

Rules for the Selection of Democratic Candidates and Nominees for Public Office Under the “TopTwo” Primary

As amended and passed unanimously by the
Washington State Democratic Central Committee on September 21, 2013

- 1 I. **Applicability.** These Rules shall apply to the selection of any candidate for public office
2 who intends to be, the nominee of the Democratic Party, on any general election ballot
3 used in a publicly financed election or candidate selection process.
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- 5 II. **Exclusive Means of Selection.** Candidates and nominees of the Democratic Party for
6 public office must be selected by one of the means specified in these Rules.
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- 8 III. **Democratic Primary.** Where State law provides for a public primary that complies with
9 these Rules (hereinafter a “Democratic Primary”), candidates and nominees shall be
10 selected by means of that Democratic Primary; provided that in the event of a vacancy on
11 the Democratic ticket, the State Chair may fill the vacancy as specified in State law and
12 applicable Party rules.
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- 14 IV. **Rules Governing Democratic Primaries.** A public primary must comply with the
15 following rules in order to qualify as a Democratic Primary where candidates or
16 nominees will be selected by means of the primary:
- 17 A. **Separate Democratic Ballot Required.** All Democratic Primaries occurring on a
18 single date shall appear on the same ballot. The ballot provided to voters in the
19 Democratic Primaries may not contain the names of any candidate for office who
20 is affiliated with any other political party, or of no political party, except that the
21 State may provide to voters a ballot that may be simultaneously used in the
22 Democratic Primaries and in primaries for offices in which no candidate’s name is
23 associated with any political party or persuasion, and in such case the ballot may
24 contain the names of all candidates for such offices.
- 25 B. **Opportunity to Join or Confirm Membership in the Party Must be Provided.**
26 Voters participating in the Democratic Primary must be offered the opportunity to
27 publicly affiliate with the Democratic Party but public affiliation with the Party
28 shall not be a requirement of participation in the Democratic Primary unless such
29 public affiliation is required by law. As a condition of participating in the
30 Democratic Primary, voters must either publicly affiliate with the Democratic
31 Party or publicly indicate that they are not affiliated with any political party.
- 32 C. **Voter Participation is Public Record.** The participation of any voter in the
33 Democratic Primary shall be a public record to the extent necessary to verify that
34 only voters eligible under party rules receive a Democratic ballot and, in addition,
35 the choice by any voter whether to voluntarily affiliate with the Democratic Party
36 at the Democratic Primary or to declare a lack of affiliation with any political party
37 shall be a public record.

1 D. **A Statewide System of Voluntary Voter Registration by Party** which allows
2 voters to publicly affiliate with the Democratic Party shall satisfy the requirements
3 of Subparagraph B, of this paragraph.
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5 V. **Alternative Means of Selection.** Where State law does not provide for a Democratic
6 Primary that complies with these Rules, including where the so-called "Top Two"
7 Primary is used, nominees shall be selected in accordance with the following rules,
8 provided that in the event of a vacancy on the Democratic ticket, the State Chair may fill
9 the vacancy as provided by State law and other applicable Party rules.

10 A. **Authorization Required.** No candidate for public office may be designated, nor
11 permit him or herself to be designated, as the Democratic nominee for any public
12 office unless such candidate has been designated by the Washington State
13 Democratic Party as a Democratic nominee pursuant to this Rule.

14 B. **Nomination Process**

- 15 1. **County Partisan Office Nominees.** The nominees for county partisan
16 office shall be nominated by a vote of the County Central Committee, or if
17 the County Central Committee fails to act before the next State Central
18 Committee meeting following the Top Two Primary, by the State Central
19 Committee at its meeting following the Top Two Primary. In making this
20 nomination the Central Committee shall consider the vote totals in the
21 Primary, and whether the candidate had received the endorsement of the
22 county party.
- 23 2. **Legislative Nominees.** The nominees for Washington State Senate and
24 Washington State House of Representatives shall be nominated by a vote of
25 the Legislative District Organization, or if the Legislative District
26 Organization fails to act before the next State Central Committee meeting
27 following the Top Two Primary, by the State Central Committee at its
28 meeting following the Top Two Primary. In making this nomination the
29 Central Committee shall consider the vote totals in the Primary, and
30 whether the candidate had received the endorsement of the legislative
31 district party organization.
- 32 3. **United States House of Representatives Nominees.** The nominees for
33 United States House of Representative shall be nominated by a vote of the
34 State Central Committee at its meeting following the Top Two Primary.
- 35 4. **Statewide and Congressional Nominees.** The nominees for all statewide
36 partisan elected offices (U. S. Senate, Governor, Lt. Governor, Secretary of
37 State, Treasurer, Auditor, Attorney General, Insurance Commissioner, and
38 Public Lands Commissioner) shall be selected at the Democratic State
39 Convention in accordance with the rules for the Convention.
- 40 5. **State Chair to Notify Election Officials.** To the extent required by law or
41 appropriate, the State Chair shall submit to state and local election officials
42 the names of those candidates authorized to campaign as the Democratic
43 nominees.
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2 C. **Vacancy on Ticket.** A vacancy caused by the death or disqualification of nominee
3 of the Democratic Party may be filled at any time up to and including the day
4 prior to the election for that position. For state partisan offices in any political
5 subdivision voted on solely by electors of a single county, an individual shall be
6 appointed to fill such vacancy by the relevant Democratic County Central
7 Committee. For all other partisan offices, including federal or statewide offices, an
8 individual shall be appointed to fill such vacancy by the Washington State
9 Democratic Central Committee. The authority granted under this section may be
10 delegated by the County or State Democratic Central Committee to its Executive
11 Board or Chair.

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13 D. As a threshold of support for nomination election under this Rule, a registered
14 voter must have either (1) received a vote of approval of 25% of those present and
15 voting at a meeting of the Democratic Party organization under the charter for the
16 jurisdiction represented by the office sought or (2) at the time of filing the
17 declaration of candidacy required by law submitted a nominating petition signed
18 by at least 5% of those voters who at the time of signing are voters in the
19 jurisdiction and registered with the Democratic Party or (3) at the time of filing the
20 declaration of candidacy required by law submitted a nominating petition signed
21 by at least 25% of the elected and appointed Democratic Precinct Committee
22 Officers represented precincts within the jurisdiction represented by the office
23 sought and who held such office as of the last meeting of the Democratic party
24 organization for the jurisdiction.

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26 VI. **Threshold demonstration of Party support required.** Any registered voter in the State
27 of Washington is eligible for selection as a candidate or nominee of the Democratic Party
28 for any public office provided:
29 A. The voter must publicly attest his or her support of the Democratic Party and his
30 or her desire to be publicly known as a Democrat; and
31 B. The voter must be otherwise eligible under state law for election to the office
32 sought; and
33 C. The voter must not have been registered as a member of any political party other
34 than the Democratic Party for at least one (1) year immediately preceding filing for
35 office.

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37 VII. **Decision of Executive Board Final.** The decision of the executive board with respect to
38 any question of interpretation of these rules is final