

GUIDANCE FOR 2021 VIRTUAL DFL CONVENTIONS

This document provides guidance to local party unit leaders whose units are conducting virtual conventions this year. It supplements the Model Rules for 2021 DFL Virtual Conventions. This document reflects many of the existing rules and requirements found in party documents, but it is not binding on a unit.

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CONVENTION PREPARATIONS

Virtual Meeting Technology

Under the Model Rules (Rule 4), the unit chair selects the virtual meeting technology platform (e.g. Zoom, Google Meet, etc.). At a minimum, the platform must allow all participants admitted to the meeting to hear proceedings as they occur or to have proceedings accessibly interpreted for them. The unit chair should also consider whether the platform includes the following features based on the unit's needs:

- Registration of participants
- Muting/unmuting of participants
- Hand-raising tool or other method by which participants non-verbally indicate to the convention chair that they wish to speak
- Voting indicators
- Built-in polling
- Chat
- Breakout rooms
- Waiting room
- Live captioning of spoken words
- Recording
- Screen sharing
- Time limits for meetings
- Recording
- Moderation controls of participants' admittance to the meeting, their audio and video output, their ability to use screen sharing, and their ability to use a chat feature

Unit chairs and other convention organizers should refer to the following articles about meeting host controls for each videoconference platform:

Zoom

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362603-Host-and-co-host-controls-in-a-meeting>

Microsoft Teams

<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/meetings-and-calls-d92432d5-dd0f-4d17-8f69-06096b6b48a8?ui=en-US&rs=en-US&ad=US#ID0EAABAAA=Meetings>

Google Meet

https://support.google.com/meet/answer/9292748?hl=en&ref_topic=7290350

Skype

<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/change-participant-settings-for-skype-for-business-meetings-9175e297-de5f-43b2-8e0f-85cc05e24986>

WebEx

<https://help.webex.com/en-us/smtewv/Meeting-Controls-in-the-Cisco-Webex-Meetings-Virtual-Desktop-App>

GoToMeeting

<https://support.goto.com/meeting>

BlueJeans

<https://support.bluejeans.com/s/topic/0TO2R000000kaidWAA/admin-tools>

Accessibility

Virtual conventions help remove some of the physical barriers to participation usually present at in-person conventions. However, other potential barriers still exist in the virtual setting. DFL conventions must be conducted in accessible settings, and reasonable accommodations should be made when requested in a timely manner. The convention notice should include ways for participants to request accommodations and state any deadlines for requests. Online information about the convention, such as events on social media or the local unit's website, should also include this information.

The DFL has collected resources to assist organizers in ensuring their conventions are accessible. The following resources and links can also be found on the DFL website at www.dfl.org/accommodations/accessibility-resources/. The resources included in this list are selected based on their applicability to virtual DFL conventions but others may be used:

Accessible Presentations Guidelines

<https://www.dfl.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/DFL-Accessible-Slideshows-Guidelines.pdf>

ADA Accessible Meetings Guidebook

<https://www.adahospitality.org/accessible-meetings-events-conferences-guide/book>

ADA Minnesota

<http://adaminnnesota.org/>

Minnesota Commission of the Deaf, Deafblind, and Hard of Hearing

<https://mn.gov/deaf-commission/>

Minnesota Council on Disability

<https://www.disability.state.mn.us/>

Minnesota Assistive Technology STAR Device Loan

<https://mn.gov/admin/star/program-services/device-loan/>

Accommodations

Convention organizers should strive to make reasonable accommodations to ensure accessibility. Closed captioning, large-print text of documents, and interpretation of proceedings are some accommodations that local units commonly arrange in advance of a convention. Accommodations can also be made during the convention, such as changes in the ways that

officials conduct business. These changes can include speaking more slowly or with more common language, waiting longer for participants to make nominations or motions, reminding participants to refrain from speaking over one another, displaying the text of a motion on screen, etc.

Captioning Resources

Below are links for information about closed captioning options. This is not a complete list of options, and all of them cost something.

Rev

<https://www.rev.com/blog/resources/zoom-closed-captioning-how-to-caption-subtitle-zoom-meetings-and-recordings>

Vitac

<https://vitac.com/zoom-closed-captioning/>

Otter

https://otter.ai/login?utm_content=brand&utm_source=google_ads&utm_medium=search&utm_campaign=prospecting-consumer-non_edu-web-brand&utm_term=otter%20captions&gclid=CjwKCAiAp4KCBhB6EiwAxRxbpHTyqFXc4_P22VVtOjbSSfltWuOI2-FLm5sMeg0lMvpgeqhXC0gosRoCFn4QAvD_BwE

Interpretation Services

Below are public resources for finding services to assist with interpretation of convention proceedings for American Sign Language users and blind or visually impaired individuals. Convention organizers should anticipate whether delegates or alternates may require other translation services, such as non-English spoken language. Minnesota-based translation services can be called upon to meet these needs.

Minnesota DHS: Find a Minnesota ASL/Video Interpreter or Agency

<https://mn.gov/deaf-hard-of-hearing/communication-access/interpreter/find/>

Minnesota DEED: State Services for the Blind

<https://mn.gov/deed/ssb/>

Virtual Meeting Security Options

Virtual conventions of different sizes will have different security needs. In general, more strict security measures will be needed for larger conventions. Competitive endorsements or elections and other contentious business being considered at the convention will also require higher security for the meeting. These security measures are needed to ensure the convention can conduct its business without interruption or disorder.

Security risks center mostly around individuals entering the virtual meeting room and causing disruption, either via audio or messages sent in chat, a practice known as “Zoom bombing.” This can involve many people entering the meeting at once, shouting profanities, using audio to

drown out other speakers, using obscene images as their default photo for their profile, and repeatedly sending explicit messages and links in chat. Such disruptions embarrass meeting hosts and attendees and detract from the business being conducted, but can also be so pervasive as to require the hosts to summarily end the meeting. Local unit organizers can prevent nearly all disruptions and breaches from occurring by correctly assessing risks and taking steps before the convention to close potential gaps in security.

Virtual meeting platforms offer a variety of security options. Units can adopt certain practices outside of the virtual meeting to help ensure its security.

Link Security

Restricting access to the meeting link may prevent disruption of a virtual convention. Making these links publicly available, on social media or on publicly accessible websites, dramatically increases the risk of uninvited entry and disruption. Conventions differ from other events a party unit holds in that there is a set list of individuals who are eligible to participate in the meeting. That means the link to enter the meeting does not need to be publicly accessible and can be shared via email, or another private means, with those eligible to participate.

Smaller units, or those without major political divisions on issues before the convention, may be willing to make their meeting link public, while units with more convention participants or greater public interest in their proceedings may wish to impose greater restrictions on meeting link sharing.

The State DFL Constitution requires most meetings, including conventions, to be open (See Article III, Section 4, Subsection N). The Model Rules also require that visitors must be provided with some way to observe convention business if access to the meeting is restricted (Rule 7). This openness can be accomplished by an officer offering the link upon request. A meeting is open if it is streamed simultaneously on a publicly accessible platform, such as Facebook Live or YouTube. Both of these methods protect the security of the meeting while satisfying constitutional obligations to openness.

Waiting Room

Another precautionary measure that Zoom, Teams, Skype, WebEx, and many others offer is a waiting room. When the waiting room feature is activated, all individuals who click on the meeting link are placed directly into a virtual queue where they are not able to participate in or observe proceedings. Meeting hosts are notified when someone enters the waiting room. The hosts can then control who is admitted into the virtual meeting room.

A waiting room is essential to ensure accurate credentialing and security. The Model Rules place control of this process with individuals designated as sergeants-at-arms, the title belonging to convention officials who control access to the floor at in-person conventions (Rule 12.e). Using a waiting room allows Credentials Committee members to verify names of entrants against the list of participants, and to mark them as being present at the convention.

Muting

Depending on the platform, meeting hosts usually have the ability to mute participants'

microphones, either those of individuals, those of groups of participants, or all except their own. Some platforms offer the option of placing all participants on mute by default upon entering the meeting. Meeting hosts can also have the ability to prevent participants from unmuting themselves, known as locking or unlocking muting.

Standard etiquette for meetings of more than 10 participants is to ask all participants to mute their microphones when not speaking. This request is usually sufficient to prevent unintentional audio disruption. For larger meetings of closer to 100 participants or more, the meeting hosts should consider locking participants' unmuting ability and providing a clear and easily accessible method for participants to request their microphones to be unmuted, such as using a hand-raising feature.

Chat

Many platforms allow meeting hosts to control participants' ability to use chat. Chat is one tool that convention organizers can use to allow participants to submit requests to meeting organizers for information, recognition in debate, assistance with technology, etc. Chat can also enable participants to send messages to all other participants as well as individuals; platforms that differentiate between these capabilities usually allow meeting hosts to restrict them separately. Smaller conventions with lower-stakes business may wish to leave chat unrestricted. Larger conventions may wish to restrict certain functions of chat, such as allowing participants to send messages to everyone. One alternative setting allows participants to send messages only to hosts and co-hosts. The Model Rules include provisions regulating appropriate use and prohibited conduct in chat, to which convention officials may hold participants accountable (Rule 9).

Removal

Almost every virtual meeting platform permits meeting hosts to remove participants from the meeting. Some will prevent removed individuals from re-entering unless specifically permitted by the hosts. Removal becomes necessary when participants continually abuse their privileges to disrupt the meeting. Some platforms also allow hosts to bar anyone who is removed from the meeting to re-enter using the same name, email, or other sign-in credentials; this feature should be employed whenever possible in the case of removing an individual who is not a member from a convention or as the convention directs. For convention procedures applicable to removing someone from a virtual meeting, see *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* (12th edition), "Dealing with Offences in a Meeting," under "§61. Discipline of Members and Guests."

Convention Assistants

As early as possible after the convention is scheduled, the unit chair should recruit convention assistants.

Convention Chair(s) and Parliamentarian

At least one convention chair must have received training and have been certified by the State DFL Party, which can provide a list of certified individuals. The unit chair may wish to use that list to find a parliamentarian to assist the convention chair. The unit chair calls the convention to order and conducts introductory business. Convention chairs are elected by the convention, formally appoint the other convention assistants, and preside for the remainder of the convention.

Technology Assistants

The unit chair may also wish to find technology assistants to operate the virtual meeting technology during the convention and to assist participants with troubleshooting as needed. The Model Rules, if adopted as the temporary rules, grant the unit chair the authority to appoint these individuals to serve in their roles until they can be formally appointed by the elected convention chair(s) (Rules 6.a, 15).

Tellers

The Model Rules also require the appointment of tellers, who are responsible for creating electronic ballots and verifying results of those ballots (Rules 15 and 16). The unit chair should select tellers prior to the convention. They are formally appointed to their roles by the convention chair. Alternatively, the unit or convention chair may select an individual to serve as head teller, granting them the authority to appoint other tellers as needed without formal appointment by the convention chair(s).

Temporary Rules and Agenda

The party unit central or executive committee may choose to adopt a modified or unmodified version of the Model Rules for 2021 DFL Virtual Conventions and the attached agenda as the temporary convention rules. If a rules committee is appointed, the central or executive committee should strongly consider adopting the rules and agenda proposed by the rules committee for this purpose. Any temporary rules and agenda govern the convention until it adopts a permanent set of rules and agenda.

Preconvention Committees

If not otherwise specified in the party unit constitution, the party unit executive committee determines which, if any, preconvention committees should be established to prepare for the organizing unit convention. Those committees should include credentials, nominations, and rules. These may also include a constitution committee and a resolutions committee if desired.

Credentials Committee

Under the Model Rules for 2021 DFL Virtual Conventions (Rule 12), the Credentials Committee is responsible for overseeing credentialing of individuals attending the convention, including preparing a temporary roll, hearing and recommending resolutions to challenges, reporting to the convention on the number of registered delegates and upgraded alternates at appropriate times, and providing the tellers with updated lists of delegates eligible to vote throughout the convention.

The co-chairs and their designees (likely other committee members) also serve as sergeants-at-arms, using their lists of registered, eligible participants to determine who should be admitted to the virtual meeting room.

Unless challenged, those delegates and alternates elected and reported by the precinct caucuses or the appropriate unit conventions, as well as any non-voting delegates, shall be included on the

temporary roll and seated at the party unit convention. The organizing unit chair and vice chair, senate district chair and vice chair (when different), and Distinguished Party Leaders (as defined in the general rules in Addendum A of the State DFL Constitution and Bylaws) who live in the organizing unit also serve as at-large delegates to the party unit convention. The committee should coordinate with the party unit chair to prepare credentials for appointed convention assistants.

Prior to the convention, the co-chairs of the Credentials Committee should create a list of all alternates for each precinct delegation elected (by subcaucus, if applicable) ordered according to the ranking provided by this rule. The co-chairs shall use this list to upgrade alternates from other subcaucuses, if necessary.

Rules Committee

The rules committee prepares the rules and agenda for consideration and adoption by the convention. The committee is encouraged to use the Model Rules for 2021 DFL Virtual Conventions as a starting point for their deliberations and work directly with party unit leadership to conform the proposed rules to fit the selected virtual meeting platform selected, its capabilities, and the way the leadership plans to use them to conduct the convention.

Nominations Committee

The nominations committee screens and recommends candidates for party offices elected at the convention. Screenings take place prior to the convention, and the committee chair(s) place the recommended candidates' names into nomination at the appropriate time on the agenda.

If not otherwise specified in the organizing unit constitution, the organizing unit executive committee shall determine the process for selecting members of the committees, which may be either election by election at a lower-level caucus or convention, or by appointment by the central committee.

Preregistration of Participants

The party unit leadership should explore ways of using capabilities, either internal or external to the virtual meeting platform, to allow delegates and alternates to register in advance of the convention. Preregistration will enable the Credentials Committee to admit delegates to the virtual meeting room and upgrade alternates more quickly on convention day.

Notice

At least 10 days prior to the convention, the party unit must send all delegates and alternates written notice of the convention and must include which unit offices are to be elected at the convention. The party unit should still have email addresses for delegates and alternates in its lists from the ballot-only conventions that occurred in 2020, though some may no longer be valid. The notice should include a virtual meeting link or a means to obtain a link, a preregistration link (if available), a phone number and virtual meeting codes to join by phone, and a way for delegates and alternates to request accommodations. Units may wish to distribute their convention notice more than 10 days in advance in order to better enable delegates to make

timely requests for accommodations. The notice should also include a means for delegates and alternates to access other convention resources the unit chooses to make available, such as technical assistance.

Preparation of Polls

Under DFL rules, voting in contested elections is by open, written ballot. Electronic balloting satisfies this requirement when it records the vote of each delegate and enables others to see how each delegate voted.

Typically, electronic balloting is conducted using either a polling feature available within the virtual meeting platform or using a separately made Google Form. Most of the built-in polling functions require a license to be purchased. Google Forms is a free alternative. Below are links to the support pages for some frequently used platforms on setting up and running polls:

Zoom

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/213756303-Polling-for-meetings>

Microsoft Teams

<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/poll-attendees-during-a-teams-meeting-9923b7d4-ea97-4aa2-b8b8-b45fefe7d454>

Google Meet

<https://support.google.com/meet/answer/10165071?co=GENIE.Platform%3DDesktop&hl=en>

Skype

<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/take-a-poll-in-a-skype-for-business-meeting-6eb1fb85-18a6-422c-ae48-55519841f296>

WebEx

https://help.webex.com/en-us/n0pdj9x/Start-a-Poll-in-Cisco-Webex-Meetings#task_6531E05B157C77BEEFF02E329A98FC3D

GoToMeeting

<https://support.goto.com/webinar/help/engage-attendees-with-polls-and-surveys-g2w020005>

BlueJeans

<https://support.bluejeans.com/s/article/Event-Polling>

The DFL has also created a guide for designing and counting ballots in Google Forms, for both unranked and ranked choice voting:

Non-Ranked Voting

[Link]

Ranked Choice Voting

[Link]

Convention organizers should use their preferred balloting service to prepare an electronic ballot for each office being elected at the convention. Each prepared ballot should include the office being voted on and a few blank slots for candidates' names. Preparing ballots ahead of time allows the tellers or others assigned to the task to fill in the names of the nominees and share the ballots with delegates, preventing unnecessary delays in the election process. If the election for an office is uncontested, the convention does not have to use a prepared ballot, but the ballots are there if needed.

Recording

Under the Model Rules, the party unit chair determines whether the convention should be recorded. A recording may be used to correct minutes or to assist with resolution of any challenges resulting from the convention (Rule 10).

ON CONVENTION DAY

Convention Day Preparations

If not done earlier, the unit chair or secretary should share the virtual meeting link with the delegates, alternates, and convention assistants at least one hour before the scheduled convention start time. The chair should also share any proposed convention documents (e.g. agenda, rules, constitutional amendments, etc.) at that same time. At least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled start of the convention, the unit organizers, the convention chair(s), and other assistants should meet informally to resolve any pressing questions and make any last-minute preparations. These preparations include sharing the correct names and spelling for any convention assistants that need to be formally appointed by the convention chair(s), making sure the correct participant management options are in place, and opening the meeting to participants.

Credentialing and Admittance of Participants

The Credentials Committee must document all delegates and alternates who enter the virtual meeting room. Checking in participants in this way constitutes registration for the purposes of the rules and credentials reports. Convention organizers are strongly encouraged to use a waiting room to facilitate this process. A waiting room allows credentials personnel to compare the names of those who have signed into the meeting to the list of all eligible delegates and alternates whose credentials have not been challenged (also called the temporary roll) and other convention personnel. In order to expedite this process, the co-chairs of the Credentials Committee should create an online spreadsheet, using a service that allows for simultaneous editing by multiple individuals (e.g. Google Sheets or Microsoft OneDrive), with the temporary roll. Committee members can then use this sheet to mark off the name of each delegate or alternate in the waiting room and then admit them to the virtual meeting room. This sheet can also be used to facilitate upgrades. All committee members and others who have the ability to admit participants into the virtual meeting room act as sergeants-at-arms (Rule 12.e).

Convention organizers can choose to satisfy the open-meeting requirement by allowing visitors who are not credentialed to be admitted into the virtual meeting room. When this happens, Credentials Committee members who admit visitors should remind them that they are not credentialed and cannot vote. The convention chair should also remind visitors that they are not to participate in proceedings before opening the floor to debate or nominations and before conducting a ballot for an election.

Call to Order and Opening Business

The unit chair or the highest-ranking unit officer present should call the convention to order at the appropriate time, conduct any patriotic exercises that were prepared for the convention, and welcome attendees. The chair or a designee, usually the unit's outreach officer, should then read the DFL Affirmative Action, Outreach, and Inclusion Statement, found in the Official Call.

This should also be the first of many occasions during the convention when the chair explains the capabilities of the virtual meeting platform and informs delegates of how they can seek

recognition, submit any written motions, speak and be heard in debate, vote on motions and in elections, ask questions, receive technical assistance, and raise points of order. The chair should also inform participants if the convention is being recorded, to whom the recording may be distributed, and for how long the recording will be retained (Rule 10). The chair may also wish to give a brief overview of the day's business and some basic procedure for delegates. The chair should restate these methods at appropriate times in the convention. Some of those present could be first-time convention attendees since the 2020 conventions were conducted by ballot only and may not be familiar with how DFL conventions generally conduct business.

First Credentials Report and Challenges

The next order of business is the first report of the Credentials Committee. The chair should recognize the committee co-chairs to report on the number of delegates and alternates registered at the convention and whether any challenges to delegate or alternate credentials were received. The Model Rules require the Credentials Committee to hear all challenges and propose an appropriate resolution to the convention for each challenge (Rule 12.b). If no challenges were received, then the temporary roll is accepted as the permanent roll of the convention, and the Credentials Committee may begin upgrading alternates.

If the Credentials Committee did receive a challenge, the co-chairs should give a brief summary of the challenge, including the names of both the challenger(s) and the challenged delegation(s), the alleged basis for the challenge, any findings of fact by the committee, and the committee's recommended resolution to the challenge. The convention chair should then announce that the motion to adopt the committee's recommended resolution has been moved and seconded and is pending before the convention. To begin debate on the resolution, the chair should recognize the challenger(s) followed by the challenged delegation(s), each for no more than five minutes. The chair may then open the floor to debate from delegates, which should be confined to three speeches in favor of the proposed resolution and three speeches against it, with each speech being no more than two minutes long. Once the limits of debate have been reached or no one else seeks recognition, the chair should close debate and call for a vote on the proposed resolution to the challenge, using whichever voting methods have been prepared for the convention. If the chair is in doubt as to the result, electronic polling should be used to determine the outcome. The chair should repeat this process for each challenge reported by the Credentials Committee until all challenges have been resolved.

Upgrading Alternates

Once all challenges have been resolved, upgrading of alternates may begin. The Model Rules allow the convention to upgrade all registered alternates to delegates by amending the credentials report, which is adopted by a majority vote (Rule 13.a). The chair may wish to entertain this motion immediately after all challenges are resolved. Otherwise, such a motion may be adopted at a later point in the convention by a two-thirds vote (see *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* (12th edition), "§35. Rescind; Amend Something Previously Adopted"). If such a motion is adopted, then all alternates are upgraded to delegate status for the remainder of the convention. The co-chairs of the Credentials Committee are responsible for providing a list of all registered delegates and upgraded alternates to the tellers.

If a motion to upgrade all alternates is not adopted, then upgrading of alternates must proceed as stated in the Model Rules (Rule 13.b), which reflect the requirements of the State DFL Constitution and Bylaws. These rules and the DFL Rule Book provide the procedure for upgrading alternates to delegates. Alternates are upgraded within each delegation (precinct or organizing unit, as applicable) by subcaucus, if applicable and when able, and must maintain equal division by gender identity. No upgrading may take place during balloting.

At in-person conventions, this process is aided by the election of delegation co-chairs, who are able to track if any delegates in their delegation are absent and find alternates who are present to temporarily replace them on the floor. The virtual convention environment makes this significantly more difficult. Instead, the Model Rules allow the unit chair to designate up to two individuals from each delegation to perform this function (Rule 13.b.ii). Delegation co-chairs should keep a list of all delegates and alternates elected in their delegation, including each individual's gender identity, subcaucus (if applicable), and the ranking of each alternate. The delegation co-chairs can use this list to monitor which participants are present. If they notice one or more of their delegates is/are absent from the convention and eligible alternates from their delegation are available, they should send a message to the co-chairs of the Credentials Committee and to the alternate(s) being upgraded, informing them that the upgrade is taking place. Delegates are permitted to enter the convention anytime, except when balloting is taking place, and are entitled to their voting delegate credentials. When an absent delegate enters a convention, and their delegation has all its delegate slots filled due to upgrading of alternates, the delegation co-chairs must downgrade the lowest-ranking upgraded alternate, within the delegate's subcaucus (if applicable), by sending a message to the co-chairs of the Credentials Committee and the downgraded alternate informing them of the downgrade.

If the unit chair does not designate delegation co-chairs, the Model Rules place the responsibility for facilitating upgrading of alternates with the Credentials Committee. The committee may choose to prepare for their upgrading by creating a pre-ranked list of alternates before the convention. This list can unify upgrading within each delegation if a delegation was elected by subcaucus. The order of alternates in each delegation should follow that of Rule 13.b.iii in the Model Rules. That order should be all first-ranked alternates listed in order by the number of delegates allocated to their respective subcaucus, with ties between alternates of equal subcaucuses being broken by lot. This order is then repeated for all second-ranked alternates, third-ranked alternates, and so on. An absent delegate in the delegation is, therefore, replaced first by the highest ranking alternate from within their subcaucus who maintains equal division by gender identity or, if no alternates from their subcaucus are present, by the highest ranking alternate from the list of all alternates in the delegation who maintains equal division. The Credentials Committee must also downgrade alternates in the same manner as delegation co-chairs, as the need arises during the convention.

Election of Convention Chair(s)

The next order of business is the election of one or more permanent convention chair(s). The unit chair begins by opening nominations for the position. The unit chair should reach out to a few delegates, possibly the unit vice chair, in advance of this point in the convention and ask them to

nominate the individuals who had agreed to serve in this role before the convention. Otherwise, the unit chair is entitled to nominate those individuals from the chair. Typically, there are no further nominations at this point, but the chair must call for further nominations at least three more times before closing nominations, as is required of all elections in the DFL. The Model Rules do not specify a maximum number of convention chairs the body may elect (Rule 15). Therefore, there is no contest for the position unless the convention adopts a motion limiting this number beforehand. Under the Model Rules, convention chairs are elected by plurality vote. Therefore, an uncounted vote by electronic polling (see Rule 24) or another voting method akin to a voice vote is usually sufficient to elect the nominees as permanent convention chairs.

Adoption of Agenda and Rules

The agenda and proposed rules should be considered separately but may be distributed to delegates and alternates together. Up to this point, any temporary agenda and rules will have governed the business of the convention and continue to do so until the permanent rules and agenda are adopted. The chair begins this process by recognizing the co-chairs of the Rules Committee, if one was appointed. Otherwise, another individual responsible for composing the agenda and rules, perhaps the unit chair, should be called upon to present the proposed agenda and move that it be adopted as the permanent agenda. If the proposed agenda was recommended by a committee, it is considered moved and seconded. Once properly before the body, the convention may debate the adoption of the proposed agenda under normal debate limits (see Rule 23). The convention may also amend the proposed agenda by a majority vote. Under the Model Rules, any proposed amendment affecting five or more words must be submitted to the convention chair(s) in writing before being considered; (Rule 21). The agenda is adopted by a majority vote of the convention and may be suspended or amended at a later time by a two-thirds vote.

This same process is repeated to consider adoption of the proposed rules. Likewise, the adopted permanent rules are subject to suspension and amendment by a two-thirds vote.

Appointment of Secretary and Other Convention Officials

Once the permanent rules are adopted, the convention chair(s) should appoint other needed convention officials and assistants, such as the convention secretary, sergeants-at-arms, tellers, designated technology assistants, parliamentarians, timekeepers, and other assistants as they deem necessary to conduct convention business. Under the Model Rules, a convention secretary, the sergeants-at-arms, the tellers, and any designated technology assistants are mandatory appointments (Rule 15).

Officer Reports

Unit officers may wish to report to delegates and alternates on their work since the previous convention. Officers running for re-election may decline to give this report in the interest of fairness to other potential nominees, but they are not required to forgo their right to give a report at this time. However, the convention chair should overrule any attempt to use this order of business to speak in direct relation to any election taking place at the convention, i.e. advocating

for any candidate(s). The convention or convention organizers may wish to move this item of business to a later time on the agenda or take up officer reports in between other items of business as down-time occurs.

Consideration of Constitutional and Bylaws Amendments

The chair begins consideration of amendments to the unit constitution and bylaws by calling upon the chair(s) of the Constitution Committee, if appointed, to explain any proposed amendments and move their adoption. When reported by a committee, the adoption of these amendments is considered moved and seconded. A technology assistant or another virtual meeting host should use screen sharing to display the draft of the proposed constitutional amendments while the chair(s) of the Constitution Committee are giving their report and while it is being debated. Convention organizers should have distributed a copy of these proposed amendments to the delegates and alternates ahead of time. The DFL Rule Book requires that delegates and alternates be provided with both the old and new language of any proposed amendments to such governing documents of a party unit. This is typically accomplished by showing changes to those documents using strikes to indicate old language proposed for removal and underlines to indicate new language proposed for addition. Also worth noting is the change in the State DFL Constitution and Bylaws, adopted in 2020, that formally permits local party units to adopt bylaws not in conflict with the unit constitution or State DFL Party documents. Such bylaws can be considered and adopted in the same manner as and as part of the same committee report or simultaneously with any proposed changes to the unit constitution. Any amendments to the report affecting five or more words must be submitted in writing (Rule 21).

Second Credentials Committee Report

Prior to party officer elections, the convention chair should call upon the co-chairs of the Credentials Committee to give a second report. This report should update the convention on the number of voting delegates and upgraded alternates are registered. This number determines whether a quorum is present, that being a majority of registered delegates and upgraded alternates.

Election of Party Officers

Following the second credentials report, the chair should proceed to open nominations for the first party unit office listed on the agenda for election. Typically, this first office is the chair, and the order of offices on the agenda typically follows the order in which they appear in the unit constitution. In conventions occurring in the odd-numbered year, the offices being elected are limited to the unit chair, the vice chair, the outreach officer (if specified in the unit constitution), the secretary, and the treasurer. Regular elections for all other party unit offices are conducted at a convention occurring in an even-numbered year.

The Model Rules anticipate the appointment of a Nominations Committee (Rule 28). The chair should call on the committee's chair(s) to report the committee's recommendation for the unit chair and place the names of any recommended candidate(s) into nomination for the office. Delegates may then place the names of other candidates into nomination. Nominations are made

without speeches or seconds. Once the chair has called for further nominations three times and no further nominations are forthcoming, the chair declares nominations closed. If more than one person has been nominated for an office, the tellers should finalize the preparation of ballots by listing the names of all nominees on the ballot.

Candidate speeches follow nominations (Rule 29). Candidates may choose to yield some or all of their time to others to introduce them or speak on their behalf. There is no further discussion on the elections by any other individuals. The model rules do not specify a method for determining speaking order, so the chair may use their discretion to determine a method, unless one of the nominees or a delegate objects. Speaking order is generally determined by the order in which candidates were nominated or determined by lot. Candidates in uncontested elections may choose to forgo the opportunity to address the body before the vote on their office is taken, but the chair may use their discretion to invite them to briefly address the body after the election is complete.

In uncontested elections, the chair should read the DFL Affirmative Action, Outreach, and Inclusion Reminder and immediately proceed to a vote by electronic poll or by a voice vote following candidate speeches, a process called “election by acclamation.”

In contested elections for party officers, a question and answer period follows candidate speeches. The chair should announce to the convention the method delegates may use to submit questions for candidates and should either themselves select or designate someone else to select questions. Under the Model Rules, the order of response is determined by lot and rotated forward by one with each question (Rule 30.c), answers are limited to one minute each, and the period is limited to 20 minutes for candidates for chair and vice chair and to 10 minutes for all other offices.

Following the question and answer period, the chair should read the DFL Affirmative Action, Outreach, and Inclusion Reminder, restate the method by which delegates will receive their ballots and cast their votes for the office, and instruct tellers to begin distributing ballots. The chair should pause at this point to allow delegates time to vote. Tellers should also move anyone participating by phone into a breakout room and take their votes by calling each individual’s name and recording their vote. After a few minutes, the chair should call again for delegates to cast their ballots and twice more, after which the chair may close balloting for the office and instruct tellers to begin counting ballots. The chair may then proceed to open nominations for the next election or entertain a brief recess if there is reason to believe a candidate in the previous election will wish to run in the subsequent election if they do not win in the first one. The drop rule in the Model Rules removes the candidate who earns the fewest votes on a ballot where no candidate receives a majority of votes, provided that at least two candidates remain on the ballot (Rule 31.a). Another ballot is then taken with only the remaining candidates included. The convention may alternatively choose to elect by ranked choice in races with more than three candidates (see Appendix B for ballot format and counting procedures).

This process should be repeated with all party unit offices. Any offices for which no candidates were nominated shall remain vacant and be filled by the unit central committee.

Other Elections for Party Office

Once all regular elections for party unit offices on the agenda have been completed, the convention may consider other elections for party office that come before it, such as elections to fill vacancies or elections for committees of higher-level conventions.

Other Business

The convention may conduct any other party unit business that properly comes before it prior to adjournment, including announcements about upcoming party events or meetings. The chair should ask delegates to send to the secretary or one of the technology assistants any internet links to events they wish to share with others, so they can be verified before being distributed in chat and in the convention minutes.

Adjournment

Once all above business has been completed, the chair should entertain a motion to adjourn. The convention may adjourn even though results in one or more elections for party office have not been announced.

AFTER THE CONVENTION

Verification of Ballot Results

At least two tellers should download and retain a copy of the raw results of all electronic ballots until the results are verified. On any electronic ballot where the result was close or in which ranked choice voting was used, the convention chair(s) and the tellers should meet to audit and ascertain results of those ballots. Any elections that require equal division by gender identity should be audited at this time to ensure compliance with those provisions of the State DFL Constitution and Bylaws. Results must be verified and transmitted to the State DFL Chair and appropriate congressional district chairs within 48 hours after the convention's adjournment.

Submission of Constitutional Changes

Changes to the party unit constitution must be submitted to the State DFL Party office within 30 days following the adjournment of the convention.

Minutes and Recording

The convention secretary should complete minutes for the convention, making any necessary corrections based on the recording of the convention if one exists, and transmit the minutes to the newly elected party unit chair. Any recording of the convention should be retained according to the policies and practices of the local unit.

VIRTUAL MEETING TECHNOLOGY GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following terms are defined for their use in this document and the Model Rules for 2021 DFL Virtual Conventions:

“Platform” means the tele/audio/videoconference service, software, application, etc. used as the venue for the convention.

“Virtual meeting room” means the tele/audio/videoconference session in which individual users are able to speak and be heard by other users and where convention business is conducted.

“Breakout room” means a tele/audio/videoconference session in which individual users are able to speak and be heard by other users, separate from the virtual meeting room.

“Waiting room” means a feature within a platform that requires a host to manually admit each participant before they are allowed to enter the virtual meeting room.

“Participant” means a user admitted to the virtual meeting room.

“Host” means participant who is assigned privileges that enable the use of the platform’s moderation tools, such as such as muting and unmuting of other users’ audio and/or video, granting or restriction of privileges assigned to specific or general users, admittance to and removal from the meeting, and other similar capabilities of the platform.

“Chat” means a feature within the platform that enables participants to communicate with other users via typed text messages.

“Mute” means to prevent a participant’s audio from being heard by other participants in the same virtual meeting room; **“Unmute”** means to enable a participant’s audio to be heard by other participants in the same virtual meeting room.

“Electronic poll” means a feature or application, within or external to the platform, that enables all participants/users to indicate their approval or disapproval in a way that allows other participants or, at a minimum, the hosts to see all participants’ indications simultaneously or see an instantaneous count thereof; typically, this feature appears as “Yes”/“No” voting buttons.

“Electronic ballot” means a feature or application, within or external to the platform, that enables credentialled participants/users to cast a vote that is counted, recorded, and verifiable and that identifies which user cast each vote.

“Screen sharing” means a function that enables one’s display to be viewed by all other participants in the virtual meeting room