

Guide to the 2016 Washington State Democratic Party Caucuses & Selection of Delegates to the Democratic National Convention

The Washington State Democratic Party holds its statewide party precinct-level caucuses on Saturday, March 26, 2016 at 10:00 am. The vast majority of all of the delegates to the Democratic National Convention from Washington State are elected through the caucus process.

Caucuses are meetings of neighbors (each meeting consisting of voters from a particular precinct) gathered for the purpose of talking about the Democratic presidential candidates and resolutions based on issues.

Those eligible to vote in the Democratic Party Caucuses include:

- Registered voters,
- Others who meet age and citizenship requirements as March 26, 2016 may register to vote at the caucuses and participate on a same-day basis, and
- Individuals age 17 years old who will be 18 years old as of November 8, 2016 (the date of the general election) may also participate at the caucuses and they do not need to complete a voter registration form. They are also eligible to be elected as delegates or alternates.

Washington State residents not qualified to vote because of age or citizenship are allowed to participate in any discussion of resolutions, but they cannot vote on the election of delegates or alternates, nor may they be elected as delegates or alternates.

Proxy voting is not permitted at precinct-level caucuses. However, those who are unable to attend due to religious observance, military service, disability, illness or work schedule may submit a “surrogate affidavit” form to the State Party. Such forms are obtained from www.wa-democrats.org and must be received by the State Party no later than Friday, March 18, 2016 at 5:00 pm.

All participants in the precinct-level caucuses must publicly declare their Democratic Party preference and have that preference publicly recorded.

In Spokane County, the precinct-level caucus meetings are run by legislative district party organizations:

- 3rd Legislative District – consists of precincts which comprise about 65% of Spokane’s population. All but one of its precincts are inside Spokane’s city limits.
- 4th Legislative District – consists of precincts in Spokane County east and northeast of the city.
- 6th Legislative District – consists of precincts which comprise the remaining 35% of Spokane’s population and areas of the county surrounding Spokane to the north, west, south and southeast.
- 7th Legislative District – consists of a limited number of precincts in Spokane County to the far north/northeast and far west of Spokane’s city limits.
- 9th Legislative District – consists of a limited number of precincts in Spokane County that are far south and southeast of Spokane’s city limits.

Registered voters may determine their precinct assignment and caucus location by visiting the State Party website (www.wa-democrats.org). Information about the caucuses should be posted by mid-February. The State Party website will also have a “pre-register” tool for the caucuses to minimize the need for voters to fill out paperwork on March 26 at the caucuses.

Participants at the precinct-level caucuses express their presidential preferences and then elect (via proportional representation based on the voting results in each precinct) a limited number of caucus attendees to serve as delegates and alternates to other meetings in the delegate election process:

- Sunday, April 17 – Legislative District Caucuses. Delegates and alternates elected at the precinct level caucuses in the 3rd, 4th and 6th Legislative Districts attend legislative district caucus meetings and elect delegates from these meetings who will represent the legislative districts at the 5th Congressional District Caucus as well as the Washington State Democratic Party Convention.
- Sunday, May 1- Spokane County Convention. Delegates and alternates elected at all of the precinct level caucuses in Spokane County meet to discuss and vote on party platform issues. Delegates and alternates elected at the limited number of precincts from the 7th and 9th Legislative Districts in Spokane County also meet to elect delegates and alternates who will represent them at the 5th Congressional District caucus as well as the Washington State Democratic Party Convention.
- Saturday, May 21 – 5th Congressional District Caucus. Delegates and alternates elected at the legislative district caucus meetings and the county conventions in Washington’s 5th Congressional District meet and elect three women and two men to attend the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia. An Elector and an Alternate Elector are elected to be part of Washington’s Electoral College delegation in the event that the Democratic nominees for President and Vice President win the popular vote in Washington in the November 8 general election.
- Tuesday, May 24 – Primary Election Day. While Democrats appear on the primary election ballot, casting a ballot for Democrats in the primary election has no impact on the selection of the Democratic presidential nominee because most of the Washington State delegates to the Democratic National Convention are elected through the caucus process.
- Friday, June 17 through Sunday, June 19 – Washington State Democratic Convention. Delegates and alternates elected at legislative district caucuses and county conventions meet in Tacoma, Washington to approve presidential electors, adopt the state party platform, and address resolutions.
- On Sunday, June 19, members of the Washington State Democratic Central Committee who represent legislative districts meet to elect 12 Pledged Party Leaders and Elected Officials (PLEOs) to be delegates at the Democratic National Convention as well as 22 At Large Delegates and 7 Alternates to the Democratic National Convention.
 - Party rules require that inclusion goals be taken into account in the selection of the At Large Delegates, including Youth (preference given for individuals age 17-24 as well as individuals age of 36 or less), race (African Americans, Hispanics, Enrolled Native Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders), LGBT Americans, and People with Disabilities).
- Monday, July 25 through Thursday, July 28 – Democratic National Convention. 101 Delegates and 7 Alternates elected at the congressional district caucuses and the Washington Democratic Convention (as well as 18 Unpledged Party Leader and Elected Official Delegates) attend the 2016 Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to nominate the Democratic Party’s candidates for President and Vice President.
- Tuesday, November 8, 2016 – Election Day.
- Monday, December 19, 2016 – Meeting of Electors. On the first Monday after the second Wednesday of December, Electors meet in their respective States (usually in the State capital) to cast their votes for President and Vice President. If the Democratic nominee for President wins the popular vote in Washington, then the Democratic Party Electors from Washington will meet in Olympia on this day to cast their votes in the Electoral College for President and Vice President.