

KANSAS PRECINCT COMMITTEE HANDBOOK

What is a precinct? A precinct is the smallest political unit in the country. Each precinct responds to one polling place. Elections are won or lost in a precinct. Most importantly, it is your neighborhood. You know the people and the schools. Your hand is on the pulse of the precinct. You understand the assets and needs of your neighborhood and have a desire to improve it.

Never underestimate the power of a precinct leader! When you actively participate in the Republican Party at the precinct level, you help win elections and promote Republican values and ideals at the local, state and national levels.

The County Republican Party organization starts with the Precinct Committeeperson. These people utilize the County Party provided tools to organize and educate the voters in their precinct. It involves a minimum time commitment of a few hours a month every month (slightly more during a campaign) and helping on Election Day to Get-Out-The-Vote (GOTV).

The Party's basic organization, from local to state level is:

Precinct Volunteer/Neighborhood/Block Captain

Precinct Committeeperson

County Committee and County Chair

District Committee and District Chair

State Committee

State Executive Committee and State Chair

PRECINCT COMMITTEEPERSON JOB DESCRIPTION

A precinct committeeperson serves as the main communication between the Republican Party and current and future Republicans in a precinct. They connect people in the precinct to the Republican Party and the Party to the People.

You are responsible for filling the roles that follow, keeping in mind that it's okay to begin slowly. Your district or county chair is available for support. You are providing a wonderful service to your community. Have fun!

- Obtain the map and walking lists for your precinct from the County Party office.
- Familiarize yourself with your neighbors and the geography of your precinct.
- Get to know your Republican and Independent neighbors.
- Host a house party. Invite your neighbors to talk politics and issues concerning your precinct.
- Canvass the precinct using a walking list. Record changes in data on your lists (address, phone, candidate preferences, etc).

- Register new Republican voters!
- Canvass Republican households, making sure all eligible voters in the house are registered.
- Welcome new neighbors and register them to vote Republican.
- Contact members of groups you belong to. Register them!
- Canvass non-party-affiliated voters in your neighborhood; encourage them to re-register as Republicans.
- Participate in District/County Republican meetings, events, and activities including aiding your local Republican Party by staffing registration drives and tables, by supporting local candidates, and participating in local fundraisers.
- Be a visibly proud Republican—display yard signs, window signs, campaign buttons, bumper stickers.

Election Year Responsibilities

You will be called upon to do some of the following during a campaign:

- Reach out to all who want to volunteer and get them active.
- Distribute Party & candidate literature.
- Hold house parties for Republican candidates
- Promote Advance Ballot and Advance Voting among Republicans.
- Help the Party “chase” early ballots to ensure they are returned.
- Help ensure a strong Get-Out-The-Vote (GOTV) effort in the final four days of a campaign.
- Recommend Republicans in your precinct to work as Poll Workers

Qualifications

Any registered Republican is eligible to become a Precinct Committeeperson in the precinct in which he or she lives. All you need is heart and desire to roll up your sleeves to help achieve Republican victories.

One becomes a Republican Precinct Committeeperson by:

Appointment: If your precinct is vacant and you would like to be appointed, please notify the County Chairman. The County Chair will officially appoint you after verifying your voter registration & precinct.

Ballot Election: During the primary election of even years, Republicans in each precinct elect 1 committeeman and 1 committeewoman per precinct.

Note: If you do not file your nomination petition in time you can fill out a Write In Candidate form. Five votes are required to win.

All Precinct Committeepersons serve the same purpose: to elect Republicans at the local, state and national levels. In addition, there are a few highlights and primary responsibilities.

Elected Precinct Committeepersons elect qualified replacements for resigned state legislative seats and are responsible for filling candidate vacancies upon death or resignation of a candidate for the general election. **The total of all Precinct Committeepersons constitutes the County Committee of the Republican Party.**

Effective Canvassing

As a precinct committeeperson, **you know your constituency best.** Your neighbors and elected officials rely on you for information, advice and help in solving problems in your area.

Why is canvassing important? ...to solicit political capitol.

Door and phone canvassing is a valuable means for outreach, education and fundraising, for advocacy and non-profit organizations. Incorporating a canvass and effective database management support allows an organization to build a real grassroots membership and funding base

Canvassing is a valuable method for mobilizing members and creating visibility for legislative and issue campaigns. Mature canvass networks have refined strategies and techniques in petitioning, targeting, and voter registration.

The best way to accomplish this is to identify your neighbor's needs. A canvass is walking door-to-door or calling and getting to know the people in your precinct. Walking lists are available primarily through your County Chair and along with your precinct map, are an important tool in canvassing.

NEIGHBORHOOD/BLOCK CAPTAINS: BLOCK CAPTAINS

Captains are responsible for the two- or three-square blocks surrounding their home. They assist in voter registration when new people move to the neighborhood. They circulate petitions and work on Advance Ballots or GOTV campaigns.

Neighborhood/block captains are critical, especially in rural precincts and those with apartment buildings and gated communities.

Have interested volunteers fill out a Volunteer Card, and give all your completed Volunteer Cards to your County Chair. Ideally, as you find others in your precinct who desire to help Republicans, you can make them Neighborhood or Block Captains.

“Service” is the key word in neighborhood canvassing. The voters in your precinct will rely on you and the Republican Party for answers and solutions to their problems.

- Meet Everyone! Start a relationship.
- Let them know they are not alone. There are Republicans in the area who agree with them.
- Identify issues that are important to them. Share Republican principles and values.
- Make sure everyone in the house is registered to vote.
- GOTV= Get Out The Vote prior to elections.
- Recruit Volunteers.

- Educate on issues & candidates.

Let them know you're a Republican resource for them, and there are Republican activities they can take part in and candidates they can vote for who share their values.

Canvassing Tools and Tips

Be prepared when you canvass with:

- Precinct map
- Walking list
- Pencils and pens
- Informational literature (party or candidate)
- Voter registration forms
- Boundaries for elections
- Republican t-shirt, sticker or other for identification
- Something to carry your materials in

CANVASS TECHNIQUES

Walking—personal visits: **Face-to-face contact is the most effective way to meet People.** Exchange information and make an impression for the Republican Party and candidates.

Your walking list contains house-by-house information regarding registered voters, party affiliation, and whether or not they voted in the last few elections (including local elections). This will tell you who the registered Republicans in your precinct are— and which houses may not have any registered voters.

Discuss the issues that are important to them. You can get an idea of what those issues are by looking for the following for insight:

Bumper stickers or window decals: What issues are brought up? Do they indicate issue preferences? Do they indicate particular values?

Religious items: Do they have any religious items in view? What does the nature of the religious display communicate to you?

Family: What type of family do they have? For example, if they have small children, education and the future of our economy may be important. If they are an older couple, health care issues may be a priority for them.

Job: What does the person do for a living? What does their job choice indicate about their values and daily concerns?

Telephone Calls: If you cannot walk or prefer to call people, your walking list contains phone numbers. Calling is also a great way to break the ice and mobilize Republicans to get the Republican message out.

NO MATTER HOW YOU CANVASS YOUR PRECINCT, EVERYTHING YOU DO IS VALUABLE FOR THE REPUBLICAN PARTY!

Sample Phone Script

Hello, is _____ home? Hi, my name is _____ and I'm the Republican precinct committeeperson for the _____ precinct. I live in/near your neighborhood.

Option 1: I am calling to let you know that our County Republican Party is holding a meeting on (date) at (location and time). I will be there and I want to encourage you to attend also.

Option 2: Local Republicans are meeting to organize for future campaigns. I was hoping you could tell me about some issues important to you that need to be addressed.

Thanks for your time! Let me give you my phone number, in case I can answer any questions you may have in the future. It's _____. I hope to talk with you again soon! Good-bye.
Help Elect Republicans!

Volunteer Outreach

Many Precinct Committee tasks, especially during an election, are more manageable if you **recruit volunteers**. When getting volunteers, know exactly what you need. Think about the work to be done and the skills of the volunteers. Try and match them as much as possible. When calling previous volunteers, thank them for their past service to the Party before asking again.

Candidate Support

One of the precinct committeepersons most important jobs is campaigning for candidates. This is where the true grass roots efforts will make the greatest difference. Your role in a campaign will be led by the candidate or their team, such as their campaign manager or volunteer coordinator. They are executing the candidate's strategic field plan. The assistance you provide is critical to a candidate's campaign.

Campaigning: Simply put, **candidates cannot do everything that needs to get done to win an election**. This is where they rely on volunteers to be their surrogates: walking, calling, e-mailing and more. This is where the time you have taken as a Precinct Committeeperson to canvass your neighborhood in non-election times pays off for our candidates.

Most voters are aware of the major candidates, such as President or Governor, but may be less informed about the "down ballot" candidates running for offices such as state legislature, city

council, or school board. When people don't have information about these races, they tend not to vote in them at all. But YOU can change that!

As a Precinct Committeeperson, you can encourage more people to vote for your candidates by:

- Walking—This is still the best way to help candidates: Talking face to face to people in your precinct and leaving the candidate's literature. It is important for you to know basic information about candidates you're walking for, but it is important to let the candidates speak for themselves through their printed materials. If you are asked questions that are not covered in the literature, do not guess what the candidate's answer is. Write down the question and relay it to the party. The candidate will contact the voter directly to answer their question.
- Calling—If the calling is your preferred method of communication use it on behalf of candidates. Make sure when you present the message that the candidate wants to get across; ideally the candidates' campaign will prepare key points for you.

In races where most if not all the candidates are unknown, personal contact may be all it takes to win that person's vote and the votes of their friends. Most voters are thrilled to meet candidates for any office and house parties are a valuable way to make that happen.

- Fundraising—Campaigns are run on donations. You can help by hosting candidate coffees and other small events in which the candidate can deliver their message and request contributions.
- Social Media—LIKE the pages of the candidates you support. Like and share their posts! As you engage with their pages, their posts will show up in your friends' newsfeed.

When and where can signs be placed?

KSA 25-2711. Placement of political signs during election period. No city or county shall regulate or prohibit the placement of or the number of political signs on private property or the unpaved right-of-way for city streets or county roads on private property during the 45-day period prior to any election and the two day period following any such election. Cities and counties may regulate the size and a set-back distance for the placement of signs so as not to impede sight lines or sight distance for safety reasons.

History: L. 2015, ch. 85, § 15; July 1.KSA

Homeowners Associations and Political Signs

58-3820. Restrictive covenants; political yard signs; limitations.

On and after the effective date of this act, any provision of a restrictive covenant which prohibits the display of political yard signs, which are less than six square feet, during a period commencing 45 days before an election and ending two days after the election is hereby declared to be against public policy and such provision shall be void and unenforceable.

The provisions of this section shall apply to any restrictive covenant in existence on the effective date of this act. History: L. 2008, ch. 165, § 5; May 29.

Winning Elections

Today's winning campaigns require a strong focus on field efforts, including door-to-door canvassing, phone calls, and letters—all the things you will be doing as a Precinct Committeeperson!

Each county party, district party, club and Precinct Committeeperson must do their part for the overall campaign plan to work.

Any registered voter may vote in person before Election Day at early voting polling places across the state.

Early voting begins 20 days before every Primary Election, and 20 days before every General Election.

The County Election Clerk will designate and publicize particular polling places that function as early voting polling places. This information is available at each County website.

Early Voting in person is the same as voting on Election Day. You show up, sign the voter roll and vote. Early ballots begin being counted about one week BEFORE Election Day.

Another advantage of early voting is that your ballot can't be rejected for voting in the wrong precinct, as it could be on Election Day. Also, you do not need to plan in advance, just walk in and do it!

VOTE BY MAIL

Any registered voter can request to receive their ballot in the mail and can submit their ballot by mail. To request an advance ballot: [https:// myvoteinfo.voteks.org/](https://myvoteinfo.voteks.org/)

GET OUT THE VOTE (GOTV) GOTV

The final four days, 100% of our efforts are focused on ensuring that every likely supporter (who hasn't already voted) gets to the polls on Election Day. This involves an intensive door-knocking and phone-calling program that goes almost around the clock for until the polls close on Election Night.

The four-day GOTV push requires every minute Precinct Committeepersons can give! GOTV is a period of time involving hundreds of new and returning volunteers operating from many locations at once. It requires a lot of coordination. Precinct Committeepersons are critical to this effort.

In Summary:

A Precinct Committee Person is called on to:

EDUCATE: Invite all potential Republican Party activities from your precinct to strategize and outline tasks that need to be done. Coordinate your event with a local official, party leader or Republican Party event. Educate them about the Republican Party, our candidates and values. Make sure they receive training through the County or District Party.

MOTIVATE: Keep in touch with those in your precinct who have shown interest in getting involved. Regular communication with Republicans at this level uncovers many who have never become involved in the Party because no one has asked—until now. Make sure these potential activists understand the importance of their involvement. Invite them to District/County meetings, precinct walks and phone banks. Have them fill out a volunteer card, so they may begin receiving regular updates from the County Party, and be hooked into the volunteer network at the local level. **KEEP IN TOUCH!** Be innovative: communicate via e-mail, telephone tree, produce a precinct flyer, etc!

LEAD: Keep all block captains, volunteers and precinct workers pulling together, despite any bumps in the road. Keep your eye on the prize! Take responsibility, making sure all volunteers are invited to regular meetings, volunteer opportunities and special events in the District and/or County.

INSPIRE: Help activists see themselves as political experts in the community to whom others can turn for guidance. Precinct Committeepersons are the direct link between the Republican Party and the voter, and they wield immeasurable influence.

ORGANIZE: Start a precinct canvass—walking or phoning. Contact your District or County Chair for additional help, walking lists, literature, etc.