



The STAFFORD COUNTY DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE BYLAWS  
*As amended in 1996, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2014, 2016, and 2018*

ARTICLE I. NAME, AUTHORITY, and PURPOSE

- A. This Committee shall be known as THE STAFFORD COUNTY DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE (SDC).
- B. This Committee was established by the authority of the Virginia Democratic Party Plan. It is the official responsibility of the Committee to initiate and manage the direction of the business matters of the Democratic Party in Stafford County, Virginia.
- C. It is the mission of the Committee to encourage the participation of all Stafford County residents in choosing Democratic Party candidates for elected positions in county, state, and national office. The Committee is dedicated to the preservation of all rights enumerated in ARTICLE I of the Constitution of Virginia. The Committee endorses the principles of the Democratic Party of the United States of America and the Democratic Party of Virginia.

ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP

- A. Democrats who are registered voters and who have joined the SDC by payment of the required filing fee are the official members of the Committee (The funding fee may be waived upon request due to hardship). Members must reside in Stafford County, Virginia for full-voting status of the Committee and to be elected to a Committee office. Any official elected as a Democrat representing Stafford County shall be an ex officio member of the Committee, if not already a voting member.
- B. Absence of a member from three (3) consecutive called Committee meetings may forfeit the right of membership unless notification has been given to the Chair for a reasonable cause of absence.
- C. When the SDC requires reorganization, the existing Committee members, or the Executive Board, shall determine by resolution, a well-advertised time, place, and manner for the Democratic voters of Stafford County, Virginia to file declarations of candidacy for Committee membership.
- D. Persons who wish to become or remain a member of the SDC must be a registered voter and sign a declaration for election to the Committee to be accompanied by a thirty-five dollar (\$35.00) annual filing fee (The funding fee may be waived upon request due to hardship).

- E. District and precinct committees shall be composed of the elected members of the SDC and must reside in the precinct or election district which they will represent. The Committee members who reside in the designated precinct or election district will elect a Captain for that jurisdiction to coordinate Democratic Party activities as determined by a full SDC.
- F. “Associate Members”. These members shall not be required to be residents of Stafford County or be registered to vote in Stafford County. The purpose of this membership is to encourage young democrats, non-residents of Stafford County and other persons who do not qualify for full membership in accordance with these bylaws, to participate in the activities of the SDC. These Associate Members shall be voted upon for membership by the full Committee, but shall not have voting rights on Committee matters.

### ARTICLE III. OFFICERS

- A. At its re-organizational meeting or the meeting following the re-organizational meeting, the Committee shall elect the following officers: Chair, Senior Vice-Chair, two (2) Vice Chairs, Secretary, Treasurer, Parliamentarian, and Sergeant-at-Arms. Such election shall be by secret ballot except when a candidate is unopposed.
- B. Officers shall be elected for a two (2) year term following the re-organizational meeting for each elections of officers every two (2) years thereafter. Vacancies in any of the offices shall be filled by election at the next regular meeting of the committee, providing notice is given to the membership ten (10) days in advance. When a vacancy occurs in the seat of the Chair during the three (3) months prior to the general election, the Senior Vice-Chair shall assume the seat until the next general election of officers.
- C. In keeping with the spirit of the Democratic Party and the policies of the State and National Democratic Parties, every effort shall be made to see that minorities are elected officers.

### ARTICLE IV. DISTRICT COMMITTEES

District and precinct committees shall be composed of the elected members of the SDC and must reside in the designated precinct or election district which they will represent. The Committee members who reside in the designated precinct or election district will elect a Captain for that jurisdiction to coordinate Democratic Party activities as determined by the full SDC.

### ARTICLE V. EXECUTIVE BOARD

- A. The Executive Board distinguishes the separation of those members who are elected officers of the SDC from the full membership.
- B. The members of the SDC who have been elected as officers of the Committee shall be known as the Executive Board, with the authority to conduct business in-between

regularly scheduled meetings of the Committee. Decisions of the Executive Board shall be presented to the Committee at the next regular meeting.

## ARTICLE VI. SUBCOMMITTEES

The Chair of the SDC shall appoint the following subcommittees:

**Finance (Budget)** – The Finance Committee in coordination with elected SDC officials and committee chairs is responsible for developing the annual budget for approval by the SDC. The Finance Committee shall recommend changes to the budget when required and make said changes after approval by the SDC. The Finance Committee will monitor financial activities to ensure compliance with the approved budget.

**Issues** – To conduct research on local, state, and national issues of importance to the Committee’s mission and to Democratic candidates or office-holders; to provide the Committee membership, the citizens of Stafford County, and elected Democrats as necessary or requested, with timely and accurate factual information regarding such issues. To maintain a visible presence at public meetings, such as Board of Supervisors, School Board meetings, and speaking on issues pertinent to those meetings and of importance to the Committee’s mission. They will provide a regular stream of letters to the editor in local papers.

**Candidate Search and Support** – This subcommittee shall work to identify and recruit viable Democratic candidates for local office in Stafford County and provide, or arrange for the provision of, training for such candidates on seeking elected office. Once a candidate is selected as the official Democratic candidate for a particular office, this subcommittee shall serve as the central point of contact between that candidate and the Stafford County Democratic Committee and provide such support as the subcommittee believes necessary to ensure that candidate’s success.

**Membership** – To send out annual membership notices. To increase membership in and volunteer support for the Committee to the maximum extent feasible; to help members find roles within the Committee and to assist in ensuring full staffing for all standing committees.

**Precinct Operations** – To build and train a permanent network of committed Democratic volunteers sufficient to staff every precinct in Stafford County with one or more volunteers throughout each Election Day and to build a precinct-led system that understands and can service constituent issues and needs. To plan and implement training programs sufficient to provide Committee members with such training as is required to promote the election of Democrats to county, state, and federal office. It will be involved with canvassing, Voter ID, etc. Precinct Operations will work with the Technology Committee to ensure that all District Chairs and Precinct Representatives have been trained in the Voter Access Network (VAN) to the extent necessary (knowing what the VAN can provide and how to use printouts).

**Public Relations** – Shall assist in issuing policy statements and publicity about Committee

activities and Democratic conventions, caucuses and primaries and general or special elections. This committee also promotes the SDC at community events.

**Ways & Means** – To undertake all appropriate efforts to raise funds required for the operation of the SDC.

**Technology** – Shall have primary responsibility to keep the Committee up-to-date in useful technologies (including social media) and to maintain the Committee website. In addition the Technology Committee shall be responsible for the use and maintenance of the VAN.

**Outreach and Visibility** – Shall work to widen the public participation of Stafford residents, new voters, recently naturalized citizens people with reinstated voting rights, and minorities in the activities of the Party and the County Committee and to generate interest in Party and County Committee affairs. The committee may provide background information, review proposed resolutions and assist the County Committee in anticipating important issues in the field of human and civil rights.

**Bylaws** - The Bylaws Committee shall review and propose amendments to the Committee bylaws. It shall be chaired by the Parliamentarian. Changes to the Bylaws requires submittal of recommended changes no less than 10 days before committee meeting where the vote will occur.

Committee members are encouraged to volunteer to serve on one or more of these subcommittees.

## ARTICLE VII. MEETINGS

The SDC shall conduct monthly meetings unless the membership votes to change the time and place for special business concerns. Notice of regular and special Committee meetings are to be submitted to the membership at least seven (7) days in advance of the meeting. The presence of thirty percent (30%) of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

## ARTICLE VIII. RULES

Where not inconsistent with these By-Laws, or with the Virginia Democratic Party Plan, the most-recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the conduct of business of the Committee.

## ARTICLE IX. BYLAWS

These By-Laws may be amended at a regular meeting of the Committee by a majority vote. A one (1) month advance notice for the adoption of such changes must be given, after presentation, for Committee action.

## ARTICLE X. VIOLATIONS

No Committee member shall publicly support, endorse or be required to endorse, or assist any nominee opposed to a Democratic Party candidate. In the event any member undertakes such activity he or she automatically forfeits the right of membership in the Stafford County Democratic Committee in compliance with Article XI of these By-Laws.

## ARTICLE XI. REMOVAL

The Committee may vote to remove from office or participating membership any person whose performance of duties are detrimental to the function and principles of the SDC. Those charged with dereliction of performance must be notified by written notice of such pending action at least ten (10) days prior to the charge being heard by at least three (3) members of the Membership Committee. The recommendation of that committee is to be presented to the full SDC at the next regular Committee meeting for final action. The decision as rendered by the Committee may be appealed to the State Steering Committee.

## ARTICLE XI. FINANCE

At the re-organizational meeting, or the first meeting following reorganization, three (3) elected members who are not part of the present or immediate past Executive Board shall conduct an internal financial audit of the books of the Treasurer. A report in writing of their findings shall be presented to the membership at the next scheduled Committee meeting. Such internal audits will take place at the end of each term of office where the reports will be made a part of the minutes. The finances of the Committee will be in compliance with acceptable accounting procedures and established written policies.

## ARTICLE XII. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

- A. **Chair** – The Chair shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Committee. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Committee; serve as an ex-officio member of all sub-committees; appoint the Chair of all sub-committees; serve as the official spokesperson for the Committee and for the Democratic Party in Stafford County; delegate responsibility for management of Committee's affairs, as required; and to perform any other duties as required by the By-Laws of the Committee and the party Plan of the Democratic Party of Virginia.
- B. **Senior Vice-Chair** – The Senior Vice-Chair shall act in the Chair's absence and shall have all powers, duties and responsibilities provided for the Chair when so acting.
- C. **Vice-Chairs** – The Vice-Chairs shall perform such duties as assigned to them by the Chair
- D. **Treasurer** – The Treasurer shall maintain the financial records of the Committee; maintain and record all income and expenditures; prepare financial statements for each monthly meeting; and shall be responsible for all other financial matters of the Committee.
- E. **Secretary** – The Secretary shall keep the minutes of all meetings of the Committee and

shall have charge of such books and records as the Chair shall direct.

- F. **Parliamentarian** – The Parliamentarian shall advise the Chair as to the conduct of the business at all meetings of the Committee. The Parliamentarian shall serve as Chair of the Bylaws Committee.
- G. **Sergeant –at-Arms** – The Sergeant-at-Arms shall maintain order during the conduct of business at all meetings of the Committee