

An Explanation of a Convention Call and Agenda

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What is a Convention Call?

A convention call is an invitation to the precinct delegates and alternates to convene in convention to do the duties which they have voluntarily accepted when elected at caucus. By Constitution, the call must be issued at least 10 days before the convention so that you are notified in a timely manner.

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Does a Convention Call Require Attendance?

The call does not bind a delegate to attend a convention. A delegate may have a legitimate reason for not attending convention. That is why alternates are elected at caucus. The call also does not bind an alternate to attend a convention.

However, the call invites and encourages all precinct delegates and alternates to attend to do the duties which they voluntarily asked to perform when they filed to be on the ballot at caucus. And they accepted these duties when their fellow caucus members elected them.

By not attending convention, the duties will be performed by fewer delegates and the precinct will have diminished representation which will disappoint others who wished to be delegates.

The work is there to be performed by the precinct delegates.

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Who Issues the Convention Call?

State statute orders a county party to hold a convention.

“The rules of each major political party shall provide that for...each county...a convention shall be held at least once every state general election year ([202A.13, paragraph 1](#)).”

State statute orders an executive committee to be elected by a county party.

“Each major political party shall also provide for...each county...an executive committee consisting of a chair and such other officers as may be necessary ([202A.13, paragraph 1](#)).”

By our [Constitution](#), it is the responsibility of the Executive Committee to call precinct delegates and alternates to convention.

The Executive Committee members were elected one year ago by the previous precinct delegates and alternates.

One year from now, a new Executive Committee will be elected by the current precinct caucus delegates and alternates. That new Executive Committee will call the next precinct caucus into session as well as the convention following it.

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What is in the Convention Call?

The Convention Call identifies the

- ! the recipients of the call,
- ! the place of convention,
- ! the time of convention,
- ! the purpose of convention, and
- ! any pertinent details.

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What if I did not Receive a Convention Call?

The Minnesota Republican Party Constitution requires a call for a convention to be issued at least 10 days prior to the convention.

If you are a delegate or alternate and have not received your call 8 to 10 days before a convention:

- ! check your party's website for information,
- ! look at social media used by your party,
- ! talk to a friend who is a delegate and get a copy,
- ! contact your precinct officers,
- ! contact your county party's officers and let them know you have not received it.

Your call letter may have been delayed by the post office.

If the call is issued by email, check your spam folder.

Even if you have not received a convention call, find out the location and time, and just show up at the convention.

If you are a duly elected delegate or alternate, you have a right to attend the convention. Indeed, you have a certain level of obligation to fulfill your duty when you accepted the responsibility. And sometimes you have to stand up for the right granted to you by your precinct by virtue of election. Government means being involved and defending your right.

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What if My Name is not on the Delegate List?

If you are a duly elected precinct delegate or alternate and you find out your name is not on the list when you arrive at convention, talk with your fellow precinct attendees.

Your fellow precinct attendees can attest you were elected to be a delegate or alternate. As a self-governing body, each precinct can identify each person who was elected by the precinct to attend a convention.

If your name did not make it on the list for whatever reason, your fellow precinct members can verify that your name should be on the list of those eligible to attend convention. Assert your rights and ask your precinct to assert its rights.

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What is the Purpose of a Convention?

There are four types of conventions called by the Executive Committee:

- ▶ a House District endorsing convention,
 - ▶ a Senate District endorsing convention,
 - ▶ an even year county convention,
 - ▶ an odd year county convention
1. Each precinct delegate and alternate is a member of a House District. These delegates meet to endorse a candidate for the Republican ticket in that House District.
 2. Each precinct delegate and alternate is a member of a Senate District. These delegates meet to endorse a candidate for the Republican ticket in that Senate District.
 3. All precinct delegates in Chisago County meet in the even year to elect delegates and alternates to the District and State conventions. These delegates endorse candidates who run on the Republican ticket for state and federal offices. At the even year convention, delegates also consider resolutions to amend the State Party's platform.
 4. All precinct delegates in Chisago County meet in the odd year to elect the members of the Executive Committee and consider amending the Chisago County Republican Party Constitution.

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What is an Example of a Convention Agenda?

The following is a typical agenda for an even year county convention.

Agenda

1. Call to order by the convener
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Invocation
4. Patriotic music
5. Reading of the convention call
6. Election of temporary convention chair
7. Election of temporary convention secretary
8. Appointment of committees and officials
 - a. Credentials Committee—
 - b. Rules Committee—
 - c. Resolutions Committee—
 - d. Applicant Filing Committee—
 - e. Timekeeper—
 - f. Parliamentarian—
 - g. Sergeants-at-Arms—
 - h. Head Teller—
9. Preliminary Credentials Committee report
10. Caucus for precinct chairs to fill delegations with alternates
11. Motion to make the temporary organization permanent
12. Rules Committee report and adoption of convention rules
13. Adoption of the agenda
14. Treasurer's report—
15. Updated Credentials Committee report
16. Applicant Filing Committee report regarding congressional district/state/judicial delegate and alternate applicants
 - a. Identification of the candidates and speeches
 - b. Election of delegates
 - c. Election of alternates
17. Announcements
18. Resolutions Committee report
 - a. Consider resolutions
 - b. Adoption of resolutions
19. Any other business that may properly come before the convention
20. Adjournment

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What is the Action Accomplished in the Agenda?

Items #16 and 18 are the action items for the convention.

1. The convention elects delegates and alternates who will serve at the congressional district convention and the state convention. They are elected to a two year term.
 - a. At the district convention, the elected delegates and alternates will endorse the congressional district candidate who will run on the Republican ticket.
 - b. At the state convention, they will endorse the candidates who will then run on the Republican ticket for state constitutional offices.
2. The consideration of the caucus resolutions is also on the agenda.

These two action items are the essence of the convention. These action items must be listed in the convention call in order to act on them in the convention. Stating the action items in the convention call informs the delegate that this is the purpose of this convention.

While attending a county convention, many candidates, from local to state level, will also speak about their campaigns. And you will hear about local party activities.

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What is the Purpose of Items 1-15 in the Agenda?

When delegates arrive at convention, they are delegates from 23 independent, self-governing precincts in Chisago County. Every delegate is seated at convention by virtue of being elected by his or her own self-governing, home precinct. No one can tell a duly elected delegate to not be seated. Precincts elect their own delegates who are not beholden to anyone other than their precinct caucus electors. The precinct body of delegates who attend a convention determine that the duly elected delegates from that precinct are seated.

Alternates are not seated immediately at convention, but sit in a separate section.

Items 1-15 of the agenda constitute a ceremony which unites the delegates from 23 precincts into one self-governing body for the entire county. Elements of this ceremony can be found in Robert's Rules of Order. This ceremony, or something similar, has long been used for political conventions.

1. A convener commences the convention because someone must start it. Together, the convener and the precinct delegates begin to make a temporary organization.
2. Together we pledge allegiance to the flag and the republic. It is the flag of a federation of many states, which together are united to comprise one nation under God whose form of government is a republic, not a democracy. While delegates are from numerous precincts, reciting the pledge reminds us of our commonness in our national republic.
3. Having acknowledged God in the pledge, we honor him in prayer and ask for his direction and blessing. We unite by acknowledging God is creator, sustainer, law-giver, judge, governor in the affairs of mankind, and redeemer.
4. Together in song, we acclaim the greatness of our country.
5. Reading the convention call reminds everyone of the purpose of the meeting.
6. Because the convention of delegates is self-governing, it elects the chair of its own choosing to conduct the meeting. Each delegate votes by virtue of being elected by the home precinct on caucus day. The convention is a convention of the delegates. It is not a convention of the Executive Committee or of the chair. The seated delegates and alternates are the authority in this convention within the boundaries of the constitutions of the Chisago County Republicans and the Minnesota State Party and the laws of the State of Minnesota. The job of the chair is to assist the delegates and alternates to conduct their business in an orderly and productive manner.
7. Likewise, it elects the secretary of its own choosing to keep the minutes.

8. Eight committees or officials have been appointed by the Executive Committee to prepare for convention and to serve the delegates during convention. The self-governing body can ratify these appointments or elect others to serve to ensure the convention runs smoothly.
9. Next, a credentials report is given to the delegates. This report reveals how many delegates from each precinct have registered and are in attendance at convention. It is up to each precinct to ensure that all who are in attendance are elected delegates from that precinct. The other 22 precincts are dependent on each precinct to guarantee their attendees are delegates and only their delegates. The credentials report establishes who are members of the temporary organization.
10. The credentials report also discloses how many delegates in each precinct are absent. Precinct chairs can then seat enough alternates to fill the number of vacancies. By the seating of alternates the delegate members of the temporary organization welcome the qualified alternates to the temporary organization. If a precinct delegate or higher ranked alternate arrives later, a seated alternate can be unseated.
11. When the alternates are seated, the body, consisting of delegates and seated alternates, votes to make the temporary organization permanent. The ceremony of making a permanent organization is now complete.
12. Now that the permanent organization has been formed, it considers the proposed rules, amends them, and adopts them as the rules for the convention.
13. The united body then adopts the agenda.
14. The treasurer's report provides a synopsis of the finances of the party for the past year.
15. Just before the action items are considered, a credentials report is given to identify any changes in the attendance. If there is a change, the permanent organization seats recent arrivals.

The precinct delegates and alternates from 23 precincts are now united into a permanent organization ready to conduct the business in items 16 and 18.

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What are the Rules Mentioned in the Agenda?

A convention, along with many other meetings, is governed by Robert's Rules of Order, which are commonly accepted as fair ways of conducting a meeting. In addition to these rules, a Republican convention adopts rules that are specific to the conduct of its business which is different than most other meetings.

With regard to the rules, the [Constitution](#) of the Minnesota Republican Party requires in Article VI, Section 4:

“The Rules Committee report shall be emailed and available on the Party website at least seven (7) days in advance of the convention.”

This requirement is the model for BPOUs, so watch your BPOU website and your email for a copy of the proposed rules for your convention.

Examine the rules carefully to make sure the rules are fair.

Be prepared to propose a rule that is fair to replace one that is not impartial.

If you cannot agree with the proposed rules, vote no.

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When Will I Receive a Copy of the Resolutions?

With regard to resolutions, the [Constitution](#) of the Minnesota Republican Party requires in Article VI, Section 5 B:

“The final committee report [on resolutions] shall be...available on the website and emailed to convention Delegates and Alternates at least seven (7) days prior to the state convention.”

This requirement is the model for BPOUs, so watch your BPOU website and your email for a copy of the resolutions for your convention. All these resolutions were proposed and passed at the precinct caucuses and now will be considered at the BPOU convention.

Carefully consider each resolution long before convention so you can vote on it intelligently. If you are exposed to the resolution for the first time at convention, you may cast a snap, uninformed vote.

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What if I Arrive Late at Convention?

Make every effort to be on time or early. If you are late, you may not be allowed to be seated at convention because some do not abide by the rules.

The Constitution of every BPOU must be consistent with the Constitution of the Minnesota Republican Party ([Article XVI, Section 1](#)).

Article V, Section 2 C requires:

“A convention may close registration of Delegates and Alternates only if the convention call states the time at which registration will close. If the call states a registration closing time the convention may permit a later closing time for registration or may require the convention to remain open regardless of the language in the call.”

1. The default position is for the convention to remain open for registration throughout the convention.
 - a. The convention is for the delegates and alternates, not the convenience of the chair, executive committee, or those taking registrations.
 - b. A delegate may legitimately be delayed from arriving on time by any number of unforeseen circumstances.
 - c. All delegates meeting in convention should adopt the attitude that a delegate should not be disenfranchised. Every delegate was enfranchised by election at the precinct's caucus.
 - d. If you, in the convention, disenfranchise someone by closing registration, a convention may disenfranchise you in another convention.
2. Registration for convention can be closed at a specified time **only if** it is stated in the convention call.
 - a. If your convention call states a closing time for registration, do not be late.
 - b. If you miss the closing time, almost assuredly you will not be seated.
3. The convention can override the stated closing time in the convention call.
 - a. The convention can vote to set the closing time later than that stated in the convention call.
 - b. The convention can vote to abolish the closing time stated in the convention call and keep registration open throughout the convention.
 - c. But don't trust that this will happen.
4. If a delegate arrives after the registration closing time stated in the convention call, it will be extremely difficult to convince the convention to let you register.
 - a. You will need to convince the registrar.
 - b. Or you need to convince other officials in charge.
 - c. If they will not let you register, you might be able to get your precinct delegates

- to make a motion and second to grant you permission.
- d. There will be debate.
 - e. Then the convention will vote to decide to grant permission.
 - f. The mood of the convention will likely go against you because it is likely you are questioning their traditional practice.
5. Perhaps your call does not state a closing time for registration. **Do not be late even then.** Some conventions will close the registration time by the adoption of rules. As the convention moves through the agenda, the delegates will adopt rules to govern the convention. A provision in those rules, often not read by delegates, may close registration when the rules are adopted. But according to the State Party Constitution, registration should not be closed by adopting such a rule. Registration can be closed at a specified time only if it is published in the convention call. A convention can extend a deadline or open registration, but it cannot close registration.
 6. Therefore be on time or early. Don't allow your vote to be subject to the whims of others.
 7. If your BPOU does not have registration open through a convention, it is not practicing the default mode of the State Party. Outside of convention, you should try to convince your BPOU to abandon any practice that can disenfranchise a duly elected delegate or alternate. Closing registration sends a message to delegates, especially new ones, that the party is restrictive and not open and welcoming. That is not a good message.

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