

## Clubs and Caucuses

### 1. Maryland State Democratic Party Policies<sup>1</sup>

#### Democratic Clubs: Charter and Registration Process

1. Any Democratic club shall have the option of participating in the chartering process. It is not a mandatory policy.
2. Any Democratic club electing not to participate in the chartering process is encouraged to register with [the] Maryland Democratic Party.
3. The chartering process shall be as follows:
  - a. The club shall submit to the Clubs Committee or to its local Central Committee the following information:
    - i. Name of Club;
    - ii. Address of Club;
    - iii. County of Club;
    - iv. Election district(s) covered by Club:
      - A. Congressional,
      - B. Legislative,
      - C. Local (e.g., council, school board, etc.),
      - D. Election (e.g., ward, precinct, etc.);
    - v. Meeting date;
    - vi. Meeting location;
    - vii. Annual events;
    - viii. Date of annual election;
    - ix. Name, address, telephone numbers for:
      - A. President,
      - B. Vice-president,
      - C. Secretary,
      - D. Treasurer;
    - x. Copies of the following documents:
      - A. Constitution,
      - B. By-Laws,
      - C. Newsletter,
        1. Publication date.
  - b. The Club's Constitution and/or By Laws shall not violate the Charter of the Democratic National Committee or the Constitution and By-Laws of the

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<sup>1</sup> See also, article V(3) of the Maryland Democratic Party By-Laws.

Maryland Democratic Party and must contain the following provisions (or provisions of similar effect):

- i. “Endorsements: In any partisan race, the Club shall only endorse candidates of the Democratic party. Endorsements of other partisan or independent candidates are prohibited. This prohibition shall not prevent the Club’s endorsement of candidates in non-partisan races (e.g., school board, judicial, etc.)”
    - ii. “Membership: The membership of this Club shall be limited to those individuals who have registered to vote in the Democratic party excepting therefrom those individuals who have declared themselves as young Democrats, i.e., they are too young to register to vote.”
    - iii. “Purpose: This Club is committed to furthering the principles of the Democratic party and to electing its candidates in general elections.”
  - c. The Club shall submit, together with the information referred to in paragraph 3a, an application fee of Ten Dollars (\$10.00), said sum representing the annual chartering fee for clubs. This fee shall be paid to the Maryland Democratic Party and maintained in a separate account or ledger column dedicated to Club activities. The annual fee shall be due on or before, January 1 of each year.
4. As it is the intention of the Maryland Democratic Party to foster a policy of inclusion within the Party, charter applications shall be approved upon submission of all of the required information and fees. The Clubs Committee or a local Central Committee may deny a Club application; however, it must do so by a majority vote at a public meeting with at least ten days prior notice to all parties concerned. In any case, the denial shall take place within ninety (90) days of submission. Any decision regarding the approval or denial of a Club charter may be appealed to the Executive Committee of the Maryland Democratic Party and shall be heard in accordance with the rules of the Maryland Democratic Party.
5. Upon approval of a Club’s charter, it shall be entitled to the following services from the Maryland Democratic Party, as well as such other services as may become available from time to time:
- a. a copy of the National Party platform;
  - b. a copy of such training manuals, or other materials, as are available from time to time from the DNC, the DSCC, the DCCC or any other party source;
  - c. access, through the Party headquarters, the Party’s legal counsel on party matters (at cost, if any);
  - d. access, through the Party headquarters, to the Party’s staff for assistance and counsel;
  - e. best available prices for lists, voter files, etc.;

- f. placement on the Faxline (at cost, if any);
- g. special acknowledgments;
- h. the use of the byline: “an officially chartered club of the Maryland Democratic Party”.
- i. an annual charter.

6. The registration process shall be as follows:

- i. Name of Club;
  - ii. Address of Club;
  - iii. County of Club;
  - iv. Election district(s) covered by Club:
    - A. Congressional,
    - B. Legislative,
    - C. Local (e.g., council, school board, etc.),
    - D. Election (e.g., ward, precinct, etc.);
  - v. Meeting date;
  - vi. Meeting location;
  - vii. Annual events;
  - viii. Date of annual election;
  - ix. Name, address, telephone numbers for:
    - A. President,
    - B. Vice-president,
    - C. Secretary,
    - D. Treasurer;
  - x. Copies of the following documents:
    - A. Constitution,
    - B. By-Laws,
    - C. Newsletter,
      - 1. Publication date.
- b. The Club’s Constitution and/or By Laws shall not violate the Charter of the Democratic National Committee or the Constitution and By-Laws of the Maryland Democratic Party and must contain the following provision (or provisions of similar effect):
- i. “Endorsements: In any partisan race, the Club shall only endorse candidates of the Democratic party. Endorsements of other partisan or independent candidates are prohibited. This prohibition shall not prevent the Club’s endorsement of candidates in non-partisan races (e.g., school board, judicial, etc.)”
- c. The Club shall submit, together with the information referred to in paragraph 6a, an application fee of Ten Dollars (\$10.00), said sum representing the annual registering fee for clubs. This fee shall be paid to the Maryland

Democratic Party and maintained in a separate account or ledger column dedicated to Club activities. The annual fee shall be due on, or before, January 1 of each year.

7. As it is the intention of the Maryland Democratic Party to foster a policy of inclusion within the Party, registrations shall be approved upon submission of all of the required information and fees. The Clubs Committee or a local Central Committee may deny a Club registration; however, it must do so by a majority vote at a public meeting with at least ten days prior notice to all parties concerned. In any case, the denial shall take place within ninety (90) days of submission. Any decision regarding the approval or denial of a Club charter may be appealed to the Executive Committee of the Maryland Democratic Party and shall be heard in accordance with the rules of the Maryland Democratic Party.
8. Upon registration of a Club, it shall be entitled to the following services from the Maryland Democratic Party, as well as such other services as may become available from time to time:
  - a. a copy of the National Party platform;
  - b. access, through the Party headquarters, to the Party's staff for assistance and counsel;
  - c. best available prices for lists, voter files, etc.;
  - d. placement on the Faxline (at cost, if any);
  - e. annual certificate of registration.
9. The Clubs Committee or the local Central Committee may revoke a Club's charter or registration upon a finding that the Club has violated the Charter of the Democratic National Committee or the Constitution and By-Laws of the Maryland Democratic Party. Such a revocation or recession must be done by a majority vote at a public meeting with at least ten days prior notice to all parties concerned. Any decision regarding the revocation or recession of a Club charter or registration may be appealed to the Executive Committee of the Maryland Democratic Party and shall be heard in accordance with the rules of the Maryland Democratic Party.
10. (DISCLAIMER SECTION; to be completed.)
11. This policy shall become effective immediately upon its adoption by the Executive Committee of the Maryland Democratic Party.

Adopted by the Executive Committee of the Maryland Democratic Party, July 17, 1993;  
amended by the Maryland State Democratic Central Committee, October 18, 1997<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The 1997 amendment changed the deadline for renewals in sections 4(c) and 6(c) from the anniversary of the original charter to January 1 of each year.

## **2. Montgomery County Democratic Party Policies**

### **Chartering Democratic Clubs and Caucuses**

#### **1. Requirements**

To be chartered, and to remain chartered, an organization must

1. Have its membership (regardless of class of membership or rights of membership) consist only of people who are either
  1. registered Democrats; or
  2. people too young to be registered voters, but who identify themselves as Democrats
2. not prohibit any otherwise qualified person from joining the organization (or remaining as a member of the organization) on account of the person's race, religion, gender, place of birth, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or physical limitation(s).
3. mail to the Secretary of the Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee a copy of all of the organization's State Board of Elections and Federal Elections Commission filings on the same day that those filings are mailed to (or filed with) the Board or Commission, respectively.
4. provide the Secretary with a copy of any amendments to the organization's charter, constitution, by-laws, or other governing documents, within thirty days of the adoption of the amendment.
5. provide the Secretary with a copy of all minutes, newsletters, and similar publications within thirty days of the time that they are distributed within the organization.

#### **2. Endorsements**

In any partisan race, a chartered organization may only endorse candidates of the Democratic party. This prohibition shall not prevent the organization's endorsement of candidates (who are registered Democrats) in non-partisan races (e.g., school board, judicial, etc.).

#### **3. Granting Charters**

An organization that is not currently chartered, but which meets the requirements for chartering, may be chartered with the approval of the Central Committee. The Rules Committee will review all proposed charters before they are submitted to the full Central Committee for approval. If the Central Committee, in its judgment, determines that the granting of a particular charter would be offensive to the basic principles of the Democratic Party, the Central Committee may refuse to grant such a charter.

#### **4. Revoking Charters**

If a complaint is received by the Central Committee that a chartered organization is not conforming to the requirements for being a chartered organization (or is acting in a manner offensive to the basic principles of the Democratic Party), the Central Committee will refer the matter to a committee. The committee will

notify the organization that a complaint has been filed against it (specifying what rule has been allegedly violated), investigate the matter, and make recommendations to the Central Committee. If the Central Committee determines that a chartered organization is not conforming to the requirements for being a chartered organization or is acting in a manner offensive to the basic principles of the Democratic Party, the Central Committee may revoke the charter of that organization. Before the Central Committee revokes the charter of an organization, the organization must be given at least twenty days notice of the meeting and the right to state its case before the Central Committee.

**5. Renewals**

1. The Secretary (in consultation with the members of the Central Committee) will draft a charter renewal form and mail it to the current address (on file with the Central Committee) of each organization, between November 15 and December 1 each year. The charter of any currently chartered organization that

files its renewal form by February 1, will be automatically renewed. If an organization does not file its renewal form by February 1, the organization's charter will automatically become inactive and the organization will not be entitled to the benefits provided in section 8 of this policy.

2. The Secretary will send a second copy of the charter renewal form to any organization that failed to file the form by February 1. If an organization files the form with the Central Committee within 6 months of the February 1 deadline, the organization's charter will be automatically reinstated and the organization will be entitled to the benefits provided in section 8. If an organization fails to file a renewal form with the Central Committee by July 1, the organization will have to go through the same process as new

organizations

to get its charter reinstated.

**6. Reports to the County Central Committee**

At the request of the County Central Committee, a chartered organization will provide the Central Committee with a copy of the organization's current constitution, by-laws, and other governing documents.

**7. Reports to the State Central Committee**

Between February 1 and February 15 of each year, the Secretary will provide the Maryland State Democratic Central Committee with a list of all organizations currently chartered by the County Central Committee (including a mailing address for each organization). In the event that the county charter of an organization also currently chartered by the state is revoked or is not renewed, the Secretary will notify the State Central Committee and request (on behalf of the County Central Committee) that the organization's state charter be withdrawn or suspended.

## 8. Benefits of Chartered Organizations

Each organization chartered by the Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee is entitled to the following benefits (at the organization's request). Organizations not chartered by the Central Committee will not be entitled to these benefits.

1. May have literature displayed in the Democratic Party tent at the Montgomery County Fair.
2. May use the rooms at County Party Headquarters for meetings at no charge, on a first come, first served basis.
3. May use the Central Committee's bulk rate postage permit, provided that the organization pays the Central Committee all postage costs in advance of using the permit.
4. Club events may be included at no charge in the schedule of events in the *Montgomery Democrat*.
5. Eligible to purchase space on the MCDCC web site at the same rate as Democratic incumbents and candidates.
6. Free link to organization's web site from MCDCC site.
7. Club events may be included at no charge in the schedule of events on the MCDCC web site.
8. Listing in the Precinct Directory.

Adopted by the Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee, April 7, 1998<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> This superseded the policies adopted by the Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee on October 6, 1971, December 17, 1975, and July 27, 1977.

The October 6, 1971 Guidelines for Continuing Assistance to Democratic Clubs stated that

- Typing must be done by the club, however, our stencils, typewriters and facilities are available for use by club members.
- Projects involving up to 4 reams may be run through our machinery. No major jobs (over 2000 sheets) can be handled.
- Facilities will be made available to Montgomery County groups only, and to the Maryland Democratic State Central Committee.
- One flyer will be allowed to piggy-back major Central Committee mailings when feasible. This one flyer may include many different notices.
- Work will be done during our regular office hours only.
- All work must be scheduled with the Office Manager at least 3-4 days in advance and will be scheduled at the convenience of the headquarters.
- Work will be realistically priced to allow for both depreciation of machinery and staff time involved.

The December 17, 1975 policy provided that the Central Committee “will continue to piggy-back flyers for club functions, but all clubs must be responsible for mailing, postage, etc., of newsletters.”

The July 27, 1977 Guidelines for Democratic Clubs Using Central Committee Facilities and Services provided that:

1. A copy of the club by-laws and a current list of officers should be on file at the Central Committee Headquarters.
2. The by-laws of the club should not violate the rules of the National Democratic Charter which governs the activities of the MCDCC, particularly those rules that apply to openness to

and amended by the Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee, January 12, 1999<sup>4</sup>

Open and free elections are one of the basic principles of the Democratic Party.

For an election to be open and free, all candidates for office must have equal and concurrent access to such fundamental information as who is eligible to vote in the election (including all contact information that the organization possesses).

If a member of a Democratic organization in Montgomery County, who is a candidate (or who intends to become a candidate) for office in that organization's next election so requests, the Chair of the Central Committee shall appoint a mediator to assist in making sure that the organization's elections are held in an open and free manner.

In appointing a mediator, the Chair is to strive to appoint a person who (1) is experienced with parliamentary procedure and the conduct of elections and (2) is acceptable to all candidates in the organization's election. The mediator may be (but is not required to be) a member of the Central Committee and generally should not be a member of the organization. Whenever the Chair of the Central Committee appoints a mediator, the Chair is to promptly notify the President of the organization and urge the organization to make use of the mediator.

At the request of the mediator, the organization will provide the mediator with a list of all persons (including contact information) who are eligible to vote in the election. The mediator will treat such list as confidential, except that the mediator may provide candidates running for office within the organization with a copy of the list.

Adopted by the Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee, January 12, 1999

Any member in good standing of a high school Democratic club in Montgomery County [is entitled to] receive a free subscription to *The Montgomery Democrat* while in high school.

Adopted by the Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee, July 10, 2001

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all "who desire to support the Party and who wish to be known as Democrats." This, of course, does not restrict clubs from having age, district, or other geographical requirements for membership. Nor should the club by-laws violate the by-laws of the MCDCC or its regulations.

3. The facilities, funds, or name of a Democratic club will not be used in support of any non-Democratic candidate, except judges, and Central Committee services will be suspended for any club if an officer of that club publicly supports any non-Democratic candidate except a judge or a School Board candidate.
4. No services will be afforded Democratic clubs that violate their own by-laws or the federal or state election laws.
5. Services will be rendered to any club declared eligible by a vote of the Central Committee.
6. Central Committee supporting services will not be rendered for any mailing which contains an endorsement of any primary candidate.

<sup>4</sup> The January 12, 1999 amendment amended §§ 5 and 7 by replacing "January" with "February".

### 3. Organizations Chartered by the Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee

Organization	Date Chartered
African American Democratic Club of Montgomery County	May 14, 2002
Bethesda-Chevy Chase Democratic Breakfast Club	before 1995
Central County Democratic Club	September 14, 1993
Coalition of Asian Pacific American Democrats of Maryland	December 14, 1999
Coalition of High School Democrats	September 12, 2000
District 14 Democratic Club	before 1995
District 15 Democratic Caucus	June 8, 2004
District 15 Democratic Club	December 9, 1997
District 16 Democratic Caucus	October 9, 2001
District 17 Democratic Club <sup>5</sup>	September 14, 1999
District 18 Democratic Caucus	September 14, 1999
District 19 Democratic Club	before 1995
District 20 Democratic Caucus	October 9, 2001
District 39 Democratic Caucus	May 11, 1999
District 39 Democratic Club	December 14, 2004
Germantown Democratic Club	July 21, 1993
Greater Silver Spring Democratic Club	March 9, 2004
Hispanic Democratic Club	November 14, 1995 <sup>6</sup>
Leisure World Democratic Club	1973
Maryland Deaf and Hard of Hearing Democratic Club	October 9, 2001
Montgomery County Green Democrats	May 16, 1990
Montgomery County New Democrats	December 10, 1996
Montgomery County Young Democrats	August 8, 1995
Northern Montgomery Women's Democratic Club	before 1995
Paint Branch High School Young Democrats	August 8, 1995
Rockville High School College Democrats	March 14, 1995
Rockville/Mid-County Democratic Breakfast Club	before 1995
Seneca Potomac Democratic Club	before 1995
Stonewall Democratic Club	May 12, 1998
20 <sup>th</sup> District Democratic Breakfast Club	before 1995
Women's Suburban Democratic Club	September 12, 2000

#### Chartered Organizations that have disbanded

Organization	Date Chartered	Date Disbanded
Montgomery County Democratic Action Group (MCDAC)	before 1995	c. January 2000
Montgomery County Lawyers Club	January 14, 1993	c. 1998

<sup>5</sup> Originally the District 17 Democratic Caucus.

<sup>6</sup> Previously chartered in 1985.