

# Precinct Chairman's Handbook

Assembled by the Republican Party of  
Texas  
Party Organization Committee

Revised: February 2018

Paid for by the Republican Party of Texas and not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee.  
[www.texasgop.org](http://www.texasgop.org)



Republican Party of Texas

P.O. Box 2206  
Austin, TX 78768  
Phone: 512.477.9821  
Fax: 512.480.0709  
www.TexasGOP.org

James Dickey, Chairman

September 13, 2017

Dear Precinct Chair,

Thank you for taking on this incredibly important position in our Party. Precinct Chairs are the soil in which the grassroots grows and the foundation of our strong State Party. The Republican Party of Texas is built upon the hardworking individuals who make up our County Parties: our County Chairs and all of our Precinct Chairs. Without your efforts to elect Republicans up and down the ballot, Texas would not be the solid bastion of liberty it has become to the rest of the union.

When you become a Precinct Chair, you have 3 basic responsibilities: help run the elections in your Precinct; grow the party base in your Precinct by building contact lists, blockwalking, and getting out the vote for Republicans during election season; and contribute to the management of your county party by participating in County Executive Committee meetings, committees, deliberations and votes.

According to the Texas Election Code, attending the County Executive Committee is the only statutory requirement and can not be delegated to someone else. If you want to find others in your neighborhood to help run the elections, you can. If you want to ask your Republican neighbor to help blockwalk and give them a title of Block Captain, you can. In fact, the more people you can help get involved in the process, the better for our grassroots ground game.

When Precinct Chairs take their responsibilities seriously, there are huge benefits to our Party. When the grassroots engage, voters have increased opportunities to have Republican representation at every level of government. When the grassroots help elect Republican office holders, those office holders are more accountable to our values and principles.

Your value as a Precinct Chair cannot be measured solely by doors knocked, calls made, email lists built, meetings attended, or Republicans elected. Your value will be measured by freedom and opportunity gained, principles held, and future generations made more secure in the blessings of liberty. In other words, your efforts and your value are immeasurable and priceless.

Thank you again for all you do for the Republican Party, and may God bless your efforts to raise up the grassroots one neighbor at a time.

Sincerely,

Chairman James Dickey

# Contents

<b>What Is A Precinct Chairman?</b> .....	<b>1</b>
What Does a Precinct Chairman Do?.....	1
How Do I Become A Precinct Chairman? .....	4
<b>Party Basics</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Documents Governing Our Party .....	7
Texas Election Cycle.....	8
Republican Conventions.....	8
<b>Organizing Your Precinct</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Precinct Organization Chart.....	10
Recruiting Volunteers .....	11
<b>Canvassing the Voters</b> .....	<b>11</b>
Sample Canvass Sheet.....	12
Maintaining Records.....	13
Utilizing the Data .....	15
<b>Get-Out-The-Vote (GOTV)</b> .....	<b>15</b>
Block Walking.....	15
Phone Banking.....	17
<b>Thank Your Volunteers!!!</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>Voting Requirements</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>Tools of the Precinct Chairman</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b>Resources for the Precinct Chairman</b> .....	<b>22</b>
<b>Role of the County Executive Committee</b> .....	<b>23</b>
<b>Statutory Requirements of the CEC</b> .....	<b>24</b>
<b>Glossary of Political Terms</b> .....	<b>26</b>

# What Is A Precinct Chairman?

**S**imply put, a Precinct Chairman is the central manager for the smallest unit in the Republican Party. As the only elected official in the precinct, they have roles and responsibilities in, and to, the Republican Party. They also get to have a lot of fun and meet a lot of people!

As a Precinct Chairman you will organize your precinct, help with elections, go to conventions, become a member of the County Executive Committee, and did we mention—have a lot of fun! So let’s find out more about it.

## What Does a Precinct Chairman Do?

Your number one job as a Precinct Chairman is to maximize the Republican vote in your precinct. You do this by:

- Getting People In Your Precinct Involved
- Identifying Voters
- Registering Voters
- Informing Voters
- Turning Out Voters

**Getting people in your precinct involved.** It’s almost always easier to do work with two or more people as opposed to doing things by yourself. This is particularly important as a Precinct Chairman. Your main job as a Precinct Chairman is to get as many voters in your precinct to vote for Republicans in elections. The best way for people to take action is by being invested in the election. Get people involved in the following areas where they have the most interest. They are volunteers and volunteers usually start with something small and then make a larger commitment as they are more invested in something. So get them involved in any part of working your precinct that you can. And don’t forget to ask them to help. Most people will help with something small. Get them involved and then the most committed will keep asking for more things to help with.

**Identifying Voters.** Get to know voters in your precinct. Be the first to welcome new neighbors and let them know you are their Republican Precinct Chairman—this can be a good way to start a conversation which can determine their political leanings. Learn who your consistent Republican voters are so you can count on their support. Learn who is a “swing voter” or who does not usually vote, so that you might persuade them to vote Republican. Also know who the Democrats are, so that you can make relationships and have conversations which might switch their views, or so that you can leave them alone when it comes to Republican Party politics. You can



request lists of voters from your local elections office or utilize “GOP Data Center” (see “Resources”, this manual) to help you with this process. Identifying voters and recording this information is also called “canvassing”.

**Registering Voters.** Always be ready to register a Republican to vote by becoming a Deputy Voter Registrar (DVR). DVRs take a short training course and an oath from the county Voter Registrar and are then allowed to accept a completed voter registration application card from a new voter and take it to the Voter Registrar. Contact your local Voter Registrar for more information.

**Informing Voters.** You need to be the political leader in your neighborhood. Keep in touch with Republicans in your area and let them know of current political events, issues, upcoming elections, and opportunities for involvement with the local party, clubs or campaigns. Distribute campaign literature, bumper stickers and yard signs to decorate your precinct.

**Turning Out Voters.** All the prior steps mentioned lead up to this one. Once you have identified your voters, registered them to vote, and kept them politically informed, it’s time to make all of that count- get them to the polls to vote Republican! The most common activities that remind voters to vote are walking door-to-door (“block walking”) and making phone calls (“phone banking”). Assist those needing to vote early by mail (contact your County Clerk for help). Offer to accompany neighbors to their polling place or drive people that need a ride. Efforts to turn out voters are often referred to as “Get-Out-The-Vote” efforts or “GOTV”.

## ***Be On the County Executive Committee***

**As Precinct Chairman, you also sit on the County Executive Committee.** The County Executive Committee is made up of the County Chairman and all the Precinct Chairmen in the county. As the representative of your precinct, you should make every effort to attend each meeting. Your presence counts towards a quorum enabling official business to be conducted. On those occasions you are not able to attend, you should have someone there who will collect any handouts and take notes for you. However, such a substitute is prohibited from voting as your proxy (Sec. 171.026).

## ***Be Involved in Your Local Elections***

**As Precinct Chairman, you have responsibilities in your local elections.** In addition to maximizing the Republican vote, ways to be involved include:

**Primary Election—Campaigning.** There is nothing in the Election Code or RPT Rules prohibiting a Precinct Chair from getting involved in contested primary races or nonpartisan local elections. Be sure to check you County Executive Committee Bylaws to see if there is a provision that prohibits you from endorsing or becoming involved in contested primary races. You should become knowledgeable about your local situation before publicly taking sides in a contested primary race. Contested races sometimes create hard feelings or damage relationships. Becoming involved in



a campaign may include going door-to-door (“block walking”), making phone calls (“phone banking”) or handing out campaign material for a candidate.

**Primary Election—Working at the Polls.** In Primary Elections, County Chairmen (with approval of the County Executive Committee) appoint Election Judges for each precinct in the county, and the Election Judges appoint clerks to assist them. Some County Chairmen require that their Precinct Chairs fill these positions as it can be difficult to recruit all the volunteers it takes to setup, run, and tear down the polling places on Election Day. Working the polls is also a great way to ensure ballot integrity for our Party and to get to know voters in your area. Note, however, that duties involved in closing the polls, completing the paperwork, and delivering the ballot box to the central counting station sometimes will conflict with the Precinct Chairman’s duty to run the Precinct Convention (see “Convention Activity” below). This should be considered by the County Executive Committee when making arrangements for Election Day.

**General Election—Campaigning.** Precinct Chairs should be eager to assist Republican candidates in any way possible. Becoming involved in a campaign may include going door-to-door (“block walking”), making phone calls (“phone banking”) or handing out campaign material for a candidate. It is particularly important for Precinct Chairs to be involved in these efforts as you know your precinct better than anyone.

**General Election—Working at the Polls.** In every precinct where our Republican candidate for Governor in a gubernatorial election wins, we are eligible to have a Republican Election Judge in the following General Election. Precincts where our candidate for Governor came in second are entitled to have a Republican as Alternate Judge. Your serving as Judge or Alternate Judge is very important to our Party’s ballot integrity and reduces the need to recruit ballot integrity volunteers. This is further incentive to get-out-the-vote! Names for Election Judges must be submitted by the County Chairman to the Commissioner’s Court the summer preceding the general election; remind them to submit your name!

## ***Be Involved In Conventions***

***As Precinct Chairman, you have responsibilities in the convention process.***

These include:

**Precinct Convention.** The Election Code designates the Precinct Chairman as temporary chair of the precinct convention (Sec. 174.025). If the Precinct Chair is unable to serve in this capacity, another eligible convention participant may take on the role (Sec. 174.025(b)). Instruction packets on running your precinct convention are provided by RPT prior to the convention. Also see Texas Election Code Chapter 174, Subchapter B.

**SD/County Convention.** Precinct Chairmen are encouraged to not only participate in their Senatorial District/County Convention (you must be elected at your precinct convention), but to volunteer to serve on one of the temporary convention committees



(contact your County Chairman or Temporary District Convention Chairman who make these appointments).

**State Convention.** As grassroots leaders, a Precinct Chairman should try to get elected as a delegate to the State Convention at their Senatorial District/County Convention (you do NOT have to be a delegate at the SD/County Convention, but it often helps!). If you are interested in serving on a temporary convention committee, contact your SREC member who makes recommendations to the state chairman for appointments.

## How Do I Become A Precinct Chairman?

It's easy! You get elected in your precinct or appointed by the County Executive Committee. So what does that entail?

### *Methods of Becoming a Precinct Chairman*

**Election for two-year term.** Candidates for Precinct Chairman run for office in the Primary Election each even-numbered year. A one-page notarized application must be submitted to the County Chairman within the filing period, usually September to December. Individuals may also apply as write-in candidates (Sec. 171.0231). If only one candidate applied to be on the ballot, there will be no election and that person will be declared elected to the office (Sec. 171.0221). If there is more than one candidate, the winner is determined by majority vote of those voting in the Republican Primary.

**Filling a vacancy.** Any eligible person may fill a Precinct Chairman vacancy at any time. Appointment is by majority vote of the County Executive Committee present at a properly called meeting with a quorum, unless otherwise stipulated by the Election Code (171.024-5).

### *So Who's Eligible?*

Qualifications to be a Precinct Chairman:

- Be a resident of the precinct (Sec. 171.023)
- Be a qualified voter in that county (Sec. 161.005)
- Not be a county, state, or federal public officeholder or candidate for such office
- In a general election year, be affiliated with the Republican Party through voting in the Republican primary election or runoff or by oath of affiliation (Sec. 162.001 – 162.012)

### *What if I Need to Resign?*

We hope you will serve out your full term as Precinct Chairman. However, some situations make it necessary to leave early, such as moving out of your precinct, losing your voting rights, or becoming an office holder or candidate. If so, please immediately provide a letter of resignation so the party can get your successor.

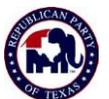


## Party Basics

**B**efore we go into the best practices for organizing and working your precinct it is important to have a general understanding of where the precinct fits in the Republican Party at the county, state and national levels, as well as to understand the convention process, the Texas election cycle and to know what documents govern the party.

Below is a graphic that shows how the foundation of everything in the Republican Party is the Grassroots Volunteers. There is no Republican Party without the local volunteer, there are no conventions, or anything else.

# Republican Party Structure



## ***NATIONAL PARTY ORGANIZATION:***

### ***Republican National Committee (RNC)***

The RNC is composed of all state party chairmen plus one committeeman and one committeewoman from each state and U.S. territory. Officers are elected by the RNC. Texas Republicans elect their RNC committeeman and committeewoman at the state conventions held in presidential election years.

National Committeeman ♦ State Chairman ♦ National Committeewoman

## ***STATE PARTY ORGANIZATION:***

### ***State Republican Executive Committee (SREC)***

The SREC is composed of the State Chairman, Vice Chairman, and one man and one woman from each of the 31 state senatorial districts (SDs). Delegates elect this committee at the state convention held in June of even-numbered years. All convention delegates elect the State Chairman and a State Vice-Chairman. Each SD elects a Committee-man and Committeewoman to represent their respective district, which is then ratified by the convention. Officers are either elected or appointed, according to SREC bylaws. SREC members help organize and oversee Party activities in their respective SDs.

State Chairman ♦ State Vice Chairman ♦ Committeeman & woman from each SD

## ***COUNTY PARTY ORGANIZATION:***

### ***County Executive Committee (CEC)***

The County Chairman and Precinct Chairmen are elected by popular vote at the primary election held in March of each even-numbered year. Together, they comprise the County Executive Committee. Republican primary election voters in the county vote on the County Chairman. Voters residing in each of the county's voting precincts elect their respective Precinct Chairmen. Officers are either elected or appointed, according to CEC bylaws.

County Chairman ♦ Precinct Chairmen

## ***PRECINCT ORGANIZATION:***

### ***Precinct Chairman and Volunteers***

The only elected official in the precinct is the Precinct Chairman. The Precinct Chairman obtains Volunteers and organizes them in the way most fitting to the precinct. The precinct is the smallest unit of our Party; however, it is the most essential unit. It is here, at the grassroots level, that voters are identified and turned out on Election Day.

Precinct Chairman ♦ Volunteers

## ***AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS***

Auxiliary organizations work in cooperation with the formal Party organization to bring specific groups of citizens into the Republican Party. They often serve as an intermediary step in getting people to assume leadership positions with County Executive Committees or with campaigns. Auxiliaries complement and add to the strength of the Party organization. For a list of current official RPT auxiliaries, visit [www.texasgop.org](http://www.texasgop.org) (go to "RPT Auxiliaries" at the bottom of the homepage).

# Documents Governing Our Party

## ***TEXAS ELECTION CODE***

The Texas Election Code is the set of laws passed by the State Legislature governing Texas elections, voting systems, candidates and political parties. When you see “Section” references in this manual, they are referring to the Texas Election Code. The 2018—2019 code may be downloaded at [www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/SDocs/ELECTIONCODE.pdf](http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/SDocs/ELECTIONCODE.pdf) . The Texas Election Code is also available online to research at [www.capitol.state.tx.us](http://www.capitol.state.tx.us) or [www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us](http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us). These websites also have a link to all of the Texas Statutes as well as to the Texas Constitution.

## ***REPUBLICAN PARTY OF TEXAS RULES***

Per the Texas Election Code, the Republican Party of Texas has adopted rules to govern the conduct of precinct, county/senatorial district, and state meetings and conventions. These rules continue in effect unless changed at a state convention. Therefore, the rules in effect at any given time will be dated as of June of the last state convention year. It is important to note that the RPT Rules do not, and cannot, conflict with the Texas Election Code. RPT Rules may be accessed online at [www.texasgop.org](http://www.texasgop.org).

## ***REPUBLICAN PARTY OF TEXAS PLATFORM***

The Republican Party of Texas has a statement of basic beliefs that outline its political philosophy. This platform is adopted at each state convention. The platform in effect at any given time will be dated as of June of the last state convention year. Additionally, the State Republican Executive Committee often passes resolutions that speak to current issues. The current RPT Platform may be accessed at [www.texas-gop.org](http://www.texas-gop.org).

## ***STATE PARTY BYLAWS & COUNTY PARTY BYLAWS***

The State Republican Executive Committee has adopted bylaws which direct the conduct of the State Party. Copies of the bylaws are distributed to each SREC Member.

County executive committees also have the option of adopting bylaws to direct the conduct of their county party. Bylaws should address the special needs found in the individual county. Bylaws usually cover items such as frequency of county executive committee meetings, who may convene a meeting, duties of officers, the number of precinct chairs necessary to constitute a quorum for conducting non-election code business, and the establishment of permanent and special committees. As the Republican Party grows, it is beneficial to have a clear outline for conducting party business.



# Texas Election Cycle

## *Year 1 (odd-numbered year) 2017 & 2019*

- January: Presidential Inauguration
- January - May: Legislative Session
- November - December: Candidate Filing for Primary Election
- September - December: Precinct Chair Filing for Primary Election

## *Year 2 (even-numbered year) 2018 & 2020*

- March: Primary Election, Precinct & SD/County Conventions
- June: State Convention
- November: General Election (Gubernatorial)

## *Year 3 (odd-numbered year) 2019 & 2021*

- January: Gubernatorial Inauguration
- January - May: Legislative Session
- November - December: Candidate Filing for Primary Election
- September - December: Precinct Chair Filing for Primary Election

## *Year 4 (even-numbered year) 2020 & 2024*

- March: Primary Election, Precinct & SD/County Conventions
- May: State Convention
- July: National Convention
- November: General Election (Presidential)

# Republican Conventions

*RPT Rules governing conventions may be found at [www.texasgop.org](http://www.texasgop.org) (go to “About the Party”)*

## ***PRECINCT CONVENTIONS***

*Precinct conventions may take place on any date from the primary election date until the date of the county or district convention. The date, place, and specific starting time within each county are to be set by the county executive committee on or before the day of the drawing for position on the general primary election ballot. Conventions are usually held at the precinct polling location, but the county executive committee may set the location outside the precinct. Purpose: to elect delegates and alternates to the county/senatorial district convention and propose resolutions for the county/senatorial district convention to consider.*

The Precinct Chair (or in their absence, any registered Republican voter from the precinct) may convene the convention. Eligible participants are those who voted in the Republican Primary (early or on Election Day) or affiliated with the Republican Party and reside in that precinct. Minutes of the proceedings (forms are provided to the County Chairman by RPT to distribute to Precinct Chairmen) must be delivered to the County Chairman within three days or mailed within two days.



Please visit [www.texasgop.org/instructional-videos](http://www.texasgop.org/instructional-videos) view an instructional video for building a precinct convention. Please visit [www.texasgop.org/precinct-convention-sample-script](http://www.texasgop.org/precinct-convention-sample-script) for a sample script of Precinct Conventions.

## ***COUNTY / SENATORIAL DISTRICT CONVENTIONS***

*Held the third Saturday after the Primary Election.* The time and location is to be set by the county executive committee. Purpose: to elect delegates and alternates to the state convention and propose resolutions for the state convention to consider.

A county convention is held when the county is completely within one senatorial district. A senatorial district convention is held when the county is divided between two or more senatorial districts. The incumbent County Chairman (which may be different than the one elected in the primary election) is the temporary county convention chairman. The temporary senatorial district convention chairman is to be elected by the precinct chairs within that county's senatorial district. Delegates are those elected from their precinct convention. Minutes of the proceedings (forms are provided to the temporary county and SD convention chairmen by RPT) must be delivered to RPT within 5 days. Prior to or on the date of the drawing for the ballot position on the general election ballot, a county executive committee that contains multiple senate districts may elect to hold the district conventions in a consolidated location.

## ***STATE CONVENTION***

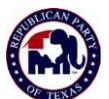
*Held in May or June of even-numbered years, following a Primary Election.* The specific date, time and location are to be set by the State Republican Executive Committee. Purpose: to elect one man and one woman from each senate district to serve on the State Republican Executive Committee, elect a State Chairman and Vice-Chairman, adopt the Republican Party of Texas Rules, and adopt the State Party platform.

In presidential election years, the state convention also elects one man and one woman to serve on the Republican National Committee, elects delegates and alter-nates to the national convention, and elects representatives to the Electoral College.

For an overview of RPT State Conventions, please visit [www.texasgop.org/](http://www.texasgop.org/).

## ***NATIONAL CONVENTION***

Held in June or July of presidential election years. The specific date, time and location are to be set by the Republican National Committee. Purpose: to nominate candidates for President and Vice President of the United States and adopt the National Party platform. Note: The Republican National Committee passed rules in January 2014 that advanced the date of the national convention and compressed the primary election cycle in presidential election years.



# Organizing Your Precinct

**R**ecruit volunteers to help you work your precinct. The precinct is the smallest political unit of registered voters. Many elections in the past have been won or lost by less than one vote per precinct. However, most elections can be won with effective precinct work—it is a proven fact! In order for your work to be most effective you must have a strong organization within your precinct.

Many precincts contain too many voters to organize a whole precinct by yourself. You will benefit from having several volunteers to assist. The goals of your volunteers are the same as yours—identifying voters, registering voters, informing voters, and turning out voters. All the information gained from these activities should be reported back up the chain to the Precinct Chairman, so you can maintain data for your entire precinct.

## Precinct Organization Chart

Here is a Precinct Organization Chart. This method of organization has proved ideal in many precincts, but as Precinct Chairman, you know your precinct best. Tailor it to fit your precinct's geography, needs, and availability of volunteers. You may also have volunteers who do not commit to the position of Block Worker or Precinct Captain, but choose to help as they are available.

### ***Precinct Chairman***

You are the central manager of the entire precinct.

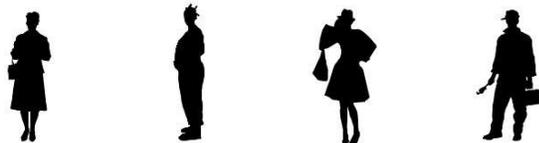
### ***Neighborhood Captains*** (3–5 per Precinct)

Break your precinct down into its major sub-divisions or neighborhoods. Choose your most capable volunteers to serve as Neighborhood Captains and manage each of these divisions. Neighborhood Captains report directly to the Precinct Chairman.

## Suggested Precinct Organization



Precinct Chairman (1 per Precinct)



Neighborhood Captains (3-5 in a Precinct)



Block Workers (3-5 per sub-division or neighborhood)



Voters (the target of each member of the precinct organization)



**Block Workers** (3–5 per sub-division or neighborhood)

Break your sub-divisions and neighborhoods down into blocks. Assign (or have your Neighborhood Captains assign) Block Workers to one or a few blocks each. Block Workers report directly to their Neighborhood Captain.

### **Voters**

Voters are the target of each member of the precinct organization. Reach voters in order to get to know them, register them to vote if they are not already, inform them about candidates and issues, get them out to vote, or help volunteer!

## **Recruiting Volunteers**

The most logical place to start recruiting volunteers is with those closest to you — family, friends and close neighbors. Then spread your net a little wider to your church, community and service clubs, PTA, exercise class, retirees and students. (Often times, high school and college Government/Political Science teachers are willing to give their students extra credit for volunteering with a political party.)

You will be surprised at the number of people who want to help, but they just don't know how to get started. That is your job; to ask them to help, to make them feel welcome and important, and to teach them how to do their job. ***The #1 reason people don't volunteer is because no one ever asked them.***

As you will read in the next section, identifying and canvassing the voters in your precinct will help you learn who will vote Republican. But it is also a great way to learn who you can recruit to be part of your precinct team. Find out who you can count on to go door-to-door, make phone calls, distribute yard signs, put bumper stickers on their vehicle, or contribute money to the county party.

## **Canvassing the Voters**

**I**dentifying voters and recording that information is called “canvassing”. Whenever you meet someone in your neighborhood, be sure to keep notes about their political affiliation and interests. You can also organize “block walks” or “phone banks” in your precinct to gather this information (these efforts are covered under “GOTV” but can be adapted for identifying voters). Using a canvass sheet is a great way to keep temporary notes until you are able to enter that information into a computer system.



Two important places to enter this data on the computer are “GOP Data Center” and your own electronic spreadsheet.

There is also software available, such as Voter Gravity or Grassroots Commando, which can be installed on a smart phone or tablet which allows for canvassing electronically. This information can be downloaded into a voter database to keep up with Republican voters in each precinct.

Here is a sample script for any precinct workers to use when meeting people:

- a. “Good morning/afternoon/evening, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. We’re taking a survey in our neighborhood. Do you have a few moments to help me complete my information? Do you plan to vote for (Republican Candidate) for Governor?”
- b. If the person answers “no”, thank them politely and leave.
- c. If the answer is “yes”, ask if they are registered to vote. If not, give them a voter registration card.
- d. If you are a Deputy Voter Registrar, collect the voter registration card before you leave. NEVER MENTION REGISTRATION to a person who is not interested in support-ing Republican candidates.
- e. Complete the information on your canvass sheet or card.
- f. When finished, thank them and move on. Do not take more than 5 minutes at a residence.
- g. Keep going back until you have contacted every family in your area.

You will also use canvass sheets when block walking and phone banking for GOTV (discussed later in this handbook). Canvass sheets should be customized for those needs. But here is a sample canvass sheet for initial meetings with people in your precincts (or to record information you already know about people):

## Sample Canvass Sheet

Date canvass completed: \_\_\_\_\_ Pct. \_\_\_\_\_  
Area covered in precinct: \_\_\_\_\_ (sub-division, neighborhood or block(s))  
Volunteer’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Block Worker’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Neighborhood Captain’s name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_



(with sample data)

ADDRESS	HOUSEHOLD	RESIDENTS FIRST NAMES	R	D	I	U	Reg?	Vol?	Yard	Stick	Comments
1234 Oak St.	Jones	Joe (husband)	x				Y		x		prop. tax issues
1234 Oak St.		Susan (wife)		x			Y		x		veteran
1234 Oak St.		Susie (daughter)				x		walk			student , age 15
1242 Oak St.	Smith	Bill (single)	x				N			x	gave reg. card
526 Reed Rd.	Wilson	Betty (widowed)	x				Y	phones			disabled / pro-life
R = Republican			D = Democrat			I = Independent			U= Undecided (or "Swing")		
Reg? = Are they registered to vote?			Vol? = Are they willing to volunteer?								
Yard = Would like yard sign			Stick = Would like bumper sticker								

**In accordance with the Precinct Organization Chart suggested earlier in this manual, Block Workers should provide copies of their canvass sheets to their Neighborhood Captains, and Neighborhood Captains should provide copies of their canvass sheets and their Block Workers' canvass sheets to the Precinct Chairman- so that all the information ends up in one place where it can be or-ganized and maintained.**

## Maintaining Records

The Precinct Chairman is responsible for maintaining an up-to-date permanent record of information on voters in the precinct.

### **"GOP Data Center"**

The first place you want to enter voter information is in GOP Data Center, the master Texas voter file. GOP Data Center is a product of the Republican National Committee, but is administered by each State Party. You may contact the RPT HQ and request access to the voter file for your precinct, and instructions on how to log-in. GOP Data Center training sessions are available upon request. Questions may be directed to the GOP Data Center Republican Party of Texas administrator at 512-477-9821.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	ST. #	ST. NAME	AGE	VOTE	OCC.	VOTE BY MAIL	YARD SIGN	BUMP. STICK.	VOL	COMMENTS
Jones	Julia	1003	Oak St.	48	RPV	secretary	N	N	Y	Y	phonebank
Jones	Randy	1003	Oak St.	52	--	plumber	N	N	N		
Smith	Cecilia	4828	Cedar St.	19	--	student	Y			N	out of town
Smith	Mary	4828	Cedar St.	43	RPV	CPA	N	Y	Y	Y	mailings
Smith	Tom	4828	Cedar St.	44	RPV	banker	N	Y	Y	N	donates \$
Telez	Margaret	1116	Elm St.	65	RPV	retired	Y	Y	N	N	
Telez	Xavier	1116	Elm St.	67	RPV	retired	Y	Y	N	Y	distribute lit.
Thomas	Bill	1276	Elm St.	40	DPV	lawyer					
Thomas	Deborah	1276	Elm St.	38	DPV	teacher					



## ***Electronic Spreadsheets***

The easiest way to keep track of your precinct's registered voters is to maintain a computerized database. Microsoft Excel© is an excellent program for creating and maintaining data in a spreadsheet. Excel provides the spreadsheet template, and you simply create fields (columns or rows) and enter the data by clicking on a box ("cell") and typing as normal. You can create fields that match your canvass sheets exactly. You can also combine data collected from canvassing and data available in "GOP Data Connect" if you like. Here is a sample spreadsheet:

Entering your information in a program like this will enable the data to be easily sorted by any column depending on particular needs. For example:

- sorting on Column F will produce a list of all Republican primary voters (RPV) which can be used for inviting them to events and for GOTV efforts.
- sorting on Column J will produce a list of those willing to put bumper stickers on their vehicle so that stickers may be distributed.
- sorting on Column C and then D will produce a list of houses that can be walked in numerical order by street.

Maintaining a column such as G ("OCC") on the occupations of voters will enable you to better know those in your precinct, how much time and at what time of day or night they may be able to volunteer for projects, and learn about which campaigns may be of special interest to them (e.g. a lawyer is likely to be very interested in judicial candidates and candidates for Attorney General).

Reserve a column such as L ("Comments") to enter miscellaneous information that will help you better know your voters.

Columns can also be easily added at any time in an Excel spreadsheet to include additional data as needs arise to benefit the county party and local campaigns. Rows may also be deleted at any time if information on a particular person will no longer be needed (e.g. if someone moves away).

It is also imperative that you backup all of your data files on your computer. Anyone can experience data loss, and chances are good at some point, you will. It is easy to accidentally delete a file; encounter a quirk in a program that results in a "fatal" software error; or you could even fall victim to a hard drive crash and lose everything. Losing all of your data could definitely cause major problems especially if it takes place days or weeks before the election, but by backing up your data, these major problems simply become minor annoyances. There are numerous ways to backup data, but the easiest is by using a recordable CD to create a back up disk, or an external hard drive or memory stick. Once you back up your data, schedule a regular time (daily, weekly, or monthly) to protect all of your important files.

It takes considerable time to assemble a good database. Therefore, it is vital to turn these computer files over to your successor or to the County Chairman when leaving office.



# Utilizing the Data

Once you have collected and saved your data—use it! Be sure to let campaigns know what households want yard signs, bumper stickers or campaign literature (or offer to pick it up and distribute it for them). Follow up with anyone who requested a voter registration card or needed extra time to fill it out. Put those to work who said they would be willing to volunteer- whether as a block worker, neighborhood captain, phone banker, etc. Inform the county party if you find any possible donors. Keep in touch with “undecided” voters who you might be able to persuade to vote Re-publican. All the information you have canvassed is incredibly valuable to Republican campaigns in your county and in the state.

## Get-Out-The-Vote (GOTV)

**G**OTV efforts happen right before and during the Early Voting period and especially during the 72-hour count-down period before and on Election Day. The two most common GOTV efforts are block walking and phone banking.

## Block Walking

Block walking is the most effective form of volunteer voter contact. It can take up several hours of your day, but gives voters the opportunity to connect with you face-to-face and ask questions. Voters are often times impressed that you took the time to come visit them in person.

Block walking involves organizing a group, or several groups, to walk door-to-door and remind Republican voters to vote (don't remind Democrats to vote!). Block walks usually happen during the two months before the general election and during the Early Voting period. (Block walking can also be useful for canvassing voters, as mentioned earlier in this handbook).

Many times local campaigns or county parties will arrange block walks and just ask you to recruit volunteers and be a part of it. However, there is no reason you cannot take the initiative to host one on your own. This is a perfect example where the Precinct Organization Chart, (see “Organizing Your Precinct” section) can be of great help. If you can divide up your precinct into neighborhoods, and then blocks, with volunteers to cover each section, you've got your ground covered. You may join up with other precincts if you like, especially if there are targeted races which cover a few precincts.

Arrange one central location and a time for everyone to meet before and after the walk. You can arrange shifts if you like- two hour increments are usually appropriate. Assign leaders (preferably Neighborhood Captains or other experience participants who know your precinct well) to lead each group. You will need to put together a “walk packet” for each leader. Walk packets should be provided on a clip board with pen and need to include:

- List of targeted Republican addresses and maps to those houses

(The easiest way to do this is through “GOP Data Center” which has the ability to pull an organized list with maps for you, according to those you have flagged as Republicans. The other option is to do this individually via your canvass records. Organize the addresses into the appropriate blocks and perhaps print maps yourself from online sources such as MapQuest, Yahoo! Maps or Google Maps.)

- Canvass sheet to record new information you find out about these voters

(You can use the model provided earlier in this handbook and customize it for a block walk, or “GOP Data Center” can create canvass sheets specifically for the walk sheets you pull. Include Name and Phone Number. Were they home or did you leave literature at their door? Have the people voted yet? Will they vote for your candidate? Include a space for additional comments.).

Have cars available to drive each group to their walk locations. Consider providing water, coffee and/or snacks before and after the walk.

Literature with polling locations and times is an excellent item to distribute to voters when walking. Many times local campaigns or your local election office will have items like these. Otherwise consider creating some yourself (you can get polling locations and times from your County Chairman or local elections office). Only distribute these items by hand to the voter or leave it at their doorstep; **NEVER put anything in or on the mailbox—this is illegal.**

Here is a sample script for your walkers to use when speaking to voters at the door:

**Walk Volunteer:** “Hello, Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am a volunteer for (candidate’s name or county party). I am stopping by to remind you to vote in the \_\_\_\_\_ election on (dates and times). Your polling location is \_\_\_\_\_.” (Hand them literature.)

**Voter:** “Thank you.”

**Walk Volunteer:** “Will you need a ride to the polls?” (**see Note below**)

**Voter:** “Yes” or “No”.

**Walk Volunteer:** “If you need a ride, we’ll be glad to have someone call you and make arrangements.”

**Voter:** “Thank you.”

~~**Walk Volunteer:** “Thank you for your support and have a great day.”~~



**NOTE:** Communicate with the local party or local campaigns about possibilities for rides to the polls before offering this.

Be prepared to answer basic questions about the candidate(s) or issues you are supporting, or being a Republican in general. If voters ask questions you cannot answer, direct them to particular campaigns or to the county party or local election office.

The Precinct Chairman (or the organization in charge of the block walk) should receive all the canvass sheets filled out during the walk. Reviewing this data can inform you who you can stop visiting (wrong addresses, those who have already voted, or those who will not be supporting your candidate) or who to visit again during your next block walk (anyone who was not home or who has not voted yet). You may also learn other information like who may be interested in helping your cause in other ways than voting (they may ask for a yard sign or to walk with you next time).

## Phone Banking

Studies have repeatedly shown that having an informed, motivated volunteer talking with fellow voters over the phone is very effective for reaching many voters in a short amount of time. It's great for those who don't want to walk or don't feel comfortable on the computer, and they can come and go on their own time.

Phone banking involves having a group of volunteers scheduled to arrive at a particular place where phones are set up (either hard lines or mobile phones) and calling lists and phone scripts are available. Many times local campaigns or county parties will arrange these and just ask you to recruit volunteers and be a part of it. However, there is no reason you cannot take the initiative to host one on your own (as mentioned earlier in this handbook, phone banking can be a great way for you to canvass voters).

This will take a few people from your precinct team to prepare and at least one to oversee the activity and be available to answer questions. You may join up with other precincts if you like, especially if there are targeted races which cover a few precincts.

Possible phone bank locations are the county party headquarters, campaign headquarters, or local (non-corporate) businesses. Try to use a place that has easy access and parking for volunteers. Avoid having volunteers making calls from home if possible.

Depending on the space you are using, hard lines may be accessible. Mobile phones can often be borrowed from local campaigns.

The best place to pull calling lists is from GOP Data Center or from your own canvassing records. You only want to pull names and phone numbers of those voters that have been identified as Republican voters. Divide the call list up among your volunteers. Create canvassing sheets (using model provided earlier in this handbook, or GOP Data Center can create canvass sheets specifically for the call lists you pull)

for them to record the results of each call. (Include Name and Phone Number. Did they answer or did you reach a voicemail box? Have the people voted yet? Will they vote for your candidate? Include a space for additional comments.).

Below is a sample phone script for your volunteers to use. Customize this to the election or campaign to which you are referring, and to whether you are calling during Early Voting or the 72-hour period.

**NOTE:** You can obtain polling locations from your county chairman or local elections office. Communicate with the local party or local campaigns about possibilities for rides to the polls before offering this.

**Phone Volunteer:** “Hello, Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am a volunteer for (candidate’s name or county party). I am calling to remind you to vote in the \_\_\_\_\_ election on (dates and times). Your polling location is \_\_\_\_\_.” (See Note below)

**Voter:** “Thank you.”

**Phone Volunteer:** “Will you need a ride to the polls?” (see Note below)

**Voter:** “Yes” or “No”.

**Phone Volunteer:** “If you need a ride, we’ll be glad to have someone call you and make arrangements.”

**Voter:** “Thank you.”

**Phone Volunteer:** “Thank you for your support and have a great day.”

Be prepared to answer basic questions about the candidate(s) or issues you are supporting, or being a Republican in general. If voters ask questions you cannot answer, direct them to particular campaigns or to the county party or local elections office.

The Precinct Chairman (or the organization in charge of the phone bank) should receive all the canvass sheets filled out during the phone bank. Reviewing this data can inform you who you can stop making phone calls to (wrong phone numbers, those who have already voted, or those who will not be supporting your candidate) or who to call again during your next phone bank session (anyone you did not reach or who has not voted yet). You may also learn other information like who may be interested in helping your cause in other ways than voting (they may ask for a yard sign or to come make calls with you next time).

## ***Early Voting vs. 72-Hours***

The main difference between communicating with voters during the Early Voting period and the 72-hour period is urgency. During the Early Voting period, voters usually have one to two weeks to get to any of the nearby polling locations. During the 72-hour



period, voters only have one day and one location left where they can make their voice heard. Remember to incorporate this into any scripts you use for your block walkers or phone bankers.

## **Thank Your Volunteers!!!**

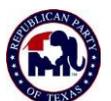
**B**e sure to thank your volunteers in person or in writing for their sacrifice of time and resources. Invite them to victory celebrations that campaigns may be putting on, or host one yourself. Without volunteers, the work cannot get done. We hope that volunteers will continue to be involved in future efforts.

## **Voting Requirements**

**K**eeep this information in mind or on hand when encouraging voter registration.

### ***Qualifications for voting (Texas Election Code Section 13.001-13.002):***

- You must be a citizen of the United States.
- You must be at least 18 years of age on the day of the election.
- You must be a resident of the county.
- You must not be a convicted felon (unless the sentence is complete).
- You must not be declared mentally incapacitated by a court of law.
- You must be registered to vote.



### ***How to Register to Vote (Texas Election Code Section 13.001-13.002):***

- Complete a voter registration application available at any government office and mail or present it in person to your county Voter Registrar's office.
- Complete a voter registration application and give it to a Deputy Voter Registrar to deliver to your county Voter Registrar's office.
- A person may register to vote at any time, but the application must be received by the Voter Registrar at least 30 days before an election in order to vote in that election.
- A person may register to vote at 17 years and 10 months of age, but may not vote until age 18.

### ***How to Vote Early by Mail (Texas Election Code Section 84.001-84.002):***

- Send a request for a mail-in ballot to your county Early Voting Clerk by mail.
- The application must be in writing and signed by the applicant. It must have the name of the applicant, the address at which the applicant is registered to vote, the address to which the ballot is to be mailed, for which election the application is being made, and the reason for needing to vote by mail (out of town during entire voting period, over age 65, disabled, or sick). Using an official form is not required.
- Upon approval, a ballot will be mailed to you with instructions on how to mail the completed ballot back.

## **Tools of the Precinct Chairman**

### ***These items are good to have on hand throughout the year:***

**Republican Platform.** All good Republicans should know what they believe. Copies of the Republican State Party platform are available at [www.texasgop.org](http://www.texasgop.org) (under "About the Party").

**Democrat Platform.** All good Republicans know what they don't believe. Copies of the Democrat State Party platform are available at [www.txdemocrats.org](http://www.txdemocrats.org) (at date of publish, under "Issues").

**Precinct Convention attendance list.** Voters who attend their precinct convention are a prime source for volunteer recruitment.



***Voter Registration Cards and Change of Address Cards.*** Always be ready to register a Republican to vote by becoming a Deputy Voter Registrar (DVR). DVRs take a simple oath from the county Voter Registrar and are then allowed to accept a completed voter registration application card from a new voter and take it to the Voter Registrar.

***Historical General Election Results by Precinct.*** This can be found on the Secretary of State’s website at [www.sos.state.tx.us/elections](http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections) (search “Election Results”) or through your local elections office. By keeping track of this data over several election cycles, it can be determined if the precinct is improving for Republicans, declining in strength, or staying the same.

***These items are particularly important during the election season:***

***Canvassing Sheets.*** Use these to keep notes when you meet new people or walk your neighborhood. A sample canvass sheet is found in this handbook.

***Sample Ballot.*** Get acquainted early with the races on your ballot. It will surprise you how many people do not know the offices for which they can vote.

***Poll Locations list.*** Voters frequently do not know where they can go vote (and it is common for locations to change). Contact your County Chairman or local elections office for this list.

***Candidate contact list.*** This list should include each candidate’s name and the contact information for their campaign office. This will be useful for you and also to direct people in your precinct who have questions or are interesting in certain issues. They may also want to volunteer for the campaign.

***Applications for Ballot by Mail.*** You will encounter people who say they will support Republican candidates but will be away on Election Day and during the early voting period. Also, anyone who is 65 years of age or older on Election Day is eligible for early voting by mail. By providing these people with a mail-in application, you will gain a vote that likely would not otherwise be cast. You can get these from your local elections office.



# Resources for the Precinct Chairman

***Please do not hesitate to utilize the many resources that are available to you!***

## ***County Party Staff and Officers***

In addition to your County Chairman, who should be your main point of contact, if your county party has a headquarters staff, they will be the best resource to answer questions about local issues. If your county executive committee has elected officers, they may be good resources for specific inquiries like attaining copies of minutes (Secretary), questions about funds (Treasurer) or legal questions (General Counsel).

## ***Local County Elections Office – Local Precinct Maps and Voter Lists***

Your local county election office can provide you with detailed maps of your precinct and the most recent list of registered voters for your county.

## ***Republican Party of Texas Staff***

If you have questions regarding statewide issues, RPT staff is available during regular business hours, Monday through Friday. RPT Headquarters is located at 211 E. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Austin, TX 78701 and the phone number is 512-477-9821. RPT is available to hold Campaign, Grassroots/Activist, Communications and “GOP Data Center” trainings in your area upon request.

## ***[www.TexasGOP.org](http://www.TexasGOP.org)***

The RPT website hosts a wealth of information on party news and activities, as well as contact information for elected officials and party leadership organizations. Other resources include RPT Rules, RPT Platform, the Party Structure and the Convention Process. Visiting and directing others to our website is a great way to stay informed.

## ***GOP Data Center***

GOP Data Center is a new system that was developed by a private vendor on contract with the RNC, and the RNC is the national administrator. The data is updated by the RPT to assist grassroots leaders and candidates in contacting voters. The system allows you to access information about registered voters in your area and also to identify voters you have met by Party and issue affiliations. You can request access forms from RPT Headquarters. See more information under “Maintaining Records” section.



## ***State Republican Executive Committee (SREC)***

Each state senate district is represented by one man and one woman who oversee the Party organization in that area. They are volunteers who can assist your county party in many ways with personal, hands-on attention. Their contact information is available at [www.texasgop.org](http://www.texasgop.org) under “About the Party, Leadership Directory”.

## ***Texas Legislative Council (TLC) – District Maps***

TLC serves the Texas Legislature and legislative agencies, but also serves as an information resource for state agencies and the citizens of Texas. You may view and print election district maps from their website, [www.tlc.state.tx.us](http://www.tlc.state.tx.us), or contact them at (512) 463-1155 to order detailed maps of your precinct.

Also see “Governing Documents” section.

# **Role of the County Executive Committee**

**T**he Election Code establishes County Executive Committees to run local political parties. The County Executive Committee (CEC) consists of the County Chair and the Precinct Chairs. Bylaws adopted by a CEC may permit the appointment of additional officers (ie. Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer). The Election Code permits only County Chairmen and Precinct Chairmen to vote on election code business. Officers may or may not be Precinct Chairs.

General statements concerning the operation of a County Executive Committee are difficult to formulate due to the extreme differences between counties in population, demographics, and party strength. However, a few words of advice are common to all.

Every County Party should adopt and follow written bylaws to govern its organization and procedures. Variations should be considered in order to meet local needs.

A key to many effective County Executive Committees is a committee system. Not every County Party will need a committee for every purpose; however, committees that fill vacancies for Precinct Chairman, recruit and assist candidates, and provide funding for Party operations can be highly beneficial.



Responsibilities of a committee should be clearly defined (often as a part of the bylaws) and accountability should be maintained. Committees should perform most of the study and deliberation involved in their area of responsibility and make recommendations for approval by the County Executive Committee. Each committee should meet at least once between meetings of the County Executive Committee, and the chairman of each committee should present a report of the activities of his/her committee to the Executive Committee. A well-functioning committee system should result in relatively short and effective meetings of the County Executive Committee.

It is recommended that the County Executive Committee meet quarterly at a minimum. Meetings should include a report from the County Chairman; reports from committee chairmen; brief reports from representatives of Republican clubs; remarks by any Republican officials or candidates in attendance; adoption of any action or appointments as required by the bylaws; and any new business items.

A social hour before or after the Executive Committee meeting is often an enjoyable and constructive event, facilitating informal discussion of business and the establishment of good working relationships among Party volunteers.

## **Statutory Requirements of the CEC**

**E**xecutive Committee members are to spend most of their time promoting the Republican Party and working to elect Republican candidates to office. However, the Election Code does mandate certain other responsibilities.

### ***Overseeing Primary Election***

The county executive committee is to oversee conduct of the primary election and primary runoff election (Sec. 172.111(b)). In larger counties, it may be possible to hire a Primary Elections Administrator and staff to be paid with state government funds (see Texas Administrative Rules published by SOS). The CEC is also to approve Primary Election Judges (Sec. 32.006).



## ***Conducting Conventions***

Every two years, Executive Committee members are to set the time for their precinct conventions and time and location for their county/senatorial district conventions (Secs. 174.022 & 174.063).

## ***Filling Vacancies on the County Executive Committee***

Any time there is a vacancy in the office of County Chairman or Precinct Chairman, it is the responsibility of the Executive Committee to appoint someone to fill the vacancy. Appointment is by majority vote of Executive Committee members attending a properly called meeting at which a quorum is present (in this situation, quorum = majority of membership). The Secretary calls the meeting to fill a County Chairman vacancy. The person appointed serves until the end of the executive committee's term. (Secs. 171.024 & 171.025).

## ***Making a Nomination for a Vacancy***

Following a Primary Election, it sometimes happens that a nominee of the Republican Party withdraws from the ballot, passes away, or is declared ineligible to serve. Depending on the office and circumstances, it may be the duty of county executive committee member(s) to appoint a replacement nominee. Members eligible to make the replacement nomination are determined by the type of district affected. (Section 145.036)

***Office covering a portion of one county***—Precinct Executive Committee: the Precinct Chairmen in that part of the county (Chapter 171, Subchapter D)

***Office covering only one entire county***—County Executive Committee: the County Chairman and all Precinct Chairmen of the county (Chapter 171, Subchapter B)

***Office covering more than one county***—District Executive Committee: the County Chairmen of entire counties and/or the Precinct Chairmen of partial counties (Chapter 171, Subchapter C)

## ***Making a Nomination for an Unexpired Term***

Following a Primary Election, it sometimes happens that an incumbent officeholder, whose office is not to be on the ballot that year, leaves office (voluntarily or involuntary). Depending on the office and circumstances, it may be the duty of county executive committee member(s) to appoint a Republican nominee to run in the November General Election. Members eligible to make a nomination are the same as in the section above for making a replacement nomination. (Sec. 202.006)

## Glossary of Political Terms

**T**hese are terms either used in this handbook, or that you may hear used by campaigns or other field workers.

**BALLOT INTEGRITY**—Ballot integrity efforts are those which ensure that proper voting rules and procedures are maintained at polling places, in order to prevent fraudulent voting. Ballot integrity committees are often put together at the state and local levels, and send volunteers to monitor polling places.

**BENCHMARK POLL**—Conducted early in a campaign to establish name identification, determine areas of demographic strength (and weakness) and identify key issues to be emphasized throughout the effort. This is usually the largest poll of the campaign and will also have the first “ballot test.”

**BLOCKWALK**—Form of voter contact where supporters are organized and go door-to-door in precincts to visit with voters, collect information about their beliefs and advocate for a candidate or political party. This is considered one of the most effective forms of voter contact when done using informed, enthusiastic volunteers. Some campaigns may hire paid walkers in order to cover more ground, but this should be done only when volunteer resources are not sufficient.

**BRUSHFIRE POLL**—Conducted in the middle of a campaign to determine progress in establishing name identification and any movement in the ballot test. It is also an opportunity to spot check any new issues that may have arisen.

**CAMPAIGN MANAGER**—Campaign managers are appointed by political candidates to manage their campaigns. The campaign manager has responsibility for the smooth functioning of the candidate’s campaign, leaving the candidate free to run for election, instead of seeing to the details of his/her campaign. Specific responsibilities include: keeping the campaign on track and on plan; management of finances; recruiting volunteers; production and distribution of campaign literature and ads; scheduling appearances and events; fundraising; and providing the candidate with pertinent information on issues.

**CAMPAIGN PLAN**—The most important document a campaign creates detailing the strategy, structure, message, budget and timeline. It is the roadmap to victory and keeps the campaign accountable and on track.

**CAUCUS**—For our Party’s purposes, a caucus is a convention meeting. At the State Convention, delegates caucus by Senatorial District to elect the permanent members of the different convention committees; to elect a State Committeeman and State Committeewoman; and to recommend a man and a woman for State Chairman and State Vice Chairman.



In presidential years, delegates also caucus by Congressional District to elect delegates to the National Convention and Presidential Electors, and to nominate a National Committeeman and a National Committeewoman.

**COLLATERAL**—A term used to describe campaign materials such as push cards, door hangers, signs, bumper stickers, etc. that support the candidate.

**COUNTY ELECTION BOARD**—A County Election Board is established in each county for the General Election for state and county officers, a Special Election for an officer regularly elected at the General Election, and any other election ordered by a county authority held at county expense. The Board consists of the County Clerk as Chair, County Judge, Voter Registrar, Sheriff, and County Chair of each political party required to nominate candidates by Primary Election. The Election Board appoints the members of the Signature Verification Committee from a list submitted by the County Chairs of the parties holding Primary Elections and approves the procurement of election supplies necessary to conduct elections.

**COUNTY ELECTIONS COMMISSION**—The County Elections Commission consists of the County Judge as Chair; the County Clerk as Vice Chair; the County Tax-Assessor Collector as Secretary; and the County Chair of each political party that made nominations by Primary Elections for the last General Election for state and county officers. The Commission is tasked with administering the election. If a county chooses to employ an Elections Administrator, that person is appointed by the Elections Commission.

**ELECTION JUDGE, GENERAL ELECTION**—At the recommendation of the County Chairman, a voter of the precinct carried by that party's candidate for Governor in the last general election is appointed by the County Commissioners' Court to serve for a one or two year term as Election Judge of that precinct. The Election Judge conducts the election within the precinct, selects the election clerk, and maintains the sanctity of the ballot. Because of the high responsibility of the Election Judge, he/she is accorded the powers of a State District Judge while conducting the election.

**ELECTION JUDGE, PRIMARY ELECTION**—The County Chairman, with approval of the County Executive Committee, appoints the Primary Election Judge for each precinct. The Election Judge of the Primary Election has all the powers and duties of the General Election Judge.

**GENERAL ELECTION**—General elections are held in even-numbered years for county, state, and federal offices. The elections are held on the first Tuesday following the first Monday in November. Nominees for these positions are chosen the previous spring in Party primaries.

**GET-OUT-THE-VOTE (GOTV)**—Describes campaign activities during early voting and the final 72-hours of a campaign that focus on turning out all identified supporters through mail, phones, block walking, etc.



**GRASSROOTS**—This is a common term used especially in Republican politics to refer to local party leaders and activists. These leaders are the building blocks of the Party.

**GROSS RATING POINT (GRP)**—Gross Rating Points measure the total volume of delivery of your message to your target audience. It represents the percentage of the target audience reached by an advertisement.

**GUBERNATORIAL**—This word means of or relating to a governor. A “gubernatorial election” is the election where the Governor is elected.

**MICROTARGETING**—Micro Targeting is a new tool for candidates and campaigns that allows them to reach voters with tailored messaging using a combination of consumer data, advanced marketing techniques and traditional political targeting.

**NOMINEE**—A nominee is the candidate selected by voters in a Republican or Democrat party primary election to seek election in the general election. In Texas, a nominee must receive a majority of votes cast the primary election.

**PLATFORM**—Platforms are statements of grassroots sentiment and historic party principles. Platforms are adopted at State and National Conventions. At the State Convention, the permanent Platform Committee is charged with recommending the Party Platform to the full Convention for debate, amendment, and ultimate adoption by the delegates.

**PRIMARY ELECTION**—Primary elections in Texas are organized and conducted by the Republican and Democrat Parties, and are financed by the State of Texas. Texas holds its primaries the second Tuesday in March in even-numbered years. Primary elections determine each party’s nominee for county, state, and national General Elections. A majority of the vote is required to win a Primary election. If no majority is obtained, a primary run-off is held between the two candidates receiving the most votes.

**O.R.V.S.**—“Optimal Republican Voting Strength”. This is a formula based on past election results to predict how a district will perform for Republican candidates in upcoming elections.

**OVERVOTE**—A ballot showing the selection of more candidates or choices than are allowed in a given race or referendum.

**PHONE BANK**—An organized phone center where volunteers gather to make calls to potential voters to identify their political beliefs, advocate for a candidate or party or turn out the vote. Phone banks can be done by a paid vendor or by supporters from home, but they are most effective when done using informed, enthusiastic volunteers at a central location and supervised by the campaign.

**PRECINCT (PCT)**—The voting precinct is the smallest political subdivision within a county. A secondary use of the word “precinct” refers to the divisions of a county from which the County Commissioners, Justices of the Peace and Constables are elected.



**REPUBLICAN**—Texas has no voter registration by party preference. A person affiliates with the Republican Party most often by voting in a Republican Primary Election. Voter registration cards are stamped at the Primary Election site to designate in which party’s primary the voter participated. Affiliation may also be accomplished by taking the oath designated in Election Code section 162.007.

**SWING VOTER**—A voter who does not commit to voting for one Party, but is swayed by different candidates and issues. Each Party works to have these voters “swing” in their direction during elections

**TRACKING POLL**—These are conducted near the end of the campaign. They will measure the ballot test and determine if the money being spent on media and campaign activities is working and getting the desired effect.

**UNDERVOTE**—A ballot that has been cast but shows no legally valid selection in a given race or referendum.

**UNIVERSE**—The group of voters that you are targeting for various mail or grassroots activities when pulling a list from the voter file.

**VOLUNTEER DEPUTY VOTER REGISTRAR**—A Volunteer Deputy Voter Registrar is a person officially authorized to register people to vote and to deliver signed applications to the County Voter Registration office. A Volunteer Deputy Registrar may never have been convicted of a felony and may work only in the county and only for the year in which he or she is sworn.

**72-HOUR TASK FORCE**—A program created after Bush vs. Gore, aimed at increasing voter contact during the final 72-hours of the campaign to turn out Republican voters. The term is used in Texas to describe the massive GOTV mobilization of our identified supporters during the two weeks of early voting in addition to the final 72-hours. An effective 72-hour program should be the most intense period of the campaign for grassroots activities and should continue right up until the polls close on Election Day.

