



**MARICOPA COUNTY**  
— DEMOCRATIC PARTY —

# PC Handbook

Revised: January 2016

**Precinct Committeeperson:**

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**Legislative District:**

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**Precinct:**

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Paid for by the Maricopa County Democratic Party | Steven Slugocki, Chair | 2914 N  
Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85012 | Not authorized by any candidate or candidate's  
committee

## **FORWARD**

*Congratulations on becoming a Precinct Committeeperson (PC)!*

The PC is the most vital role in the Democratic Party. You are now, in effect, a part of the governing body of both the Maricopa County Democratic Party and your Legislative District committee.

You are the heart and soul and strength of this party. Grassroots Democracy begins with you. You represent the Party to your neighbors and in turn you are the eyes and ears of the Democratic Party at the local level.

This manual is designed to help you understand your role and provide you with information to make your job easier. Your Legislative District (LD) Executive Committee and the members of your district's PC Recruiting and Training Team are there to assist you in helping build a powerful Democratic Party in your precinct and LD. With your active, ongoing help in your precinct, we will succeed in electing good Democrats to all levels of public office.

## **WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A DEMOCRAT**

Democrats are people you see in our community every day. We come from all walks of life and our shared beliefs and values help shape a strong state and nation where every citizen has the opportunity to succeed.

### **WE BELIEVE IN:**

- the right of all citizens to vote without hindrance
- equal opportunity for all citizens
- rewarding honest, hard work with a living wage and a fair tax system
- family values that are more than a political slogan
- quality education that allows all to reach their potential
- freedom from government interference in our private lives and personal decisions
- a diverse populace and a society that benefits from that diversity
- security in our homes and safety on our streets
- separation of church and state
- a strong United States - morally, economically and militarily
- laws and common sense reforms that protect our air, water and food

The Democratic Party serves as a vehicle for bringing together our political aspirations of a large and diverse group of people who share a set of common core political values.

Democrats work to elect public servants who will build stronger communities, a better state and nation for our families today and for generations to come.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Our primary mission is to elect Democrats to public office by building an organization of capable and experienced leaders and volunteers. The challenge before us is to structure and institutionalize a Party that will complement this mission by, but not limited to:

- Organizing at the precinct level
- Registering voters
- Recruiting viable candidates
- Raising funds through various activities
- Participating in public events
- Communicating our message
- Listening to voters regarding their concerns regarding local issues
- Supporting Democratic candidates and officeholders
- Supporting the party principles and/or platform Involving committee members in social activities

## **DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION**

### **DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE (DNC):**

The Democratic National Committee is the governing body of the Democratic Party at the national level, and has responsibility between National Conventions. It plans the convention, sets guidelines for selecting delegates, determines the allocation of delegates to the states, establishes the rules of procedure for the convention, conducts the party's presidential campaign, provides technical and financial support to state party organizations and to many federal, state, and local candidates.

### **ARIZONA DEMOCRATIC PARTY (ADP):**

The State Committee governs the Arizona Democratic Party. The State Committee is subject to Arizona statute and the bylaws of the Arizona Democratic Party. The Precinct Committee members and Legislative District Committees elect the State Committee's members. Each County Committee is entitled to select one State Committee Member for every three elected Precinct Committeepersons in each District. These State Committee Members are elected at the biennial reorganization meetings in autumn/winter of even-numbered years. Also, each County Committee Chairperson is a member of the State Committee. There are 30 Legislative Districts in the state of Arizona each electing one member to the State Senate and two members to the State House of Representatives.

### **MARICOPA COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY (MCDP):**

MCDP's membership consists of all of the Precinct Committee members within the County. Its mission is to elect Democrats to local, county, state and federal offices. Officers are elected at

MCDP's biennial reorganization meeting in autumn/winter of even-numbered years. By population, Maricopa County is the largest county in Arizona and 4<sup>th</sup> largest in the United States, with over 4 million people. There are 19 organized Legislative Districts (of the 30 statewide) in Maricopa County.

### **LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT COMMITTEE (YOUR LD):**

By law, Legislative District Committees consist of Precinct Committee persons (PCs) registered within the District and who live in the precinct they represent. Each precinct is allowed at least one and usually more PCs determined by quota. PCs represent their precinct and are actively engaged in educating and persuading voters plus building a team of volunteers. Ideally, they know the people, the schools, the businesses, and the community centers of their precinct. They understand the issues in their neighborhood.

PC's elect their Legislative District officers, and nominate members to the State Committee. The District Chair serves on the Maricopa County (MCDP) Executive Committee. LD Committees assist in electing Democrats, especially within their Districts. They usually hold open monthly meetings. As required by statute, every two years they hold a reorganization meeting after the General Election.

There is a difference between elected and appointed PCs.

- Elected (by ballot) PCs count towards the district's allowed quota of state committee members, who then represent the State Party, and are the only ones eligible to run for the State Committee and for District, County, and State Party offices at the biennial reorganization meetings. They serve two years, until the next primary cycle. To become an elected PC (in the spring of even numbered years), you will need to circulate a petition and get signatures from (at most) 10 registered Democrats or Independents in your precinct and then have your petition submitted to and verified by the county recorder.
- The County Chair may appoint additional PCs at any time and often relies upon the recommendation of LD Chairs. Final approval is made by the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors at their monthly meetings.

All PCs, both elected and appointed, are eligible to seek election as a delegate to national conventions.

The total of all PCs constitutes the Legislative District (LD) Committee.

A PC must not publicly support a candidate from another party. For example: having the PC's name on their literature, campaign committee, or publicity; speaking on the candidate's behalf at public meetings; putting signs on the lawn; or distributing other party campaign literature.

### **PRECINCTS:**

Precincts are the smallest political units in the country. A precinct is where elections are won or lost. Most importantly, it is your neighborhood. A precinct is made up of one or more Precinct Committeepersons. They lead the precinct working with other volunteers as a team to promote Democratic values and elect Democrats to office.

### **CLUBS and CAUCUSES:**

Clubs and Caucuses are separate organizations and exist within the Democratic family to encourage broader participation. Examples are the Veterans, LGBT, and Progressive Caucuses.

## **PC JOB DESCRIPTION**

The Precinct Committeeperson (PC) serves as the main communication source between the Arizona Democratic Party/Maricopa County Democratic Party and current and future Democrats in his or her precinct. The PC is charged with connecting the people in the precinct to the Democratic Party, and the Party to the People.

The precinct committeeperson is responsible for filling the roles that follow, keeping in mind that it is okay to begin slowly; filling one or two at the start. Your district or county chair is always available to provide support and answer questions. Remember, you are providing a wonderful service to the Party and to your community. Have fun!

- Obtain the precinct map and walking lists for your precinct and familiarize yourself with your neighbors and the geography of your precinct.
- Get to know your Democratic and Independent neighbors:
  - Host a house party and invite your neighbors to talk about politics and issues concerning your precinct. Canvass the precinct using walking list or call list.
  - Keep track of changes in voter data on your lists (change of address or phone, candidate preferences, etc.), and
  - Update the VAN File with the new data (through your Chair or MCDP HQ).
- Register new Democratic voters, either at their door or online.
  - Canvass Democratic households and make sure all eligible voters in the house are registered.
  - Check your local paper for home sales in your precinct to welcome new neighbors and register them to vote as Democrats.
  - Contact members of groups you belong to and register them to vote as Democrats, in person or online.
  - Canvass the non-party-affiliated voters in your neighborhood; encourage them to re-register as Democrats.
  - Encourage voters to sign-up for the PEVL (Permanent Early Voter List).

- Participate in District/County Democratic Party meetings, events, and activities including providing assistance by staffing registration drives and tables, by supporting local candidates, and by taking part in local fundraising efforts.
- Be a visibly proud Democrat -- display yard signs, window signs, campaign buttons, bumper stickers.
- Recruit new PCs and other volunteers in your Precinct and communicate with them regularly. Adding volunteers means you can divide the Precinct for more personal contact with the voters. It also means providing additional support and backup for each other and for your candidates. Develop winning strategies by utilizing the group's collective skills, best practices, contacts, and energy to get the job done!

**PCs will be called upon to do some of the following during campaign season:**

- Reach out to all who want to volunteer within your precinct and get them active.
- Obtain petition signatures and \$5 Clean Election contributions for Democratic candidates to qualify them for the ballot.
- Distribute Party and candidate literature through door-to-door canvassing.
- Help identify where independent voters stand on our Democratic candidates.
- Hold house parties for Democratic candidates.
- Promote vote-by-mail and in-person Early Voting among Democratic supporters (the Permanent Early Voting List – PEVL).
- Help the Party to "chase" early ballots to ensure they are returned.
- Help ensure a strong and effective Get-Out-The-Vote (GOTV) effort in the final weeks of the campaign. The state (ADP) and county (MCDP) parties will design the GOTV Plan, and you will help implement it.
- Recommend Democrats within your precinct to work as Poll Workers on Election Day -- our front line of defense in voter protection to make sure every vote counts.

**MCDP bylaws specify the duties of PCs:**

- Support District, County, and State organizations.
- Assist in registering Democratic voters.
- Canvass and campaign in your precincts on behalf of Democratic Candidates.
- Encourage and assist Democrats and positively ID'd Independent voters with Early Voting (PEVL).
- On Election Day, assist by turning out a maximum Democratic vote (Get Out The Vote -- GOTV).

## **COMMON ABBREVIATIONS:**

**ADP:** Arizona Democratic Party (statewide)

**CD:** Congressional District -- a federal geographic entity (Arizona has 9)

**GOTV:** Get Out The Vote

**LD:** Legislative District -- a state geographic entity (Arizona has 30)

**Leg** (pronounced "ledge"): Arizona State Legislature

**MCDP:** Maricopa County Democratic Party (countywide; 19 organized LDs)

**PC:** Precinct Committee person

**PEVL:** Permanent Early Voter List (Voting by mail in every election)

**VAN:** Voter Activation Network -- web database used by the Democratic Party that houses the names (and other information) of every registered voter