



TOWN AND WARD COMMITTEE **HANDBOOK**

Massachusetts Republican Party
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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Local Republican Activist,

Thank you for your willingness to get involved with the Republican Party at the local level! Local committee members are 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 expand our base with new voters who share our core principles of fiscal discipline, accountable government, great schools for every child, and safe 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 2016, our Party took complete control of the federal government in Washington DC, and we continued that momentum here at home: For the first presidential election in 32 years, we successfully defended every incumbent in the Legislature, and added to our caucus. That's in addition to the groundbreaking work we're doing to support municipal candidates 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 available to answer questions, provide campaign tools, and work with your members so you can run an effective committee. Regionally, your state committee members will be an invaluable resource. The state party has made major strides in the areas of field, data, and digital in recent years, and we're committed to ensuring that our local committees have access to these important tools.

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 30th and 40th days after the election of the committee during a presidential primary election. For committees whose members were not elected on a slate during the presidential primary election, prospective members must receive authorization to organize from the MassGOP Chairman or their Regional State Committee member. Learn more about this process by calling the MassGOP at **617-523-5005**. Staff will connect you with the appropriate individuals to begin the process.

Upon authorization, members of the committee should agree on a time and 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.

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. A majority of the members present and voting should agree on the bylaws. **You can find a sample bylaws document on our website at** www.massgop.com/samplebylaws.

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 30th and 40th days after the election of the committee. 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, 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. This form must be sent to your local town or city hall, the Commonwealth's Elections Division, OCPF, and the Massachusetts Republican Party. This is critical for your committee to be considered validated and also important so that local residents who want to get involved can find your committee. **Find the form here:** 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.

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

Local Committees are strongest when they 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. You can also engage in list-driven registration projects: Work with the MassGOP’s political staff to generate lists of unenrolled voters who actively participate in Republican primaries. You can pull those lists (including address fields) and personally reach out to those individuals. Use handwritten notes or phone calls to encourage them to come to a meeting or events and consider registering as a Republican. You can even enclose a voter registration form when you reach out (see below).

By expanding our registration numbers, we can spread our message of fiscal discipline and government accountability. New voters may register to vote online if they have a valid RMV-issued ID at 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.

Growing Membership

The committee should always strive to add new members. Encourage Republicans to come to your meetings and events, and add them as full or associate members of your committee by a majority vote. Your strategy for membership growth can mirror the one for voter registration: Work with the MassGOP political staff to generate a prospect list of Republican voters who actively participate in elections (both municipal and statewide elections). Reach out to them pitching casual events to encourage them to join. **Learn more about adding full or associate members at** 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 or (617) 979-8300 for questions. The MassGOP can also provide guidance for the best ways to spend money for candidate support; call our office for more details.

Messaging

Committees that project a positive Republican message will invite 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 messaging is a **Facebook page**. You can post updates about the activities of your Committee, promote causes, and advocate for candidates running for office. The page will also enable you to list contact information for your officers. Check the Facebook pages of the MassGOP, Governor Baker, and other elected officials for content ideas. Generating content via links, photos, and graphics will lead to a professional-looking page. For help with graphics, use a free tool called **Canva** (www.canva.com). **Go to: www.facebook.com/pages/create to create a Facebook page.** If you feel your committee is capable of maintaining a website, the MassGOP can help 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. You can also hold local Democrat legislators accountable for their votes with the Beacon Hill establishment. The MassGOP sends out sample press releases based on recent votes in the Legislature. If you want to make sure you're getting those emails, get in touch with info@massgop.com. Also 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.**

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.**

- **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.

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.