

Become a Precinct Chair!

updated March 2, 2012

Thank you for your interest in serving the **Bexar County Democratic Party**. We need volunteers working throughout the county to help get Democrats elected. Among our most important volunteers are **precinct chairs** and **precinct coordinators**.

What is a precinct chair?

The precinct chair is a publicly elected party official representing a voting precinct. The precinct chair is elected by the Democratic voters in that precinct in the primary and serves a two-year term. The precinct chair is the "go-to person" for all Democratic precinct activity. An active, effective precinct chair makes an enormous difference in the success of the Party and our candidates.

What are the duties and responsibilities of a precinct chair?

Among the official and unofficial duties and responsibilities of the precinct chair are:

- Be a standing member of the County Executive Committee
- Represent the precinct by attending every County Executive Committee meeting
- Understand the Texas Democratic Party Rules and the Texas Election Code
- If the county chair fails to call a County Executive Committee meeting, join with other precinct chairs in calling the meeting
- Organize the precinct and get to know the people in the precinct
- Bridge the gap between voters and elected officials
- Help find judges, alternate judges, and election clerks
- Encourage primary voters to attend the precinct convention
- Place signs at the primary polling place indicating the location of the precinct convention
- Organize and conduct the precinct convention
- Get people to do the following volunteer jobs:
 - Work the precinct polling place on Election Day
 - Pass out literature
 - Report pertinent information back to the Democratic party headquarters and Democratic campaigns
 - Dress the polling place with campaign signs on Election Day
- Get our voters to the polls
- Other duties as needed, as this list is not comprehensive

What is a precinct coordinator?

In precincts that do not have a precinct chair, the precinct coordinator is a volunteer who organizes to turn out the vote, as the precinct chair would do. But the precinct coordinator does not serve on the County Executive Committee and does not have an official role in the precinct convention (though the precinct convention may choose him or her to preside over that convention). Many times, precinct coordinators apply to become appointed as precinct chair in vacant precincts. But if you do not wish to serve on the County Executive Committee, the Democratic Party can still use your help as precinct coordinator. Also, you are welcome and encouraged to join standing committees of the Bexar County Democratic Party.

What are the qualifications for a precinct chair?

A precinct chair should be an outgoing, self-motivated person who likes people. To be eligible as precinct chair, you must:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Be registered to vote in Bexar County
- Currently reside in the precinct
- Not be an elected official in federal, state, or county government, or a candidate for such office (Local government officials and candidates are eligible.)
- For late applicants seeking appointment in even-numbered years, you must have voted in the Democratic primary (not including the primary runoff), or else taken an oath of affiliation with the Democratic Party (If you voted in another party's primary or took part in another party's convention, you are ineligible until the next calendar year.)
- The qualifications listed above are required by the Texas Election Code. It is also desirable that precinct chairs have internet and e-mail capabilities and basic computer skills.

How can I become a precinct chair for the 2012-2014 term?

Precinct chairs are elected in the Democratic Primary in even-numbered years, (*in in Primary Runoff for 2012 only*). Filing reopened on **Friday, March 2, 2012**, and will close on **Friday, June 1st at 6:00 p.m.** The Runoff Election will be on **Tuesday, July 31, 2012** and the term of office will begin on August 20, 2012.

Here is a link to the new application form: www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/pol-sub/2-1f.pdf Please indicate that the application is for the FULL TERM. The application needs to be notarized and submitted to the county chair, secretary, or primary staff.

According to a federal court order, if you filed already but your precinct number will change, you will be able to amend your application until **Friday, June 1st at 6:00 p.m.** **Precinct boundary changes may be ordered by Commissioners Court as late as March 20. We will do our very best to make sure precinct chairs and applicants are informed about changes in precinct boundaries and precinct numbers so that you can meet the deadline for amending your precinct chair application if needed.**

If you are the only applicant from your precinct, you won't actually appear on the ballot but will be deemed elected.

If you miss the filing deadline, your application will be considered for filling a vacancy in your precinct at the earliest opportunity after the new term begins. In this case, your application should indicate that it is for the UNEXPIRED TERM 2012-14. Write in candidacy will not be an option for those who miss the filing

How can I become a precinct chair for the remainder of the 2010-2012 term?

Vacancies are filled by the County Executive Committee (the committee of all precinct chairs).

Vacancies cannot be filled before the term begins, and they require a majority quorum. (This is one reason why it is crucial that precinct chairs attend these meetings regularly!)

After the filing period ends, late applications are collected by the Precinct Recruitment and Training Committee. Notarization of late applications is encouraged but not required.

Here is a link to the application form: www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/pol-sub/2-1f.pdf

Please indicate that your application is for the **UNEXPIRED TERM** 2010-2012.

As specified in the Continuing Rules of the Bexar County Democratic Party, the PRTC reviews applications for statutory eligibility using the criteria listed above. The PRTC also makes recommendations to the CEC, whenever a majority quorum is present, as to which applicants the PRTC feels should be appointed to fill vacancies. The criteria for recommendation include voting history in the most recent Democratic primary election, willingness to work in the precinct, willingness to attend CEC meetings, and for those who previously served as precinct chair, actual attendance at CEC meetings during their period of service. Applicants are encouraged to submit a questionnaire to the PRTC - [View & Print the questionnaire](#)

Please note that there are no right or wrong answers to questions posed in the questionnaire and interview, and that the PRTC does not have any authority as to who becomes a precinct chair. Whether you become a precinct chair is determined by the Democratic primary voters if you apply to be on the ballot, or by the CEC if you seek appointment during an unexpired term.

If you have not yet received or do not seek the recommendation of the PRTC, you will still have the opportunity to be appointed by the CEC, provided that you are eligible. After the vote on recommended applicants, the PRTC will present a list of all remaining eligible applicants, and give each an opportunity to introduce themselves to the CEC prior to a vote on their appointment. In this case it is important that you be present at the CEC meeting.

How can I become a precinct coordinator?

Precinct coordinators can be appointed by the County Executive Committee or by the Precinct Recruitment and Training Committee. "Precinct coordinator" is not an office specified by the Rules of the Texas Democratic Party or the Texas Election Code, but it is nevertheless an important responsibility. Our Democratic candidates depend on having a large network of volunteers working to turn out the vote, whether or not they are precinct chairs.

How can I get more information?

Please refer questions to Mark Camann, co-chair of the Precinct Recruitment and Training Committee, 512-698-5477, txpianoforte@yahoo.com.