chair\* (The Constituency Caucuses are; Asian-American / Pacific Islander, Black, College and Young Democrats, Disability, Labor, Latino, Native American, Progressive, Rural, Senior/Retiree, Stonewall, Veterans, and Women's.)

\* If Chair and Vice-Chair both live within the First Congressional District, the Vice-Chair will only receive a vote in the Chair's absence or if the Chair occupies another voting position. In all circumstances, the constitutional provision of one person, one vote will be followed.

#### **Glossary:**

Acceptable Large Print Definition: 18 point sans-serif type font. At least 10 % of materials should be in large print.

Ex-Officio - Position held because of holding another position; Non Voting Member.

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**BY-LAWS OF the First Congressional District Democratic Central Committee**  
Ratified 9 February 2013

[Article 1 of the By-laws define what each subcommittee does. Following Article 1 are membership lists for each subcommittee. The membership lists are not a permanent part of the By-laws, but are included for ease of information]

**BY-LAWS OF the First Congressional District Democratic Central Committee**

**Article 1- Standing Committees**

Section 1. ~~Each Central Committee member shall be appointed by the Chairperson with the advice of the Executive Board to serve on one of the four Standing Committees: Education, Finance, Program, and Issues. The Convention Committees are Arrangements, Credentials, Platform, and Rules. They may be recalled as needed between conventions. At no time will it be permissible for a meeting to be of such length that it places an undue financial or physical burden upon its members.~~

Section 2. The District Affirmative Action Chair is elected at the District Convention. The District Affirmative Action Committee consists of the District Affirmative Action Chair, the Affirmative Action Chairs from each County, and any State, District or County Constituency Caucus Chairs living in the District.

Section 3 The First District Democratic Central Committee Standing Subcommittees will be Education, Finance, Program, and Issues. Each Standing Subcommittee shall report verbally at a Central Committee meeting and/or by filing a written report with the Secretary concerning its activities at least quarterly and, if necessary prepare and submit a budget to the Treasurer annually.

Section 4. There shall be an Education Committee whose duties shall be:

- A. To coordinate publicity efforts, such as writing and disseminating press releases, other printed materials, and radio or television spots with the other standing committees.
- B. To coordinate with the Webmaster and Social Media Moderator to post summaries or pictures of events on <http://www.idp1st.info> and <https://www.facebook.com/iowa1stCDDemocrats> and to coordinate the dissemination of our message to target audiences, such as activists through the e-mail or mailing list or to the public through media such as newspaper, radio, or television.
- C. To assist the Iowa Democratic Party and the First District Counties in developing handouts and trainings for biennial organization meetings/caucuses, non-partisan-election-year workshops, election-year

- Caucus-to-Convention planning and get-out-the-vote.
- D. If requested by candidates for Iowa House or Iowa Senate whose districts cross county lines, to assist in coordinating the efforts of such candidates with county parties or other candidates.
  - E. To notify candidates of events within the First Congressional District, including community, party and candidate events and to coordinate candidates' events with the other committees.
  - F. Compile a list of Democratic office holders and general election candidates in the First Congressional District with their preferred contact information.

Section 5. There shall be a Finance Committee whose duties shall be:

- A. To prepare and submit a written budget annually for the Central Committee's approval and to prepare and submit an internal written year-end report including account performance and review of fund raising events.
- B. To review budget status monthly to assure conformity to the budget and fund-raising goal and to collect information concerning fund raising and spending by the First Congressional District Democratic Party, to evaluate the priorities of spending policies, and to make recommendations to the Central committee through the Executive Board.
- C. To develop and carryout fund raising plans approved by the Central Committee and in cooperation with the Executive Board, critique the effectiveness of fund raising projects.
- D. To review and approve budgets from all Standing Subcommittees.
- E. To oversee the planning, coordinate participation, and help to implement fund raising events and other Democratic Party activities (such as candidate's forums or debate parties if appropriate) by finding a "Point Person" (someone in charge) for each activity.
- F. To promote the image of the First Congressional District Democratic Party by encouraging participation in community activities *i.e.*: collecting food for the Labor Harvest, give a day for Habitat for Humanity, community or neighborhood cleanup day, and seasonal assistance for the elderly etc.

Section 6. There shall be an Issues Committee whose duties shall be:

- A. To gather facts and information on issues identified and confirmed through the local platform process and to prepare issue position papers based on research for adoption and use by the Central Committee and local and state candidates.
- B. To lead and encourage "letters to the editor" efforts utilizing issue position papers and Issue research.
- C. To inform and distribute to the public the platform and issue positions of the First Congressional District Democratic Party and to coordinate with the Webmaster and Facebook Moderator the posting of articles as needed or desired.
- D. To answer questions or research answers to questions at Central Committee meetings concerning both the First Congressional District and Iowa Democratic Party's Platforms.

- E. To coordinate with District Affirmative Action committee in the identification of supportive constituency groups, and the development of a relationship with our party. [Including identifying candidates or other speakers and matching them with supportive constituency groups.]

Section 8. There shall be a Program Committee whose duties shall be:

- A. To update and maintain the information in the Voter Action Network (VAN), the Iowa Democratic Party's (IDP) database. The VAN identifies all registered voters in Iowa and the Party uses this database to help grass roots party building through the Get Out the Vote activities. Voter lists and labels can be generated from this database. Access to the information is restricted to persons doing approved Party business.
- B. To communicate with the Party Secretary to maintain and update a list of Central Committee members and to maintain and to update an e-mail or mailing list of Democratic Activists.
- C. To prepare biannually, a handbook for Central committee members and to conduct an orientation for new county representatives. This is also an opportunity to present goals and strategy.
- D. To serve as liaison to the County and State Democratic Parties in planning and implementing Caucuses and Conventions and recruiting people for the First Congressional District Central Committee
- E. Access to information collected by this committee: The executive Board shall determine access policy.

Costs: The Executive Board shall determine if and when fees are appropriate to specific requests for information. With the exception of Presidential campaigns, materials shall be provided at a cost designed to meet the Party's cost for materials. If the First Congressional District Democratic Party provides data to the Presidential campaigns, the cost shall be comparable to but competitive with the Iowa Democratic Party rates.

## Article II - General Rules and Regulations

- The Central Committee shall not raise money for or contribute money to Democratic candidates in primary elections. Central committee members may as individuals however, raise money for and contribute to Democratic candidates in primary elections.
- Special meetings shall be called by the Chairperson within 12 days of a petition signed by at least 10 members of the organization setting forth the matters to be considered at said meeting. The Executive Board or Chairperson may also call a special meeting. The Secretary shall send email notices to those with email addresses. Depending on the time, the Secretary will either send postcard notices or activate the phone tree system with the help of the Volunteer Committee, informing them of the meeting or meeting change— at least seven days in advance. The notice shall include an agenda of the meeting. At special meetings, it shall be out of order to consider items not listed on the agenda of the call for a special meeting.

- All procedural matters not covered in the Constitution and bylaws shall be handled in accordance with the provisions of Roberts Rules of Order Revised.

- These Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of those in attendance at any meeting provided seven days' email or postcard notice of the proposed change of the Bylaws was sent to all members.

- Provisions of these Bylaws may be waived at any duly announced meeting to permit passage of a motion contrary to some provision of the Bylaws provided a motion to waive the specific provisions for the stated reason(s) receives a two thirds affirmative vote of the members present and voting.

- The Central Committee, the Executive Board and the Committees created by them shall refrain from endorsement of candidates in primary election contests; however, members of the Central Committee may as individuals support qualified Democratic candidates of their choice in such ways as they may decide would be in the best interests of the Democratic Party.

- No person shall cast more than one vote, nor shall there be any voting by proxy or absentee ballot.

- Policies not addressed by the Constitution or the Bylaws, but which are ongoing, shall be designated as Standing Resolutions attached to these documents. These policies can be updated at any Central Committee meeting and must be reviewed within three months following the election of each new County Central Committee.

- **From Iowa Democratic Party Constitution Article XII - General Provisions**

*Section 1 - Code of Iowa:* The relevant sections of the Code of Iowa election laws are made a part of this Constitution. No provision of the Constitution is meant to supersede or abrogate any of the provisions of the Statutes of Iowa.

*Section 2 - Absentee Ballots:* No voting by absentee or proxy ballot shall be permitted at any meeting or convention of the state, district, county, or precinct organizations or at any meeting of any organization affiliated with and subordinate to the Iowa Democratic Party.

*Section 3 - Secret Ballot:* No secret ballots shall be used by elected representatives at any convention or central committee meeting.

*Section 4 - Quorum:* No convention shall elect delegates to the next level convention in the absence of a quorum of at least forty (40) percent of the accredited delegates to the convention.

*Section 5 - Open Meetings:* All meetings of Democratic Central Committees and Conventions, and of their committees, shall be open in the same manner as an agency of the state government is required to hold open meetings.

The "Open Meetings Law" requires all members and other interested individuals and the media be provided with an agenda which clearly identifies all items to be acted upon and that the public be allowed to attend the meetings with the following two exceptions.

1. If 90% of the members present and voting declare an item to be too urgent to allow waiting for the next meeting, action may be taken even though it was not clearly identified in the agenda.

2. "Political Strategy" is a reason for going into closed session in addition to those cited in the "Code of Iowa."

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Reference - Iowa's Open Meetings Law (Chapter 21 of the Iowa Code) at a Glance:

What government bodies are subject to the laws? The act defines government body as any board or commission of the state or its political subdivisions or any boards created by government bodies. The act specifically includes all advisory boards and any non-profits who conduct wagering or gambling whose debt falls on the state. Notable exemptions to the definition of public body include: County or district fair committees or agricultural societies

What is a meeting? A gathering in person or by electronic means: formally or informally, of a majority of members of a board, including certain advisory committees, where deliberation or action upon any matter within the scope of the board's policy-making duties takes place.

What is not a meeting? A gathering of members of a board: formally or informally, of a majority of members of a board, including certain advisory committees, for purely ministerial or social purposes, and where there is no discussion of policy or intent to avoid the purposes of the open meetings law.

What kinds of meetings are exempt? No final action can be taken during a closed session (sometimes called Executive Sessions). A governmental body may hold an executive session, with a 2/3 vote of the body, to discuss the following topics: records exempted under the Iowa Open Records Law

Patent applications, litigation strategy and items that fall under attorney-client privilege, licensing examinations and applications, student hearings, current law enforcement investigations, when considering hiring, firing, disciplining or promoting public employees in order to protect the character of the individuals, the purchase or sale of real estate, Termination hearings, Collective bargaining or strategy

Notice requirements - Governmental bodies are required to give at least 24 hours notice of all meetings, which must include the time and location of the meeting and the tentative agenda. The governmental body is also required to notify all news agencies that have requested specific notification of any meetings. The act permits emergency meetings to be held, so long as they are justified within the minutes of the meetings. Subcommittees of government bodies can hold unannounced meetings immediately following or during the open meetings of the committee of which they are apart if they announce those meetings during the larger committee meeting.

More information can be found by going to the Iowa Attorney General's website.

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