



MINNESOTA DFL



This is a tool to support the development of Convention Chairs across Minnesota. This guidebook summarizes and rephrases our governing documents but does not replace or supersede them.

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Preparing for the Convention

About two weeks in advance of the scheduled convention date, the following information should be requested from the unit (worksheet in Appendix):

- Convention information (date, time, location, and any actual or predicted contentious business)
- Local unit's Constitution and Bylaws
- Convention Call
- Rules Committee's report
- Constitution Committee's report
- Convention Leaders Information including:
 - Local Unit Leadership
 - **Chair:** Oversees pre-convention committees and typically convenes the convention and presides until election of the convention chair.
 - **Vice Chair:** Assists the Chair with their duties and may fulfill the duties of the Outreach Officer if none is established in the unit's Constitution.
 - **Outreach Officer:** (if established) - Works with Arrangements Committee to handle any accommodation requests and typically reads the Affirmative Action, Outreach, and Inclusion statement/reminder during the convention. *(Reminder can be found on page 1 of the Official Call)*
 - Convention Preparation Committee Leaders
 - **Arrangements:** Works with the convention site for meeting preparations, sets up the convention site, arranges printing, and often works with campaigns on room and table arrangements.
 - **Credentials:** Reviews reports from the bodies that elect delegates, prepares the temporary roster, and reviews and recommends resolutions to credentials challenges.
 - **Rules:** Proposes rules for convention operations. Rules are usually based on the Model Rules provided by the State DFL.
 - **Nominations:** Screens and recommends candidates for party office.
 - **Constitution:** Proposes changes to the unit's Constitution and Bylaws.
 - **Resolutions** (if an Organizing Unit convention): Prepares the convention's resolutions report based on the submissions from the preceding level.
 - Convention Day Appointees
 - **Head Teller:** Responsible for all counted votes. Often supported by additional teller volunteers that help with the counting.
 - **Sergeant-at-Arms:** Controls access to the convention floor and reviews credentials.
 - **Timekeeper:** Times speeches to ensure they comply with the convention's Rules.

- **Secretary:** Maintains an accurate record of the convention's proceedings. This includes motions, amendments, and the outcome of actions. This is typically **not** a transcript or description of the proceedings.

***Some items referenced above may not be available until closer to the convention*

Roles of Chair and Parliamentarian

Convention Chair

A facilitator or mediator who allows the convention to reach a collective decision.

Duties:

- Be a neutral and impartial presiding officer at a convention
- Announce the correct sequence of business
- Recognize appropriate members to speak
- Follow correct voting procedures and announce the results
- Respond to questions relating to the factual aspects of the business as well as parliamentary procedure
- Expedite the business with members and adjourn the meeting when appropriate
- Announce the result of any vote of the convention
- Provide guidance to other convention officials. For example, direct the secretary to record the result of an uncontested election

Parliamentarian

A consultant who advises on matters of parliamentary procedure.

Duties:

- Provides advice to the chair and, when requested, to any other member.
- Be seated next to the chair
- Remain impartial
- Avoid speaking to the assembly (chair has final ruling)
- Inconspicuously call the attention of the chair to any error in the proceedings that may affect the substantive rights of any member, or may otherwise do harm

Key Resources

State Constitution and Bylaws



- Highest authority
- Can be found at www.dfl.org/partydocuments/
- Article III – Covers general rules and policies related to conventions
- Article V – Establishes and governs Organizing Units
- Rule Book – General Rules (previously located in Official Call)

Official Call



- Road map for caucus to convention process, including Organizing Unit Conventions
- Provides process details for before, during, and after the convention
- Can be found at www.dfl.org/partydocuments/

Organizing Unit Constitution



- Required by the DFL Constitution, but must remain in agreement with state-wide documents
- May clarify information relevant to the convention such as number of directors
- Maintained by local units

Convention Rules and Agenda



- One of the actions of a convention is to adopt rules and an agenda
- Cannot be in conflict with higher documents
- Convention materials can be found at www.dfl.org/convention-planning/

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 12th Ed.



- Applies in absence of other rules
- Can be purchased at robertsrules.com as well as many bookstores
- Roberts Rules of Order "In Brief" is another resource that is short, concise and a user-friendly guide to the essential procedures

Key Resources



Convention Chair Training

- Required by new Convention Chairs to gain certification. The training is comprehensive and covers all sections found in this guidebook. It can be accessed via the Training Hub at www.mn.dfl.litmost.com
- To gain training hub credentials, you will need to contact the Training department at training@df.org



Parliamentary Procedure - At A Glance

- Parliamentary Procedure at a Glance is a 2-page document that highlights priority motions. This resource can be found at www.dfl.org/convention-planning
- This resource is intended to serve as a supplement to Roberts Rules of Order (referenced above)



Congressional District Constitution

- Congressional Districts may create and maintain a constitution. Individual constitutions need to be consistent with the State DFL Constitution. To learn more about Unit specific constitutions, visit dfl.org/partydocuments/



Congressional District Call for Convention

- The time, date, and location of the Congressional District convention, as well as meetings of pre-convention committees
- Members of Congressional District pre-convention committees are elected by organizing unit conventions
- The Official Call contains a full description of the business of a Congressional District Convention



Other Conventions

- Municipal, County, and Senate District Endorsing Conventions
- To learn more about the DFL's Caucus & Convention Process, visit www.dfl.org/caucuses-conventions/process/

Other Resources

- A list of unit officers, committee chairs, scheduled speakers, and proposed convention officials who might need to be recognized during the convention
- Miscellaneous consumable supplies such as paper (for everything from signs to ballots), note cards (for Q&As), pens, pencils, markers, painters' tape, paperclips, rubber bands, etc. can prove remarkably useful at unexpected moments
- Tools such as a gavel, timecards, a large coin for flipping, numbered slips of paper for sorting by lot, an extension cord, stapler, scissors, hole-punch, timer, bell, etc.
- Most of the above materials should be provided by the unit, but it is good practice to have backups. Develop a "convention in a bag", a container of useful things, and add to it whenever something is found wanting

The Convention

When you arrive on the day of the convention you will first want to check in with the Chair of the Unit. You should plan to arrive with plenty of time to get a sense of the location as well as to prepare for the day. Confirm previously requesting information including:

- Convention information (any actual or predicted contentious business)
- The Convention Call
- Rules Committee's report
- Constitution Committee's report
- List of convention leadership and convention appointees
- For organizing units in even numbered years, dates, Times and locations of congressional district convention and pre-convention meetings as well as instructions on how those pre-convention committees are to be appointed
- **Pick up actual delegate handouts** – The formatting and page numbers may be different from what you collected prior to the convention, and it is important to be able to reference specific pages throughout the convention
- Confirm the Chair(s) of the pre-convention committees (Committees may vary depending on the convention): Arrangements, Credentials, Rules, Nominations, Constitution, and Resolutions. Confirm the list of the following convention appointees: Head Teller, Sergeant-at-Arms, Timekeeper, and Secretary
- When there is more than one convention co-chair, before the convention is called to order, the co-chairs should go over the proposed agenda and determine which co-chair will preside over which items
- If time permits, it is advisable to walk around the convention hall and facility to identify any areas of concern and raise them with the unit chair

Convention Agenda

The following is a typical agenda but may vary some due to local conditions

Calling the Convention to Order

- The official start of the convention
- If the start of the convention must be delayed, the delay should be announced to the delegates.
- Before convention chair's election, the convention convenor leads the body (typically the unit Chair).
- If the unit convenor wants help, you can assist, but you hold no formal role or power until elected.

Pledge of Allegiance

- A flag ceremony may occur here

Welcome(s)

- Delegates and guests

Reading of Affirmative Action, Outreach and Inclusion Statement

- Found in the Official Call (pg.1)
- Must be read at the beginning of all DFL Conventions

First Credentials Report

- The first substantive order of business is to receive the credentials report #1 and to resolve any credentials challenges. No votes by the convention may occur before the convention receives the first credentials report.
- The Credentials Committee produces the temporary roster and makes recommendations for the resolutions of any credentials challenges.
- Any reports or challenge recommendations must be considered and approved by the full convention pursuant to the Official Call and Convention Rules.
- This report may also be used to explain the procedures that will be used to upgrade alternates.

Election of Convention Chair(s)

- After this item is where the elected convention co-chairs formally begin leading the convention**

Appointment of Secretary and other Convention Officials

- After being elected as a convention co-chair, declare the needed convention appointees.
- Includes: Secretary, Parliamentarian, Head Teller, Sergeant-At-Arms, and Timekeeper

Subsequent Credentials Reports

- May occur throughout the convention, but generally before major items requiring a vote.
- Announces current number of registered delegates and upgraded alternates to determine quorum size.

Adoption of Agenda and Rules

- The convention will work through the agenda items proposed by the Rules Committee. The agenda may be amended before its adoption by majority vote; however, changes after the initial adoption require a 2/3 affirmative vote.
- These are 2 separate motions that are usually introduced by a pre-convention committee report, which don't require a second.
- Before adoption of the convention's rules, debate is governed by any temporary rules adopted by the unit Central Committee, the State Constitution and Bylaws (including the Rule Book), the Official Call, and Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (in the listed order of precedence).

Officer Reports (if any)

- It is common for officers to provide a report on the unit's activities since the previous convention.
- If officers are running for a contested re-election, especially as chair or vice chair, they may defer their report until after the officer elections. This is to prevent the appearance of using their report as extra campaign speech time.

Consideration of Constitutional and Bylaw Amendments

- These amendments are typically introduced by the pre-convention Constitution Committee. As a committee report, this does not require a second.
- If complicated or controversial, the report may be taken up in sections or by topic. Check with the pre-convention committee's co-chairs for how they would like to handle their report.

Election of Party Officers

- Election of specific positions depends on whether unit does even year or annual conventions.
- Specifics on the elections rule in Official Call

Election of State and CD Convention Delegates/Alternates

- Election Rules in Official Call
- Those units in multiple Congressional Districts will need to elect their delegates and alternates from and by the delegates who reside in each Congressional District.

Endorsement of State Senate Candidate (in years ending in 0, 2, and 6 only)

- If unit is whole Senate District

Endorsements of State House Candidates

- If unit is more than a whole House District, the Convention will separate into House Districts
- May be scattered throughout the convention
- Adjournment

Adoption of Platform Resolutions (in the even year)

- Only done at Organizing Unit Conventions

Election of Congressional and State Convention Delegation Co-Chairs (in the even year)

- Your Organizing Unit delegates and alternates make up your delegation. You will elect people to lead this group at the conventions they attend.
- Only done at Organizing Unit Conventions

Election of Congressional District Pre-Convention Committee Members (in the even year)

- Only done at Organizing Unit Conventions

Announcements

- May be scattered throughout the convention

Speakers

- May be scattered throughout the convention
- Time limit should be announced for each speaker
- Consult Convention Rules for specifics related to guest speakers

Adjournment

- This is the closing of the convention

Delegates and Alternates

It is important to know who delegates and alternates are for organizing unit conventions, as well as upgrading and downgrading of alternates.

Organizing Unit Convention membership includes:

- Delegates and alternates elected at precinct caucuses held in the organizing unit
- Chair and Vice Chair of the organizing unit when the convention is called to order
- Distinguished Party Leaders (“DPLs”), as defined in Article III, Section 19 of the DFL Constitution and Bylaws, who reside in the organizing unit

Excluded from convention membership:

- Other automatic delegates to the State Convention
- Elected Officials who are not DPLs

Delegates and Alternates elected at Precinct Caucuses

Each precinct caucus elects delegates and alternates to the organizing unit convention. The credentials pre-convention committee for the organizing unit establishes a temporary roll of delegates and alternates to the convention. Delegates included in the temporary roll are seated for the purpose of calling the convention to order.

Following the seating of the delegates on the temporary roll and addressing credentials challenges, alternates can be upgraded. Because credentialing remains open until the convention adjourns, delegates can continue to arrive and leave, resulting in the need to upgrade and downgrade delegates throughout the convention.

Upgrading and Downgrading Alternates

Upgrading and downgrading is handled by others, if there is a challenge related to the process, it will be directed at you as chair, and you will need to be able to respond to it and provide the appropriate direction and guidance to help address the complaint.

Convention rules often provide for the establishment of delegation chair(s). These rules usually provide for each precinct to elect one or more people to serve as delegation chair(s) for the precinct throughout the convention. Generally, these delegation chair(s) are given the following jobs: (1) distribute and collect ballots for the precinct and/or (2) upgrading and downgrading

delegates. While it is their responsibility, it is likely that questions may arise that require the convention chair's assistance.¹

Automatic Delegates: Organizing Unit Chair and Vice Chair

Organizing units are responsible for coordinating and running the precinct caucuses. This often results in organizing unit chairs and vice chairs needing to handle matters across an organizing unit the night of precinct caucuses, sometimes making it difficult for them to stand for election to be a delegate or alternate to the organizing unit convention. To address this issue, the organizing unit chair and vice chair are automatic delegates to their own organizing unit convention.

Automatic Delegates: Distinguished Party Leaders (DPLs)

To be an automatic delegate to an organizing unit convention, a Distinguished Party Leader must reside in the geographic boundaries (often a county or state senate district) of the organizing unit and must have participated in their most recent precinct caucus (*either in person or by submitting a non-attendee form*). DPLs should be included in the temporary roll prepared by the credentials committee. If excluded, a DPL should be seated as soon as the omission is discovered and corrected.²

Article III, Section 19 of the State DFL Constitution and Bylaws provides a list of DPLs:

- DFL members of the State Senate and State House of Representatives
- DFL Governor
- DFL Lieutenant Governor
- DFL Attorney General
- DFL Secretary of State
- DFL State Auditor
- DFL members of the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives from Minnesota
- Any current or former U.S. Presidents or Vice Presidents who are Minnesota residents
- Public officials elected at a convocation per State DFL Constitution and Bylaws Article VII, Section 2
- Any former DFL State Party Chairs
- Any DFL Chair Emeriti designated by previous State Conventions (see State Convention delegate list in the Official Call for designated Chair Emeriti)

¹ When the rules provide for this to be handled by delegation chair(s), a credentials committee may try and handle the upgrading and downgrading anyway. If the attendance is such that there will be minimal upgrading, absent a challenge to the process being raised, it is a best practice to leave well enough alone.

² It is out of order to challenge the seating of DPLs as a delegation. It is in order to challenge whether a specific individual qualifies as a DPL (e.g., does the individual hold the office described in Article III, Section 20 and did they attend their precinct caucus).

- The tribal chair of each Native American tribe whose tribal government headquarters is located in Minnesota (provided the chair is a resident of Minnesota)³

Accommodations

Article III, Section 1 of the DFL Constitution and Bylaws requires conventions to encourage participation of young people, seniors, women, persons living with disabilities, and other historically under-represented groups whether by race, ethnic group, immigration status, consideration of faith, gender identity, sexual orientation, or other protected status. (The cited section deals with Affirmative Action, Outreach and inclusion and does not mention Accommodations.)

To that end, numerous provisions are included in the Rule Book addendum of the DFL Constitution and Bylaws regarding accommodation. Many of these impact chairing conventions.

Accessible Locations

“Accessibility-Accessible Sites” in the General Rules of the Rule Book addendum of the DFL Constitution and Bylaws provides that conventions must be held in accessible locations.

Generally, as a convention chair, you are not involved in selecting the convention location, but you may be on the receiving end of a complaint regarding the facility.

It is a best practice to acknowledge the concerns raised, note the general requirements, and commit to passing along concerns to the individuals who organized the convention. Another best practice is to encourage the impacted delegate to work with the convention planners in the future to address the concerns in future conventions.

Time to Participate

“Accessibility-Time to Participate” in the General Rules of the Rule Book addendum of the DFL Constitution and Bylaws requires the chair of a convention to allow enough time for people living with disabilities to participate fully.

This often comes into play with freezing the floor – especially when the floor is frozen multiple times in succession. Convention chairs should be especially receptive to requests to allow certain delegates extra time to return to the floor when the call to freeze the floor is short and should instruct the sergeant at arms accordingly.

³ A tribal chair may designate another elected member of the tribal council who is a resident of Minnesota and who attended their precinct caucus to act as the DPL representative for the tribe at one or more conventions during that year, *provided the tribal chair gives written notice of such designation to the State DFL Chair at least ten days prior to the convention at which the designation is to take effect.*

Delegate and Alternate Seating

Not all facilities will easily allow individuals living with disabilities to sit with their precinct. In these instances, the convention planners should have a location on the floor for those who cannot navigate the convention floor to the location of their precinct (for example, a place for an individual in a wheelchair in an auditorium where most of the seats are only otherwise accessible by stairs).

At the start of the convention, the convention chair should acknowledge these delegates and work to ensure that their participation with their precincts is seamless. For example, if the convention rules provide for written ballots to be distributed by precinct, the convention chair should ensure that the precinct chair(s) for those delegates distribute and collect ballots from these delegates.

Prayer Breaks

In many of our units, we have a sizable Muslim population, and many members of the Islamic faith practice the call to prayer five times a day. As noted in the training, we are to encourage participation of all individuals, including those whose faith may provide barriers.

The convention planners may have provided for two prayer rooms and provided you with a list of the prayer times for that day. It is a reasonable accommodation that no significant business occurs during the prayer breaks. Different units accommodate in different ways, and often memorialize this in their convention rules and/or agendas (some requiring recess, others limiting the types of voting that can occur).

Even if pre-convention planning did not contemplate prayer breaks, if you are alerted to a request for accommodation for prayer breaks, you should do your best to ensure that delegates are not disenfranchised because of their religious observations. To that end, delegates who leave the floor for the purpose of prayer should never be treated as having left the convention (resulting in the upgrading of an alternate who must be downgraded upon their return).

Finally, some conventions have been bogged down in the label “prayer break” (some arguing the word “prayer” should not be used). However, it is discouraging (not encouraging) for the members of the Islamic faith to be required to defend the purpose of the accommodation. Thus, this debate should be ruled out of order.

Interpretation and Translation

“Accessibility-Interpretation” in the General Rules of the Rule Book addendum of the DFL Constitution and Bylaws provides for numerous types of interpretation – provided that a request was made to the State DFL at least two weeks prior to the convention (*see however Requests for Accommodation later in this module*).

As a convention chair, you are not usually involved in the planning process and have no knowledge of what interpretive or translation services have been requested. Rather, you are generally advised as to the interpretive services being provided the day of the convention. As a convention chair, you should take the time to meet the interpreter(s) prior to convening and ensure that any requests for additional time for interpretation are addressed.

At many conventions, units have arranged for use of headsets. For these headsets, those requesting interpretive service listen to an interpreter who live translates the action of the convention.

However, at some conventions, the headsets are not available, or the headsets may not work for some reason. In these instances, there may be need for live interpretation from the podium. Convention chairs need to exercise patience and coordinate with the interpreter to break up long pieces into smaller segments to allow for the interpretation.

Sometimes, challenges arise with interpretive services. There may be allegations that hired interpreters are aligned with specific candidates or are not translating accurately. This can be especially difficult when dealing with DFL or convention-specific concepts like “endorsement.”

These issues are often difficult to adequately address in that you, as convention chair, were not involved in lining up the hired interpretation services and do not speak the language the dispute relates.

The best practice is to rely upon the assumption that hired interpreters are acting in a professional manner, and that interpretation is not an exact science, so there may be more than one way to translate the words being translated.

Finally, some delegates may bring personal interpreters with them to a convention. This is generally permissible provided that the interpreter does not interfere in the convention or balloting (other than to assist the delegate in understanding the ballot).

The convention chair should work with the convention to accommodate the seating of these interpreters with their delegates in ways to prevent (or at least minimize) disruption to other delegates.

Requests for Accommodation

“Accessibility-Requests for Accommodation” in the General Rules of the Rule Book addendum of the DFL Constitution and Bylaws provides that even when requests for accommodation are made in a timely fashion, they are not guaranteed to be approved.

It is possible that you may encounter a delegate who made a request to the State DFL which was denied for a specific reason. Of course, it is not possible for you to change this on the day of a convention, and information available may not be complete. Your best course of action, as

convention chair, is to acknowledge the concerns of the delegate, and make recommendations as to ways the individual can get involved to address those concerns at future conventions.

Overall, the DFL is a diverse party and wants to encourage the participation of everyone who wishes to participate. To that end, the DFL strives to make reasonable accommodations.

While some of those accommodations cannot be provided, and others can only be provided if requests are made early enough, a convention chair should do their best to ensure that the participation by the delegates is as fair and open to all as is possible given the facility and preparations made by the convention planners.

Where accommodations are not possible, best practice is to offer an apology to the delegate, along with encouragement for the delegate to volunteer and work with the other volunteer convention planners going forward to correct the issue in the future.

After the Convention

The formal responsibilities of convention chairs and parliamentarians usually end the moment the convention ends. The unit will be in transition during this time, so please be prepared to help with the following areas:

Meeting of State and Congressional District Delegates and Alternates

- Elect Pre-convention Committee members for Congressional District Conventions. Each Congressional District will have its own rules for this.
- Elect Delegation Chairs.
- If the unit has delegated the selection of platform resolutions to the state delegates and alternates, arrange for this to happen accordingly.
- In some parts of the state, elect Pre-convention Committee members for County and/or Municipal Conventions.

Meeting of Unit Officers

New and any continuing unit officers meet immediately after adjournment to get a running start on the upcoming cycle. This can occur at convention site or a convenient location nearby. Below are the items to discuss during the meeting:

- Exchange contact information
- Schedule next Central Committee meeting
- Transfer records and materials from retiring officers.
 - Retiring Treasurer should provide bank signature cards
 - Retiring Secretary should provide collected minutes

Reporting

While reporting of convention results is the responsibility of the newly elected chair, the outgoing officers and convention officials should assist them to ensure a smooth transition and complete reporting. Best practices include the following:

- Meet with the convention secretary to review how the minutes should cover any particularly tricky part of the convention business and ask that the draft minutes be sent to you for review.
- Remind the new unit chair, the new unit secretary and the convention resolution chair of the deadline for submitting resolutions to Platform Committee.
- Ensure all state and Congressional District reporting forms are properly completed.
 - Photograph these completed forms and email them to the State Director of Party Affairs, and the appropriate Congressional District Chair just in case the unit fails to do so.

After Party

In many units, the convention will be followed by an after party, a social gathering often held at a nearby watering hole or hosted by someone. The purpose is to bring the unit together and to resolve any tensions that may have occurred. If possible, try to attend the after party to:

- Answer questions from delegates about what has just happened.
- Get feedback that will allow you to grow as a chair or parliamentarian.
- Recover, because you have worked hard and will need to unwind.

Elections

The election of DFL leaders is a core function of Organizing Unit Conventions. There are a variety of elections that can occur at a convention. The election process is made of four main components: Nominating, Voting, Counting and Reporting. These will be discussed in greater depth below.

Nominating

All candidates for election or endorsement at a convention must first be nominated by a delegate on the floor or by a Nominations Committee. If a Nominations Committee has recommended a candidate(s) for a position, the chair of the committee (or designated member) should place the name(s) into nomination. Note: take names for only one office at a time. Nominations do not require a second. Seconds and speeches should not be accepted. Candidate name only.

Be familiar with the specific Convention Rules and the Unit Constitution, which may impose restrictions on who may be nominated.

- Is there a gender-identity restriction?

- Did candidates need to screen with the Nominations Committee to be eligible for nomination?

Nominations for Multiple Positions & Equal Division

If multiple candidates are to be elected the DFL requires Equal Division.⁴ Equal division means that no more than half (rounded up if not a whole number) of the positions elected can be held by male or female gender identifying individuals, with those who do not identify as male or female not counting towards the total positions used to determine equal division. An individual's gender identity is determined by gender self-identification. There are some rare circumstances, like state convention delegates, where equal division may be waived if absolutely necessary given the pool of candidates. But for ongoing positions where vacancies can be filled, equal division is a strict requirement. Chairs must ensure equal division for entire delegations – each subcaucus, all of the delegates, all of the alternates, and all of the delegate and alternates combined.

When taking Nominations for a position where multiple candidates may be elected, accept nominations which include both the name and gender identity of each candidate.

According to the DFL Official Call:

Once nominations are closed:

1. If only individuals who identify as male or female were nominated and if one of the gender identities has total nominees which does not exceed one-half (when there is an even number of positions to be elected) or one-half rounded down (when there is an odd number of positions to be elected), then the chair may entertain a motion to elect those nominees by acclamation and hold an election for the nominees from the other gender identity.
2. If only individuals who identify as male or female were nominated and if the total number of positions to be elected is even in number, the chair may divide the election by gender identity.
3. If only individuals who identify as male or female were nominated, if the total number of positions to be elected is odd in number, and if there are more nominees of both genders than half of the positions to be elected rounded up, then the chair shall hold a single election, provided that the result of the entire election must achieve equal division.
4. If individuals who do not identify as male or female were nominated, then the chair shall hold a single election, provided that the result of the entire election must achieve equal division.

Caucus and convention reports of election results must report the gender identity of each individual elected (as determined by gender-self-identification).

Additional rules and examples for this process are explained in the DFL Official Call and should be carefully read through and understood prior to chairing a convention. Please reach out to the Party Affairs department of the State Party if you have further questions.

⁴ See equal division section in appendix for further explanation.

Candidate Speeches and Q & A

Nominated candidates are typically allowed time for speeches; there may also be a Question-and-Answer period. Follow the Convention Rules for specifics. Candidate names should be drawn by lot to determine speaking order and/or the order for answering questions. If not otherwise specified in the Convention Rules, rotate the order of candidates answering questions in the Q & A period. The Convention Chair should ensure all candidates are treated equally and allowed the same maximum time for each speech and/or time to answer each question. If candidates are going over their time, the Chair should intervene. Many unit rules will make the first question similar to: “will you abide by the endorsement, yes or no answers only”.

Voting

Uncontested Election

If there is only one name in nomination for an election or endorsement, the candidate may typically be elected/endorsed by acclamation (i.e., a voice vote), instead of by written ballot.

If the convention rules do not already allow for this, the Convention Chair may ask for a motion to suspend the rules for balloting and allow a vote by acclamation. A vote to suspend the rules requires a 2/3 affirmative vote to pass. If the vote to suspend the rules of balloting and allow a vote by acclamation passes, proceed with taking a voice vote for the election/endorsement.

Contested Election

Voting in a contested election will typically be done by written ballot or by Proportional Representation, using the Walking Subcaucus system. Know the Convention Rules for voting in each election or endorsement (e.g., some may call for Ranked Choice Voting, which is explained later in this guidebook).

Flow of Voting in a Contested Election (using a written ballot):

- Prepare to freeze the floor
- Freeze the floor and start balloting
- After ballots are turned in, unfreeze the floor
- Tellers tabulate the ballots
- Announce results of the ballot

Preparing to Freeze the Floor

Immediately following candidate presentations and/or Q & A, announce the time until the floor will be frozen, and balloting will begin. A warning of at least five minutes must be given prior to freezing the floor. Refer to the Convention Rules for specifics. A ten-minute warning must be given to any committee in session prior to an endorsement ballot. Explain what it means to freeze the floor and what needs to happen before the floor is frozen. Direct all voting delegates and upgraded alternates to be seated in their proper seats with their delegation. Direct anyone

who is not a voting delegate or upgraded alternate to leave the convention floor. Ask sergeant-at-arms to help instruct all voting delegates in the hallway or otherwise not on the convention floor to return to their seats. Receive an updated Credentials Committee Report, prior to the first ballot only. Make several announcements of the time remaining until the floor is frozen, including a final one-minute warning.

Freezing the Floor

When the designated time is up, the Convention Chair declares the “floor is frozen.” Once the floor is “frozen,” no one may enter or move about the Convention floor. Anyone who leaves will not be allowed to reenter until balloting is complete and the floor is “unfrozen.” No upgrading of alternates will occur during the time the floor is frozen. Direct the sergeant-at-arms not to allow anyone else onto the floor.

- Note: delegates and upgraded alternates with mobility impairments shall be allowed an additional 10 minutes to access the convention floor after it is frozen.

Standard Balloting

Prior to balloting for a candidate (as opposed to a motion), read the Affirmative Action, Outreach, and Inclusion Reminder as written in the Official Call. Must be read prior to the first ballot per office in a contested election.

Affirmative Action, Outreach, and Inclusion Reminder:

“As you vote today, remember that the DFL is committed to electing members of under-represented communities to positions both within the DFL Party and in public office.”

Remind delegates what they are voting on, and if relevant, the acceptable candidate names. “No endorsement” is always an acceptable choice when voting on an endorsement.

Explain how balloting will proceed (e.g., will delegation chairs come to the front to get ballots from tellers? Know this in advance.) Explain to delegates that they MUST sign their ballot on the back for it to be valid! Delegates in attendance, however, were elected to represent their larger unit, and therefore their vote is not private. Remind delegates multiple times to sign their ballot!

Help ensure all delegates have a ballot. Instruct delegation chairs, as needed, to collect the completed ballots from their delegation only and return them to the appropriate envelope. Sometimes tellers will be designated to hand out and collect ballots.

Once it appears all ballots have been turned in, ask if there are any remaining ballots. After the Convention Chair has verified that all ballots have been collected, returned to the proper envelopes, and turned over to the tellers, the Chair announces: “Balloting is complete, and the

convention floor is now unfrozen.” Delegates and others with appropriate badges may now come and go on the convention floor. Further explanation of specific duties during balloting can be found in the Appendix – “Balloting - Who Does What”

Balloting Materials

Delegation Envelopes

- Delegations are usually by precinct but may include a separate at-large or distinguished party leader delegation. One envelope per delegation is used to distribute and collect ballots. Each envelope should be marked with the name of the delegation and the size of the delegation, which is the number of ballots to be placed in that envelope. Labels allow reuse at future conventions

Ballots

- Distinct ballots should be provided for each round.
- If a printer is available, list candidates with a place for marking each. Endorsement ballots should also include a place for marking no endorsement.
- If a printer is not available, color code each round of blank ballots
- Robert’s Rules no longer mandates a motion to destroy ballots, but does require that ballots and all tally sheets be kept under seal by the secretary until the within which a recount may be ordered expires. In the DFL. That is 10 days or after any challenge is resolved whichever is later, after which they are to be destroyed.

Favorite Pet <i>Ballot must be signed on back</i> <input type="checkbox"/> No Endorsement <input type="checkbox"/> Bird <input type="checkbox"/> Cat <input type="checkbox"/> Dog <input type="checkbox"/> Fish <input type="checkbox"/> Reptile
--

Tally Sheets

Tally sheets are used to tabulate the results for each delegation for each round of balloting. They have a space for tabulating the votes for each candidate and, if applicable, no endorsement, but they should also include additional spaces to mark the name of the delegation, the round of balloting, the submitted ballot count, the spoiled ballot count, the unspoiled ballot count, and teller signatures. When tabulating, blank unsigned ballots are set aside, but all other ballots must be accounted for. Spaces should be filled in only when the tellers agree on the totals and they should be zero filled so that there are no blank spaces. Once

tellers agree on all spaces, they are to sign the tally sheet, staple it together with the delegation ballots and return the resulting packet to the head teller for entry onto a spreadsheet.

Tally Sheet for - Round 1	
Delegation	_____
_____ Submitted Ballots	
_____ Spoiled Ballots	
_____ Unspoiled Ballots	
_____ No Endorsement	
_____ Bird	
_____ Cat	
_____ Dog	
_____ Fish	
_____ Reptile	
Teller	_____
Teller	_____

Spreadsheet

- Hand tabulation can lead to errors. The tally spreadsheet should contain a separate sheet for each round with columns for delegation names, spoiled ballots, unspoiled ballots, each candidate and possibly no endorsement and registered delegate count. It should contain rows for each delegation, total votes, total as a percent of unspoiled ballots. As each delegation packet is returned its tally sheet should be transcribed into the spreadsheet. Once all delegations are accounted for, the sheet shall be distributed to the convention chair and to any candidate poll watchers. The convention chair after announcing the results to the convention should pass the sheet on to the secretary for incorporation into the minutes.

1	Registered	Submitted Ballots	Spoiled Ballots	Unspoiled Ballots	Blank/ Abstain	Tabulated Ballots	No Endorse	Bird	Cat	Dog	Fish	Reptile
Total	45	44	3	41	1	40	1	7	9	8	9	6
Percent							2.500%	17.500%	22.500%	20.000%	22.500%	15.000%
Status												
Gender Identity												
Precinct 1	25	24	3	21	1	20	1	4	6	4	3	2
Precinct 2	20	20	0	20	0	20	0	3	3	4	6	4

Ranked Choice Voting

In the election of Party Officers where only one position is open on the ballot, ranked choice voting may be used if contained within the unit's convention rules.⁵ Ranked choice voting may be selected as a drop rule for such endorsement or election, provided that ranked choice voting

⁵ RULE BOOK OF THE MINNESOTA DFL PARTY Page A5

may only be used where one position is on the ballot. In no case shall a drop rule be used to reduce the number of candidates to less than two.⁶

Whenever a system of ranked choice voting is to be used, the precinct caucus, convention or other meeting must use the ranked choice voting procedure outlined in the DFL Official Call. Ranked choice voting may only be used if there is a race in which there are 3 or more candidates running for one seat. On a written ballot, individuals will note their choice of candidates, ranking them in order of preference.⁷

Once balloting is complete, the ballots shall be collected and turned in to the chair. The chair or head teller shall then begin counting ballots. If on the first ballot one of the candidates receives a simple majority of the votes (60% for endorsement), then that candidate shall be declared the winner. If no candidate crosses that threshold, then the candidate with the lowest total number of votes shall be dropped from subsequent counts.⁸

During subsequent counts, those ballots cast for the candidate that was dropped shall be redistributed based on their next highest ranked choice candidate that has not been dropped from the race. If there are any ballots that do not list a remaining candidate, those ballots shall be considered exhausted, set aside and not included in subsequent counts. If after all the ballots are counted, a candidate has received a simple majority of the votes cast, that candidate shall be declared the winner. If there are only two candidates left, the candidate with the greater number of votes shall be considered the winner. The vote tally at the end of each count must be documented in the minutes.⁹

In order to minimize errors: use pre-printed ballots, use a separate teller team for each delegation, control noise, and control access to teller area.

If Ranked Choice Voting is planned for in the convention rules, the teller area for each delegation needs to be wide enough to hold a ballot pile (roughly 6 inches) for each candidate as well as for spoiled, exhausted, and no endorsement. A desk or a card table is too small to be practical.

Ranked Choice Voting Tie Break

Several methods of breaking ties are possible. The methods may be used sequentially but must be decided in advance of vote tabulation which to use and when. Carefully review the proposed rules for the convention to see if this is addressed. If not, consider discussing with the unit chair and/or rules committee chair(s) before the convention convenes so that a suitable rule may be included for adoption. Here are some options for breaking ties between last place

⁶ RULE BOOK OF THE MINNESOTA DFL PARTY Page A2

⁷ 2018-2019 OFFICIAL CALL OF THE DEMOCRATIC-FARMER-LABOR PARTY OF MINNESOTA Page 5

⁸ 2018-2019 OFFICIAL CALL OF THE DEMOCRATIC-FARMER-LABOR PARTY OF MINNESOTA Page 5

⁹ 2018-2019 OFFICIAL CALL OF THE DEMOCRATIC-FARMER-LABOR PARTY OF MINNESOTA Page 5

candidates that may be specified in the convention rules. If none is provided for, and it becomes necessary to resolve a last place tie within a Ranked Choice Voting ballot counting round, it may be necessary to have the convention adopt a specific process.

Head-to-Head - All unspoiled are tabulated by the relative rank of the tied candidates.

- Advantage - Reflects preference of convention.
- Disadvantage - Time consuming and might not yield result.

First Round - Relative rank of the tied candidates in first round.

- Advantage - Instantaneous.
- Disadvantage - Only reflects preference of some delegates Might not yield result.

By Lot (coin flip)

- Advantage - Instantaneous and will yield result.
- Disadvantage - Does not consider preference of delegates.

Drop both

- Advantage - Instantaneous.
- Disadvantage - May violate Mutual Majority Criterion.

Walking Subcaucus

Whenever a system of proportional representation is to be used the convention shall use the Walking Subcaucus process. The following procedures apply:

The chair opens nominations for subcaucuses. Subcaucuses must have a title which must begin with a candidate name or uncommitted and may include issue(s). There are specific rules depending on the level of the convention; look in the Official Call for clarification. The title must not be readily confused with the title of a previously nominated subcaucus. The nominator may briefly inform the group of the candidates and issues named in the subcaucus title. No one may nominate more than one subcaucus.

When nominations are completed, the chair identifies areas where each subcaucus will meet. A time shall be specified in the convention rules for completing the first count of each subcaucus.

Prior to this time, individuals must be permitted to leave a subcaucus and join another. At the specified time, all movement ceases, the members of each subcaucus are counted by the convention tellers, and the count is reported to the chair. The chair announces the count for each subcaucus to the convention. The threshold for subcaucus viability is the number of persons needed to elect one delegate. Viability is determined in the following manner:

1. Add up the total number of members of all the subcaucuses.
2. Divide the result of Step No. 1 by the total number of delegates to be elected. If there is a remainder, round the result up to the next whole number. This is the viability number.

If all remaining subcaucuses are viable on the first count, then there shall be no second count. Any subcaucus which has fewer delegates than the initial viability number is informed that it is

not viable, and members must join a viable subcaucus to continue participating in subcaucusing. A time is specified (by majority vote of the precinct caucus or in the convention rules) for the second and final count. Prior to this time, individuals may move among the subcaucuses. At the specified time all movement ceases and the members of each subcaucus are counted by the convention tellers. Results of that count are reported to the chair. Delegate allocation is then determined by the chair as follows:

1. Add up the total number of members of all the viable subcaucuses.
2. Divide the result of the first step by the total number of delegates to be elected. Carry this division out to at least three decimal places.
3. Divide the number of members of each subcaucus by the result of the second step. The whole number result is the minimum number of delegates allotted to that subcaucus. After allotting delegates in this manner, allot any remaining delegates to subcaucuses in the order of the largest remainder to the smallest remainder. (A subcaucus whose number is less than "1" on the final count will not be allotted any delegates or alternates.)

ELECTION OF DELEGATES

Subcaucus procedures are adopted by a majority vote within the subcaucus. The chair of each subcaucus shall read the Affirmative Action, Outreach, and Inclusion Reminder. After that, each subcaucus will elect its delegates and alternates by written ballot. Only individuals who were members of the subcaucus at the time of the final membership count may participate in the subcaucus delegate and alternate election. Alternates must be ranked within each subcaucus (1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.) for proper upgrading. You can find more specific explanations in the Official Call.

Elections for Specific Roles

Party Officers

Nominations

Prior to opening Nominations for Party Officers, a designated person (such as the Convention Chair or Nominations Committee Chair) should explain what will be voted on, and briefly explain the role of each Party Officer position.

The Convention Chair should then open Nominations for one office at a time.

- Nominations and elections for party office should be done in the order listed in the agenda
- If there is a Nominations Committee, the Committee Chair (or designated member) may place the appropriate candidate's name into nomination. The Convention Chair should then call for further nominations

Elections

Know the Convention Rules for elections and voting for Party Officers, as well as the guidelines in the Nominations and Elections Section.

- Know if the Convention Rules allow time for candidate speeches and/or Q&A.
- If a contest exists, the Affirmative Action Reminder must be read prior to voting.
- If no contest exists, election by acclamation is possible if allowed either by the rules or by suspension of the rules. Follow the Convention Rules (or if the Rules are silent, use your discretion) if the floor should be frozen prior to taking a vote.
- Know the method of voting outlined in the Convention Rules.
 - Remember that if the election is uncontested, the Chair may usually proceed with a voice vote (the Convention Rules may need to be suspended first).

While votes are being tabulated for an office with a contested race, the Convention may sometimes proceed with nominations and voting for the next Party Office. However, if there is a contest for Party Unit Chair, the Convention may not proceed to nominations for Vice Chair while ballots are tabulated, since the Chair and Vice Chair must not be the same gender-identity. There may also be a geographic requirement (e.g., perhaps the Senate District Chair and Vice Chair must not reside in the same House District). Also, ask if any candidates for the office currently being tabulated may wish to run for the next office if their candidacy is unsuccessful. If so, wait for the results before moving on.

Director Elections

The election of Party Unit Directors is slightly different, since typically multiple Directors are elected, as opposed to one person per Party Office.

In the election of multiple Directors, the number to be elected must have equal division. If three (3) or more people are to be elected, the Convention has the right to use a Proportional Representation election method, if requested. According to the State DFL Party Official Call, the proportional representation system that must be used is the “Walking Subcaucus.”

If proportional representation is not utilized, the Convention Rules should indicate the method of election to be implemented. Most likely it is a written ballot, with either a plurality or majority vote required for election.

State Central Committee Member and Alternate Elections

Organizing Unit Conventions elect Members and Alternates to serve on the DFL State Party Central Committee in even-numbered years.

The State Central Committee (SCC) is the governing body of the State Party between State Conventions. The SCC typically meets quarterly, and members of the committee serve two-year, volunteer terms.

SCC Membership

The DFL Official Call lists the voting membership of the State Central Committee as well as the allocation of Members and Alternates per Organizing Unit. Organizing Units with two SCC votes, send their Chair and Vice Chair as the Members and elect two at-large Alternates. Organizing Units allotted more than two SCC votes, will elect at-large Members (in addition to the Unit

Chair and Vice Chair, who are automatic members) as well as an equal number of ranked Alternates for all SCC Member positions.

Nominations for SCC Members and Alternates

Prior to opening Nominations for State Central Committee Members or Alternates, explain what will be voted on and the role of State Central Committee Members and Alternates. Be sure the Convention delegates understand they are electing SCC Members and Alternates and not State Convention Delegates and Alternates!

Electing SCC Members

Follow the procedures for elections and voting outlined in the OU Convention Rules, as well as the guidelines in the Nominations and Elections section.

- Know if the Convention Rules allow time for speeches and/or Q&A.
- Know the method of voting outlined in the Convention Rules.
 - If three (3) or more SCC at-large Members (or Alternates) will be elected at the Convention and a contest exists, the Convention Delegates may request Proportional Representation. (See the Walking Subcaucus Appendix)
- SCC Members and Alternates must have Equal Division. (See the Equal Division module for guidelines.)

Electing SCC Alternates

After completing elections for SCC Members, open Nominations for SCC Alternates, as needed. Alternates to the SCC must be ranked for purposes of upgrading. Alternates must be ranked according to votes received and must have equal division of gender identities.

State and Congressional District Convention Delegate and Alternate

Elections

Prior to nominations explain the role of the State/Congressional District Convention Delegates and Alternates. Note that the same individuals are elected Delegates and Alternates to both the State Convention and appropriate Congressional District Convention. Announce the dates, times, and locations of both the State and Congressional District Conventions. To be eligible to run you must be a DFL party member in the Organizing Unit who will be at least age 18 and eligible to vote on Election Day of that year; however, a Distinguished Party Leader as defined in the general rules in Addendum A of the State DFL Constitution and Bylaws is not eligible.

The number of State/Congressional District Convention Delegates and Alternates to be elected from each organizing unit may be found in the DFL Official Call or www.dfl.org/partydocuments/. Those units in multiple Congressional Districts will need to elect their delegates and alternates from and by the delegates who reside in each Congressional District.

The Convention Chair should then ask how many individuals wish to serve as Delegates to the State Convention. If no more (including letter nominees) want to serve than there are Delegate positions, no contest exists, and a formal election need not be held. Instead, proceed with a vote by acclamation (i.e., a voice vote).

If a contest does exist, the Convention Chair should ask for a show of hands of who wishes to use Proportional Voting (the Walking Subcaucus system) to elect State Delegates and Alternates. If delegates equal to the number represented by one State Convention Delegate want Proportional Representation, it MUST be used. Prior to the vote, the Chair should know what this number would be. (The number needed to elect one delegate = the number of registered delegates from the latest credentials report divided by the number of State Delegates the Unit may elect.)

See the Walking Subcaucus Appendix, for details on how to proceed with electing State Delegates and Alternates, if Proportional Voting is used.

If Proportional Voting is not used, the Convention shall use the election procedures and voting method outlined in the Convention Rules. If the Convention Rules are silent, the Convention should adopt by majority vote the rules for this election.

If there is not a contest for State Delegate positions, then a simple voice vote may be taken. Sometimes, if just a few more people want to be State Delegates than there are positions, some may volunteer to be State Convention Alternates.

In a presidential year, the National Delegate Selection Plan prohibits the participation of automatic delegates in any step of the national delegate selection process. Best practice for a convention chair in a presidential year, when starting the election of state delegates and alternates, is to announce that automatic delegates (i.e., DPLs and organizing unit chairs and vice chairs who are automatic delegates) cannot participate in the election of state delegates and alternates.

Ranking Alternates

State Convention Alternates should be elected after the election of State Convention Delegates. State Convention Alternates must be ranked for purposes of upgrading. Alternates should be ranked according to votes received. Sometimes an Alternate candidate may volunteer to be the last Alternate. Alternates should have equal division of gender identities.

Delegation Co-Chairs and CD Pre-Convention Committee Members Elections

Inform all State Convention Delegates and Alternates that they should stay for a brief meeting after the business of the OU Convention is complete, for the purpose of:

- Electing State/Congressional District Convention Delegation Co-Chairs.

- The role of the Delegation Co-Chairs includes helping with upgrading Alternates, and roll call and ballot voting at the State and Congressional District Conventions.
 - Co-Chairs should not be of the same gender-identity.
- Electing Delegates and Alternates to serve on Congressional District Pre-Convention Committees, in accordance with procedures established by each Congressional District.

Counting

Party unit officers, State Central Committee members and alternates, and State/Congressional District Convention delegates and alternates may be elected by majority vote, plurality vote, or by proportional representation and the Walking Subcaucus system, depending on the specific convention rules. Tellers appointed by the convention chair often assist with preparing, handing out, collecting, and counting written ballots.

Reporting

Once the votes are tabulated, the convention chair should announce the election results to the delegates. When announcing results, the chair should list the office, the numbers of votes each candidate received, the number needed for election, and the winner(s) of the election (if applicable). If a candidate withdraws before the results are announced, the number of votes that candidate received need not be announced but should still be recorded in the minutes. Sometimes another ballot is needed if a majority vote was needed for election but not achieved. Be familiar with the convention rules to know the specific rules on balloting for that convention.

It is the responsibility of the unit chair in office following the adjournment of a convention to complete all convention reports and transmit the reports to the State DFL Chair and appropriate congressional district chairs. These reports must be filed within two to five days after the convention's adjournment; details and timelines for filing the party unit convention reports are listed in the DFL Official Call. Although the Convention Chair is not responsible for filing the reports, be prepared to assist the Unit Chair collect and record any relevant convention information, including election results, that may need to be transmitted.

Endorsements

One of the main goals of a DFL Convention is to endorse candidates for office. According to the DFL Constitution, a candidate must receive 60% affirmative vote of the delegates present and voting to win the DFL endorsement. No vote or motion can change this rule. A candidate may receive exactly 60% of the vote and win the endorsement. This is different than a “majority vote,” for example, where a candidate must receive *more than* 50% of the vote to win.

If multiple candidates are competing for the endorsement, many ballots may be needed before delegates begin to agree on one candidate. Be familiar with any “drop rules” outlined in the Convention Rules and the “Drop Rule” entry in the Rule Book attached to the State Constitution and Bylaws. For example, the convention rules may specify that any candidate who did not reach a 10% minimum threshold of votes on the second ballot will be dropped from the list of eligible candidates. Drop rules will never decrease the list of candidates to less than two and “no endorsement.”¹⁰

Delegates may not be able to come to a consensus on which candidate should be endorsed and/or delegates may agree the Convention should simply not endorse any candidate. In these cases, delegates may agree on a vote of “no endorsement.”

According to Article III, Section 4, Subsection H of the DFL Constitution and Bylaws, “No convention, central committee, or commission representing a geographical area less than the area competent to elect the public official may endorse a candidate.” Therefore, for example, a City Convention would not have the authority to endorse a candidate for a County-wide election.

Only those delegates who reside in the area in which the election will occur may vote on endorsement for that office. Sometimes larger district conventions may break off into smaller conventions, for the purpose of endorsing candidates representing smaller units within the larger area. For example, a Senate District Convention may recess (or adjourn, if business has concluded), and call a House District Convention to order for the purpose of endorsing a State House Candidate. Only those delegates and upgraded alternates who reside in the House District may participate and vote in the House District Convention.

After the smaller District convention has concluded its business, adjourn that convention. And, if appropriate, call another District Convention to order, or call the larger unit Convention back into order.

¹⁰ “No endorsement” is always an option in addition to candidate names.

Balloting

Prior to each vote, announce which candidate names are on the ballot. All candidates who were nominated (and did not otherwise withdraw) will be on the first ballot. Voting for any other name will result in a spoiled ballot. Candidates may be dropped from future ballots in accordance with a Convention drop rule. Voting for a candidate who has been dropped, will result in a spoiled ballot. Delegates may vote for “no endorsement” instead of a candidate name on any ballot. Delegates may also vote “present” or simply sign their ballots, but not vote. Remind delegates they need to sign their ballots!

How can a Convention vote for “no endorsement?”

- 1) Delegates may choose to vote for “no endorsement” instead of a candidate name on any written ballot.
 - If 60-percent or a greater percentage of the delegates vote for no endorsement on their ballots, balloting is complete and there is officially “no endorsement” for that office at the Convention.
- 2) Convention Rules may specify that after a certain number of ballots, a motion for “no endorsement” would be in order. Such a vote for “no endorsement” at the convention would pass with a simple majority vote.
 - If a motion for “no endorsement” is made prior to the time allowed by the Rules, it would require a 2/3 affirmative vote to suspend the rules first.

In addition to a motion for “no endorsement,” a convention may pass a motion directing the unit’s central committee to not endorse. This motion is often combined with the motion described in item 2, above. This motion may also take the form of a convention rule that provides if the convention adjourns without issuing an endorsement in a particular contest, the unit central committee may not endorse for that contest. Unless the adopted motion states otherwise, the direction to the central committee to not endorse is only effective through the primary election. If not stated otherwise, the central committee may then endorse post-primary election for the general election. See the “Endorsement—Direction to Central Committee” entry in the Rule Book addendum to the DFL Constitution and Bylaws.

In addition to a specific vote for “no endorsement,” a convention can adjourn after losing quorum before an endorsement decision is made. See Quorum under Parliamentary Procedure, below, regarding how quorum can be lost, and efforts required to be made to restore quorum. Note that each ballot for endorsement is a test for quorum pursuant to “Endorsement—Test of Quorum” entry in the Rule Book addendum to the DFL Constitution and Bylaws.

Resolutions

The DFL Ongoing Platform and Action Agenda form a base for the party’s selection and endorsement of candidates for public office and serve as a guide for action and accountability

for elected officials. Items for the DFL Ongoing Platform and Action Agenda items start as Resolutions submitted at local precinct caucuses. Resolutions passed at the precinct caucuses are then forwarded to the Organizing Unit Convention Resolutions Committee.

The Resolutions Committee organizes and prepares the list of resolutions, which will then be voted on at the Organizing Unit Convention. The delegates at the Organizing Unit vote on the resolutions according to the Convention Rules. Prior to considering Resolutions at the Convention, the Platform Statement (as written in the Official Call) must first be read.

“The State DFL Ongoing Platform embodies the principles of the Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party. The State DFL Action Agenda is a set of recommended public policy positions which the party supports and will promote during the next two years. The State DFL Legislative Priorities will be drawn from these two documents.”

Each organizing unit may forward to the State Platform, Issues, and Legislative Affairs Committee a number of resolutions equal to twice the number of State Convention Delegates elected by the Organizing Unit Convention, or 20 resolutions, whichever is greater. The resolutions should address party positions on state and national issues and must be selected according to a procedure adopted by the Organizing Unit Convention. A Unit Convention may also choose to adopt resolutions on local issues. Local-issue resolutions are not sent to the State Platform, Issues, and Legislative Affairs Committee and are therefore not included in the total number that may be forwarded to the State.

A Unit Convention may also pass resolutions based on DFL Party issues. These resolutions are also not included in the total number that may be forwarded to the State Platform, Issues, and Legislative Affairs Committee. Instead, such resolutions will be referred to the State DFL Chair and the Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules Committee to further determine the appropriate action.

The State Platform, Issues, and Legislative Affairs Committee will organize and prepare the resolutions passed at all the Unit Conventions and submit a report to the State Convention Delegates.¹¹

Parliamentary Procedure

Robert’s Rules are the basic, underlying rules of parliamentary procedure used in all DFL meetings and conventions. Using Robert’s Rules of parliamentary procedure helps:

¹¹ Delegates may want to consider resolutions that were not passed up from the Precinct Caucuses to the Organizing Unit Convention to the State Convention. To accomplish this, there is an option for submitting Petition Resolutions. Information on this process can be found in the Call.

- Ensure meetings and conventions are conducted in a standard and uniform way
- Maintain order.
- Meeting and convention attendees effectively and efficiently get things done in a straightforward, open, and fair manner.

Calm, Clear, and Respectful

The role of the Convention Chair is to help lead the business of the day in a fair, clear, and efficient manner. It is important to do your best to remain calm and respectful of everyone in attendance. Using Robert's Rules helps maintain the formality to treat everyone equally and respectfully.

For example - avoid referring to people by name, instead say, "The Chair recognizes the delegate at microphone 2..." or if a delegate makes a motion that is not in order, the Chair should not say, "You are out of order!" Instead say, "The motion is not in order at this time..." and briefly explain why.

How to Learn Robert's Rules

Unfortunately, there is not a great substitute for reading Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR), 12th Edition. However, you may learn much of what you need to know by reading: Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised In Brief, 3rd Edition. If you use the In Brief version, be sure you have access to the additional rules in the full book. There are certain steps and rules the Chair must follow for business to be valid at a Convention. Some of the basics will be covered in the following section. As you start your process of learning Robert's Rules of Order remember:

- It is always okay to stop and look up a rule during a Convention, and/or ask a co-chair or parliamentarian to help!
- It may be helpful to practice the words the Chair should say in common scenarios, for example, when handling a motion or conducting an election.
- You may want to bring a "cheat sheet" of Robert's Rules for quick reference.

Convention Chairs should know how to handle motions, as well as nomination, elections and voting according to Robert's Rules.

Motions

What is a Motion?

A motion is a formal proposal by a member/delegate that the group take specific action. Certain steps should be followed to propose the action ("make a motion"), perhaps discuss and/or amend it, and vote on it. These steps are outlined in detail in Robert's Rules of Order.

There are different types of motions. **Main motions** bring business before the assembly. Only one main motion may be on the floor (i.e., considered by the group) at a time. **Secondary motions** may help the delegates work with the main motion (such as by “amending” the Main motion) or deal with other issues (such as “suspending the rules” so a certain motion can be made or questioning the ruling of the chair with a “point of order”). Other secondary motions may be unrelated to another motion but have to do with special matters of immediate importance (such as a motion to “raise a question of privilege” and ask for example, for the microphone volume to be turned up). If a motion is made while another motion is pending, it is a secondary motion and special rules apply to it. If this same motion is made while no other motion is pending, it may be considered a main motion and the rules of a main motion apply to it.

Rules to Know About Motions

The Chair should know (or know how to look up) a few basic rules about the common motions:

- Can the motion be made at that particular time (is it “in order”)?
- Does the maker of the motion need to “obtain the floor” (i.e., be recognized formally by the Chair and state their name/unit) before making the motion?
- Does the motion need to be “seconded” by another delegate?
- Is the motion debatable?
- Is the motion amendable?
- What vote is required for the motion to pass?

Main Motion

A Main Motion introduces new business before the body and can only be made while no other motion is pending. The delegate who introduces the main motion must obtain the floor this means the delegate must be recognized by the Chair and state their name and party unit. A main motion must be seconded by another delegate before the Chair “states the question.” Immediately after hearing a “second,” the Chair states the question, and the delegates may then debate and/or amend the main motion. After there is no further debate or amendment, the Chair puts the motion as it is now worded before the body and takes a vote. The Chair then declares if the motion passes or fails and announces the result.

Debate on a Main Motion

Convention Rules typically specify how many delegates may speak on each pending motion and the maximum length of each speech. During debate, rotate as much as possible between delegates for and against a motion. If there are multiple microphones, rotate recognizing delegates at the various microphones. Debate on a motion must be “germane,” i.e., it must pertain to the pending motion and whether it should or should not be adopted. Once the limit has been reached on the number of delegates who may speak on a pending motion and there are no further amendments, the Chair should proceed with a vote on the pending motion.

Voting on a Motion

When it appears that there is no further debate or amendment on a motion, the Convention Chair may ask: “Is there any further debate?” If there is no further debate or amendment on a motion, or the delegates have exhausted the limits of debate, the Chair “puts the question,” (i.e., states the motion, as amended, if appropriate), then proceeds with taking a vote. Convention Chair: “The question is on the adoption of the motion to.... All those in favor of the motion, say ‘aye.’ ... All those opposed, say ‘no.’”

Division

If a delegate doubts the result of a voice vote, the delegate may call for a “Division.” A division is a call for a “standing vote,” or in the case of a DFL Convention, a vote taken by delegates raising their badges.

A call for a Division:

- May be made by a delegate without being recognized by the Chair, may interrupt other business, but must be made immediately after the results of the vote are announced. (Delegate: “Division!”)
- Does not require a second
- Is not debatable
- Is not amendable
- Does not require a vote. Instead, the Chair immediately retakes the vote, this time asking delegates to raise their badge in support of and then in opposition to the motion.

Counted Division

If the result of a vote appears too close to call, the Chair should retake the vote asking delegates to hold up their badges in favor of and then opposed to the motion and count the badges. Tellers or other volunteers named by the Chair may help with the counting.

If the Chair does not call for a counted division, and a delegate believes the vote is too close to call, the delegate may make a motion for a counted division.

A motion for a Counted Division:

- The maker of the motion must be recognized by the Chair, and the motion must be made immediately after (or before) the vote is taken.
- Must be seconded
- Is not debatable
- Is amendable
- Requires a majority vote to pass.

Unanimous Consent

Sometimes the Chair believes there will be no objection to a motion relating to routine business or questions of little importance. In such instances, time may be saved by dispensing with the formality of stating the motion and putting the question to a vote. Instead, the Chair may use the procedure of “unanimous consent” by asking the delegates if there is any objection. If any delegate objects to “unanimous consent,” then the Chair should proceed with all of the usual steps of considering a motion.

Motion to Amend¹²

If a delegate believes a motion would be more agreeable if it was changed in some way, they may make a motion to “Amend” the motion (refer to RONR for details on which motions may be amended; a main motion may be amended).

The motion to Amend:

- May be made only after the maker of the motion obtains the floor and is recognized by the Chair
- Must be seconded by another delegate
- May be debated (as long as the motion it is seeking to amend may be debated)
- May be amended
- An amendment to an amendment may be made. But an amendment to an amendment to an amendment may not be made (this would just be too confusing!).
- Requires a majority vote to pass
- Various ways to amend a motion include:
 - Inserting or adding words to a motion
 - Striking out words from a motion
 - Striking out and inserting words in a motion
 - Substituting one or more paragraphs with one or more new paragraphs

Once a motion to amend passes or fails, there cannot be another motion that would try to take away or add essentially the same content or have the same effect. This is the “settled” rule.

Debate on a Motion to Amend

The Chair should always make it clear what is being debated. Make sure during a motion to amend, the delegate knows they are debating the amendment only. Debate on an amendment should be germane only to the amendment, not the entire motion.

¹² **“Friendly Amendment”** - Once a motion has been stated by the Chair, the motion is now the property of the entire assembly, and not just the maker of the motion. Therefore, another delegate cannot simply ask the maker of the motion to accept a “friendly amendment.” A “friendly amendment” after the motion has been stated by the Chair is not allowed. It should be treated as any other amendment: debated (if allowed) and voted on by the entire body.

If the motion to amend passes:

- Only the amendment passes, not the entire motion that was being amended.
- Debate may now continue the motion as amended.

If the motion to amend fails:

- Only the amendment fails.
- Debate may now continue on the motion as worded before the motion to amend was made.

Motions to Limit or Extend the Limits of Debate on a Motion

If a delegate wants to allow more (or fewer) speakers to debate a motion than are allowed in the rules or allow longer (or shorter) speeches in debate, the delegate may make a motion to Limit or Extend the Limits of Debate.

A motion to Limit or Extend the Limits of Debate during the middle of debate on a motion:

- May be made only after the maker of the motion obtains the floor and is recognized by the Chair
- Must be seconded
- Is not debatable
- Is amendable
- Requires a 2/3 affirmative vote to pass¹³

Motion for the Previous Question

If a delegate wants to end debate altogether and immediately vote on the pending motion, they may make a motion for the “Previous Question” or informally “Call the Question”.

The motion for the Previous Question:

- The maker of the motion must be recognized by the Chair, state their name and unit. The delegate may not interrupt another speaker and may not simply call out “Question!” or “Call the question!”
- Must be seconded

¹³ When a motion requires a “2/3 affirmative vote” to pass, at least 2/3 of the vote must be in favor of the motion for it to pass. Motions that require this higher threshold of a 2/3 affirmative vote to pass are typically motions that may restrict the right of some members to participate (such as limiting the numbers of speakers or length of speeches on a debate or closing debate altogether). According to Robert’s Rules, anytime a 2/3 affirmative vote is required for a motion to pass, a “standing vote” should be taken, not a voice vote. In DFL Conventions, in lieu of a “standing vote,” delegates vote by raising their delegate badge.

- Is not debatable or amendable
- Requires a 2/3 affirmative vote to pass.

Motion to Suspend the Rules

If a delegate wants to do something that is not permitted by the Convention Rules or Agenda, they may make a motion to “Suspend the Rules.” **A motion to Suspend the Rules may not suspend rules in the Unit or DFL Constitution or Bylaws, Official Call or suspend a fundamental principle of parliamentary law.*

The motion to Suspend the Rules:

- May be made only after the maker of the motion obtains the floor and is recognized by the Chair
- Must be seconded
- Is not debatable or amendable
- Requires a 2/3 affirmative vote to pass.

Motion to Recess

If a delegate wants the group to take a short break in the proceedings, they may make a motion to Recess.

The motion to Recess, if made while another motion is pending:

- May be made only after the maker of the motion obtains the floor and is recognized by the Chair
- Must be seconded
- Is not debatable
- Is amendable, regarding length of time to recess
- Requires a majority vote to pass.

Motion to Adjourn

If business has not yet come to an end at a Convention, a delegate may still make the motion to adjourn, and the delegation may vote to end the Convention. Some Convention Rules state that the Convention may not adjourn until certain business has been completed. A motion to adjourn prior to this business being completed would thus first require a motion to suspend the rules (a vote to suspend the rules requires a 2/3 affirmative vote to pass). If the vote to suspend the rules passes, the Chair may proceed with the motion to adjourn (passed with a majority vote). The motion to Adjourn at a typical DFL Convention is not a “privileged” motion (i.e., a motion that can interrupt other pending business). Because there is not a regularly scheduled meeting where this same group of delegates may continue any unfinished business, adjourning

a DFL Convention is a special circumstance, known as Adjourn sine die (pronounced: see-na dee-ay).

Most conventions that have not yet considered the minimum required business cannot adjourn. If applicable, a convention will instead be considered recessed if the meeting ends before the required business has been considered.

The motion to Adjourn sine die is a Main Motion, and all of the rules for Main Motions apply:

- May be made only after the maker of the motion obtains the floor and is recognized by the Chair. May not be made while another motion is pending.
- Must be seconded
- Is debatable
- Is amendable
- Requires a majority vote to pass.

Quorum

A Convention must maintain quorum to conduct any substantive business. Quorum is the minimum number of members who must be present. The quorum required at a Convention is the majority of registered delegates and upgraded alternates, whether or not some have left (unless the unit's constitution or bylaws sets a higher number).

Prior to the first ballot in a contested election or endorsement, the credentials committee should give a report with the number of registered delegates thus far. Typically, a majority of this number of delegates present is required for quorum, i.e., required to continue business.

The continued presence of a quorum at a convention is presumed, unless the Chair, or a delegate notices that quorum may be lost, or if the number of ballots cast (including abstentions) is less than the quorum number.

Every ballot cast will be a test of quorum. If the number of ballots cast (including abstentions) is a majority or more of the total number of registered delegates, then quorum is met. If quorum is not met by the ballot test for quorum, then that ballot is not valid. Delegates may choose to be present, but not vote, however. So, if quorum is not met by the ballot test for quorum, it is still prudent to count delegates in attendance before announcing that quorum is lost.

The Convention Chair may notice what appears to be a loss of quorum and conduct a count of delegates in attendance. If the Chair does not notice a possible loss of quorum and is conducting business as usual, a delegate may make a point of order.

If quorum has been lost, no substantive business may be conducted. Announcements may be made, guest speakers may address the body, efforts may be made to reestablish a quorum, and there may be a motion to recess or a motion to adjourn. According to the DFL Rule Book, however, the Convention Chair(s) shall recess the convention for ten minutes before any motion to adjourn the convention for lack of quorum is entertained.

If quorum is reestablished prior to adjournment, business continues where it left off immediately before quorum was lost. If quorum is not reestablished and a motion to adjourn prevails, the Convention ends immediately.

Point of Order

If a delegate notices the rules are being violated, they may (at the time the rules are being violated), make a “Point of Order.”

A Point of Order:

- May be made by a delegate without being recognized by the Chair, may interrupt other business, but must be made at the time the rule is being violated.
- Does not require a second
- Is not debatable
- Is not amendable
- Is normally ruled upon by the Chair, without taking a vote.
- The point of order is either “well taken” or “not well taken” by the Chair.

Appeal the Ruling of the Chair

If a delegate believes the Chair is incorrect in their ruling on a point of order, they may “Appeal the Ruling of the Chair.”

A motion to Appeal the Ruling of the Chair:

- May be made by a delegate without being recognized by the Chair, may interrupt other business, but must be made immediately after the Ruling of the Chair.
- Must be seconded
- Is typically debatable
- The Chair may speak twice in the debate: once at the beginning, and once at the end of the debate.
- Is not amendable
- A majority or a tie vote sustains the ruling of the Chair.

Requests and Inquiries

Sometimes a delegate may have a question or concern that requires immediate attention or permission of the assembly.

Requests and Inquiries:

- May interrupt other business if immediate attention is required
- Do not require a second
- Are not debatable

- Are not amendable
- Are normally resolved without taking a vote.

Parliamentary Inquiry:

If a delegate has a question regarding parliamentary procedure or other rules having a bearing on the business at hand, they may do so via a Parliamentary Inquiry to the Chair. The Chair answers the question, but the Chair’s answer is simply an opinion, not a “ruling,” so it is not subject to “appeal.”

Request for Information:

If a delegate has a question about information relevant to the business at hand, they may make a Request for Information to the Chair, or through the Chair to another member. This is NOT a way for a delegate to give a speech.

Question of Privilege:

If a delegate has a request relating to, for example, the comfort of the assembly (such as a ventilation issue or a problem with the microphone volume), they may raise a Question of Privilege.

Challenges

Even in the best run convention, someone will be unhappy with at least one of the outcomes. Their candidate was not endorsed. Their resolution was not passed. If the process was fairly and correctly performed, that is not grounds for a formal challenge.

If there was a problem that likely impacted the result, there is a challenge process to request a formal review of the action (or inaction). The challenge process does not replace the need for individuals to attempt to resolve problems at the time the problem occurs.

Challenges may be submitted up to 10 days following the convention and will likely be heard by a panel of the state Constitution, Bylaws and Rules Committee.

If so, the convention chairs and parliamentarians will almost certainly be asked to testify on their perceptions of what happened at the convention. This was covered in more depth in the Challenges section.

Challenges related to the election of convention delegates and alternates are typically heard by the convention’s Credentials Committee. The final decision on credentials challenges is made by the convention itself.

A challenge is an allegation that a precinct caucus, convention, conference, committee, or commission failed to follow the provisions of the Call, the applicable DFL constitution or bylaws,

or Robert's Rules of Order, that fraud or dishonesty occurred, or that an individual was not eligible for election or endorsement.

This section is focused on challenges before and during a typical convention. For information on other types of challenges, please refer the Challenges section of the Official Call.

Who can bring a challenge?

Any DFL party member(s) who lives within the DFL political division where the act(s) occurred, or who would be personally, directly, and adversely affected by the act(s), can bring a challenge. For example, a challenge to the election of a precinct delegate may be brought either by a DFL member who lives in that precinct or by a delegate to a convention at which the challenged precinct delegate would be seated. (See paragraph II.B.3. of the Precinct Caucus section of this Call for the definition of who does not qualify as a DFL party member.)

When must a challenge be brought in order to be considered?

All challenges must be in writing, stating the nature of the challenge and the remedy sought, and must be postmarked, hand delivered, or arrive by fax or e-mail within ten calendar days after the date the challenged action occurred. A challenge not meeting the deadline still may be considered if the body reviewing it decides that the challenge could not reasonably have been brought within the required period.

If possible, challenges to convention actions should be raised when the issue occurs. Even if the convention is ultimately unable to resolve the issue, it is important for there to be a record of the issue and any vote(s) taken by the convention on the issue.

Types of Challenges

There are a wide variety of challenge, but the most common for a convention chair to respond to include:

- Formal challenges
 - to delegate/alternate credentials
 - pre-convention actions
 - actions during the convention itself
- Unruly delegates and/or candidates

Challenges to election of Convention Delegates/Alternates

Challenges to election of convention delegates/alternates are heard by the credentials committee of the convention to which they were elected, if any, and resolved by the convention.

The challenger shall file the challenge form with the Chair of the body holding the convention and send a copy to the State DFL Chair at the State DFL Office address on the cover of the Call.

The chair of an affected district will convene the appropriate committee early enough to hear all challenges and enable the roll to be prepared without delaying the convention. The challenger and challenged individual(s) will be notified of the time and place for the hearing. The seriousness of the grounds alleged will be a matter considered by the appropriate committee.

The applicable committee will report to the convention the name of the person it believes is entitled to participate in the convention and that person's name will be included on the temporary roll of the convention. If the committee cannot reach a decision, it will report this to the convention and no delegate name will be listed on the temporary roll. If there is more than one challenge to be reported, the committee will report on them in the order in which they were first forwarded to its chair(s).

The convention will vote on the committee report, taking a separate vote for each challenge reported. All delegates on the temporary roll may vote with the exception that no challenged delegate may vote on the resolution of their own challenge.

Challenged delegates or their replacements who are recommended for seating by the applicable committee are seated with the temporary roll. The final vote by the convention or central committee on the report establishes the permanent roll.

See the Official Call's Section on Challenges for more information.

Unruly Delegates and/or Candidates

While Robert's allows generous discretion around participation at a convention, the State DFL requires all Table Officers maintain a high-quality professional, respectful demeanor toward delegates and alternates at all time.

As a result, we suggest strategies to diplomatically maintain control:

- Practice effective problem-solving and de-escalate tension
- Resist getting caught up in the emotion, maintain a calm demeanor (Convention attendees will take your lead on how to react)
- Don't forget the potential of nonverbal communication cues

Problem-solving/ De-escalating Tips

- Consider conferring with Table Officers – it buys time & gathers other perspectives
- Consider asking a Co-Chair/Parliamentarian to engage with the delegate off-line, perhaps to help identify how to most efficiently make the desired point – taking the delegate aside to cool off and feel heard helps diffuse the situation
- If there is an argument, depending on the seriousness, call a short recess and invite the delegates to a different location asking Table Officers to help mediate the conversation
 - Only under rare circumstances, you may ask the delegates to choose to cease arguing or kindly leave the premises

Convention Chair Tips

The Convention Chair is there to help lead and guide the delegates to get through the business of the day and make the decisions they desire to make.

General Tips:

- Do not assume all delegates know Robert's Rules. Sometimes delegates need help forming a proper motion.
- At any given convention, about a third of the delegates are attending for the first time. Be ready to explain what is going on.
- If you do not know something, stop, and look it up in Robert's Rules, the Convention Rules, the Unit Constitution, the DFL Official Call, or the DFL Constitution. Bring all of these documents with you to the Convention.
- Speak slowly and repeat the words of a motion so all delegates know what is being debated and voted on.
- It is okay to make a mistake with the Rules. If you realize the mistake on your own, or if a delegate calls your attention to it with a "point of order," simply correct the mistake. Remember, you are all volunteers working together!
- The DFL Party is here to support you. As a new Convention Chair, you may get stuck and that is alright. With any questions or concerns, you can reach out to the Party Affairs department at partyaffairs@df.org or by phone at 651-251-6311, however a convention should not be unduly delayed while waiting for an answer.

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