



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE NATIONAL PLATFORM AND THE CONVENTION PLATFORM COMMITTEE

1) What is the Platform?

The National Platform is an official statement of the Party's position on a wide variety of issues. Each issue category included in the Platform is a "plank." A new Platform is adopted every four years by the Democratic National Convention.

In 1840, the Democratic Party adopted the first-ever platform by a political party. That document was less than 1,000 words. Our 2008 Platform was about 25,000 words, but some Platforms have been as large as 40,000 words.

The Democratic Party has a long and proud history of representing and protecting the interests of working Americans and guaranteeing personal liberties for all. The 2008 National Platform focused on **Renewing America's Promise: (1) Renewing the American Dream; (2) Renewing American Leadership; (3) Renewing the American Community; and (4) Renewing American Democracy.**

To view the 2008 Platform, go to www.democrats.org.

2) What is the Platform Committee?

The Platform Committee is one of three "Standing Committees" of the 2012 Democratic National Convention. The other two standing committees are the Credentials and Rules Committees.

The Committee is responsible for drafting and recommending a proposed National Platform for approval at the Democratic National Convention. Its recommendation is presented as a Committee Report voted on by the delegates to the Democratic National Convention.

3) When will the Platform Committee meet?

The Platform Committee will meet August 10-12, 2012 in Detroit, Michigan.

4) How do individuals submit testimony to the Platform Committee?

Under the Democratic Party's rules, any person may submit a written statement or testimony concerning the Platform to the Platform Committee prior to the Committee's meeting. An online portal has been established to receive submissions at www.democrats.org/platform. Correspondence may also be mailed to: The Chairs of the Platform Committee, c/o The Democratic National Committee, 430 South Capitol Street, SE, Washington, D.C. 20003, or sent via email to platform@dnc.org.

5) Can I testify before the Platform Committee?

The Platform Committee and/or Platform Drafting Committee will hold a limited number of public forums. Any person may request permission to testify at a public hearing and/or forum. Generally, the opportunity to present testimony in person is limited based on timing and logistical considerations.

6) How does the Platform Committee operate?

The *Call for the 2012 Democratic National Convention* outlines the general responsibilities of the Platform Committee, the composition of its membership, and its Rules of Procedure. The Committee may also adopt additional Rules of Procedure for conducting its business, and, absent other provisions, it operates under *Robert's Rules of Order* (as most recently revised).

Before the Platform Committee meets, the DNC Chair will distribute a document to the Platform Committee members outlining the issues to be considered by the committee. The document is usually an initial draft of the Platform as prepared by a small Platform Drafting Committee.

At the Platform Committee meeting, members discuss each plank of a draft platform. They have the opportunity to submit amendments to the draft. Amendments must be approved by a majority of the members present and voting. An amendment that fails on a majority vote can still be brought to the Convention floor as a minority report, with the support of members representing at least 25% of the total votes of the Committee (47 members). Minority reports are voted on by the Convention delegates during the consideration of the Platform Committee's report.

7) How can someone become a Platform Committee Member?

Any Democratic voter is eligible for membership to the Platform Committee or one of the other standing committees. Members do not have to be delegates to the Convention. Each state allocates its committee positions to presidential candidates based on the results of the state's presidential primary or caucus. Presidential candidates who have qualified to receive committee positions nominate individuals for each committee, who are then elected by the state's National Convention delegates. A detailed description of how and when each state and territory's standing committee members are elected can be found within the state or territory's Delegate Selection Plan.

As with all Democratic Party elections, membership on the standing committees is open to all Democrats, regardless of race, sex, age, color, creed, national origin, religion, ethnic identity, sexual orientation, economic status or physical disability.

8) How many members serve on the Platform Committee?

Each Convention Standing Committee has a total of 186 members (not including Committee officers) that cast 183 votes. Members are allocated as follows:

- A total of 157 members are proportionally allocated among the states based on population and Democratic voting strength. (The District of Columbia and Puerto Rico are treated as states.)
- Four members are allocated to represent American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Democratic Party Committee Abroad ("Democrats Abroad") with each member casting $\frac{1}{4}$ vote. (These jurisdictions are collectively referred to as the "territories.")
- Each committee includes 25 Party Leader and Elected Official (PLEO) members. These members were nominated by DNC Chairwoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz and elected by the DNC Executive Committee.
- Members selected by each state and territory, as well as the PLEO members, must be as equally divided as mathematically practicable between men and women.

9) When were the Platform Committee Members selected?

Once a state or territory finishes selecting its National Convention delegates, those delegates meet and vote on the members to serve on the Platform and other standing committees. All state-based standing committee members were selected by June 24, 2012. The 25 PLEO members were elected by the DNC Executive Committee in Charlotte, NC upon nomination by DNC Chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz.

10) Who Chairs the Platform Committee?

On April 28, 2012, DNC Chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz announced the selection of Cory Booker of New Jersey and Lt. Gen. Claudia Kennedy of South Carolina to serve as the Chairs of the 2012 Platform Committee. They were nominated by Chair Wasserman Schultz and elected by the DNC Executive Committee.

11) What are the responsibilities of the Platform Committee Chairs?

The Chairs call and preside over the Platform Committee's meeting(s), prepare an agenda for the orderly conduct of the committee's business, and supervise preparation of research studies and briefing materials as required to accomplish the committee's work.

12) What is the Platform Drafting Committee?

The Platform Drafting Committee is responsible for preparing an initial draft of the Platform, which is used as a working document by the Platform Committee at its meeting. There are fifteen members on the Drafting Committee and they do not have to be members of the Platform Committee. The Drafting Committee is not considered a subcommittee of the Platform Committee.

13) What night does the Convention vote on the Platform? What about the other Committee reports?

The Platform Committee's Report will be considered on the first day (Tuesday) of the Convention. The Credentials Committee's Report is considered as the first item of business on the first day of the Convention, since it affects the seating of delegates. The second item of business considered at the Convention is the Rules Committee's Report, which recommends the agenda, procedural rules, and officers for the Convention.

14) May Platform Committee Members attend the Convention?

Any standing committee member who is not already a delegate or alternate will receive a credential for guest seating for the National Convention.

15) Who covers the costs associated with attending the Committee's meeting and the Convention?

Each standing committee member is responsible for his or her own costs. Members should contact their State Party for information on how and where to seek financial assistance to help defray expenses.

For more information, call 202/488-5049 or write to:

Office of Party Affairs and Delegate Selection
Democratic National Committee
430 South Capitol St., SE
Washington, DC 20003

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