

Green Party of Pennsylvania New Member Handbook



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Thank you for joining, and welcome to the Green Party of Pennsylvania!

This new member handbook will provide you with basic information about the structure of the Green Party of PA and an overview of the organization so that you may find a place within the Green Party of PA that best fits your individual talents, creativity, and passion. The Green Party of PA is a confederation of local organizations. Our values of decentralization and grassroots democracy have encouraged us to avoid a top-down organizational style. So it is important that you as member of the Green Party of PA have a clear understanding of engagement with the Party so that your activism and needs are fully empowered.



First thing's first!

Make sure that the Green Party of PA can stay in touch with you by sending us your contact information at www.gpopa.org/join/us.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Green Party of PA is to promote Green values throughout Pennsylvania by participation in the political process: electing candidates; enacting legislation; organizing communities; providing viable new political options; supporting the development of county Green Parties; and making government more open, democratic, and participatory for all Pennsylvania citizens.

The Four Pillars

Ecological Wisdom, Social Justice, Grassroots Democracy, and Peace. These are the four pillars, the four interconnected ideas that the international Green Party movement supports to organize just societies. The Four Pillars are the basis of the Green Party [10 Key Values](#) which are our guide to politics of vision and action.



Ecological Wisdom

More than stop-gap solutions like recycling, this means living simply and in harmony with our surroundings. Humanity is not separate from nature, nor do individuals live in isolation from each other. Our actions, lifestyles and businesses have an impact on our human and natural environment. We seek to minimize our negative impact and maximize our positive impact on both civilization and wilderness.



Social Justice

The promise of our Constitution and society are meant for all people, regardless of differences (including economic disparity). Everyone deserves the chance to live a healthy, meaningful life, with the ability to participate in the decisions that affect their lives and their surroundings. Green Parties seek to help individuals and their communities achieve that balance. Further, we oppose efforts by business or government to infringe on the human rights of citizens of the United States or of other nations.



Grassroots Democracy

The legitimacy of government is derived from the voluntary consent of the governed. The closer the decision-makers are to those who would be affected by the decision, the more effective, efficient, and accountable government can be. This value is based on Greens' unshakable conviction that people everywhere have the right, capacity and responsibility for, self-determination. Through local action and grassroots participation in government true democracy can be achieved.



Peace

Violence is morally wrong and logistically ineffective, because it treats the symptoms of problems, not the root causes. Greens acknowledge the need to take desperate measures in self-defense in life-or-death situations, but non-violence to us means actively working to build a world where violence is unnecessary. In the 21st Century, where the international community has become increasingly dependent upon all cultures, we believe that there is no problem that cannot be solved through dialogue. And we believe that no problem can be solved through violence whether it's military or interpersonal, physical violence, Greens will work to promote peaceful resolution to conflict. We also categorically reject the death penalty in any form.

Green Party of PA Origins

The Green Party of PA has long been a leading force within Green Party politics in the United States. Pennsylvania members played an integral part during the founding meeting of the Association of State Green Parties in November 1996. During July 2001, the Green Party of PA helped in the creation of the Green Party of United States with a Pennsylvania Green serving as one of the first co-chairs of the national organization. The Annual Convention of the Green Party of the United States was twice hosted in Pennsylvania at Philadelphia in 2002 and at Reading in 2007.

Pennsylvanians have taken up the Green Party ballot line to run for public office since as early as 1993. Greens have run for nearly every office with many successfully serving as school board directors, council members, and election judges. During the 2012 Presidential election Pennsylvania Greens helped nominate Cheri Honkala for the office of Vice-President.

The Green Party of PA was first recognized as a minor political party in the state in 2000. Minor party status was lost after 2006 and was not again obtained until 2016. While not always on the ballot, the Green Party of PA has tirelessly fought restrictive ballot access laws in the state. The Green Party of PA has defended such notorious ballot challenges like that of Carl Romanelli's 2006 race for U.S. Senate. Romanelli collected over 100,000 signatures on his nominating papers yet he faced nearly \$80,000 in court costs and was ultimately removed from the ballot. Such oppressive laws were broken apart when in 2016 a court decision reduced the required signatures needed for ballot access to just 5,000 and further alleviated the liability of the defendant to pay the challengers legal fees when filing objections to Green Party nominating papers.

Green Party of PA Structure

The Green Party of PA structure is not the typical top-down structure of many organizations. The voters, members, and supporters are the roots; the locals spring from them and are part of them; the state party is only there to help provide organization and support. The authority and decision-making stems from the affiliated local County Chapters made up of committed Greens throughout the state.



Design by Kevin Richardson

The State Committee is made up of delegates from affiliated locals and serves to support the local chapters as well as Greens in unaffiliated counties. The number of delegates to the State Committee that each affiliated local County Chapter receives is determined by the registration numbers of Greens on a county wide-basis. A list of affiliated and organizing counties is found at www.gpofpa.org/counties and more information about the process of becoming and affiliated chapter can be accessed at www.gpofpa.org/affiliation_guide.

An elected Steering Committee helps to enact the decisions of the State Committee. The Steering Committee is a seven member panel made up of a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and four at-large members. The Steering Committee members serve one-year terms and are elected by county delegates at the first meeting of the State Committee at the beginning of each year. You can reach the Steering Committee by email at contact@gpofpa.org or by telephone at (717) 839-2395 and will find our presently serving Steering Committee at www.gpofpa.org/gppa_leaders.

Committees are the heart of our party. This is where our members and supporters have the opportunity to work together toward a stronger party and a more peaceful, sustainable, and equitable future (and also to have fun). Our committees are organized into four major teams to promote collaboration and continuity.



Core Team

The Core Team includes all of the critical committees and workgroups that help to ensure the smooth functioning of the state party. This team establishes party rules, develops the platform, and manages the tools and systems that maintain the party and allow it grow. Committees and workgroups within the Core Team include:

- Rules and Platform Committee
- Web Design and Management Workgroup
- Database Management
- Membership Management
- Speaker's Bureau Team
- Nominating and Elections Committee
- Technology Tools and Applications
- Archiving



Finance Team

The Finance Team includes all of the committees and workgroups that help to manage and plan for the finances of the party. This team establishes a budget; plans events, meetings, and fundraising

initiatives; promotes membership options; and manages merchandise. Committees and workgroups within the Finance Team include:

- Budget Committee
- Fundraising Committee
- Meetings/Events Workgroup
- Membership Workgroup
- Marketing/Merchandise



Communications Team

The Communications Division includes all of the committees and workgroups that help to manage the communications and public image of the party. This team designs content for the website and manages Facebook and Twitter pages and posts. Other activities include production of a newsletter, press releases and editorials, rapid mobilization for critical events, and creation of educational materials and programs.

- Media Committee
- Public Relations Committee
- Rapid Response Committee
- Education Committee
- Newsletter Workgroup



GreenWave Team

GreenWave is charged with the coordination and support of local Green candidates, offering a regional network of support for candidates and campaigns. GreenWave was recently expanded to include regional support and outreach for new county affiliations and new county member support. The GreenWave Team also works with college students through a regional GreenWave internship program.

- Campaigns
- New County Outreach
- New County Support
- Campus Greens
- Internships



National Delegates

The Green Party of PA interacts with the national Green Party USA through elected National Delegates and National Committee members. More information about the National Party is available at www.gp.org/about.

Green Party of PA Membership Program

Green Party of PA Membership provides you access to a variety of news, discounts, and Green Party merchandise. We offer engagement at several levels, allowing you to decide your level of support based on your commitment and resources. Sustaining donation memberships are a vital means of party funding because the Green Party of PA refuses to take corporate PAC funded donations and focuses on a people powered base. Even if you aren't a registered Green, you can join us to promote a more peaceful, sustainable, and equitable future through grassroots democracy. Check out the variety of membership packages offered at [www.gpofpa.org/join us](http://www.gpofpa.org/join_us).

More Opportunities with the Green Party of PA

The State Committee has six regularly scheduled meetings throughout the year. Typically, three of those meetings are held online using a web-conference service. The other three meetings are held in-person and each are joined with a one day event full of speakers and workshops. Anyone can attend our events and meetings; however, only elected delegates can vote during business meetings. Stay up-to-date with our schedule of events by following our calendar at www.gpofpa.org/calendar.



We encourage you to get to know our website, www.gpofpa.org as well as like our Facebook Page www.facebook.com/gpofpa and follow us on Twitter [@GreenPartyofPA](https://twitter.com/GreenPartyofPA).

Thanks again for joining the Green Party of PA!

We are confident you now realize your opportunities with-in the Green Party of PA are many and it is up to you to put your talents, creativity, and passion into something which you truly believe. You will be an important part of our (yes our!) dynamic and growing party. It doesn't matter if your interest is in activism, campaigning, strategizing, planning, artistic endeavors, talking to people, or policy writing you will find that there is a welcoming place for you in the Green Party of PA!