



**MASSGOP**  
TOWN AND WARD COMMITTEE **HANDBOOK**

**Massachusetts Republican Party**  
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## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Republican Town or Ward Committee Candidate,

Elections for Republican Town and Ward Committees are on March 1, and I wish you the best of luck! If you are elected, you and your fellow committee members will be the faces of *our* Republican Party in your city or town. We're honored to have you on board our team as we continue to grow the GOP across Massachusetts and expand our base with new voters who share our core principles of fiscal discipline, accountable government, great schools for every child, and safe, thriving communities.

It is an exciting time to be a Republican in Massachusetts. In 2014, our Party reclaimed the Governor's office and added a strong contingent of GOP legislators to our team on Beacon Hill. And in 2015, we doubled down on our commitment to building our farm team – working hard to elect great candidates to local office in cities and towns across Massachusetts. As the city council president in my hometown of Quincy, I know how important local officials are to building our Republican bench. And as former local officials themselves, I can tell you that Governor Baker and Lt. Governor Polito share that commitment.

As we capitalize on the momentum of the last few years, our town and ward committee members will be on the front lines of our efforts to grow the Party. Local Republican committees are the strongest when they add members, register new voters, and work to elect candidates to municipal office. This handbook will provide you the tools you need to organize your committee so you can start doing just that.

I can assure you that you have enthusiastic partners at the Massachusetts Republican State Committee. Our State Party staff is always available to answer questions, provide important campaign tools, and work with your members so you can run an effective local committee. And your local state committee members will be an invaluable resource at the regional level. The state party has made tremendous strides in field, data, and digital campaigning in recent years, and we're committed to ensuring that our local committees have access to these important tools for the future.

Once again, thank you for your service to the Party. Best of luck, and we look forward to working with you in the years ahead.

Sincerely,



Kirsten Hughes  
MassGOP Chairman

# ORGANIZING YOUR COMMITTEE

## **Organizing Meeting**

State law (M.G.L. Ch. 52, Sec. 4) requires that local party committees must hold an organizing meeting in the ten days between the 30<sup>th</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup> days after the election of the committee. That means that this year, Republican Town and Ward Committees must meet and organize between **April 1 and April 10**.

The members of the committee should agree on a time and common place to meet, (which can be a public building – like a library – that you can reserve, as long as you do not solicit funds in the building). After your organizing meeting, you should agree on a consistent meeting time and place, and ensure that all the members are aware. **Learn more about organizing:** [www.massgop.com/committeehandbook](http://www.massgop.com/committeehandbook).

The first step of the organizing meeting is to pass bylaws for your local committee. The bylaws will be the documents that govern the operations of your committee for the next four years. **You can find a sample bylaws document on our website at** [www.massgop.com/samplebylaws](http://www.massgop.com/samplebylaws). A majority of the members present and voting should agree on the bylaws.

The next step is to elect officers. Per state law, Committees are required to elect a Chair, a Secretary and a Treasurer. The **Chair's** role is to run the meetings of the committee and to serve as a point of contact with state party leadership and other entities. The **Secretary** will keep members aware of meetings (via an email or mailed paper notice) and to take minutes at the meetings. The **Treasurer** should keep track of the Committee's revenues and expenditures and file reports with the Office of Campaign and Political Finance (OCPF). Treasurers may not be public employees with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

For subsequent meetings, **set an agenda**. Meetings should begin with a call to order, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, an approval of the last meeting's minutes, and reports of subcommittees.

## **Organizing a City Committee**

A **City Committee** consists of all the members of organized Ward Committees in that City. The City Committee must hold an organizing meeting in the ten days between the 30<sup>th</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup> days after the election of the committee. This year, City Committees must meet and organize between **April 1 and April 10**. The procedure for this meeting is the same as the procedure for the organizing meetings of the Town and Ward Committees. City Committees elect a Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer who serve in that capacity for the City Committee, separate from any duties related to their Ward Committee positions.

## **Register with the MassGOP**

After organizing, the next step is for the Committee to register with the state Republican Party. **You can do so using a convenient registration form at our website:** [www.massgop.com/register](http://www.massgop.com/register). You'll need to list all members, including their email addresses and phone numbers. We'll use this list to keep you updated with news, events, and volunteer opportunities to help candidates.

## **Register with the Elections Division, OCPF, and the City Clerk**

The Committee is required to fill out form CPF-101 – a “Statement of Organization” – after organizing. You'll list all Committee members and officers. **Find the form here:** [www.massgop.com/committeeform](http://www.massgop.com/committeeform).

## **Complying with Campaign Finance Law**

The committee treasurer must keep accurate records of all contributions and expenditures, and periodically report to OCPF. OCPF offers a great guide for local committees, as well as an instructional video. If you are in doubt about how to comply with campaign finance regulations, always ask OCPF for guidance. **View the OCPF online guide here:** [www.massgop.com/ocpfhelp](http://www.massgop.com/ocpfhelp)

# COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

## Candidate Recruitment

Bringing positive change to Massachusetts starts at the local level. The Committee should identify all the possible offices that are up for election in your city or town, and make a **calendar of elections**. Recruit candidates to run from your membership and from among local leaders in the community. Support these campaigns through fundraising and grassroots campaigning (more on those resources below).

## Voter Registration

We need local Committees to register more Republican voters in communities across the Commonwealth. **Voter registration should be a part of everything you do.** If you hold events in your community, if you invite new members to your meetings, if you work with local campaigns – you should be constantly asking people to register to vote, or to change their registration to Republican. By expanding our registration numbers, we can spread our message of fiscal discipline and government accountability. New voters can register online if they have a valid RMV-issued ID at [www.RegisterToVoteMA.com](http://www.RegisterToVoteMA.com). Additionally, voters who want to switch their registration to Republican may go to this website and fill out a new registration form. You can also print and bring registration forms to events. **Download and print the voter registration form at: [www.massgop.com/voterform](http://www.massgop.com/voterform).**

## Growing Membership

The committee should always strive to add new members. Encourage more Republicans to come to your meetings and events, and add them as full or associate members of your committee by a majority vote. **Learn more about adding full or associate members at [www.massgop.com/committeehandbook](http://www.massgop.com/committeehandbook).** Formal membership aside, the committee should also build a large list of general Republican supporters.

## Fundraising

Committees can be tremendously supportive of local candidates, and help make the difference at the ballot box. Hold annual fundraisers and send out fundraising letters in the mail. You can also suggest (but not require) that Committee members pay dues. Work with local candidates and elected officials to cultivate good donor prospect lists to expand your fundraising network. Individuals may contribute up to \$5,000 to local party committees, who may use those funds to assist candidates in a variety of ways. **Contact OCPF at: [www.ocpf.us](http://www.ocpf.us) or (617) 979-8300 for questions.**

## Messaging

It is important for the Committee to project a positive Republican message that invites new voters in your community to join us. Governor Baker's sustained popularity gives us a model to follow: communicate that our Republican Party stands for working families and small businesses through **lower taxes**, a more **efficient** and **accountable government**, **great schools** for every child, and **safe, thriving communities**.

The best vehicle for this kind of day-to-day messaging will be a **Facebook page**. You can post updates about the activities of your Committee, promote local causes, and advocate for candidates running for office. The Facebook page will also enable you to list contact information for your officers. Check the Facebook pages of the MassGOP, Governor Baker, and local elected officials for ideas for content. **Go to: [www.facebook.com/pages/create](http://www.facebook.com/pages/create) to create a Facebook page.** If you feel your committee is capable of maintaining a website, the MassGOP can offer assistance through our partnership with NationBuilder.

Another way to get your message out is **via the press**. Get contact information for local newspapers and submit **letters to the editor** supporting the causes and candidates that your Committee is supporting. Feel free to get in touch with our state party press shop for advice on working with local media.

### Local Activities

A great way to publicize your Committee is to organize and participate in local events. Plan to have supporters at town fairs, parades, charity fundraisers, and other similar events. **Always make voter registration a central part of these efforts** – encourage potential supporters to register. Use these events as an opportunity to reach voters who are not otherwise driven to attend a Republican Town or Ward Committee meeting.

## STATE PARTY RESOURCES

### State Party Structure

Republican Town and Ward Committees constitute the Republican Party at the municipal level. At the state level, the Party is governed by the **Republican State Committee**. The State Committee is an 80-member body, with a Committeeman and Committeewoman elected from each State Senate district. The State Committee leads the Party in the state, guiding the messaging, fundraising, and election activities of the MassGOP. State Committee members in your district will be helpful resources as you work to organize the Party in your area. **Find your State Committee member at [www.massgop.com/committee](http://www.massgop.com/committee).**

The State Committee elects a Chair of the state party, currently Kirsten Hughes. The Chair is the leader of the state party and the face of the GOP in Massachusetts. The Chair hires a staff to run the day-to-day operations of the Party. The staff supports candidates, pushes the Republican message in the media, and raises funds for GOP candidates.

### MassGOP Toolbox

Over the past few years, the MassGOP has built a suite of tools available to Republican candidates. These tools allow candidates to run effective campaigns. If you have potential candidates for office who need help, the “MassGOP Toolbox” is a great place to start. **Learn more: [www.massgop.com/toolbox](http://www.massgop.com/toolbox).**

- **Political:** Our PinPoint database allows candidates to target the voters they need to talk to in order to win, and you can use our certified vendor program to connect with the best vendors.
- **Media:** We can help with press lists and releases, and can re-circulate stories to major outlets.
- **Digital:** Our partnership with NationBuilder allows candidates affordable access to a modern website with a database to track supporters. We also provide guidance for digital advertising.
- **Fundraising:** We’ll provide guidance with everything from OCPF filing to surrogate coordination.

### Key Dates

2016 is an exciting year for the Republican Party. See below for some important dates this year:

- **April 30: MassGOP Delegate Caucuses.** Caucuses will be held to determine the delegates to the Republican National Convention. Delegates are proportionally allocated based on the results of the presidential primary on March 1. Caucuses are open to Republicans that registered by February 10. Check [www.massgop.com](http://www.massgop.com) and your email inbox for updates on locations and times.
- **May 3: Nomination Signature Submission Deadline** for legislative and county candidates
- **May 10: Nomination Signature Submission Deadline** for congressional candidates
- **July 18-21: Republican National Convention.** The Republican Party will nominate a candidate for President following the conclusion of the primaries. More at [www.convention.gop](http://www.convention.gop)
- **September 8: Massachusetts State Primary (Note: Thursday).** A primary will determine nominees for legislative and congressional elections. *Last Day to Register to Vote in the Primary: August 19.*
- **November 8: Election Day.** Polls open from 7AM to 8PM. See [www.WhereDoIVoteMA.com](http://www.WhereDoIVoteMA.com) for your polling place. *Last Day to Register to Vote in the General Election: October 19.*

### Conclusion

Once again, we cannot thank you enough for your willingness to step up and serve our Republican Party as a member of your local committee. Together, our team will continue to fight for our shared principles, to build the GOP in Massachusetts, and to secure a better future for our commonwealth.