Rules for Constituency Caucuses

I. Applicability: These rules shall apply to any Constituency Caucus established by the Washington State Democratic Central Committee (hereafter SCC) pursuant to Charter Article VI, Section G and Bylaws Article II.F.

II. Formation and Recognition of Constituency Caucuses

A. Any group of Democratic activists wishing to form a new Constituency Caucus or, having formed a caucus or council outside the Party but wanting to be recognized as a Constituency Caucus, may apply for recognition by the SCC through the State Party Secretary. The proposed Constituency Caucus shall submit an application as described in appendix A of this document. After review by the Secretary and Executive Committee, the Chair of the SCC shall submit the plan for formation to the SCC for consideration.

B. In the event the Executive Committee concludes that a proposed Constituency Caucus is not substantially distinct in name, purpose and mission from one or more existing organizations it shall make a recommendation to the SCC whether the proposed new Caucus should replace the similar Constituency Caucus or whether the request to recognize the new Constituency Caucus should be rejected.

C. Any Constituency Caucus that has met, prior to the passage of these rules, at any regularly scheduled meeting of the SCC during the 2019/2020 session of the SCC is deemed “recognized” by the SCC for the purpose of these rules.

1. If a caucus has not submitted Appendix A (or some reasonable approximate historical substitute), that Caucus must provide that information at the submission of their first annual report.
2. This application will be considered immediately and automatically ratified by the SCC as long as their submission of Appendix A abides by these rules.

III. Public Communications

The state Chair is the Authorized Spokesperson for the Democratic Party of the State of Washington. (Bylaws V.A.9) All public communications by the Caucus shall state that the views expressed are the views of the Caucus only and do not necessarily represent the views of the Washington State Democratic Party or any other organization affiliated with the Democratic Party. The State Party shall provide approved language for this statement.

Passed by the WSDCC on February 2nd, 2020
IV. Meetings

1. Constituency Caucuses in good standing may request use of otherwise available meeting space at SCC meetings or State Conventions. Requests are subject to availability of suitable facilities and to any State Party policies relating to the use of facilities rented or provided by the State Party. All Caucus meetings times and locations provided with on-site space at SCC meetings or the State Convention shall be included in the agenda prepared for SCC members (or convention delegates).

2. If a Constituency Caucus elects to meet off-site prior to or during an SCC meeting (or State Convention) and informs State Party staff at least fifteen days in advance, the location and time of the meeting shall be included in the agenda prepared for SCC members (or convention delegates) with a disclaimer that the Constituency Caucus is meeting off site. The Constituency Caucus shall be solely responsible for hosting an off-site meeting, including but not limited to expenses, liability, and security.

V. Annual Report

By December 1st of each calendar year each constituency caucus shall submit to the state party chair an annual report on the caucuses’ activities. The report shall include the name, mission, officers, major activities, number and jurisdiction distribution of its membership, average attendance at meetings, objectives for the upcoming year, and performance to the objectives of the prior calendar year. A template for this report form will be approved by the Rules Committee. A form for the report provided as appendix B to this document to simplify production and review of the information.

The State Party Chair shall include the annual reports in the call to meeting for the January meeting.

VI. Constituency Caucus Bylaws and Membership

A. Each Constituency Caucus shall operate under a set of bylaws governing its meetings and defining its membership. The State Party Secretary and Party Affairs staff must have a current copy of the bylaws for each recognized Constituency Caucus.

B. Within three months of being established by the SCC, or until the next regularly scheduled meeting of the SCC (whichever is the longer period of time) a Constituency Caucus shall submit a copy of its bylaws to the State Party Secretary for review and approval by the Rules and Bylaws Committee to ensure consistency with the Charter, Bylaws and these rules. If the Rules and Bylaws Committee concludes that the bylaws of a
Constituency Caucus are not consistent with the Charter, Bylaws or any rules or policies adopted pursuant to the Charter and Bylaws it shall notify the Caucus of the deficiencies. A Constituency Caucus so notified shall have three months to amend its bylaws (or adopt new bylaws) to correct the deficiencies or be automatically suspended until all such deficiencies are corrected.

C. The bylaws of a Constituency Caucus must:

1. Specify what the Constituency Caucus’s quorum for meetings shall be;

2. Limit the Constituency Caucus membership to residents of Washington State who are willing to support the principles and goals of the Democratic Party, as expressed in the Charter and, expressly define any further limitations on membership in the Constituency Caucus (provided that no requirement for payment for dues may be included unless accompanied by a simple process for waiver based on hardship);

3. Provide that the Constituency Caucus agrees to conduct all business according to the Charter and Bylaws of the Washington State Democratic State Party, applicable state and federal laws governing State Party activities, and other provisions adopted pursuant to the authority of the Charter and Bylaws, including rules adopted by the SCC relating to Constituency Caucuses;

4. Specify responsibilities for control of and reporting on caucus finances including the specific responsibilities of each caucus officer.

D. Membership in a recognized Constituency Caucus does not grant any member membership in the SCC or in any other SCC affiliated organization beyond the recognized Constituency Caucus itself. Each Constituency Caucus shall at least once a year offer its members the opportunity to have their contact information shared with the State Party so that they will receive all general communications provided by the State Party to its supporters.

E. If a Constituency Caucus elects a new officer or an officer’s contact information changes, the Constituency Caucus must notify WSDCC Secretary & state party affairs staff of the change within ten days.

F. If a Constituency Caucus amends its bylaws, it shall provide a full copy of the amended bylaws to the State Party Secretary within fourteen days of the change for the same review and approval by the Rules and Bylaws

Passed by the WSDCC on February 2nd, 2020
Committee as is given to wholly new bylaws and shall correct any deficiencies noted by the Rules and Bylaws Committee.

VII. Financial Management and Reporting

Constituency Caucuses may fundraise for incidental expenses related to Constituency Caucus activities, and meeting spaces. Constituency caucuses shall not make either monetary or in-kind contributions to campaigns for candidates or ballot measures. Treasurers must be identified to the Finance and Compliance Director of the State Party within seven days of their appointment or election, and contact information supplied.

A. On December 1st of each calendar year, officially recognized Constituency Caucus provide the Chair and the Treasurer of the SCC with a report summarizing its income, expenses for the preceding calendar year and proposed objectives for the current year. A report template is included in Appendix C of these rules.

B. These reports shall be included in the SCC Treasurer’s report in the January meeting of the next year.

C. If a caucus is found to have made a monetary or in-kind contribution to a campaign the Chair shall contact the caucus leadership and provide one or more options for how the situation may be resolved. The caucus leadership shall have 15 days from the time the options are reported to them from the Chair to demonstrate that appropriate actions have been taken and that the situation is resolved.

D. If the situation is not resolved the Chair shall convene a meeting of the Executive Committee. The Chair shall present the situation and the recommendations that have been made for resolution. The caucus leadership shall be afforded the opportunity to present their recommendation for resolution of the situation. The Executive Committee will derive a set of actions required to keep the party in compliance with public disclosure laws.

E. The caucus shall have 30 days to execute the direction of the Executive Committee from time of notification. If they fail to do so, the SCC shall vote on if the caucus’s recognition will be revoked at the next meeting of the SCC. In the interim, the Chair shall take such actions as necessary to keep the party in compliance with public disclosure laws, until such time as the SCC has the ability to vote on further action. The caucus may apply for reinstatement at any future general meeting of the SCC.

Passed by the WSDCC on February 2nd, 2020
F. Violations of this rule against monetary or in-kind contributions shall result in a vote of the SCC on whether the Caucus’s recognition should be revoked. The caucus may apply for reinstatement at any future general meeting of the SCC.

VIII. Acceptance of Code of Conduct and Development of Complaint Procedures

A. A Constituency Caucus and its members are subject to the Code of Conduct of the SCC and related policies and procedures.

B. Constituency Caucuses will establish their own procedures for implementing the Code of Conduct and disciplining members who violate it, within their own caucuses. Complaints against state committee members and officers of the Caucus may still be filed under the SCC Procedures for Code of Conduct Violations.
APPENDIX A: Sample Outline for Constituency Caucus Application

Name:

Immutable Characteristic or Common Interest:

Mission Statement or Purpose:

Membership Description:

Objectives for The Calendar Year:
APPENDIX B: Form for Constituency Caucus Annual Report

Caucus Name:

Caucus Mission:

Caucus Officers: (Modify to fit caucus bylaws)
Chair
Vice Chair
Treasurer
Secretary

Membership
Number of members
Geographic Distribution of Membership
CD 1:
CD 2:
CD 3:
CD 4:
CD 5:
CD 6:
CD 7:
CD 8:
CD 9:
CD 10:

Percentage of Members Receiving State Party Communications
Average Attendance at Meetings
Number of PCOs

Overview of Activities
Objectives for The Upcoming Year
Performance to The Objectives of the Prior Calendar Year
Number of Meetings Held
Other Activities

Passed by the WSDCC on February 2nd, 2020
APPENDIX C: Template for Constituency Caucus Financial Report

Cash on Hand at Beginning of Year
Expenditures
Deposits
Cash on Hand at End of Year
Fundraising Objectives for Next Year