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2020 PRECINCT CAUCUSES

Precinct Caucuses

What to Know

League of Women Voters of Minnesota

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

It does not support or oppose political parties or candidates.

We do, however, educate the public on how to be part of the political process and civic engagement.

What is a precinct caucus?

Precinct caucuses are local meetings by political parties. They are not run by the government, but by the parties and are considered party activities.

The caucus is the first in a series of meetings where parties may endorse candidates, select delegates, and set goals and values (called party platforms).

Each political party runs their caucus meetings differently. Check directly with a political party to answer specific questions about how they are run.

When and where are precinct caucuses?

Tuesday, February 25, 2020

Caucuses begin at 7 p.m.

You can find precinct caucus locations by using the Precinct Finder tool at www.mnvotes.org.

You can also contact a political party directly to ask for your precinct caucus location.



What are the major political parties in Minnesota?

The **major** political parties of Minnesota in alphabetical order are:

- [Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party](#)
- [Grassroots-Legalize Cannabis Party](#)
- [Legal Marijuana Now Party](#)
- [Republican Party of Minnesota](#)

“Major political party” is defined by [Minnesota Statute 200.02, subdivision 7](#).

What are the minor political parties in Minnesota?

The **minor** political parties of Minnesota in alphabetical order are:

- [Green Party of Minnesota](#)
- [Independence Party of Minnesota](#)
- [Libertarian Party of Minnesota](#)

“Minor political party” is defined by [Minnesota Statute 200.02, subdivision 23](#).

Major Parties vs. Minor Parties

Major parties are required to follow certain rules regarding precinct caucuses that are set by law.

However, there are very few rules set by the law. Most caucus activity is dictated by the party's own rules.

Minor parties might not have precinct caucuses at all.

Who may participate?

Anyone may attend to observe.

To participate in the caucus, you must be eligible to vote in the November 2020 election and live in the precinct.

This means that people who are 17 on caucus night, but will turn 18 before the November election, may participate in the precinct caucuses.

Do I need to be a registered member of the party?

No. Minnesota does not have party registration.

However, to participate, you must agree with the principles of the party as stated in the party's constitution.

Ask yourself: Do you believe in the basic principles of the party?

If yes, then you can participate in that party's caucus!



What happens at a precinct caucus?

Participants **choose volunteer leaders** who will organize political activities in the precinct. This could include maintaining contact lists, holding political meetings, and helping with campaign efforts.

What else happens at a precinct caucus?

Participants **discuss issues and ideas**. Individuals can present an issue or idea for the party to support, called a **resolution**. If they convince other attendees to support their resolution, it will be taken to the next political convention. Eventually, that resolution could become part of the official party platform.

What else happens at a precinct caucus?

Participants **choose delegates** who will endorse candidates at future conventions. At future conventions, party delegates will endorse state and federal candidates, such as Governor and Lieutenant Governor or U.S. Congress.

Political parties have different ways of choosing delegates at the precinct level caucus -- contact your party for more information.

What *doesn't* happen at a precinct caucus?

Caucus participants no longer cast a ballot for or caucus for presidential nominations.

Instead, Minnesota now has a presidential nominating primary. The presidential nominating primary is the process by which voters cast a ballot for the candidate the voters believe should receive a national party's nomination for president.

To learn more about the presidential nominating primary, check our website (www.lwvmn.org) for our web page “Picking the President – Part 1” for more info.



What is a resolution?

Party platforms are made up of party positions on a wide range of issues.

Resolutions are position statements that can be adopted at the precinct level and advanced to become party positions at the state and national level.

Resolutions must be presented in writing.

How do I present a resolution?

Generally, resolutions have the following pieces:

- A statement of a problem or opportunity, including relevant facts and context.
- A rationale for adopting the position.
- A declaration of the position as a policy statement.

Important! Each party may have different format requirements for proposing resolutions, including specific forms that must be filled out. Contact your party for details.

An example of a resolution

- Whereas, purple people eater feeders represent 15% of the local economy in 13 MN counties; and
- Whereas, employers have been unable to recruit and train purple people eater feeders over the last 5 years; and
- Whereas, the state of Minnesota currently does not fund any programs for purple people eater feeder skill training;
- Therefore, be it resolved, that the Wooly Party of Minnesota supports adequate state funding to technical schools and employers for the training and hiring of purple people eater feeders.

What if I work or have school on caucus night?

You have the right to take time off work to be at a precinct caucus. You must give your employer ten days' written notice.

Public universities, community colleges, and public schools cannot hold classes or events after 6:00 p.m. on the evening of precinct caucuses.


What if I have accessibility needs?

Major political parties must attempt to provide you an interpreter by request, if you are deaf, deafblind, or hard-of-hearing.

If you are visually impaired, you also have the right to get written caucus materials ahead of time, by request.

What are the next steps after precinct caucuses?

Precinct Caucus – elect Unit delegates and local leadership; adopt resolutions that are considered at conventions




Basic Political Organizing Unit Convention – usually a senate or house district or county; endorse candidates for local elected office; elect unit officers; elect state/congressional delegates



Congressional District Convention – endorse U.S. House candidate; elect district officers; elect national delegates



State Convention – endorse candidates for statewide offices and U.S. Senate; elect party officers; adopt state party platform



National Convention – endorse presidential nominee; elect national party officers; adopt national party platform

Remember: Caucuses by the Parties

Unlike elections, which are run by local and state government election officials, precinct caucuses are run by political parties.

Every aspect of the precinct caucus, including site location, meeting agenda, how well the meeting is run, etc., is the responsibility of the party and its leaders.

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about your precinct caucus, please contact your party. Government officials likely cannot help you.



Contact Info for Major Parties

In alphabetical order:

- **Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party**

255 E Plato Blvd
Saint Paul, MN 55107
(651) 293-1200

- **Grassroots-Legalize Cannabis Party**

2114 E 35th St
Minneapolis, MN 55407
(651) 280-7922

- **Legal Marijuana Now Party**

1835 Englewood Ave
Saint Paul, MN 55104
(651) 266-3827



Contact Info for Minor Parties

In alphabetical order:

- **Green Party of Minnesota**
4200 Cedar Ave S, Suite 8
Minneapolis, MN 55407
(651) 288-2820
- **Independence Party of Minnesota**
P.O. Box 40495
Saint Paul, MN 55104
(651) 998-9156
- **Libertarian Party of Minnesota**
1710 Douglas Drive N, Ste 225U
Golden Valley, MN 55422
(612) 440-1776



Contact Info for League of Women Voters of Minnesota

546 Rice Street, Suite 200
St. Paul, MN 55103

(651) 224-5445

info@lwvmn.org

www.lwvmn.org

