

Chester Town Democratic Committee BYLAWS

Final, July 2025

ARTICLE I. NAME

This organization, established under the charter and bylaws of the Democratic Party of the State of Vermont, shall be known as The Chester Town Democratic Committee, hereinafter may be referred to as the "CTDC."

ARTICLE II. MISSION STATEMENT

The Chester Town Democratic Committee affirms that the government of the United States of America is of, for and by the people of this nation. Government is how we define the framework of a civil society which supports and benefits all citizens and non-citizens. Equal representation promises all people equal opportunity to participate in and contribute to efforts for the common good.

We stand in support of the US Constitution and the Vermont Constitution. We support the separation of power among three co-equal branches of government

Therefore, the Chester Town Democratic Committee affirms the following principles:

- The rule of law and the principle that no person or entity is above the law.
- Social justice, human rights and the unimpeded right to vote.
- Equal access to healthcare, public education, childcare and affordable housing.
- Acknowledgement and reduction of the impact of climate change.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. MEMBERS OF THE CTDC

Membership in the CTDC is open to registered voters of Chester, VT. who sign a CTDC membership application affirming their support for the mission of the CTDC.

- A. Voters cannot participate in more than one party organization. (17 V.S.A. §2317)
- B. All publicly elected Democratic officers must reside in Chester.
- C. Good standing is defined as a member of CTDC who is not suspended.
- D. Members may be suspended by the Executive Committee for the following:

1. Misrepresenting the information provided on their CTDC Membership Application.
2. Unauthorized use of CTDC funds.
3. Violating CTDC Bylaws

E. No Member or members of the CTDC shall publish or speak on behalf of the CTDC without authorization of the CTDC executive board.

Section 2. VOTING PRIVILEGES

All members in good standing shall have full voting privileges on matters coming before the body.

ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS

Section 1. ELIGIBILITY FOR CTDC ELECTED OFFICERS

- a. Any member of the CTDC in good standing shall be eligible to hold any office.

Section 2. ELECTED OFFICERS

The officers of this organization, who shall be elected at each Re-organization (Re-org) meeting held in September of odd numbered years, shall consist of the following (17 V.S.A. § 2314):

- A. Chair
- B. Vice Chair
- C. Secretary
- D. Treasurer
- E. Parliamentarian

Section 3. TERMS OF OFFICE

The officers of this organization shall serve terms of office as follows:

- A. Elected officers shall serve two-year terms beginning immediately with the Re-org meeting at which they are elected and ending at the following Re-org meeting upon election of their successor, with the following exceptions:
 - a. An officer elected between Re-org meetings shall serve until the following Re-org meeting.
 - b. In case of resignation or death

- c. Removal from office by the membership.
- B. No officer may serve for more than eight (8) consecutive years in any office.

Section 5. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Any member of the CTDC may nominate another member for office. Election of officers shall be by one of the following methods:

- A. Regular election of officers shall:
 - a. Occur at each Re-org meeting. The Re-organization (Re-Org) caucus will take place before the regular meeting between September 10 and 30 in odd-numbered years. (per 17 V.S.A. § 2304 and Vermont Secretary of State)
 - b. Nominations will be taken at the Re-org meeting election.
 - i. All nominees need to be an CTDC member in good standing.
 - ii. Nominees will be offered an opportunity to speak at the Re-org meeting.
 - c. Require a simple majority (50% +1) of CTDC members present (in person) and voting for election.
- B. Special election of officers shall be conducted in the same manner as regular elections with the following exception:
 - a. They shall occur at the next regular meeting of the CTDC following a vacancy in the office, provided that the CTDC Executive Board has received official notice at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting.
 - b. Official notice may be sent electronically.
- C. Only members in good standing of CTDC are eligible to vote in the election of officers.
- D. In the event of no volunteer for an executive board position, CTDC may opt to combine any two positions with the exception of a Chair/Treasurer.

Section 6 VACANCIES

- A. Declaration
 - a. Any vacancy in any office of the Executive Committee arising from any cause, including failure to elect, shall be declared by the Chair or acting Chair at a regular meeting of the CTDC or by written

notice to the members of the CTDC not less than seven (7) days in advance of the next regular meeting of the CTDC.

B. Nominations

- a. At the next regular meeting of the CTDC following said declaration, nomination(s) shall be made to fill such vacancy. Nominees are invited to appear before the CTDC at this meeting.

C. Election of Officers

- a. Elections to fill vacancies in any office of the CTDC shall be held immediately following nomination(s).

Section 7. RESIGNATION FROM OFFICE

Resignation from the Executive Board may be accomplished by submitting a written resignation to the Executive Board.

ARTICLE V. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. CHAIR

The Chair shall:

- A. Serve as the chief administrative officer and official spokesperson of this organization.
- B. Preside at all meetings of the CTDC, as well as those of the Executive Board.
- C. Call for and propose an agenda for:
 - a. All meetings of the CTDC and Executive Board.
 - b. The Re-org meeting, held in September in odd numbered years, or in cases of the resignation of a member of the Executive Board.
- D. Chair shall be added as co-signer with Treasurer on any CTDC financial accounts.

Section 2. VICE CHAIR

The Vice Chair shall:

- A. Assist the Chair in discharging the duties of that office.
- B. Assume the duties of the Chair in the absence of or a vacancy in that office.
- C. Assume the office of Chair in case of a vacancy in that office until the vacancy is filled.
- D. If a Chair resigns in the middle of a term, and the Vice Chair does not want to advance to the Chair position, the Vice Chair can remain Vice Chair of the newly elected Chair for the remainder of the term.

Section 3. SECRETARY

- A. The Secretary is the official recording officer of the CTDC.

- B. The Secretary is responsible for keeping the minutes of CTDC meetings and CTDC Executive Committee meetings.
- C. The Secretary shall ensure that CTDC meeting minutes and supporting documents shall be made available to the CTDC Chair for distribution to the membership within 7 working days and presented for a vote at the next scheduled CTDC meeting.
- D. The Secretary and Chair shall ensure that records of CTDC meetings, Standing Committee meetings and Ad Hoc Committee meetings are maintained.
- E. The Secretary shall maintain copies of approved Bylaws and subsequent amendments.
- F. The Secretary shall maintain an up-to-date list of standing and ad-hoc committee membership.
- G. The Secretary shall provide a list of elected positions for potential legislative candidates.

Section 4. TREASURER

The Treasurer shall:

- A. Receive all monies of the CTDC and issue receipts for monies received upon request.
- B. Keep an accurate record of payments and those who provide the payments, made electronically or by check, as authorized by the approved budget or by majority vote of the CTDC.
- C. Establish and maintain the CTDC Act Blue Account.
- D. Make a complete financial report at all CTDC meetings.
- E. Keep records and file all reports required for compliance with the Vermont Secretary of State (SOS) and Internal Revenue Service (IRS).
- F. File quarterly reports to the Secretary of State showing all income and sources with names as well as expenditures.
- G. Provide any documents for, and cooperate fully with, audits.

Section 5. PARLIAMENTARIAN

The Parliamentarian shall:

- A. Maintain a copy of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, latest edition, as well as a copy of these Bylaws.
- B. Advise the Chair on matters of parliamentary procedure and the contents of these Bylaws.

ARTICLE VI. EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board shall:

- A. Consist of the elected officers listed in these Bylaws.
- B. Meet at the call of the Chair at least once a month.

- a. A quorum shall consist of more than 50% of members of the Executive Board.

Section 1. LIMITATIONS

- a. The Executive Board cannot negate any action taken by the CTDC.

Section 2. EXECUTIVE BOARD CHAIR AND SUCCESSION

- a. The Chair of the CTDC shall be the Chair of the Executive Board, and in that officer's absence the succession shall be as follows: Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer.

ARTICLE VII. CTDC MEETINGS

Meetings of the CTDC are open to all Democrats, the public and the press.

Section 1: VOTING & QUORUM

- A. Each member in good standing shall have one vote.
- B. Paper ballots may be called by the Board Chair.
- C. Voting may be conducted in person or via electronic means at the discretion of the CTDC Chair.
- D. Members of the CTDC who participate in meetings via electronic means must be signed in using previously validated e-mail and have their cameras enabled in order to participate in voting
- E. Proxy and absentee voting are prohibited.
- F. The members present and in good standing shall constitute a quorum for a regularly scheduled meeting.

Section 2: PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

- A. In all matters not expressly covered by these Bylaws and the VDP Charter, the Vermont State Statutes may govern all CTDC meetings and meetings of the executive board. Reference may be made to Robert's Rules of Order.

Section 3: REGULAR MEETINGS

- A. Regular meetings of the CTDC may be held monthly with meeting dates selected at the discretion of the Chair. Electronic attendance will be allowed as available. The Board Chair may postpone or cancel meetings due to unforeseen circumstances or weather.
- B. Written or electronic notices (social media, online forums, local publications) and publicly posted at the Chester Town Hall for regular meetings, shall be sent to all members at least seven (7) days in advance of each meeting.

C. The Executive Board may call an executive session with a simple majority of executive Board members. Minutes of the executive session shall be provided to the CTDC membership.

Section 4: RE-ORG MEETING

A. The Re-organization (Re-Org) caucus will take place immediately following the regular September meeting between September 10th and 30th in odd-numbered years. (per 17 V.S.A. § 2304 and Vermont Secretary of State)

- a. Process for how to conduct the Re-Org caucus will follow guidance put forth in 17 V.S.A. § 2304
- b. The caucus meeting shall include the election of CTDC officers and county committee delegates, and shall be immediately followed by the regular meeting, which will be led by the newly elected officers. (17 V.S.A. § 2305)

B. If there are two or more candidates for one office, the election shall be conducted by secret ballot. (see Section 1: VOTING & QUORUM)

C. The Re-org caucus shall be convened by one of the officers present, in the following order: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer.

- a. The convening officer shall preside for the purpose of the election of a Chair pro tem.
- b. The Chair pro tem shall preside for the purpose of election of officers.
- c. All newly elected Officers will assume their positions immediately following the election.
- d. The first order of business following the election of officers shall be the adoption of bylaws which will have been published in the meeting minutes and distributed to the CTDC membership at least seven (7) days prior to the regular meeting. The CTDC shall operate under the old bylaws until new bylaws are adopted.

D. It is the responsibility of the Chester Democrats to elect their own representatives to the Windsor County Democratic Committee.

- a. This election shall coincide with the committee Re-org process before the regular September meeting every odd-numbered year.

- b. The number of available positions is determined by the VDP based upon voting populations and can be confirmed with the County Chair.
- c. Nominations must be confirmed by a majority of those present and voting.
- d. County committee delegates shall serve for two years following their election or until their successors are elected or appointed. (17 V.S.A. § 2308.c)
- e. Once selected, it is the responsibility of the CTDC Chair and Secretary to relay the selections of CTDC Officers and County Delegates to the Vermont Democratic Party (VDP) Chair and the Windsor County Democratic Committee (CDC) Chair. (17 V.S.A. § 2307)

Section 5: SPECIAL MEETINGS

A. A special meeting may be called at any time by the Chair, or in the Chair's absence or incapacity, by the Vice Chair, or by any other officer in the absence or incapacity of the Chair and Vice Chair. A special meeting may also be called by a majority of the executive board.

B. A special meeting may be called by request of one-third of the members in good standing. Members must be notified in writing or electronically (Front Porch Forum, social media, etc.) and posted publicly at least twenty-four hours in advance of a special meeting.

C. The call must state the reason for the special meeting.

ARTICLE VIII. JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

It is the responsibility of the Chester Town Democratic Committee to nominate Justices of the Peace. (17 V.S.A. § 2413)

A. On or before each primary election, at a meeting called by the CTDC Chair or, if the Chair does not do so, called by any three committee members before that year's primary election. The committee must give members at least seven (7) days' written notice by mail or email, and it must also post notice in the Chester Town Clerk's office and in two other public places in the town. Each notice should state the date, time, and place of the meeting, as well as the specific offices for which nominations may be made. The number of candidates to be placed on the ballot are up to twelve (12), subject to change by the VT Secretary of State.

B. At the CTDC meeting, a nomination must be confirmed by a majority of those present and voting. If no candidate receives a majority after two ballots, the candidate with the lowest number of votes in the

second and each succeeding ballot must be eliminated until a candidate does receive the majority.

C. The Chair and Secretary must sign and file an official statement of nomination with the Chester Town Clerk. The statement, accompanied by a copy of the meeting notice, must be filed no later than 5:00 p.m. on the third day following the primary election. (See 17 V.S.A. § 2385(d) for the language to be used in the statement.) Before filing, the officers must check with each nominee to confirm that they consent to appear on the ballot and to serve if elected.

ARTICLE IX. COMMITTEES

- A. The CTDC chair may appoint committee chairs, who may in turn appoint additional committee members. (except for the nominating committee and the campaign committee, whose members shall be elected at a special or regular meeting of the CTDC).
- B. Each committee chair shall provide the CTDC secretary with a list of committee members and notify the chair of changes in committee membership.

Section 1, Standing Committees

- a. Standing committees shall be established by a majority vote of CTDC members in good standing as defined in the bylaws. Committee members may number no more than 7 on each committee.
- b. The CTDC chair may appoint standing committee chairs who may appoint additional committee members.
- c. Events and initiatives sponsored by standing committees must be approved by a majority vote of CTDC Members in good standing.
- d. Approved events and initiatives shall be planned and facilitated by members of the committee.
- e. The committee shall collaborate with other CTDC committees, where appropriate, to support approved events and /or initiatives.

A. Bylaws Committee

On or before March 1 of every even-numbered year, the Bylaws Committee shall review its bylaws and adopt any amendments deemed necessary and appropriate by the membership (VDP Bylaws, ARTICLE XXIX. 1) The bylaws may be reviewed as needed, by a committee who shall bring recommendations to the membership. (ARTICLE XII. AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS)

B. Campaign Committee

This committee and its chair, whose members shall be nominated and elected at the first meeting of the CTDC following the Re-org, shall recruit Democratic candidates to run for public office. The Campaign Committee shall not exceed 7 members, including the Committee Chair and the CTDC Vice Chair.

Additionally, the committee may:

- a. Provide information to all candidates who are Democrats and share our values.
- b. Educate endorsed and approved candidates on issues of the CTDC, events and activities, our membership and other helpful information throughout the Town of Chester.
- c. Provide access to resources, training, and mentorship to potential candidates.
- d. Acquire a list of elected positions for potential legislative candidates.
- e. May not include candidates for elective partisan office (with the exception of Justice of the Peace).

C. Communications Committee

The Communications Committee shall coordinate all messaging for newsletters, website, press releases and electronic communications, such as email, social media, and any other publicity deemed necessary. The Communications Chair may create subcommittees as needed.

D. Education Committee

The Education Committee shall focus on Federal, State and Local Directives, actions, reorganization plans, staffing funding and legislation that impacts our schools, school children, and taxpayers. The committee will evaluate these practices and propose actions to see how they align with the principles and values of the Democratic Party. The committee shall educate the public on these issues and advocate for alignment with democratic values.

E. Legislative Committee

The committee shall track state legislation and keep members informed, in a timely fashion, of pending legislation and initiatives relevant to the CTDC and the Town of Chester, Vermont. The committee may not lobby on behalf of the CTDC and may include locally elected Democratic legislators.

F. Archives Committee

The Committee shall collect anecdotal stories of people in our community who have encountered challenges related to political or governmental policies. These stories will be archived and shared at the discretion of the

archives committee and the CTDC membership.

Section 2, Ad Hoc Committees

- A. Ad hoc committees shall be established by a majority vote of CTDC members in good standing to accomplish a time-specific purpose. Committee members may number no more than 7 on each committee.
- B. The CTDC chair may appoint ad hoc committee chairs, who may appoint additional committee members.
- C. Events and initiatives sponsored by ad hoc committees must be approved by a majority vote of CTDC members in good standing.
- D. Approved events and initiatives shall be planned and facilitated by members of the committee.
- E. The committee shall collaborate with other CTDC committees, where appropriate, to support approved events and /or initiatives.
- F. Ad hoc committees may be established for but not limited to the following:
 - a. Community events committees may be established as ad hoc committees to sponsor or collaborate with Community Organizations on events or initiatives that promote the wellbeing of the community and align with the CTDC Mission.
 - b. Fundraising events or initiatives committees may be established as ad hoc committees to raise funds for CTDC initiatives or community initiatives that align with the CTDC Mission.
 - c. Political Events Committees may be established as ad hoc committees to support and/or promote values aligned with the CTDC Mission.
 - d. Other Ad Hoc committees may be established to accomplish a time-specific purpose that aligns with the CTDC Mission.

Section 3, Committee reports and continuity of records

- a. Committees shall identify the chair, schedule meetings, and provide meeting minutes to the CTDC Chair within seven days of the meeting. Meeting minutes shall include:
 - Date of the meeting
 - Meeting participants
 - Summary of business conducted

- The CTDC Chair shall provide subcommittee minutes to the CTDC Secretary and to the CTDC Membership along with meeting agendas
- b. Retiring Committee Officers must relinquish all books, records, and supplies upon stepping down from their role.

Section 4, Committee expenditures

- a. No committee shall incur any expenditure involving this organization unless authorized by the CTDC Chair and Treasurer.

ARTICLE X: APPOINTMENTS TO PARTISAN ELECTIVE OFFICE

Section 1. VACANCY IN A PUBLIC OFFICE

When a vacancy occurs in a partisan elective office and it is the responsibility of the CTDC to present recommendations for appointment as provided by law (17V.S.A. §2623), the following shall apply:

- A. All candidates for appointment shall present to the Chair of the CTDC a completed application form provided by the Chair.
- B. From the list of eligible candidates to fill a Democratic vacancy in elective office, the membership will vote on candidates to move forward to the Governor's Office.

ARTICLE XI. AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

Section 1. AMENDMENT PROCEDURES

A. Amendments and modifications to these Bylaws are permitted at any time when authorized by a majority of the CTDC Membership, and must follow the procedure defined below.

- a. The proposed change shall be submitted in writing at a regularly scheduled meeting by a CTDC member.
- b. The proposed change shall be published in the meeting minutes and distributed to the CTDC membership at least seven (7) days prior to the next regular meeting.

- c. At the next regular meeting the CTDC shall vote on the change with a 50 +1 majority of members present and voting required for ratification.
- d. The Secretary will make the necessary changes in the CTDC Bylaws, update the Bylaws version number and revision, and make publicly available the new version of the Bylaws as the current and active version.
- e. Formatting changes made to these Bylaws do not constitute an amendment and therefore do not need to be approved by the membership.

ARTICLE XII. AUTHORITY OF BYLAWS

The CTDC shall fulfill its mission under rules and procedures spelled out in these Bylaws.

Section 1. REPLACEMENT CLAUSE

These Bylaws supersede and replace any previous bylaws passed by the CTDC.

Section 2. CONFLICTS OF AUTHORITY

Where these Bylaws conflict with the Statutes or Regulations of the State of Vermont or the charter, Bylaws, or rules of State or National Democratic Party Organizations, the higher authority shall take precedence.

ARTICLE XIII HISTORY OF BYLAWS

It is the responsibility of the Secretary of CTDC to maintain copies of all approved Bylaws and/or amendments. Such copies must include date of adoption, and all amendment dates shall be listed in these bylaws. Revised Bylaws shall be submitted to the Vermont State Democratic Party (per Article XXIX.2) after approval. These bylaws were adopted on 2025, and have been amended as recorded below (the most recent is listed first):

VERSION HISTORY AND REVISION NOTES

These Bylaws of the Chester Town Democratic Committee were adopted on _____, 2025 by a vote of the members of the Chester Town Democratic Committee, two thirds of whom voted in favor.

Secretary