

# OAKLAND COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY

## BYLAWS

(Adopted 7/28/20; Ratified 6/14/22; as Amended through 2/13/24)

**PREAMBLE:** The Oakland County Democratic Party believes, with the Michigan Democratic Party, in the Principle of People – giving service to the needs and aspirations of all people; and it believes in the Principle of Democracy – working for equal opportunity for access and full participation of all elements of society in all political and governmental processes.

### **Article I: NAME**

This organization shall be known as the Oakland County Democratic Party and shall be referred to in these bylaws as OCDP.

### **Article II: PURPOSE**

The purpose of the OCDP is to promote the philosophy of the Michigan Democratic Party, referred to in these bylaws as MDP, and to elect Democrats who support this philosophy, and, further, to unite and aid in the activities of party members, precinct delegates, committees, officeholders, candidates, and other Democrats working to promote wide and active participation in the OCDP.

### **Article III: MEMBERS**

**Section 1.** Membership of the OCDP shall consist of members of the MDP residing in Oakland County. OCDP Officers shall apply for and become members of the OCDP.<sup>1</sup>

**Section 2.** All public meetings of OCDP shall be open to all members of MDP residing in Oakland County, regardless of actual or perceived race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, economic status, religion, ethnic identity, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, physical appearance, or disability.

**Section 3.** No test for membership in, nor any oath of loyalty to, OCDP shall be required or used, including those which have the effect of requiring prospective or current members of OCDP to acquiesce in, condone, or support discrimination on the grounds of actual or perceived race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, economic status, religion, ethnic identity, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, physical appearance, or disability.

**Section 4.** OCDP shall support the broadest possible participation without discrimination on grounds of actual or perceived race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, economic status,

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<sup>1</sup> 2/13/24 – Section 1 re-written to simplify the definition of OCDP membership, and require Officers to apply for and become members of the OCDP.

religion, ethnic identity, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, physical appearance, or disability.

**Section 5.** Multiple-position offices, such as OCDP Executive Committee members, and Officers at Large must be elected by one of the methods approved for implementing proportional representation, as specified in MDP Bylaws, and Rules for Voting and Elections.

**Section 6.** All rules and bylaws of OCDP shall be consistent with the rules of MDP and shall be available on the OCDP website.

**Section 7.** The unit rule is prohibited in any OCDP elections as defined in the MDP bylaws.<sup>12</sup>

**Section 8.** No rule shall be adopted by OCDP which would require a person to cast a vote or be recorded as voting contrary to that person's judgement.

**Section 9.** The Statutory Vice Chair of any unit, Committee, Caucus, or Convention of OCDP shall identify as a different gender from the Chair of such unit, Committee, Caucus or Convention.<sup>3</sup>

**Section 10.** Votes shall not be taken by secret ballot at any meeting of the OCDP.

#### **Article IV- OFFICERS COMMITTEE**

**Section 1.** The Officers Committee shall serve as the primary decision-making body of OCDP. The Officers for OCDP shall be elected in accordance with the rules of MDP within thirty days of the Executive Committee's election and shall constitute a committee known as OCDP Officers Committee.

**Section 2.** The Officers shall include:

1. Chair
2. Statutory Vice-Chair
3. Three Additional Vice-Chairs
4. Recording Secretary
5. Corresponding Secretary
6. Treasurer
7. Parliamentarian
8. Congressional District Representatives
9. Six at-large Officers appointed by the Chair
10. Up to six additional at-large Officers, as elected by the Executive Committee
11. Immediate Past Chair<sup>4</sup>

**Section 3.** The Officers Committee shall:

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<sup>2</sup> 6/8/21 – "As defined in the MDP bylaws" added.

<sup>3</sup> 6/8/21 – "Identify as a different gender" added.

<sup>4</sup> 2/9/21 – Immediate Past Chair added as Officer.

1. Approve the hiring and termination of any OCDP employee staff upon the recommendation of the Chair by majority vote.
2. Form an Audit Subcommittee with at least three newly elected officers at the beginning of the election cycle.
3. Have the authority to obtain suitable insurance coverage, including Workers Compensation, Property Damage, and Public Liability, and Fidelity Bonds.
4. Have the authority to commit the resources of OCDP, either in cash or in-kind to any candidate, campaign committee, or ballot proposition committee.
5. Perform other duties as prescribed by the Chair, these bylaws, and by the parliamentary authority adopted by OCDP.

**Section 4.** The Chair shall:

1. Preside at all meetings of the Officers Committee, Executive Committee, and the General Membership.
2. Oversee execution of all motions and resolutions approved by the Executive Committee, the Officers Committee, and General Membership.
3. Establish, with the consent of the Executive Committee, all standing and special committees of OCDP, as well as to nominate chairs for these committees.
4. Serve as an ex-officio member of all OCDP committees, except any nominating committee should one be convened.
5. Act as the official spokesperson of OCDP.
6. Each March propose, in consultation with the Officers Committee, a one-year budget and an estimated budget for the following year and present to the Executive Committee for approval.
7. Provide a surety bond for a sum sufficient to protect the organization from loss. The cost of this bond shall be borne by OCDP.
8. Hire, manage, and terminate staff of OCDP, pursuant to Article IV, Section 3, Subsection 1.
9. Provide all records necessary for the Compensation Subcommittee to fulfill its duties.
10. Perform other duties as prescribed by these bylaws, and by the parliamentary authority adopted by OCDP.
11. The Chair may appoint a Sergeant at arms at their discretion.

**Section 5.** The Statutory Vice-Chair shall identify as a different gender than that of the Chair. The Statutory Vice-Chair shall:

1. Assume the Chair's role in their absence.
2. Report to the Officers Committee on the progress of committee(s) to which they are assigned
3. Perform other duties as prescribed by the Chair, these bylaws, and by the parliamentary authority adopted by OCDP.

**Section 6.** The three additional Vice-Chairs shall:

1. Assume the Chair's role in the absence of both the Chair and Statutory Vice-Chair, in elected order (as determined by the proportional voting results as the time of the last regular OCDP election).
2. Perform other duties as prescribed by the Chair, these bylaws, and by the parliamentary authority adopted by OCDP.

**Section 7.** The Recording Secretary shall:

1. Keep an accurate record and minutes of the Officers Committee, the Executive Committee, and the General Membership meetings.
2. Keep and preserve all records of the OCDP.
3. Make the minutes and records available to members upon written request.
4. When the Recording Secretary vacates their position, the individual vacating the position shall forthwith deliver to the new Secretary, or designated officer, all items kept and preserved by them during their tenure in office.

**Section 8.** The Corresponding Secretary shall:

1. Ensure that proper notification of meetings and related information is given to all members of the OCDP in a timely manner and in compliance with MDP Rules and these bylaw rules.
2. Report all changes in OCDP Executive Committee Membership to the MDP.

**Section 9.** The Treasurer shall:

1. Be responsible for the financial receipts and disbursements of budgeted expenditures for OCDP at the direction of the Chair and/or Officers Committee.
2. Ensure that all funds of OCDP are deposited in banks or credit unions, and draw funds by a financial mechanism that can be tracked, with the approval of two of the following officers: Chair, Statutory Vice-Chair, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, or Treasurer. One or more of the two officers shall be the Chair or Treasurer.
3. Make written financial reports to the Officers Committee, Executive Committee, and General Membership at each regularly scheduled meeting. These reports shall include, at a minimum, income and expenditures itemized by categories as appropriate to summarize the sources of income and areas of expenditures.
4. Abide by all applicable campaign finance legal requirements, including the submission of all campaign finance reports in a timely manner.
5. Upon the end of a Treasurer's term, or if the position is otherwise vacated, transfer to the new Treasurer all items kept and preserved during their tenure in office. The Treasurer whose term has ended shall cooperate in transferring signing authority for all

bank and/credit union accounts to the new Treasurer.

6. Provide a surety bond for a sum sufficient to protect the organization from loss. The cost of this bond shall be borne by OCDP.

**Section 10.** The Parliamentarian shall advise the Chair, Officers committees, and members on matters of parliamentary procedure.

**Section 11.** The highest-ranking Congressional District Democratic Party officer of a Congressional District lying in whole or in part within the boundaries of Oakland County, or their designee who shall be a resident of Oakland County, shall sit as a member of the Officers Committee of OCDP.

**Section 12.** The Immediate Past Chair shall be an officer with the same privileges as the other officers and shall serve until there is a new Immediate Past Chair. The Immediate Past Chair shall perform other duties as prescribed by the Chair, these bylaws and by the parliamentary authority adopted by the OCDP.

**Section 13.** Vacancies shall be handled as follows:

1. Vacancy of any at-large officer position shall be appointed by the Chair subject to the approval of the Executive Committee.
2. The process for filling a vacancy of any elected or appointed Officer shall begin at the next regularly scheduled Executive Committee meeting.
3. At said meeting the Chair, or the highest-ranking member of the Officers Committee present, shall call for nominations to replace the vacated officer position(s). On the next Executive Committee meeting notice, the names of the nominees and the rules of the election to fill these positions will be stated.

**Section 14.** Elected and appointed Officers may be removed for neglect of office by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the majority membership of the Executive Committee. The vote for the removal of an elected or appointed officer shall be taken at a meeting specifically called for this purpose.

1. A meeting with the purpose of removing an officer shall be called by a majority of the Executive Committee.
2. The notice of such a meeting must indicate the specific time and place of the meeting, and the basis upon which the action is founded. Notice must be provided at least seven days before the meeting.
3. The motion to remove must carry by a two-thirds vote of the total Executive Committee.

## **Article V: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Section 1.** The Executive Committee shall serve as the body representing the interests of the Executive Committee and the General Membership.

**Section 2.** One-third (1/3) of the Executive Committee shall automatically consist of the most recent Democratic nominees for county-wide office, county commission, state house, state senate, and U.S. House of Representatives, whose districts include all or part of Oakland County. The OCDP Convention shall elect the balance of the Executive Committee, which shall consist of twice the number of automatic members.

**Section 3.** Within twenty (20)<sup>5</sup> days following the November election in each even numbered year, the delegates to the OCDP Convention, as selected in accordance with MDP and OCDP bylaws, shall convene at the call of the OCDP Chairperson for the purpose of electing the balance of the Executive Committee.

**Section 4.** The position of a delegate-elected Executive Committee member that is absent for five (5) scheduled meetings in a calendar year shall be declared vacant. The Club Chair will be so advised, and the Club shall designate a new Executive Committee member to be nominated to fill the vacancy that is committed to and able to attend Executive Committee meetings. Approval of the new Executive Committee member shall be as provided in Section 5.<sup>6</sup>

**Section 5.** If a vacancy occurs in the position of the delegate-elected members of the OCDP Executive Committee, the remaining delegate-elected members shall vote to fill the vacancy.

**Section 6.** The Executive Committee shall:

1. Vote for the Officers of the OCDP.
2. Approve the OCDP Annual Budget.
3. Approve minutes of all Executive Committee meetings.
4. Approve the six at-large officers appointed by the Chair by majority vote of the Executive Committee.

## **Article VI: MEETINGS**<sup>7</sup>

**Section 1.** The regular meetings of the OCDP Executive Committee shall be on the second Tuesday of each month unless ordered by the Officers Committee, for unusual circumstances, on a different date to be announced in the notice. At least seven days' notice shall be given of the date, time, and location or electronic meeting platform of the meeting. The notice may be given by mail, electronic mail, or posted on the OCDP website. A quorum shall exist at an Executive Committee meeting when twenty-five (25) members of the Executive Committee are present.

**Section 2.** The date, time and location or electronic meeting platform for all public meetings of the OCDP shall be publicized fully and in such a manner as to reasonably assure seven days' notice to all interested persons. Such meetings must be held at a location or on an electronic

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<sup>5</sup> 3/9/21 – 30 days changed to 20 days to comply with Michigan Election Law and MDP Rules.

<sup>6</sup> 2/13/24 – New Section 4 added.

<sup>7</sup> 6/8/21 – “Electronic meeting platform” added to sections 1, 2, 4 and 6.

meeting platform accessible to all OCDP members and large enough to accommodate all interested persons.

**Section 3.** The OCDP shall publicize fully and in such a manner as to reasonably assure seven day notice to all interested parties a full description of the legal and practical procedures for selection and qualifications of OCDP officers and representatives. Publication of these procedures and qualifications shall be done in such a fashion that all prospective and current members of the OCDP may be fully and adequately informed of the pertinent procedure and qualifications in time to participate in each selection procedure of the OCDP organization.

**Section 4.** The Officers Committee meeting may be called as needed by the Chair, or by a majority of the members of the Officers committee. At least seven days' notice shall be given of the date, time, and location or electronic meeting platform of the meeting. Notice may be given by mail, electronic mail, or posted on the OCDP website. A quorum shall exist at an Officers Committee meeting when seven members of the Officers Committee are present.

**Section 5.** Special meetings of the Executive Committee may be called by the Chair of the OCDP or by a majority of the members of the Executive Committee. At least seven days' notice shall be given of the date, time, and location or electronic meeting platform of the meeting. Notice may be given by mail, electronic mail, or posted on the OCDP website.

**Section 6.** The full OCDP general membership shall meet quarterly, at the call of the chair, to be informed of, discuss and review the activities of the OCDP Executive Committee, and conduct such other business as may be of interest to the general membership. At least seven days' notice shall be given of the date, time, and location or electronic meeting platform of the meeting. Notice shall be provided as set forth in Section 1. A quorum shall exist at a general membership meeting when twenty-five (25) members, as defined in Article III, Section 1, are present.<sup>8</sup>

**Section 7.** Meetings of the OCDP Executive Committee and OCDP General Membership shall generally be held in person at a designated location. Members who are not present in person may have the right to participate by electronic and/or telephonic means, technology and budget permitting, subject to any limitations established in rules adopted by the OCDP to govern such participation. The Chair of the OCDP may direct meetings be held electronically or hybrid in person/electronic,<sup>9</sup> subject to any limitations established in rules adopted by the OCDP to govern such participation. Meetings of the Officers Committee, Standing Committees, and Special Committees need not be in person, and may be held electronically and/or telephonically at the call of the appropriate chair.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> 5/11/21– Quarterly General Membership meetings added.

<sup>9</sup> 7/12/22—Authorizing hybrid meetings and removing the unusual circumstances requirement for electronic meetings.

<sup>10</sup> 6/8/21– New Section 7 added.

**Section 8.** When meetings of the OCDP are held electronically or hybrid in person/electronic,<sup>11</sup> except as otherwise provided in these bylaws, meetings shall be conducted through use of Internet meeting services designated by the OCDP Chair that support visible displays identifying those participating, identifying those seeking recognition to speak, showing (or permitting the retrieval of) the text of pending motions, and showing the results of votes. These electronic meetings shall be subject to all rules adopted by the OCDP, to govern them, which may include any reasonable limitations on, and requirements for, members' participation. Any such rules adopted shall supersede any conflicting rules in the parliamentary authority but may not otherwise conflict with or alter any rule or decision of the OCDP.<sup>12</sup>

## **Article VII: STANDING COMMITTEES**

**Section 1.** The Chair shall appoint the following Standing Committees and Committee Chairpersons, subject to the approval of the majority of the Executive Committee, for the work of OCDP. The Chair shall be ex-officio of all Standing committees.

**Section 2.** Standing Committees shall include the following:

1. Rules and Bylaws Committee –The committee shall serve as an advisory committee on matters pertaining to the rules and bylaws of the OCDP. The committee recommends to the membership such changes in the rules and bylaws, as it deems appropriate for the operation of the OCDP. The committee is responsible for reviewing all questions related to the rules and bylaws and for reporting its findings to the OCDP Executive Committee for action.
2. Finance Committee<sup>13</sup> – The committee is charged with conducting periodic review and oversight on how the budget is operating. The Finance Committee will also create a Compensation sub-committee to review and recommend approval of salaries by the Officers Committee.
3. Fundraising Committee<sup>14</sup> – The committee is charged with conducting fundraising activities, with the approval of the Executive Committee.
4. Membership Committee – The committee shall work to recruit and retain members of OCDP.
5. Resolutions Committee – The committee shall receive and review proposed resolutions for study and recommendation. No resolution shall conflict with the MDP State Platform.
6. Communications Committee – The committee shall establish strategies and tactics for communicating internally and externally. Activities include, but are not limited to newsletters, events, web and e-mail communication.

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<sup>11</sup> 7/12/22—Authorizing hybrid in person/electronic meetings.

<sup>12</sup> 6/8/21– New Section 8 added.

<sup>13</sup> 4/11/23—Removing fundraising from the Finance Committee.

<sup>14</sup> 4/11/23—New Section 3 added, creating a new Fundraising Committee, separate from the Finance Committee.



7. Political Organizing Committee – The committee shall work to conduct and support all candidate and organizing activities of OCDP. Activities include but are not limited to Precinct Delegate recruitment and allocation; voter registration and outreach; candidate recruitment and screening; and assigning credentials for Election Day poll checkers and challengers.

8. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee—The committee has the purpose of ensuring that the OCDP represents and supports the broadest possible participation without discrimination on grounds of actual or perceived bias, including but not limited to race, color, creed, age, national origin, economic status, religion, ethnic identity, ancestry, physical appearance, or disability. The committee is tasked with 1) creating education and training programs for the OCDP; 2) identifying ways to support rights groups in these areas; and 3) identifying ways that the OCDP can improve upon its representation, including but not limited to membership recruitment, event participation, and leadership diversity, with the approval of the executive committee.<sup>15 16</sup>

9. Community Support Committee – The committee shall work to conduct and support all charitable and service activities of the OCDP. The committee is responsible for identifying areas of need and community service activities that OCDP could promote, donate to, or participate in, with the approval of the executive committee.<sup>17</sup>

10. Young Democrats Committee – The committee, composed of democrats under the age of 29, shall work to expand participation and involvement of young people in the Democratic Party and the electoral process. The committee is tasked with identifying ways that the OCDP can improve upon youth membership recruitment, event participation, leadership development, and in other ways, with the approval of the executive committee.<sup>18</sup>

11. Women’s Rights Committee—The committee has the purpose of ensuring that the OCDP represents and supports the broadest possible participation without discrimination on grounds of actual or perceived bias, including, but not limited to, sex, marital status or economic status. The committee is tasked with 1) creating education and training programs for the OCDP; 2) identifying ways to support women’s rights groups; and 3) identifying ways that the OCDP can improve upon its representation, including but not limited to membership recruitment, event participation, and leadership diversity, with the approval of the executive committee.<sup>19</sup>

12. LGBTQIA Rights Committee—The committee has the purpose of ensuring that the OCDP represents and supports the broadest possible participation without discrimination on grounds of actual or perceived bias, including, but not limited to, sexual orientation, gender identity,

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<sup>15</sup> 2/9/21 – Committee added.

<sup>16</sup> 8/10/21—Modified to conform with creation of separate Women’s Rights Committee and LGBTQIA Committee; also, grammatical correction.

<sup>17</sup> 2/9/21 – Committee added.

<sup>18</sup> 2/9/21 – Committee added.

<sup>19</sup> 8/10/21—Committee added.

gender expression or economic status. The committee is tasked with 1) creating education and training programs for the OCDP; 2) identifying ways to support LGBTQIA rights groups; and 3) identifying ways that the OCDP can improve upon its representation, including but not limited to membership recruitment, event participation, and leadership diversity, with the approval of the executive committee.<sup>20</sup>

13. The African American Committee - The committee shall serve to advance, protect, tackle African American issues, and advance the interests of African Americans in Oakland County. The committee will work to ensure that more African American candidates are part of the political process in Oakland County, and work towards greater participation from African Americans in the Oakland County Democratic Party. The committee is tasked with 1) creating education and training programs for the OCDP; 2) identifying ways to support African American rights groups; and 3) identifying ways that the OCDP can improve upon its representation, including but not limited to membership recruitment, event participation, and leadership diversity, with the approval of the executive committee.<sup>21</sup>

14. Committee meetings may be conducted at a date, time and location or electronic meeting platform as designated by the committee chair.<sup>22</sup>

#### **Article VIII: ENDORSEMENT PROCEDURE**

**Section 1.** The OCDP Chair will establish an Endorsement Screening Committee that consists of an odd number of members, appointing no less than 5 members of the OCDP. The screening committee shall be a special committee that shall cease to exist at the end of each election cycle.

**Section 2.** The Chair shall appoint co-chairs (of different gender identity) for the Endorsement Screening Committee. The persons so appointed shall be members of the OCDP.

**Section 3.** The Endorsement Screening Committee shall look to the OCDP Endorsement and Screening Policy (OCDP Standing Rule #1) for endorsement principles, policies, processes and guidance in carrying out its responsibilities, and in determining whether or not to endorse in any given race.

**Section 4.** Endorsement recommendations, if any, shall be referred to the Executive Committee for approval pursuant to the OCDP Endorsement and Screening Policy (OCDP Standing Rule #1). Endorsements of the OCDP are only made on recommendation by the Endorsement Screening Committee and approval by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee may not

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<sup>20</sup> 8/10/21—Committee added.

<sup>21</sup> 9/14/21— Committee added.

<sup>22</sup> 6/8/21— New Sub-Section added to Section 2.

amend, change, or replace an endorsement recommendation of the Endorsement Screening Committee.<sup>23</sup>

### **Article IX: PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

The latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall apply to questions of procedure for which there is no applicable rule of procedure under the Rules of the MDP or these bylaws.

### **Article X: AMENDMENTS**

**Section 1.** Proposals for changes or amendments to these bylaws may be made by motion, without debate, at any meeting of the OCDP Executive Committee, and all proposed amendments shall first be referred to the Rules and Bylaws Committee which shall report its recommendation at the next succeeding regular meeting or special meeting called for that purpose.

**Section 2.** These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) affirmative vote when a quorum is present at a meeting of the OCDP Executive Committee, provided that written notice setting forth the proposed amendment has been given to all Executive Committee members seven days prior to the date of the meeting.

**Section 3.** These bylaws shall be in full force and effect upon their adoption, and they shall supersede all motions and policies of a contrary nature, with the exception of those provisions of Michigan Statutes which apply to the Statutory structure of Political Parties in the State of Michigan and the MDP Rules.

### **Article XI: DISSOLUTION**

In the event of dissolution of the OCDP, all real and personal property will revert to the benefit of the MDP.

**These bylaws were adopted by an electronic meeting of the Executive Committee of the OCDP on July 28, 2020, ratified at an in-person meeting of the Executive Committee on 6/14/22; and witnessed by members of the Executive Committee:**

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\_s/\_\_\_\_\_  
OCDP Chair

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\_s/\_\_\_\_\_  
OCDP Recording Secretary

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<sup>23</sup> 6/14/22—New Article VIII added.

Introduced by the OCDP Rules and Bylaws Committee 7/28/2020

Committee Members

Sharon Person - Chair

Nina Abrams

Laurie Evans

Murray Gorchow

Aaron Green

Thora Hanses

Joseph Person

Tamara Williams