

Beginner's Precinct Caucus Worksheet

PRECINCT CAUCUS LAW

1. Must start at 7:00 PM.
2. Must keep precinct caucus open for at least one hour (to at least 8:00 pm).
3. Must hold the precinct caucus at the place designated on the **Call** (*notice of location of precinct caucuses as sent to County Auditor and the notice to that parties' public of location of their precinct caucus, often done with a local newspaper*).
4. All voting shall be by secret ballot. No option to raise hands or by voice. Minnesota law requires a secret ballot.
5. Temporary officers are appointed by the parties' structure to convene that precinct caucuses. Once the precinct caucus starts, the attendees have the right to choose their own precinct officers to run the precinct caucus and/or to be elected for the next 2 years as the precinct chair. Each political party may have specific rules that apply to this process once the law is fulfilled.
6. Nominations for election of permanent officers of the precinct and delegates shall remain open for at least the first 15 minutes before voting. The nominations can remain open longer.
7. Election of delegates and alternates can begin after convening (starting) the caucus for at least 30 minutes (approximately 7:30 pm), but must begin within one hour of convening a caucus (approximately 8:00 pm).
8. There is no law that requires a set time to finish the precinct caucuses. *NOTE: In many precinct caucuses locations, all business is completed by 8:00 pm. It is important to come early for your precinct caucuses. A great time to meet each other and become familiar with the location and materials before the precinct caucuses meeting starts.*
9. Gubernatorial Preference Ballot (straw poll) must be held during the first hour.

KEYS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PRECINCT CAUCUS NIGHT

1. Arrive early to find the actual room, get familiar with other people attending and be able to review materials available.
2. Remember: everyone has the right to be heard. The caucus as a group decides what and how things will happen in accordance with the requirements of the law, their party rules and Robert's Rules of Order.
3. Be ready to lead or volunteer to be a delegate or alternate.
4. Don't be afraid to ask other potential delegates or alternates to state which candidate(s) they support.
5. Do not leave until the entire caucus is completed and adjourned!

SHORTENED AGENDA

1. Welcome and salute to the flag is common.
2. Introductions are common.
3. Election of a chairperson (usually the convener) and a secretary who serve for that night only. Two year Precinct Chair or other officers are elected later during this meeting.
4. Required of all attendees to sign the 2008 Precinct Caucus forms as required by their political party.
5. Opportunity to sign up as an election judge for your party.
6. Elect designated number of delegates and alternates (not before 7:30 pm) to BPOU conventions.
7. Participate in the Presidential Preference Ballot for the candidate of your choice.
8. Candidate and party materials handed out. Attendees can bring materials also.
9. Resolutions can be submitted for debate and a vote.
10. Official local party information is distributed.
11. Adjournment as early as 8:00 pm or later in many areas.
12. Convener and secretary usually must sign all documents to be reported to higher units of the party and are responsible to get all required materials to the high unit as required.

CAUCUS PREPARATION

1. Read this material and bring it with you to help remember what will happen.
2. • Go to www.sos.state.mn.us to get your GOP, DFL or Independence Party precinct caucus locations OR
3. • Go to www.mngop.com for Republican precinct caucus information
4. • Go to www.dfl.org for DFL precinct caucus information
5. • Go to www.mnip.org for Independence Party Precinct Caucus Information.
6. In addition, all major political parties are required to give precinct caucus location information to each county auditor office. The County office is required by state law to take the information provided by the political parties and make it available to the public. Call your county auditor office to find out your precinct and political party location for the 2008 precinct caucus. Your newspaper frequently publishes this info as provided by parties.

