



MARICOPA COUNTY

DEMOCRATIC PARTY

MARICOPA COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY ENDORSEMENT POLICY

Effective: January 30, 2014

1. PREAMBLE

Whereas, Article II, paragraph one, lines 17 and 18 of the Maricopa County Democratic Party (MCDP) Bylaws state “The mission of the MCDP is to elect Democrats to public office who embrace the values of the Democratic Party,”

Whereas, the Arizona Democratic Party has codified our shared Democratic values into the Arizona Democratic Party Platform entitled: “Arizona Democrats: Our Vision for Tomorrow”,

Whereas, the Arizona Democratic Party Platform encompasses our positions as Democrats, and has been ratified through democratic process in keeping with its statutory authority under the Arizona Revised Statutes,

Whereas, MCDP’s endorsements can inform Democratic voters which candidates most closely support our Democratic values, demonstrate they are building broad-based support and are most likely to win election, therefore;

Be it resolved that,

The Maricopa County Democratic Party shall adopt a clean, open, fair and transparent endorsement process to ensure the faithful execution of the Party’s primary purpose,

Be it further resolved that,

The Maricopa County Democratic Party Endorsement Policy does not constitute a bylaws change,

Be it further resolved that,

This written policy is designed to guide MCDP in its mission to elect more Democrats to office.

2. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR MCDP ENDORSEMENTS

MCDP may grant endorsements to candidates for state, county, and local offices in Maricopa County only in accordance with this duly adopted Endorsement Policy.

The MCDP Endorsement Committee shall consist of the MCDP Executive Board (MCDP Chair, First and Second Vice Chairs, Treasurer, Secretary, Sergeant-at-Arms) and three (3) additional members to represent each of the three MCDP regions: one member from the Southwest Region (comprised of Congressional District 7, and the Maricopa County portions of 1 and 3); one member from the Southeast Region (comprised of Congressional Districts 5 and 9); and one member from the North Region (comprised of Congressional Districts 6, 8, and the Maricopa County portion of 4).

Each Legislative District Chair shall nominate one (1) Precinct Committee person from his/her Legislative District to be considered for inclusion on the MCDP Endorsement Committee. The MCDP Chair will then appoint one (1) person from each MCDP region (Southwest, Southeast, and North) from among those nominees to serve on the Endorsement Committee.

In the event that a region's member resigns or is deemed to have resigned from the Endorsement Committee, the MCDP Chair shall appoint another person from among the remaining nominees in that region. In the event that a Legislative District lies in more than one MCDP region, the residential address of that LD Chair's nominee shall determine which region that nominee shall represent.

For Legislative races, the Executive Board of the Legislative District in question shall through simple majority vote nominate for appointment a Precinct Committee person from that LD to serve as a member of the Endorsement Committee.

At no time shall a member of either the MCDP Endorsement Committee or MCDP Executive Committee vote on a recommendation for any candidate in a race for which he/she is also a candidate in that same race and district (as either the candidate being voted on, or as an opponent). In all such cases, members of the Endorsement Committee or Executive Committee shall recuse themselves from participating in that particular recommendation.

MCDP shall endorse no more than one candidate for each available office in any given race. For example, in a race which only one person can win (such as for City Council member in a single-member district), MCDP would endorse only one eligible candidate; however, in multi-member districts (such as the two-member Arizona House districts), MCDP could endorse up to two eligible candidates, if it so chose.

MCDP may publicize by electronic or printed means any and all endorsement recommendations, but is under no obligation to do so.

Only candidates whose “Endorsed” status has been ratified by the MCDP Executive Committee may refer to themselves as MCDP “Endorsed” candidates.

As part of the endorsement process, MCDP shall take into account and exhibit a preference for candidates who:

- Uphold Article II, paragraph one, lines 17 and 18 of the MCDP Bylaws which states “The mission of the MCDP is to elect Democrats to public office who embrace the values of the Democratic Party”
- Consistently share and express our Democratic values, which are codified in the Arizona Democratic Party Platform
- Demonstrate a willingness and ability to meet candidate expectations, as expressed in the endorsement application and interview process
- Work with the MCDP Field Program to strengthen the Democratic brand across the ballot and across the county

The ability of Democratic candidates to have access to the VAN is not affected by the MCDP endorsement process. Candidates’ access to the VAN is determined solely by the Arizona Democratic Party (ADP).

The ability of Democratic candidates to participate in the MCDP Field Program is open to those Democratic candidates who are “Endorsed” by MCDP as well as others, who while they may not yet be endorsed at a specific point in time, demonstrate their commitment to our Democratic values and to strengthening the Democratic Party and MCDP’s efforts across the ballot and across the county.

3. THE STAGES OF THE ENDORSEMENT PROCESS

The endorsement recommendation process is divided into four different stages. This guide will assist you through each stage of the process.

3.1 BEFORE ENDORSEMENT RECOMMENDATION INTERVIEWS

The MCDP Endorsement Committee, with the assistance and advice of MCDP Senior Staff (Executive Director, Finance Director, and Field Director), as the first step in the endorsement process, will:

- Research races for which endorsements may be/have been requested
- Set up Endorsement Recommendation Interviews as necessary, specifying locations, dates, times of each interview
- Determine candidates eligible for consideration for endorsement in each race
- Notify eligible candidates by written notice about the Endorsement Recommendation Interviews for their particular race, and send the Candidate Application and Candidate Questionnaire along with a copy of this MCDP Endorsement Policy to them
- Collect the Candidate Application and Candidate Questionnaire from each candidate eligible for endorsement.

3.2 DURING ENDORSEMENT RECOMMENDATION INTERVIEWS

The MCDP Endorsement Committee will periodically call for Endorsement Recommendation Interviews where candidate(s) will be interviewed, and the committee will vote on endorsement recommendation(s) for those races.

At Endorsement Recommendation Interviews, the MCDP Endorsement Committee will:

- Sign in all candidates being considered for endorsement at that time
- Collect any Candidate Applications and Candidate Questionnaires from eligible candidates not received earlier.
- Interview the candidates: each candidate may choose 1 other person (such as a campaign manager/consultant/advisor) to be present during the interview.
- Following a discussion of the candidates, conduct a vote on the endorsement recommendation for each race (a 60% vote of those members present and voting is required to make an endorsement recommendation)

The MCDP Endorsement Committee may make any of the following endorsement recommendations:

- Recommendation of a candidate (or group of candidates) as “Endorsed”
- Recommendation of “No Endorsement At This Time”
- Recommendation of “No Consensus” (note that failure to make a recommendation becomes a recommendation of “No Consensus” by default)
- Finding that a candidate is “Unacceptable” for endorsement

The names of all candidates who receive the necessary 60% or greater vote as “Endorsed” by the MCDP Endorsement Committee will be forwarded by the MCDP Chair for ratification by the MCDP Executive Committee.

The names of any candidates who do not receive the 60% or greater vote as “Endorsed” or who receive any of the other recommendations shall not be forwarded by the MCDP Chair for ratification or review by the MCDP Executive Committee.

3.3 BETWEEN ENDORSEMENT RECOMMENDATION INTERVIEWS AND A VOTE BY THE MCDP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Within five (5) business days of an Endorsement Recommendation Interview, the MCDP Chair will electronically transmit to each member of the MCDP Executive Committee:

- The names of all candidates who received the necessary 60% or greater vote as “Endorsed” by the MCDP Endorsement Committee
- The office for which each of those “Endorsed” candidates is running
- The “Endorsed” Candidate Questionnaires

For Legislative races only, the following also applies: within five (5) business days of an Endorsement Recommendation Interview involving a candidate/candidates for Legislative office, the MCDP Chair will electronically transmit a copy to members of the appropriate Legislative District (LD) Executive Board that pertains to that specific LD:

- The names of all candidates who received the necessary 60% or greater vote as “Endorsed” by the MCDP Endorsement Committee
- The office (Arizona Senate or House) for which each of those “Endorsed” candidates is running

The members of an LD Executive Board who may vote (in addition to LD Chair, who already has a vote as a member the MCDP Executive Committee) are: the First and Second Vice Chairs, the Treasurer, and Secretary of the LD.

3.4 VOTE BY THE MCDP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Once the MCDP Chair has electronically transmitted an “Endorsed” recommendation to the MCDP Executive Committee, the members of the Executive Committee will have five (5) business days to vote electronically on each such recommendation. The MCDP Chair shall specify the format (via return email, electronic form, etc.) each committee member shall use to record his/her vote and the deadline (by date and time) for voting.

An “Endorsed” candidate must receive a 60% or greater vote by the MCDP Executive Committee members voting on that candidate’s recommendation by the specified deadline in order for the endorsement to be ratified. Each candidate so ratified is thereafter officially an MCDP “Endorsed” candidate.

For Legislative races only, the following also applies:

Once the MCDP Chair has electronically transmitted an “Endorsed” recommendation to an LD Executive Board, the members of that Executive Board specified above in Section 3.3 will have five (5) business days to vote electronically on each such recommendation. The MCDP Chair shall specify the format (via return email, electronic form, etc.) each board member shall use to record his/her vote and the deadline (by date and time) for voting.

In Legislative races only, the votes of LD Executive Board members voting by the specified deadline will be counted in addition to the votes of the MCDP Executive Committee, and will have the same value as if those LD Executive Board members were members of the MCDP Executive Committee for that specific vote.

In keeping with MCDP Bylaws, at no time shall a single person have more than one vote at each voting stage of the endorsement process. In other words, if a person is both a member of the MCDP Executive Committee and an LD Executive Board (for example, an LD Chair), he/she shall have only one vote in the final voting stage.