

Shelby County Democratic Party Reorganization Convention Rules

RULE 1 – Authority and Purpose

These rules are adopted under the Bylaws of the Shelby County Democratic Party and the Tennessee Democratic Party for the fair and orderly conduct of the Reorganization Convention.

RULE 2 – Convention Date, Location, and Quorum

The Convention shall convene on March 29, 2025, at Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church, 491 E. McLemore Avenue, Memphis, TN 38106. A quorum shall consist of 26 participants or 13 from County Commission Districts, whichever is greater.

RULE 3 – Convention Leadership

The Chair shall appoint a Convention Chair who shall preside over the election for Chair and serve as Parliamentarian. The Chair shall appoint a Sergeant-at-Arms to maintain order, a Timekeeper to manage debate and nomination timing, and necessary committees, including Credentials, Rules, and Bylaws.

RULE 4 – Eligibility and Credentialing

All participants must be bona fide Democrats. Participants who have voted in republican primaries in the past four years may be disqualified. Participants must be registered voters in Shelby County. They must also sign an affirmation of party loyalty. Valid identification and proof of residency are required. Registration opens at 9:00 AM and closes at 10:15 AM. The Credentials Committee shall verify the Pledges of Support of all attendees, resolve eligibility challenges, and settle grievances. Proxy voting is prohibited. All votes shall be public and shall not be by secret ballot.

RULE 5 – Convention Entry and Security

Doors shall be closed for the Convention at 10:15 AM. No one shall be admitted after that time except those in line for credentialing. Once voting on a motion or nomination begins, no one may enter until the vote concludes. A Sergeant-at-Arms Committee will maintain order and enforce decorum.

RULE 6 – Participation and Conduct

Only credentialed participants can make motions, ask questions, debate, and vote. Participants must give their names before being recognized. No member may speak a second time on a motion until all others have spoken, and no participant may be recognized more than three times on a motion. Disruptive conduct, personal attacks, or slander are prohibited and will result in expulsion from the convention.

Shelby County Democratic Party

Reorganization Convention Rules

RULE 7 – Order of Business

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Welcome and Introductions
4. Statement of Purpose
5. Introduction of Temporary Officers
6. Adoption of By-laws
7. Adopt the Report of the Credentials Committee
8. Adoption of Convention Rules
9. Nominations and Elections
 - a. Nominations and Elections for Executive Committee and Grass Roots District Council (in Caucuses).
 - b. Nominations and Elections for Chairperson (Executive Committee and Grass Roots Council)
 - c. Nominations and elections for Officers (Executive Committee and Grass Roots Council)
 - d. Officers are Sworn In & Take Oath of Office
10. Adjournment

RULE 8 – Nominations and Elections

Offices shall be elected in the following order: Chair, 1st Vice Chair, 2nd Vice Chair, Recording Secretary, and Corresponding Secretary. Nominations shall be made from the floor and must be seconded, except in cases of self-nomination. All nominees must be present or have provided prior written consent. Speeches for nominations are limited to 1 minute, seconding to 30 seconds, and candidate remarks to 2 minutes. Debate is limited to 3 speakers per side (1 minute each).

A participant who is not part of the executive committee may be elected Chair. However, all other officers must be members of the executive committee. The Executive Committee and the Grass Roots District Council shall be voting participants for chair and other officers. The Chair will appoint the Treasurer with the approval of the Executive Committee.

RULE 9 – Voting Procedures

Each credentialed participant shall cast one vote in person. Voting shall be conducted and acknowledged by voice, raised hand, standing vote, or roll call if requested. A simple majority is required. In the event of a tie, a runoff vote will be held. The Convention Chair will announce the final vote totals after each vote.

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Rule 10 - Caucus Rules

- a. The Convention will break into caucuses for each of the 13 county commission districts to elect two Executive Committee members, one male, and one female, and several members of the Grass Roots Council, the number of which is determined by the number of voters who cast ballots in the most recent democratic primary for governor in each district.
- b. The convention's presiding officer will appoint the Caucus Chair for each district. The chair will be responsible for convening and conducting the Caucus.
- c. The delegates for each caucus shall elect a caucus secretary, who shall be responsible for recording the minutes of the caucus and tallying the elections. The Secretary will be eligible to be nominated to the Executive Committee or Grass Roots Council for that district but will defer to the Caucus Chair to record the results of any election in which the Secretary participates.
- d. The Caucus Chair shall conduct the elections for the two Executive Committee members and the Grass Roots Council members from that district with separate elections and gender equity, alternating by sex. The Caucus Chair shall allow any person nominated for a position to make a brief statement on their behalf in addition to a short statement by the nominator of that person. After nominations cease, the ballot is closed, and the election shall commence. A majority (over 50%) shall prevail in each election.
- e. If a majority is not reached, the lowest vote-getter is dropped from the next round of voting until a majority is reached. If there is a tie, voting will continue for three more rounds, but if there is still a tie, the winner will be decided by a coin toss.
- f. If the number of members of the caucus willing to serve on the Democratic Grassroots Council does not exceed the number of seats available, all are eligible for selection to that Council without gender restrictions, and the caucus delegates can waive separate elections.
- g. Newly elected Executive Committee members must sign an Oath of Office form before leaving the caucus.

RULE 11 – Parliamentary Procedure

The Convention shall be conducted under Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised, unless modified by these rules. If a parliamentary inquiry arises during the election of the Chair, the Bylaws Chair will preside over the inquiry.

RULE 12 – Timekeeping

A Timekeeper shall be appointed to enforce speaking time limits during nominations, debates, and resolutions.

RULE 13 – Grievances

Grievances concerning the process or conduct of the Convention must be submitted in writing to the Rules Committee Chair before adjournment. The Rules Committee will issue a good-faith determination and may refer unresolved matters to the Tennessee Democratic Party for final resolution.

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RULE 14 – Oath of Office and Certification

All elected officers and Executive Committee members shall take the oath of office. The oath and the Credential and Pledge of Support form shall be recorded and submitted to the Tennessee Democratic Party on the same day. A newly elected Executive Committee meeting may follow the Convention without further notice.

Certification

Prepared and submitted by the Rules Committee of the Shelby County Democratic Party on March 29, 2025.

Chair, Rules Committee: _____

Chair, Shelby County Democratic Party: _____