

ROLE OF THE PRECINCT CHAIRMAN

As Precinct Chairman, your #1 goal is to maximize the Republican vote in your precinct. You do this by:

Identifying Voters. Get to know each voter in your precinct. Be the first to welcome new neighbors and let them know you are their *Republican* Precinct Chairman- this can be a good way to start a conversation which can determine their political leanings. Learn who your consistent Republican voters are so you can count on their support. Learn who is a “swing voter” or who does not usually vote, so that you might persuade them to vote Republican. Also know who the Democrats are, so that you can make relationships and have conversations which might switch their views, or so that you can leave them alone when it comes to Republican Party politics. You can request lists of voters from your local elections office or utilize Voter Vault (see “Resources”, the Precinct Chairman manual) to help you with this process. Identifying voters and recording this information is also called “canvassing”.

Registering Voters. Always be ready to register a Republican to vote by becoming a Deputy Voter Registrar (DVR). DVRs take a simple oath from the county Voter Registrar and are then allowed to accept a completed voter registration application card from a new voter and take it to the Voter Registrar. Contact your local Voter Registrar for more information.

Informing Voters. You need to be the political leader in your neighborhood. Keep in touch with Republicans in your area to let them know of current political events and issues, upcoming elections, and opportunities for involvement with the local party, clubs or campaigns. Distribute campaign literature, bumper stickers and yard signs to decorate your precinct.

Turning Out Voters. All the prior steps mentioned lead up to this one. Once you have identified your voters, registered them to vote, and kept them politically informed, it's time to make all of that count- get them to the polls to vote Republican! The most common activities that remind voters to vote are walking door-to-door (“block walking”) and making phone calls (“phone banking”). Assist those needing to vote early by mail (contact your County Clerk for help). Offer to accompany neighbors to their polling place or drive people that need a ride. Efforts to turn out voters are often referred to as “Get-Out-The-Vote” efforts or “GOTV”.

As Precinct Chairman, you also sit on the County Executive Committee. The County Executive Committee is made up of the County Chairman and all the Precinct Chairmen in the county. As the representative of your precinct, you should make every effort to attend each meeting. Your presence counts towards a quorum enabling official business to be conducted. On those occasions you are not able to attend, you should have someone there who will collect any handouts and take notes for you. However, such a substitute is prohibited from voting as your proxy (Sec. 171.026).

As Precinct Chairman, you have responsibilities in your local elections. In addition to maximizing the Republican vote, ways to be involved include:

Primary Election - Campaigning. There is nothing in the Election Code or RPT Rules prohibiting a Precinct Chair from getting involved in contested primary races. However, you should become knowledgeable about your local situation before publicly taking sides in a contested primary race. Contested races sometimes create hard feelings or damage relationships. Becoming involved in a campaign may include going door-to-door (“block walking”), making phone calls (“phone banking”) or handing out campaign material for a candidate.

Primary Election - Working at the Polls. In Primary Elections, County Chairmen (with approval of the County Executive Committee) appoint Election Judges for each precinct in the county, and the Election Judges appoint clerks to assist them. Some County Chairmen require that their Precinct Chairs fill these positions as it can be difficult to recruit all the volunteers it takes to setup, run, and tear down the polling places on Election Day. Working the polls is also a great way to ensure ballot integrity for our Party and to get to know voters in your area. Note, however, that duties involved in closing the polls, completing the paperwork, and delivering the ballot box to the central counting station sometimes will conflict with the Precinct Chairman’s duty to run the Precinct Convention (see “Convention Activity” below). This should be considered by the County Executive Committee when making arrangements for Election Day.

General Election - Campaigning. Precinct Chairs should be eager to assist Republican candidates in any way possible. Becoming involved in a campaign may include going door-to-door (“block walking”), making phone calls (“phone banking”) or handing out campaign material for a candidate. It is particularly important for Precinct Chairs to be involved in these efforts as you know your precinct better than anyone.

General Election - Working at the Polls. In every precinct where our Republican candidate for Governor in a gubernatorial election wins, we are eligible to have a Republican Election Judge in the following General Election. Precincts where our candidate for Governor came in second are entitled to have a Republican as Alternate Judge. Your serving as Judge or Alternate Judge is very important to our Party’s ballot integrity and reduces the need to recruit ballot integrity volunteers. This is further incentive to get-out-the-vote! Names for Election Judges must be submitted by the County Chairman to the Commissioner’s Court the summer preceding the general election; remind them to submit your name!

As Precinct Chairman, you have responsibilities in the convention process. These include:

Precinct Convention. The Election Code designates the Precinct Chairman as temporary chair of the precinct convention (Sec. 174.025). If the Precinct Chair is unable to serve in this capacity, another eligible convention participant may take on the role (Sec. 174.025(b)). Instruction packets on running your precinct convention are

provided by RPT prior to the convention. Also see Texas Election Code Chapter 174, Subchapter B.

State Convention. As grassroots leaders, Precinct Chairmen should try to get elected as delegates to the State Convention at their Senatorial District/County Convention (you did NOT have to be a delegate at the SD/County Convention, but it often helps!). If you are interested in serving on a temporary convention committee, contact your SREC member who makes recommendations to the state chairman for appointments.

Qualifications to be a Precinct Chairman:

- 1) be a resident of the precinct (Sec. 171.023)
- 2) be a qualified voter in that county (Sec. 161.005)
- 3) not be a county, state, or federal public officeholder or candidate for such office, and
- 4) in a general election year, be affiliated with the Republican Party through voting in the Republican primary election or runoff or by oath of affiliation (Sec. 162.001 – 162.012)

Methods for becoming a Precinct Chairman: (Sec.171.022)

Election for two-year term. Candidates for Precinct Chairman run for office in the Primary Election each even-numbered year. A one-page notarized application must be submitted to the County Chairman within a one-month filing period. Individuals may also run as write-in candidates (Sec. 171.0231). If only one candidate's name is to be placed on the ballot, there will be no election and that person will be elected to office (Sec. 171.0221). If there is more than one candidate, the winner is determined by majority vote of those voting in the Republican primary election.

Appointment to fill vacancy. Any eligible person may be appointed to fill a Precinct Chairman vacancy at any time. Appointment is by majority vote of the County Executive Committee present at a properly called meeting with a quorum, unless otherwise stipulated by the Election Code (171.024-5).