



## 2022 Precinct Caucus Planning Guide

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## Caucus Planning Guide

### Overview

#### **Caucus Date and Times - Tuesday, February 1, 2022**

Here are some of the key times to be aware of for caucuses. This information can also be found in the DFL Official Call (go to [dfl.org/partydocuments](http://dfl.org/partydocuments) for a digital copy of the call).

- 6:30PM - Registration must begin at or before 6:30PM
- 7:00PM - Meeting Called to Order

#### **Key Deadlines**

- November 1 - Reporting Caucus Locations to State Party
- January 10 - Deadline to Request Proof of Insurance for Caucus Night
- January 23 - Deadline to request access to the online registration tool

### **Locations - Must be reported by Nov 1, 2021**

#### **Identify Precinct Caucus Locations**

It is preferable, although not required, to hold a caucus geographically within the precinct (see page 2 of the DFL Official Call, as well as Minnesota statutes 202A.15 and 202A.156). To help with this process you can see where your caucuses have previously been held on your reporting form. Here are some location ideas if you need something different than your previous locations.

- Public schools
- City halls
- Community centers
- Park buildings
- Use of churches and other private facilities is an option, but may be challenging because they can be viewed as less-than-neutral.

When figuring out space for caucuses your organization you will need to consider expected attendance as well as what is available in your community. Below are the main set up approaches used in the DFL for caucuses.

- **One location for all precincts in your unit:** The location should be centrally-located and ideally near a transportation hub.
- **Multiple Locations:** Typically used for large turn-out precincts, reserve a sufficient number of large rooms, as their caucuses may not fit into standard-sized classrooms or in cases where there is a large geographical space.

#### **Key things to know for spaces:**

- All Public Schools must give you the space for that night as long as you request in writing.
- All public buildings must make their facilities available for caucus under state law (MN Statute 202A.19).



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- While it is up to the local unit to pay for caucus spaces, public facility rental fees for caucuses must not exceed the lowest charges of any other group (MN Statute 202A.192).
- **Internet Access** - If at all possible you will want to find a location where you will be able to access the internet in order to have the easiest time for registration as the registration tool requires use of the internet.
- **Proof of Insurance** - Some venues may require you to provide proof of liability insurance. The DFL State Party pays to cover local events with our insurance, but it is still up to the local organization to request insurance. You can request insurance certificate using the form at  
<https://dfl.org/resource/proof-of-insurance/>
- **Accessibility** - Locations must be fully accessible for persons with disabilities. Most public buildings are required to meet certain accessibility standards by code. However, it is still important to check out the location to ensure accessibility. Consider the following:
  - Are there sufficient numbers of accessible parking spaces?
  - Is the entrance where you are planning registration accessible?
  - Are the accessible bathrooms near where you are planning to have the meetings?
  - Are all the rooms you will be using accessible without stairs or by elevator?

\*For more information on meeting accessibility please check out <https://dfl.org/accommodations/>

### Report Location by Nov 1, 2021

All precinct caucus locations must be reported to the state party by Nov 1, 2021 (Official Call, Page 3). Every Organizing Unit has a unique link that was sent to your Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary for review.

### Site Visits

Site visits is simply taking the time

Here is a list of things to ask about for your site visit:

- Review building accessibility
- Figure out what signs you might need to help folks navigate to their caucus meeting
- Get the contact information on who will be helping at the facility on caucus night and who to call if there is an issue.

### Volunteer Recruitment

### Planning Team

A planning team will take the lead in planning Caucus Night including, but not limited to, finding and reporting locations, advertising, planning recruitment nights, preparing the convenor packets and site materials, helping to run caucus convenor trainings, and recruiting volunteers to help as convenors or at registration.



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### Site Coordinator(s)

A site coordinator is the person who is the main point of contact for a caucus site and is responsible for ensuring everything runs correctly on caucus night. In areas with multiple locations you will want to arrange for at least one site coordinator to manage every site.

### Greeters and Registration Volunteers

Registration volunteer needs can vary depending on how you plan to run your caucuses. In some areas, convenor help run and recruit volunteers to help with registration - particularly if registration is run at the entrance to the caucus room. Some units use a central registration area - in this case they recruit volunteers to specifically help with registration. You should consider how registration will be set up and how many folks you are expecting to attend when planning for how many volunteers you might need.

You should also plan to have folks recruited to volunteer as greeters. This role is focused on welcoming folks to caucuses and helping them navigate the building. Caucus night is one of the only interactions many folks have with the party - so we want to ensure they have a positive experience and want to get further engaged!

### Convenors

Convenors are the individuals who start the Precinct Caucus Meeting. Often they are also elected to run the caucus meeting as the Caucus Chair.

#### Convenor Recruitment

Identify caucus convenors as soon as possible and prepare a complete list with their names and contact information. It does not need to be reported to the DFL. Caucus convenors are often, but not necessarily, the precinct chairs. Each precinct caucus should have its own convenor, unless multiple precincts are meeting in one room and it's feasible to share a convenor among them.

#### *Things to keep in mind for convenor recruitment:*

- Someone who is comfortable in front of people, who can speak clearly and be understood.
- Convenors need to be on-site to set up their caucus by 6pm or earlier.
- Can get to a training
- Let them know they don't need to be the caucus chair - but that can be. If they are not they are encouraged to offer support to the caucus chair.

#### Convenor Packets

Convenor Packets should include all of the documents needed for the Convenor to run their caucus. They should be handed out either as the convenor training or before precinct caucuses so the convenors have time to become familiar with them. You can find a checklist for what should be included in the appendix.

#### Convenor Training

Plan to have at least one in-person training for caucus convenors. If they cannot attend training, try to sit down



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for a one-on-one with convenors. If you absolutely cannot meet with every convenor, be sure to have written materials for each convenor who cannot attend the training.

### Training Outline

This training is aimed at making sure that convenors are comfortable with running their caucus. Be sure that convenors know they represent the Minnesota DFL to their precinct caucus. Caucus convenors must arrive early to set up their sites and should find additional volunteers from their precinct to help with registration, resolutions etc.

- **Caucus timeline is as follows:**

- 6:00 pm set up (or earlier)
- 6:30 pm registration opens
- 7:00 pm “time-certain” for convening caucus (calling the meeting to order)
- 7:30 pm election of Delegates/Alternates must not start prior to this time
- 8:00 pm caucus must not close prior to this time

Convenors should listen to their caucus attendees, be friendly, and keep things moving and have caucus members introduce themselves if caucus size permits.

- **Go through convenor instructions.**
  - Run through the agenda and the sample rules
- **Review Official Call Instructions**
- **Preference Ballot**
  - More information about this process will be announced in January.
- **Local Information**
- **Ensure Convenors know when they will get their Materials and how to report them at the end of the night.**
  - Let convenors know how they will pick up packets and materials prior to caucus night
  - Remind convenors where to drop off materials after caucuses

## Document and Materials Prep

### Convenor Packets

You will need to make, distribute, and collect a packet for each precinct in your Organizing Unit. The basic steps are listed below the following page contains a checklist for what must be included in each precinct's packet.

- Make copies of the materials listed in the “must copy” section as well as any local printing
- Build packets using the Packet Checklist
- Make a time to distribute packets to caucus convenors (it is highly recommended to wait until caucus night if possible)
- Provide specific directions to convenors on how to return the materials to you as these will be needed for credentials at your convention as well as for reporting to the State Party



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Convenor packets should be distributed at trainings or before precinct caucuses so that convenors have time to become familiar with them. Convenor packets must include copies of all documents required for caucus. They are listed in the next section “Documents for Each Caucus” and complete instructions will be in the caucus kits distributed on December 7, 2019. You can find a checklist in the appendix.

### Must Copy Documents

*These materials will need to be copied prior to the caucus.*

- Precinct Caucus Convenor Instructions (1 copy per precinct)** – Provides detailed instructions for Convenors and Caucus Chairs. You should plan to meet with your convenors to go over this packet and give them specifics related to their caucus. In addition, you can direct your convenors to complete a training on the DFL Training Hub.
- DFL Caucus Registration Affirmation (1 copy per precinct)** – This sign must be displayed in the precinct caucus registration area.
- Electronic Registration Tool Instructions (multiple for each precinct)** – Basic explanation of how to use the tool. Can be on table to support registration volunteers.
- Blank Caucus Registration Sheets (multiple for each precinct)** – If your unit uses the electronic registration system, these will be used to sign in individuals that need to be added to the system. If your unit does not choose to use the new electronic caucus registration tool, attendees can sign-in using these forms.
- Caucus Rules/Agenda and Basic Information Sheet (1 copy for each attendee)** – This sheet includes the basics of participating in the caucus as well as sample rules and an agenda. You cannot remove items from the agenda, but you can add local business. Make your best guess on how many copies will be needed for your caucuses based on previous attendance. *Make sure you copy both sides.*
- Resolution Form (1 copy for each attendee)** – All resolutions for a precinct must be attached to this form.
- Non-Attendee Form (multiple copies for each precinct)** – If a voter cannot attend caucus or must leave the caucus early, filling out this form and delivering it to the Unit Chair or Caucus Chair allows their name to be put into nomination for offices they have indicated.
- Precinct Caucus Report Forms (at least 1 set for each precinct)** – *Depending on the size for a precinct they may need multiple sets of some of the forms.* These will be the written record of what occurred at the caucus.
- Senate and House Caucus Letters (1 copy for each attendee)** – Needs to be put out for attendees to take.

### Pre-Printed Caucus Night Materials

*These materials will need to be sorted through as some are for the Organizing Unit Convention and others are for precinct caucus night.*

- Caucus Report Form Coversheets** – This page needs to be attached to the top of each caucus’s packet of report forms. One coversheet is provided for each precinct.
- Precinct Envelopes** – Complete the information on the front: precinct name, number of delegates to be elected. Place all materials for each caucus in this envelope. If all the materials don’t fit in the envelope, you can use something else to pack the materials, but be sure to include that envelope for the convenors.



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- Party Documents (Constitution, Official Call, and Platform)** – There are enough of these to give one copy to each precinct. If you need more for some reason, they can be found at [DFL.org/PartyDocuments](http://DFL.org/PartyDocuments).

### Materials NOT included in Your Caucus Kit

*These are materials you will need to find or make for each precinct.*

- Map or Description of Precinct Boundaries** – Provide a map of the precinct to each convenor for posting at the caucus room location. (Maps are available at <https://www.gis.leg.mn/html/precincts2018.htm>)
- Local Information** – Provide locations and times of local elections, and any other relevant information or events.

### Registration Materials

- 2 or more smart devices with Action Builder registration tool for each Precinct.
- 2 or more smart devices with MN Secretary of State Caucus Location Finder.
- Pens
- Blank registration sheets

### Helpful Materials

- Pens and paper
- Name tags
- Painter's tape
- Directional signage
- Voter Registration

### Distribution and Collection of Materials

If precinct caucuses are being held at multiple locations, arrange delivery of packets to precinct caucus convenors before the caucus.

If multiple precinct caucuses are being held at one location distribute preparatory materials to the convenor before the caucus and distribute the report forms to be filled out at the caucus location

Arrange in advance with caucus convenors where all materials should be returned at the end of the night. You should have contact information for each convenor. Think ahead to your unit conventions and gather any information that does not go to the State DFL such as Pre-Convention committee lists or local volunteer forms. Make a plan in advance for sorting and distributing information gathered by each precinct: registration sheets for data entry, delegate and alternate lists to campaigns, and information needed by the pre-convention committees (credentials, resolutions, etc.) – especially, any issues that might become credentials challenges.



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### Attendee Recruitment

#### Advertising

##### How to Publicize Your Local Precinct Caucuses in Five Easy Steps

Below are five easy steps to help publicize your local precinct caucuses. A media kit that expands on these instructions will be sent to every local unit.

1. Send Media Advisory to Local Press
  - a. The officers of your local units will be emailed a template for a media advisory accompanied by a press list organized by county.
  - b. Fill in the blanks of this template with the information specific to your precinct caucus.
  - c. Paste the media advisory into the body of an email.
  - d. Write a subject line for the email, such as “ADVISORY: SD22 Announces February 25th Precinct Caucus Location.”
  - e. Look at the press list to see which press outlets may be interested in your caucus.
  - f. Copy those email addresses and paste them into the “Bcc” line of the email.
  - g. Write your email in the “To” line.
  - h. Hit send!
2. Call the Press.
  - a. Call each publication to follow-up on your email. As mentioned, a press list organized by county will be sent digitally and will include phone numbers.
  - b. Ask them if they received the notice of caucus locations and ask them to add it to their calendars as well as to publish a notice in the newspapers.
  - c. Let them know that you or others in your party unit are available for interviews.
3. Post on Social Media.
  - a. Post the precinct caucus information on social media and encourage your followers to share.
  - b. Create an “event” on Facebook for the Precinct Caucus.
  - c. Include a link to the Caucus Location Finder on DFL.org.
4. Choose Spokespeople.
  - a. Reporters may want to interview local DFLers for their articles. Choose one or two well-spoken people who are willing to speak to the press and will be present at the precinct caucus.
  - b. Gather their contact information so that you can easily send it to reporters if they ask to speak with them before the event.
5. Facilitate press at Caucus.
  - a. Remember, precinct caucuses are open to the press. If any reporters come to your caucus, welcome them, be kind, and help facilitate interviews with your chosen spokespeople.
  - b. **If there are any concerns, email DFL Communications Director Brian Evans at [bevans@dfl.org](mailto:bevans@dfl.org).**  
**For urgent press matters call Brian at 612-217-4113**



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### Direct Outreach

Direct outreach is the best way to get folks involved in the party. Having a successful Precinct Caucus is the best and easiest way to start the party process with a strong base of potential volunteers. Most folks who do not follow politics are not even aware that we have precinct caucuses. Because of this, it is important that everyone does their part to get people to their caucus.

Ideally, each precinct chair should door knock or phone bank their precinct. This can make a huge difference in turnout. If a person hears from their precinct chair about caucuses, they will:

- Know at least one person at the caucus
- See that there are other democrats in their precinct
- Understand what precinct caucuses are and why we hold them
- Know that there is a local unit they can participate in all year

## Caucus Night Plan

### Site Set-Up

A large entryway or common area is desirable for registration, so that attendees are not confined to a small area when waiting to register. If you will have multiple caucus meetings in one building there are a few ways to structure registration. Some units register attendees at one area for multiple precincts/rooms and direct people to the correct room for their precinct, others find that a separate registration area for each precinct room works best. Recruit greeters to help participants find their way to registration, stairs, elevators, rest rooms, and caucus rooms. Posting an easily understandable floor plan, and maps of the building, is also helpful. Consider handing out individual building maps, marked with precinct names and room numbers, to attendees as they enter the building. The precinct name and a map showing its boundaries should be visibly posted at each caucus location/room. Signs indicating the nearest accessible restrooms should also be posted around the site.

### Preference Ballot

Balloting for gubernatorial preference will begin at 6:30pm and conclude at 8:00pm, unless people are still registering for the caucus. Balloting needs to be accurate and run like an election. Be sure to go through attached preference ballot procedures with all convenors. Only ballots cast for candidates officially registered for the preference ballot will be counted. A caucus should not have more ballots than they have members signed in, so be sure convenors are double-checking that all caucus attendees are signed in before balloting ends. All votes in the Preference Ballot must be recorded on the official tally sheet. Online reporting of results should be completed as soon as possible on Caucus Night. The caucus chair or teller reads the results for their caucus at the end of the balloting period.



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### After the Caucus

#### Collection of Materials After Caucus

Data entry and material collection must happen promptly after caucus night. This is even more important during a redistricting year. In order to sort elected officers, delegates and alternates into their new units, the State Party will need as much time to sort through the data as possible.

#### Data Entry/Reporting

##### Reporting to the Organizing Unit Chair

Each precinct will have a reporting form to be submitted to the Organizing Unit Chair after the caucus. There is a page for each of the following: Convention Delegates, Convention Alternates, Preconvention Committees, and Election Judges.

##### Reporting to the State DFL

Action Builder will be used for post-caucus data entry, including adding delegates and alternates, election judges and other designations. Entering the data after caucus will follow a similar process to sign in on caucus night. Refer to the Action Builder training for more details.

**Organizing units will have up to 10 days after the caucus to enter their information.**

#### Follow Up with Attendees

Precinct Caucus night is essentially the start of the organizing year. In order to grow as a party through our caucus and convention cycle, it is essential that we maintain relationships with our caucus attendees. Follow up with caucus attendees within a couple of days of the caucus. Let them know what the unit will be working on and invite them to any upcoming events.

#### Follow Up with Precinct Leadership

Precinct chairs and vice chairs elected at precinct caucuses will be eager to get started in their role. Reach out to them promptly after caucus night to ensure they understand their role in the unit, and know where to find any resources they may need.



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### Appendix

#### Caucus Kit Checklist

*These items should be included in every packet you prepare for precinct caucuses:*

- Precinct Envelopes with completed information—Place all materials for each caucus in this envelope. If all the materials don't fit in the envelope, you can use something else to pack the materials, but be sure to include that envelope for the conveners.
- Precinct Caucus Convenor Instructions (1 copy per precinct)
- DFL Caucus Registration Affirmation (1 copy per precinct)
- Blank Caucus Registration Sheets (multiple for each precinct)
- Electronic Registration Tool Instructions (multiple for each precinct)
- Attendee Information Sheet (1 copy for each attendee)
- Resolution Form (1 copy for each attendee)
- Non-Attendee Form (multiple copies for each precinct)
- Senate Caucus Letters (1 copy for each attendee)
- House Caucus Letters (1 copy for each attendee)
- Precinct Caucus Report Forms (at least 1 set for each precinct) – Depending on the size for a precinct they may need multiple sets of some of the forms.
- Caucus Report Form Coversheets (1 per precinct) – This page needs to be attached to the top of each caucus's set of report forms.
- Pre-Printed Registration Sheets
- Constitution (1 copy per precinct)
- Official Call (1 copy per precinct)
- Party Platform (1 copy per precinct)
- Map of Precinct (1 per precinct) – Maps found here: <https://www.gis.leg.mn/html/precincts2018.htm>
- Campaign Materials (at least 2 per precinct - divide based on expected participation)
- Day of Action (Multiple per precinct)
- Local Information