



# Central Committee Member Handbook

A Guide to Organizing Your Precinct

Prepared by the Delaware County Democratic Party of Ohio, June  
2018

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Congratulations! As a member of the Delaware County Central Committee, you are now an elected or appointed representative of the Democratic Party at the most local level. You represent the Democrats in your precinct—your neighborhood—serving as a communication link between these people and elected officials, Democratic candidates, and the Delaware County Democratic Party (DCDP).

### The Basics: Finding Your Precinct

Forgotten your precinct name? If so, go to the Voter Search area on the Delaware County [Board of Elections \(BoE\) website](#), enter your address, and make a note of which precinct you're in. To find the exact boundaries of your precinct, go to the [Resources and Data](#) on the BoE site, then click on the [Precinct Map Book](#). Scroll down in the Precinct Map Book PDF file until you find your precinct. And if you're interested in seeing all the precincts in Delaware County, click on the [County Wide Precinct Map](#) on that same page.

The heart of your role as a Central Committee (CC) member is to encourage political involvement at a grassroots level by the people in your precinct. More concretely, you'll provide information and an opportunity to participate in the political process, all aimed at the same goal: electing more Democrats to office. This handbook will help you do this.

### Our Goal: Help Democrats Win

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At the risk of belaboring the obvious, your goal as a CC member is simple: Elect more Democrats at every level. Everything you do in your role as a CC member should be focused on this goal. The work you do can be grouped into three areas:

- **Be sociable:** This means interacting with Democrats in your precinct, building relationships that can help meet our goals. You might do this by going door-to-door (called *canvassing*), holding house parties, or in other ways. However you meet your Democratic neighbors, you'll also need to compile and maintain information on the Democratic voters in your precinct, and maybe help them register

to vote. We win with data, and knowing who all the Democrats are makes getting out the vote more effective.

- ***Be informed:*** Know about voting and elections. You are the elected Democratic party official closest to voters, and so many of them will look to you for guidance about basic election mechanics. Staying informed also means working with the Delaware County Democratic Party in a variety of ways, including attending party meetings, reviewing material the party provides to you, and periodically checking the [DCDP website](#) and [Facebook page](#).
- ***Be supportive:*** An important part of this is raising money for the Delaware County Democratic Party. Even more important, though, is getting out the vote. Achieving our goal of electing more Democratic candidates ultimately means getting more people to vote Democratic in every election. The nuts of bolts of achieving this are an essential part of your role as a CC member. You might also choose to campaign with specific candidates in your district, playing a direct part in helping them win.

What follows takes a closer look at each of these three core activities for Central Committee members.

## Be Sociable

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Politics is about people. As a Central Committee member, your responsibilities mostly boil down to listening and talking to the people in your precinct. In other words, you need to be sociable.

But we're not all sociable in the same way. Maybe you're fine with one-to-one conversations, but the thought of holding a house party makes you nervous. Or maybe your home doesn't lend itself to this kind of gathering, but you think going door-to-door in your precinct is fun.

The key point is that you don't have to do everything described in this section. At least initially, it's okay to focus on your strengths. Also, you don't have to work alone. Be on the lookout for other Democrats who are willing to help you, especially with the things that are more challenging for you.

## Compile Information about Democrats in Your Precinct

As a CC Member, one of your most important responsibilities is to collect and maintain accurate contact information about Democratic voters in your precinct. The place to start doing this is by getting a *precinct voter list*. This list is just what it sounds like—a list of voters in your precinct—and getting it is simple. The DCDP will start you off with a paper list of all the registered Democrats in your precinct.

For those who are comfortable using electronic spreadsheets we highly recommend downloading your own precinct list. It is quick, easy, and very effective in terms of tracking and sorting information of your constituents. To download your own list go to the [Voter Reports](#) area of the BoE website, then specify the options shown in the example below (of course choose your own precinct name). Click “Start Processing”, and once completed, click “Download My File”. The file will be saved in your Downloads area. You will be able to open the file in Excel or Google Sheets—showing all of the selected voters in your precinct organized by address.

### Voter Reporting

The Voter Information was last updated: 6/19/2018 5:52:54 AM

**Output Format**

- PDF Labels (Avery 5160 Format, do not scale printing)
- PDF Report
- Downloadable File (Comma Separated Values)  Household?  Include Voter Districts?

**Select Voters that only voted in:**

11/7/2017 General Election ▼

**Include Voters with the following Current Party Affiliations:**

- Democratic  Republican  NonPartisan (Includes 'others')  Constitution  Green  Libertarian  Socialist

**Additional Filtering:**

- Filter On Precinct  Filter On District  No Filtering

Beginning Precinct: 130 POWELL B ▼

Ending Precinct: 130 POWELL B ▼

**How would you like the output sorted?**

- Alphabetical (sorted by Voter Name)
- Precinct, Alphabetical (sorted by Precinct, then Voter Name)
- Walking List (sorted by Voter Address)
- Precinct, Walking List (sorted by Precinct, then Voter Address)

**Do you wish to include voter Mailing Addresses in addition to Residential Addresses?**

- Yes
- No

The data in your precinct voter list includes each registered voter's name, postal address, and primary voting history (which is how we know they're Democrats). If you want different information about the voters in your precinct, you can change the options on this form to generate exactly what you're looking for. Here are some examples:

- The options selected above return all voters who voted in the November 7, 2017 general election. You can also choose to see voters from other elections, such as the most recent primary election. Or you can choose "No Election Filter".
- This example returns just Democrats. If you want to see, say, Democrats and NonPartisan voters, you can also check the NonPartisan button under the "Include Voters ..." heading (not a bad idea to have a record of the NonPartisan voters in your precinct.)
- This example also returns voters in order by their address. This is generally what you'll want, since a fundamental use of your voter list is to create *walk lists*; organized lists of voters in your precinct that guide door-to-door canvassing.

Make the most of this list—it's a valuable tool. Your precinct voter list is the key to knowing the voters in your precinct, and it's essential for recruiting volunteers to work with you, hold fundraisers, identify potential candidates, and more. As a CC member, the people on this list are your core constituents.

The list isn't perfect, however, and you will want to maintain and improve it. Maybe there are new Democratic voters in your precinct, for example, or perhaps some have moved away. More important, this data (which comes from the Board of Elections) doesn't include phone numbers or email addresses. As described later, you'll need to do some work to acquire this information and maintain it on your voter list.

### **Understanding your Electronic Voter List**

The electronic version of the voter list provides a lot more information than the paper versions. Most of the list is very straightforward, and provides fairly detailed voting data. [Appendix 5](#) provides a quick overview of some of the data categories that will help you make the most of this information.

## **Interact with Democrats in Your Precinct**

It can't be said too often: Politics is people. Being an effective CC Member means interacting face-to-face with the people in your precinct. There are two main ways to do this, and both are important: door-to-door canvassing and Blue Block parties.

### **Door-to-Door Canvassing**

Door-to-door canvassing is just what it sounds like: going from house to house in your precinct, talking one-on-one with your neighbors. Recall that you are the representative of the Democratic Party in your precinct—you're an elected official--so to do your job as a CC Member, you need to know the Democrats in your district. Just as important, they need to know you.

The best way to do this is to walk your precinct, introducing yourself to every Democrat on your precinct voter list. There's never a bad time to do this, but a good time is shortly after you take on the CC member role. You might also do door-to-door canvassing at other times, such as before elections, but whenever you do it, remember that you need to collect contact information—you always want to improve your precinct voter list. You should carry a clipboard and invite the people you speak with to provide their name, email, and phone number, information you can later transfer to your precinct voter list. For more on how to effectively canvass your precinct, see [Appendix 1: Canvassing Door-to-Door](#).

### **Blue Block Parties**

Another way to get to know your Democratic neighbors is to hold regular Blue Block parties, social events centered around the Democratic Party and our agenda. These parties can range from small gatherings in a home to larger parties at a park or other venues, and they let you meet and talk with other Democrats in your precinct. These events help your neighbors get to know each other better, letting them know that they're not the only Democrats in the area. Keep your Blue Block parties simple—try mid-afternoon or after-dinner-style events—so that repeated gatherings don't become a burden. For more on how to run a Blue Block party, see [Appendix 2: Hosting a Blue Block Party](#).

### **Be Sociable, But Not Too Sociable**

Remember that some of the information you receive from the national, state, and county Democratic Parties is private and confidential. This includes contact information about voters in your precinct, Central Committee correspondence, and more. This means that you shouldn't share copies of this information with anybody else, and it also means that you'll need to return this information to the county party upon request. We all need to make sure that the work we do remains secure.

Also, discussions with the media should generally be left to the county party leadership and candidates. If you are approached by the media, please speak first with the county party chair for recommendations and talking points.

### **Register People to Vote**

One of the basic services you should provide to people in your precinct is helping them register to vote.

The main qualifications for registering to vote in Ohio are as follows:

- You must be a citizen of the United States.
- You must be at least 18 years of age on or before the date of the next General Election.
- Seventeen-year-olds can register and vote in a Primary Election if they are going to be 18 on or before the General Election.
- You must be a resident of the State of Ohio for at least 30 days prior to voting.
- You must reside at the address at which you seek to register.

Voter registration ends 30 days before Election Day, so make sure all registration forms are turned in to the Board of Elections by then. If this isn't done, your newly registered voters will not be able to vote in the upcoming election.



As a CC member, you should download a sample voter [registration form](#), sample [absentee ballot application](#), and any other relevant voter information from the Voter Information area of the Delaware County Board of Election [website](#). The State of Ohio now has “no excuse” absentee voting or early voting, which means that any registered voter can either request an absentee ballot without providing a reason or vote early in person. Voters can fill out a request form to vote by mail (ballots will be sent to their home address), or they can vote early in person at the Board of Elections generally starting 25 days before a primary, 35 days before a general election, or as soon as the ballots are available. Requests for absentee ballots can be made at any time by filling out the absentee ballot application and turning it in to the Board of Elections. Ballots will not be mailed until around 30 days before Election Day.

## Be Informed

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Whether or not you feel like an expert on politics, expect the Democrats in your precinct to see you that way. This gives you a great opportunity to educate your neighbors about both the mechanics of voting and the Democratic Party in general.

### Know About Voting and Elections

People in your precinct will look to you for information about voting and elections. Here are the main things you need to know:

- How to register to vote: To create or change a voter’s registration, the simplest approach is to do it online at the [Ohio Online Voter Registration site](#).
- Where people in your precinct vote: Once again, the web is your friend. Voters can go [to the Polling Locator on the BoE website](#), enter their address, and learn where they should vote (**hint:** include the street name, but not the street indicator: Rd, Blvd, St., etc.). Another option is to perform a [Voter Search](#) on the BoE site.
- How to submit an absentee ballot: It’s easy. The voter can download an [absentee ballot application](#) at the BoE site, fill it out, then return it to the address at the top of the form.

- The dates of upcoming elections and early voting schedules: consult the Voter Information area of the Delaware County Board of Elections [website](#), look for the link: “Absentee Vote Center Hours & Deadlines”.

This isn’t an exhaustive list, but these are among the most common questions you’re likely to hear. For other questions related to elections and voting in your precinct, the best place to look for an answer is the Delaware County Board of Elections [home page](#).

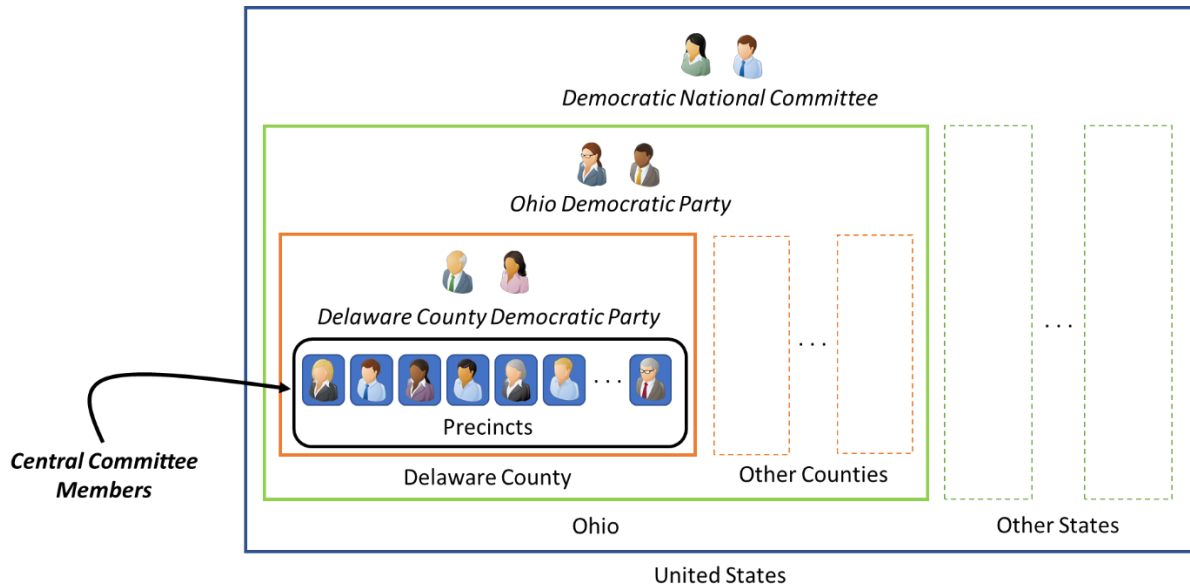
You can also help voters in your precinct in other ways. For example, the DCDP will create Sample Ballots during the periods leading up to elections. These include things like election dates, candidates, and more. You can distribute this to the Democrats in your precinct, helping make sure they know how to make their voice heard. And if you get questions you can’t answer, just contact the Delaware County Democratic Party; they’re here to help you. You can also download [Sample Ballots](#) from the Board of Elections website. This will be very helpful during off-year elections.

**Download the free Ohio Voter Info App.** If you own a smartphone you can put the power of Ohio Voter Information at your fingertips. Once installed on your smartphone this app allows you to perform voter searches, locate polling places, view sample ballots, and more--much of what you can do on the Board of Elections website. Most election workers tell us this is an indispensable tool and improves how they communicate and work with voters.

To get the App: For iPhone users, go to the App Store. For Android, go to Google Play. Search for “Ohio Voter Information”.

### **Work with the Delaware County Democratic Party**

Remember: You’re not alone. Every CC member can count on the support and assistance of the broader Democratic Party. But to work effectively with the party, it’s useful to know how the whole thing is structured. The figure below shows the overall organization of the Democratic Party, along with the fundamental role you play within it.



At the top is the Democratic National Committee (DNC), providing leadership for the Democratic Party across the country. Beneath this, each state has its own state-level party, such as our Ohio Democratic Party. Within each state, each county (there are 88 in Ohio) has its own party leadership, which for us is the DCDP. Inside each county are precincts (currently 159 in Delaware County), each of which can have a Central Committee member. That's you.

Before you got involved, you may not have known much about precincts, Central Committee members, or the Delaware County Democratic Party. Expect this same lack of knowledge from most people in your precinct. When you meet these people, it's good to make them aware that these things exist. How else can they know what they can do to help improve our country? Plenty of people want to make a difference, i.e., they want to help Democrats win. As a Central Committee member, you are the key connection between the party and these people. Help them understand how things work and, more important, what they can do to help.

You can also help the DCDP by doing things such as the following:

- Attend Central Committee meetings regularly. If you wish, you can participate in one or more subcommittees, letting you make a difference in specific areas such as fundraising, candidate

recruitment, communications, and more. Central Committee meetings are held on the third Thursday of every month (except when notified otherwise). DCDP generally sends out notices about each upcoming Central Committee meetings, so keep an eye on your email. You can also check the website for any changes, <https://www.ohiodeladems.org/events>.

- Keep yourself up to date on scheduled Democratic fundraisers and other events planned by the Delaware county party and our local candidates. To do this, visit the [Events area](#) on the Delaware County Democratic Party site: or the Ohio DelaDems [Facebook Page](#). You can also sign up to receive text message alerts from the Ohio Democratic Party by texting “OH” to 51555.
- Help identify poll workers as needed for your precinct. These people play an important role in making sure that our elections run smoothly and remain fair.
- Display your pride in being a Democrat. Talk positively about our local party and Democratic candidates for local offices. During events, wear buttons or t-shirts that express pride in being progressive, put a bumper sticker on your car, and always encourage others to join our local party. T-shirts and other apparel are available at the DCDP Headquarters at 12-1/2 North Sandusky Street.

### **Contacting the Party**

Party Headquarters are located at: 12½ North Sandusky Street, Delaware, OH 43015

Phone: (740) 363-7500, Email: [chair@ohiodeladems.org](mailto:chair@ohiodeladems.org)

Website: <https://www.ohiodeladems.org>, Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ohiodeladems>

### **Be Supportive**

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As a CC member, being informed and sociable are fundamental. But being supportive—doing the concrete things that help Democrats win—is every bit as important. Four main components of doing this are getting out the vote during elections, campaigning with candidates, interacting with your fellow CC members, and raising money for the Democratic Party.

## **Raise Money for the Democratic Party**

Whether we like it or not, money is part of politics. Here in Delaware County, our Democratic Party maintains a headquarters that pays rent, uses office supplies, creates and mails literature, and more. The county party also provides money to local candidates, such as cash that pays for yard signs and flyers. While money doesn't guarantee electoral victory, it certainly helps.

As a CC member, you should donate what you can to our local party. You should also help with and attend fundraising events held by the party (consult the events area on the [DCDP website](#) or [Facebook page](#) to see what's happening and when.) What's expected of you is simple: each Member is encouraged to raise money in their precinct for the Delaware County Democratic Party. This can be done in different ways. For example, why not ask guests at your Blue Block parties to contribute, say, five or ten dollars? We understand that different people have different levels of comfort with raising money; all we ask is that you consider making the request.

Be aware that there are several compliance rules you must follow about contributions. First, all of the money you collect must be given to the Delaware County Democratic Party treasurer. Also, all contributions and in-kind contributions to the party must be recorded and reported. Necessary information for each contribution is:

- Contributor's full name.
- Contributor's street address (not a P.O. box).
- Contribution date.
- Contribution amount or, if in-kind, a description and estimated value of the item contributed. For example, if a printing firm creates flyers for you at no charge, you must ask them what the charge would have been, then record that as an in-kind contribution.

Recognize too that not everybody can make contributions. Under Ohio law, the following contributions are forbidden:

- Contributions from anyone under the age of seven.

- Contributions from persons who are not U.S. citizens or legal residents.
- Anonymous contributions.
- Contributions from corporations.

Following all these rules is essential. The penalties for non-compliance can be surprisingly serious.

### **Interact with Fellow CC Members**

Working with your precinct constituents is a continuous learning experience. We want you to be able to collaborate and share your learnings and thoughts with other CC members. To enable these types of conversations we have created a private Facebook group intended only for DCDP Central Committee members and other key members of the Party. As a Central Committee member you will receive an electronic invitation to join this group. Of course this means you need to be a member of Facebook.

### **Campaign with Candidates in Your Precinct**

Part of being an informed CC member is keeping up to date about Democratic candidates. To help you do this, the Delaware County Democratic Party will provide you with a list of all Democratic candidates at the beginning of each election season. More information about each candidate will be available on the [DCDP website](#). Also consider doing some “opposition research” to become informed about whom your candidates are running against.

You are encouraged to assist the candidates in any way possible. The candidates will also be asked to make every effort to keep you informed of their activity in your precinct. This includes door-to-door canvassing, literature distributed by the candidate or the candidate's committee, or any special community group meetings in your precinct the candidate plans to attend.

Other things you can do to help candidates include these:

- Distribute literature: “Lit Drops” are an important part of reinforcing candidate name recognition and positions on key issues. The respective campaigns and/or the Party will supply you with campaign literature. For more about distributing literature see: [Appendix 4: Distributing Literature and Yard Signs](#).

- **Help with yard signs:** Ask Democrats in your precinct if they would be willing to have a yard sign for a candidate in their yard. Keep track of the name, address and phone number of everybody who says yes, then send this information to the appropriate candidate's campaign. The campaign will follow up to place the lawn signs.
- **Write a letter to the editor:** Get a letter published in a local newspaper urging people to support a certain candidate based on his or her accomplishments. Be sure to sign your name and put a phone number and/or email address on the letter.
- **Hold a candidate party:** Invite a candidate to your home to speak to a group of fellow Democrats in your precinct. For more on how to do this, see Appendix 4: Holding a Candidate Party.
- **Recruit volunteers:** Every candidate depends on people willing to work for them. Whether that work is distributing literature, door-to-door canvassing, or something else, finding more volunteers increases the odds of victory. The DCDP might have lists of volunteers in your precinct—ask them—but you can also reach out to your neighbors. Put whoever you find in touch with the candidate's campaign, then make sure you get the names of new volunteers back to the DCDP for next time.
- **Provide information about the political environment:** Pay attention to the activities of opposition candidates in your precinct. Save copies of literature, invitations to events, and other related materials, then send them to DCDP headquarters or the candidate's campaign office. You can also let the DCDP or the candidate's office know about any upcoming community events that might be appropriate for a candidate to participate in.

Candidates might also contact you for general information about your area or to ask for help with one of these activities. Feel free to help, but refer all requests for precinct voter lists to Party headquarters.

### **Identifying Potential Democratic Candidates**

A major goal of the Delaware County Democratic Party is to recruit strong Democratic candidates, work with them, and then help get them elected. As an elected representative of the party, you have an important role to play in identifying and encouraging good candidates. Keep your eyes open for people who want to run and who you think could win. Whenever possible, connect them with the county party. Who knows? You might help give the next Barack Obama or Sherrod Brown their start.

### **Get Out the Vote**

Whatever work you do, none of it really matters unless the people in your precinct actually vote for Democrats. This makes getting out the vote your most important activity—it's the culmination of everything else you do. Here are some of the most important ways to do this.

- **Canvass your precinct:** As mentioned earlier, the most effective way to communicate with voters is by canvassing door-to-door. For more on how to do this, see [Appendix 1: Canvassing Door-to-Door](#).
- **Distribute literature and yard signs:** Walk your precinct with a friend or with candidates to distribute campaign materials. For details and suggestions, see [Appendix 3: Distributing Literature and Yard Signs](#).
- **Use media, social and otherwise:** You might create a Facebook group just for your precinct, write letters to the editor, send postcards reminding Democrats in your precinct to vote in an upcoming election, and more.



What should you say when you're interacting with the people in your precinct? How do you motivate people to vote? Here are some points to make:

- Make sure the Democrats you talk to actually plan on voting. Ask if they've picked a date for when they are going to vote, ask if others in the household are also going to be voting, and find out when. Make sure they know where their polling or early voting location is, too. Doing this is important—it's the essence of getting out the vote.
- Remind voters of polling locations and hours of operation.
- Remind voters of the opportunity to vote early; provide the address, days, and times of availability.
- Remind them of the absentee voting process. Be prepared to explain the process when asked.
- Identify people who might have trouble getting to the polls. Help arrange transportation if they would rather go to the polls than vote by mail with an absentee ballot.
- Remind them of the issues and candidates, whether for primary, special, or general elections.
- Reinforce the theme of working to turn Delaware county blue.
- Reinforce the importance and civic duty of voting; it's how their voice can be heard.

## Conclusion

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We're all in this together. Your grassroots efforts as a Central Committee member are a crucial part of winning at all levels, from national elections to statewide and local races. Your efforts are not only necessary—they are appreciated. CC members don't always receive the accolades they deserve, so the staff at the Delaware County Democratic Party would like to express its full recognition of all the hard work Central Committee members do to build a strong Democratic Party, to strengthen our supporters in every community, and to secure victories for our candidates across the state of Ohio.

## Appendices

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### Appendix 1: Canvassing Door-to-Door

There are two main reasons to canvass your precinct. They are:

- Persuading people who are undecided to vote Democratic: In this case, you're talking to more than just Democrats—you're also contacting unaffiliated voters in your precinct.
- Getting out the vote: The candidate with the most supporters doesn't win elections—the candidate with the most supporters *who vote* wins elections. You should visit all Democrat and Independent voters prior to the election to remind them to vote.

For both of these, your most important tool is your precinct voter list. The candidate or the Party may also provide you with other materials that can help you canvass successfully. This includes the following:

- Scripts for interacting with voters so everyone is using the same message.
- Training so that everyone feels comfortable doing the work.
- Specialized lists that are prepared by the candidate
- Literature from each candidate's campaign as it becomes available. The party will also provide you with visibility materials like yard signs, bumper stickers, buttons, and other materials as they become available from each campaign.

#### Door-to-Door Tips

- Your safety should always come first. Whenever possible, go door-to-door with a partner and a cell phone. Avoid canvassing after dark and avoid entering stranger's homes. If a house makes you uncomfortable, skip it and move on to the next one. Also, you should have a designated driver and a designated navigator. Even in a compact precinct, you'll probably want to drive rather than walk.
- Don't get into arguments with voters – it doesn't help our cause. There will always be voters who won't support our candidates; when you meet one, simply thank them for their time and move on.

- Don't get involved in "like-minded" discussions. Democrats love to talk to other Democrats. While it's fun to have a feel-good discussion, it's not a good use of your time. Instead, use this as an opportunity to recruit them as a volunteer, or to display a yard sign; make sure they have all the necessary information, then politely move on.
- Never leave literature in mailboxes or mail slots. According to federal law, only the US Postal Service can leave items in mailboxes.
- Be prepared for any kind of weather, whether that means mittens, an umbrella, or sunscreen.
- Pencils are more reliable than pens, especially in the cold and damp.

### **Canvass Checklist**

- Walk list, which based on your precinct voter list or one supplied by the candidate.
- Script
- Literature
- Voter Registration Forms
- Absentee Ballot Applications
- Clipboard
- Map
- Writing implement
- Fully-charged Cell Phone

## Appendix 2: Hosting a Blue Block Party

As mentioned earlier, a recommended method for connecting with your precinct constituents and building your network is to host a “Blue Block” party once or twice a year. Blue Block gatherings are primarily social, allowing your neighbors to get to know each other better, and to know that they are not the only Democrats on the block. Try to keep Blue Block Gatherings as simple, mid-afternoon or after-dinner-style events, so that repeated gatherings don’t become a burden, and so others will volunteer to host.

Blue Block gatherings can range from small parties in a home to larger parties at a venue or park.

For some of your neighbors, this social engagement is as much activism as they are ever going to be exposed to. But even with this, we create an ever-expanding wave of progressive dialog and in so doing, improve the Democratic brand. However, a Blue Block Gathering is good for so much more.

Second only to getting to know each other, is collecting contact information. Make sure you have a sign-in sheet. Make sure everyone signs in and adds or updates their address, phone, cell phone, and email address. Have a checkbox for Volunteering Interest. Make sure to let them know about the DCDP Facebook page or if there is a local Democratic Facebook page, ask them to join that one too. Always have a separate form for guests if they know of others in the precinct who are also Democrats. Some may be uncomfortable with providing the contact information, if so ask them to reach out to those people and have them contact to you.

Asking for small donations. Always challenging is asking for donations, even small ones. Never make it seem that a donation is required for attendance at a Blue Block party, because these parties are first and foremost about socializing with your neighbors and building your network. At some point you might want to ask people to kick-in \$5 or \$10 to the Party. If they do, remember to capture their contribution information as described in the section “Raise Money for the Democratic Party”. And make sure to hand off the contributions and compliance information to the Treasurer at the next Central Committee meeting.

Business Cards. Think about printing up business cards. Contact the DCDP headquarters to ask about DCDP artwork for your business card. Include your name, contact info, the DCDP Facebook page and the DCDP website address ([www.ohiodeladems.org](http://www.ohiodeladems.org)).

### **Activity Suggestions for Parties:**

You may want to consider some specific ideas as themes or activities for your Blue Block Parties:

- **Canvassing:** Attendees might each take a part of your precinct and do door to door. To make this possible, you'll need to create "walk lists" for each participant prior to your party, each covering a section of your precinct. You'll also need a script. Practice role playing this script a few times—it might feel silly, but it helps new volunteers get into the swing of things.
- **Phone banks:** Distribute call lists (which you've prepared ahead of time) and a script. As with canvassing, role-play the script before making real calls. Make sure everyone knows how to fill in his/her call sheets.
- **Postcard writing:** The goal here is to send postcards to the voters in your precinct, such as reminders to vote. To help your guests do this, you should provide sample postcard text, along with a list of names and addresses for each attendee.

### **Inviting Your Guests**

Choose the way you feel most comfortable notifying your precinct constituents about your Blue Block party. Sending an actual invitation in the mail is the best way to get a crowd. (Remember, you have their mailing addresses on your precinct voter list.) Ask people to RSVP, and be sure to call or email anyone you haven't heard from about a week after you send the invitation. Don't be dismayed if not everyone you invite shows up; if you invite 50 people, you will usually get 10-15 people who show up. The simple fact that you invite people, even if they can't attend, is important; a personal note from a friend or a person in their community is a communication that will stick with folks.

### **When the Party is Over**

The most important part of your event might be what happens after the guests all leave: compiling all the information that you gathered. You should add new names, email addresses, and phone numbers to your precinct voter list. Plan on providing this information to the DCDP so it can be added to our central database. The easiest way to do this is by compiling all the information onto a spreadsheet (hopefully you have been already maintaining your Voter List on a spreadsheet). If you are uncomfortable using a spreadsheet, find someone in your neighborhood who is comfortable and enlist them to be responsible for compiling the information and sending to DCDP.

### **Sample House Party Invitation**

*Dear Friends:*

*Last November, I joined hundreds of activists, volunteers, staff, and candidates from across the state celebrate the victories of Senator Sherrod Brown and of Democratic candidates up and down the ticket. We had worked tirelessly for months to talk to our family, friends, and neighbors about the importance of voting and about the importance of supporting Democratic candidates. This work clearly paid off and while the victories were sweet, there is still a lot of work left to be done. After sweeping GOP victories across the state, the Republicans in the state legislature have continued to attack Ohio's women and Ohio's working and middle-class families. I refuse to sit idly by while this happens, and I am prepared to continue to work to ensure that we keep winning on local and statewide races in the coming campaign cycle to keep this great state moving forward.*

*To kick off the 2018 campaign cycle, I will be hosting a house party on August 16th to talk about the issues facing our neighborhood and our state and to tell folks how to get involved with the Ohio Democratic Party. I hope to see you on Saturday, August 16th at 1:30. Please RSVP if you think you can make it!*

*Thanks and talk soon,*

*John*

*What: Please join us for an Election Year Neighborhood Kickoff*

*When: Saturday, August 16<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm*

*Where: The home of John Smith  
340 East Williams St  
Delaware, OH 43015*

*Please RSVP at calling (740) 555-1234 or by emailing [your@emailaddress.com](mailto:your@emailaddress.com)*

### **Appendix 3: Holding a Candidate Party**

To provide support for a specific candidate, you can host a candidate party in your home around election time. Don't confuse this with a Blue Block party, even though many of the mechanics are the same. The goal of a Blue Block party is to socialize with fellow Democrats in your precinct and to do precinct-level activities such as canvassing. A candidate party, by contrast, promotes a specific candidate for a specific election. They're also not necessarily done by a single precinct—several CC members often join together to sponsor the party.

Candidate parties give voters in the area an opportunity to meet and question Democratic candidates.

You should consider the following when setting up a candidate party:

- **Location:** Your home is probably fine. Make sure you have a room large enough for several people to meet in and enough chairs for everyone to sit in.
- **Date:** Decide on a couple of dates that would be convenient for you and your family. Have the candidate confirm one of the dates.
- **Inviting voters in the precinct:** Call or send an invitation, flyer, or card to voters in your precinct to come to your house and meet the candidate. Feel free to invite your personal friends and relatives.
- **Supplies:** Buy enough coffee, punch, snacks, and or dessert items for the number of people who are planning to attend.

- Event reminders: Two days before your candidate party, call the candidate or campaign committee and give them a status report. Confirm the time and address of your home. Ask if there are any other last-minute items or details to go over regarding the event. Call people who have indicated they will be there to confirm their attendance.
- At the event: Make sure everyone at the event introduces themselves to the candidate before starting. Then introduce the candidate to the group. Have the candidate speak to the group, leaving time for questions and answers. And don't forget to thank everyone for coming to the event.

#### **Appendix 4: Distributing Literature and Yard Signs**

Literature distribution is a time-consuming task. The more volunteers you help to recruit, and the more organized you are, the easier the job becomes. There are two basic types of literature distribution:

The literature drop:

- The material is left on the doorstep, in the screen door, behind the mailbox, etc. No attempt is made to personally contact the voter.
- Literature is usually left at every home in the precinct, rather than with just registered voters.
- This is the quicker of the two types of distribution. The time necessary to drop one precinct depends on the size and physical layouts of the precincts. However, most precincts can be covered by a two-person team in two or three hours.

The canvass:

- Volunteers using walk lists knock on the door of each targeted voter (the DCDP will help you decide whether to target Democrats, Independents or both) in an attempt to visit each household and deliver the literature.
- Because personal contact is the goal, the canvass may take two people four to five hours to complete in one precinct.

#### **Suggestions for Literature Distribution**



People will quickly figure out how organized your effort is. The more a volunteer perceives an effort to be organized, the better the results will be. Here are some recommended procedures for organizing a literature distribution effort:

- Every two people recruited cuts down the time needed to cover an area by 2 to 5 hours. Poll workers, friends, and neighbors are obvious sources of volunteers. Often, people who don't have the time to take on a major responsibility are willing to join with others from the neighborhood for one afternoon of work and fellowship.
- If at all possible, assemble volunteers in one location before beginning the distribution. This lets you give any special instructions, to review the guidelines, and to let each volunteer feel like part of a group. This will greatly increase the amount of control you have over what happens with the distribution in each precinct. The further away you get from the volunteer, the less control and direction you're able to give. In most cases, literature should be left with the volunteer for distribution at a later time only if absolutely necessary. If this does become necessary, following up with this volunteer is critical to see that the material was distributed and that no problems or questions came up.

It's important that you be ready when your volunteers arrive. People have a limited amount of time and shouldn't be asked to stand around while literature is counted, etc. Before beginning the literature distribution, you should assemble the following materials:

- Volunteer instructions: Jot down a few basic guidelines that volunteers will need to know about literature distribution, such as how much time will be spent on distributing literature today, do's and don'ts, why distributing literature is important, and so on.
- Walk lists: Accurately denote the assigned areas. After your volunteers have finished, ask them to verify which portion of the targeted area(s) were reached with literature.
- Campaign literature: How much you need depends on the type of distribution planned. More literature is needed for a straight literature drop than for a canvass. Have volunteers return unused literature.

Please observe the law and rules of common courtesy when conducting a literature distribution effort. Some general rules to keep in mind are:

- Literature is not to be placed in mailboxes.
- Literature should be placed in a secure location so that it won't blow away.
- Don't walk on lawns.
- Obey any posted signs (i.e., "Beware of Dog" or "No Trespassing").
- Smile and speak to everyone you see.
- Don't distribute literature after dark.
- Don't argue. Keep moving.
- Don't go inside the house.
- Campaign stickers or t-shirts should be provided for each volunteer.
- Don't pick up or remove the opponent's literature or yard signs

Note that canvassing or distributing literature is not soliciting. Soliciting is prohibited in some neighborhoods. If someone asks you to stop, politely explain that you are not soliciting. If they get argumentative, just leave.

### **Suggestions for Putting Up Yard Signs**

Yard signs are a major part of many local and county wide elections. Here are some tips for effectively putting up yard signs in your precinct:

- Make sure signs are put up securely and in a location that is visually pleasing to the homeowner or business owner. The signs may have to be up for several weeks.

- Make sure you have permission to put up the yard sign.
- Don't put a yard sign in anyone's yard without their permission.
- Don't put a yard sign in a business's window, yard, or parking lot without the owner's permission.
- Don't tear down another candidate's sign under any circumstances. It is illegal.
- Each municipality usually has a different set of regulations governing the use and/or placement of yard signs. Be aware of any sign regulations in your area.
- In the city, you should not place a yard sign any closer than six feet away from the street. Anything closer could be taken down by the city.
- In the county, you should not place a yard sign any closer than six feet away from the road. Anything closer could be taken down by the County Engineer's Office or blown over by a fast-moving car.
- On state routes, you should not place a yard sign any closer than 20 feet away from the pavement. Anything closer could be taken down by the Ohio Department of Transportation.
- On interstate freeways, you should not place a yard anywhere near it. The signs will be taken down by the Ohio Department of Transportation, and they may file a complaint against the candidate.

### **Appendix 5: Understanding Your Electronic Voter List**

- CNTYIDNUM (County ID Number), SOSIDNUM (Secretary of State ID Number): These are unique identifiers at both the County and State levels. You probably will not have any use for these numbers.
- MADDR1, MADDR2, MCITY, MSTATE, MZIP, MOUNTRY: This the Mailing Address if different from the Registered Voting address.

- VOTERUPDT: This is the most recent date the voter’s information was updated (they may have recently moved, hence a recent date).
- PRSID: Each Precinct has a numerical as well as location indicator, eg: “Powell B” is also PRSID 129.
- P180508, G171107, S170502, etc.: This is a rolling list of all the elections held over the past nine years, and whether the Voter participated in the election.
  - “P” = Primary. You will generally see either a D or R (Democrat or Republican) under the “P” column indicating the Party ballot pulled by the voter in that Primary election.
  - “G” = General Election (you will see an “X” if the Voter voted in that election).
  - “S” = Special Election (you will see an “X” if the voter voted in that election).
  - NOTE: if the letter is capitalized, it means they voted at the polls on Election Day. If the letter is lower case it means they voted early, either with an Absentee ballot or at an Early Voting location.
  - The numbers indicate the date: “180508” is May, 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018.
  - Also note that not every precinct in the county is involved in all Special Elections, as it may be specific to a Village, City, Township, school district, etc.