



Rules Committee Handbook

What is the Rules Committee?

The Rules Committee is a standing (or permanent) committee of the Democratic Party of Multnomah County. The Rules Committee reviews the Bylaws and Standing Rules in order to draft and propose rules and amendments. Also, when Precinct Committeepersons make amendments, the Rules Committee reviews, recommends, and reports on all proposed amendments.

What are the responsibilities of the Rules Committee?

Bylaws Article VII § 4 H states:

The Rules Committee will:

1. Review the Bylaws and Standing Rules on a regular basis and draft amendments as needed;
2. Review, make recommendations, and report to the Central Committee on proposed amendments to the Bylaws and Standing Rules;
3. The Rules Chair shall provide interpretation, in consultation with the committee, on matters concerning the Bylaws, when called upon by the Party Chair.

And...

Bylaws Article XIV § 1 (B) states:

1. ... the Rules Committee will prepare rules and procedures to govern the [platform] convention.

How do I submit an amendment?

Any PCP may propose amendments to the Bylaws or the Standing rules. Amendments must be given to the recording secretary in writing (recording@multdems.org) at the CC meeting occurring the month *before* they are voted on. Bylaws amendments will require a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote, Standing Rule amendments will require a majority vote. See Bylaws Art. X.

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I am another officer, committee chair, or executive committee member. What are my responsibilities to the Rules Committee?

Recording Secretary:

- Upon receipt of a proposed Standing Rule or Bylaw amendment, email the proposed amendment to rules@multdems.org.

Chair of the Platform, Resolutions and Legislation Committee:

- Consult with the Rules Committee on issues regarding the Platform Convention.

Chair of the Party:

- Call on the Rules Committee Chair to provide interpretation of, and consultation on, the Bylaws and Standing Rules.

Timeline for Submitting an Amendment:

PCP Originated Amendment

1. PCPs must submit a proposed amendment in writing at the central committee meeting before it is to be voted on.
2. The Recording Secretary immediately sends the proposed amendment to the Rules Committee.
3. The Party Chair immediately sends out the proposed amendment for notice and comment.
4. The Rules Committee invites the proposer to its next meeting and reviews the proposed amendment at its monthly meeting prior to the next Central Committee meeting.
5. The Rules Committee will respond in one of the following ways:
 - a. Make a recommendation of “vote yes” or “vote no”
 - b. Request the proposer adopt amendments to their proposed amendment and resubmit their amendment in time for notice at the next central committee meeting.
6. The Rules Committee Chair will then notify the Party Chair of the recommendation of the Rules Committee and its desire to speak or not to speak regarding the proposed PCP amendment.

7. The Rules Committee Chair will submit the final version of any proposed rules to the Party Chair and the Communications Officer.
8. The Rules Committee commits to keeping the total time for consideration of an amendment to under one month for the benefit of working people.

Rules Committee Originated Amendment

1. The Rules Committee will submit a proposed amendment in writing at the central committee meeting before it is voted on.
2. The Party Chair will send out the proposed amendment for notice and comment.
3. The Rules Committee will allow for public comment on the proposed rule until the time of its regular monthly meeting.
4. The Rules committee may amend proposed amendments following the public comment period and resubmit amendments provided they meet notice requirements in the bylaws.
5. The Rules Committee will submit proposed amendments to the Party Chair and to the Communications Officer.

Style Guide:

- All bylaw and standing rule amendments will use the following preferred action verbs:
 - “Will” means a mandatory action which must be taken by an individual or by a body.
 - “May” means an optional action”
- All bylaw and standing rule amendments will use the active voice.
 - Ex. The Party Chair will send notice.
 - *Not:* Notice will be sent out.
- Language should be as short and simple as possible.
- Bylaws should generally only be amended where there has been a problem, where there is an imminently foreseeable problem, or where there is a conflict within the bylaws.
- The Bylaws should exist to minimize oppression within the party, and establish obvious standards/rules/procedures.

An Equity Lens in Rulemaking:

- Rules Committee will use the Racial Equity Lens in considering all Bylaw and Standing Rule amendments.

Additional Rules:

- After initial posting, the Rules Committee will make changes to the Handbook only monthly on the date of the Rules Committee meeting to promote consistency.