

Section 3501.01 | Election procedure - election officials definitions.

Effective:
October 17, 2019

(F) "Political party" means any group of voters meeting the requirements set forth in section [3517.01](#) of the Revised Code for the formation and existence of a political party.

(1) "Major political party" means any political party organized under the laws of this state whose candidate for governor or nominees for presidential electors received not less than twenty per cent of the total vote cast for such office at the most recent regular state election.

(G) "Dominant party in a precinct" or "dominant political party in a precinct" means that political party whose candidate for election to the office of governor at the most recent regular state election at which a governor was elected received more votes than any other person received for election to that office in such precinct at such election.

(L) "Officer of a political party" includes, but is not limited to, any member, elected or appointed, of a controlling committee, whether representing the territory of the state, a district therein, a county, township, a city, a ward, a precinct, or other territory, of a major or minor political party.

(Q) "Precinct" means a district within a county established by the board of elections of such county within which all qualified electors having a voting residence therein may vote at the same polling place.

(T) "Political subdivision" means a county, township, city, village, or school district.

Section 3517.01 | Political party definitions.

Effective:
October 17, 2019

(A)(1) A political party within the meaning of Title XXXV of the Revised Code is any group of voters that meets either of the following requirements:

(a) Except as otherwise provided in this division, at the most recent regular state election, the group polled for its candidate for governor in the state or nominees for presidential electors at least three per cent of the entire vote cast for that office. A group that meets the requirements of this division remains a political party for a period of four years after meeting those requirements.

(b) The group filed with the secretary of state, subsequent to its failure to meet the requirements of division (A)(1)(a) of this section, a party formation petition that meets all of the following requirements:

(i) The petition is signed by qualified electors equal in number to at least one per cent of the total vote for governor or nominees for presidential electors at the most recent election for such office.

(ii) The petition is signed by not fewer than five hundred qualified electors from each of at least a minimum of one-half of the congressional districts in this state. If an odd number of congressional districts exists in this state, the number of districts that results from dividing the number of congressional districts by two shall be rounded up to the next whole number.

(iii) The petition declares the petitioners' intention of organizing a political party, the name of which shall be stated in the declaration, and of participating in the succeeding general election, held in even-numbered years, that occurs more than one hundred twenty-five days after the date of filing.

(iv) The petition designates a committee of not less than three nor more than five individuals of the petitioners, who shall represent the petitioners in all matters relating to the petition. Notice of all matters or proceedings pertaining to the petition may be served on the committee, or any of them, either personally or by registered mail, or by leaving such notice at the usual place of residence of each of them.

(2) No such group of electors shall assume a name or designation that is similar, in the opinion of the secretary of state, to that of an existing political party as to confuse or mislead the voters at an election.

Section 3517.02 | Controlling committees of major or intermediate political party.

Effective:
February 5, 2014

All members of controlling committees of a major political party shall be elected by direct vote of the members of the party, except as otherwise provided in section [3517.05](#) of the Revised Code. Their names shall be placed upon the official ballot, and, notwithstanding division (B) of section [3513.23](#) of the Revised Code, the persons receiving the highest number of votes for committeepersons shall be the members of those controlling committees. Each member of a controlling committee shall be a resident and qualified elector of the district, ward, or precinct that the member is elected to represent. All members of controlling committees of a minor political party shall be determined in accordance with party rules.

Each political party shall file with the office of the secretary of state a copy of its constitution and bylaws, if any, within thirty days of adoption or amendment. Each party shall also file with the office of the secretary of state a list of members of its controlling committees and other party officials within thirty days of their election or appointment.

Section 3517.03 | Controlling committees of major or intermediate political party membership.

Effective:
February 5, 2014

The controlling committees of each major political party or organization shall be a state central committee consisting of two members, one a man and one a woman, representing either each congressional district in the state or each senatorial district in the state, as the outgoing committee determines; a county central committee consisting of one member from each election precinct in the county, or of one member from each ward in each city and from each township in the county, as the outgoing committee determines; and such district, city, township, or other committees as the rules of the party provide.

All the members of such committees shall be members of the party and shall be elected for terms of either two or four years, as determined by party rules, by direct vote at the primary held in an even-numbered year. Except as otherwise provided in section [3517.02](#) of the Revised Code, candidates for election as state central committee members shall be elected at primaries in the same manner as provided in sections [3513.01](#) to [3513.32](#) of the Revised Code for the nomination of candidates for office in a county. Candidates for election as members of the county central committee shall be elected at primaries in the same manner as provided in those sections for the nomination of candidates for county offices, except as otherwise provided in sections [3513.051](#) and [3517.02](#) of the Revised Code.

Each major party controlling committee shall elect an executive committee that shall have the powers granted to it by the party controlling committee, and provided to it by law. When a judicial, senatorial, or congressional district is comprised of more than one county, the chairperson and secretary of the county central committee from each county in that district shall constitute the judicial, senatorial, or congressional committee of the district. When a judicial, senatorial, or congressional district is included within a county, the county central committee shall constitute the judicial, senatorial, or congressional committee of the district.

A minor political party may elect controlling committees at a primary election in the even-numbered year by filing a plan for party organization with the secretary of state on or before the ninetieth day before the day of the primary election. The plan shall specify which offices are to be elected and provide the procedure for qualification of candidates for those offices. Candidates to be elected pursuant to the plan shall be designated and qualified on or before the ninetieth day before the day of the election. Such parties may, in lieu of electing a controlling committee or

other officials, choose such committee or other officials in accordance with party rules. Each such party shall file the names and addresses of members of its controlling committee and party officers with the secretary of state.

Section 3517.04 | Organization of state central committees.

Effective:
October 30, 1989

The members-elect of each major political party state central committee shall, except as otherwise provided in this section, meet following the declaration of the results by the boards of elections of the election of members of the state central committees, at a suitable place and time to be designated by the retiring chairman of the committee in accordance with party rules. In the case of a county central committee, the meeting shall be held not earlier than six nor later than fifteen days following the declaration of the results by the board of elections of the election of members of county central committees in that county. Notice of any meeting held pursuant to this section, giving the place and time, shall be sent to each member-elect by the retiring secretary of the committee by mail and a copy of the notice shall be posted in the office of the secretary of state or board of elections, as the case may be, at least five days prior to any such meeting. The meeting shall be called to order by the retiring chairman or secretary or if there is no such officer, or if such officer is absent, then by a member of such committee designated by the secretary of state in the case of the state committees, and by a member of the board of elections of the same political party, designated by the board, in the case of county committees. A temporary chairman and secretary shall be chosen and the committee shall proceed to organize by the election of a chairman, vice-chairman, treasurer, secretary, and such other officers as the rules provide.

Section 3517.05 | Terms of party committees - determining rightful county central or executive committee.

Effective:
October 19, 1978

All party committees, the selection of which is provided for in sections [3517.02](#) and [3517.03](#) of the Revised Code, shall, except as otherwise provided in this section, serve until the date of the organizational meeting provided for in section [3517.04](#) of the Revised Code. A county central committee shall serve until the sixth day after the date of the declaration of the results by the board of elections of the primary election in that county. In case of vacancies caused by death, resignation, failure to elect, or removal from the precinct, ward, township, or district from which a committeeman was chosen, the controlling committee or, if authorized, the executive committee shall fill the vacancy for the unexpired term by a majority vote of the members of such committee.

If more than one organized group claims to be the rightful county central or executive committee, each such group shall file a list of its officers and members as provided in section 3517.06 of the Revised Code, and the board of elections with which such lists are filed shall certify them to the state central committee of the party concerned. The state central committee shall meet within thirty days after receipt of such certification and forthwith determine and certify which committee shall be recognized as the rightful county central or executive committee.

Section 3517.06 | Names and addresses of members and officers of county central committee and county executive committee.

Effective:
October 1, 1953

A list of the names and addresses of the members and officers of the county central committee and the county executive committee of each political party shall be filed by the secretary of each committee in the office of the board of elections of the county in which such committee exists and in the office of the secretary of state promptly after the organization of each of such committees. A list of the names and addresses of the members of the state central committee and the state executive committee of each political party shall be filed by the secretary of each committee in the office of the secretary of state promptly after the organization of each of such committees.

All changes occurring in the membership of a county central or executive committee after such filing shall be reported promptly by the secretary of such committee to the board and to the secretary of state. All changes occurring in the membership of a state central or executive committee after such filing shall be reported promptly by the secretary of such committee to the secretary of state. All such lists shall be open to public inspection at all times when the offices in which they are filed are open for business.

Section 3517.1012 | Political parties to establish restricted funds - deposits and disbursements.

Effective:
October 17, 2019

(A)(1) Each state and county political party shall establish a restricted fund that is separate from all other accounts of the political party.

(2) A state or county political party shall deposit into its restricted fund all gifts that are made to or accepted by the political party from a corporation or labor organization subject to the applicable limitations prescribed in division (X) of section [3517.13](#) of the Revised Code. A state or county political party may deposit into its restricted fund any gifts that are made to or accepted by the political party from a source other than a corporation or labor organization.

(3) Moneys in a state or county political party's restricted fund may be disbursed to pay costs incurred for any of the purposes specified in division (A) of section [3517.18](#) of the Revised Code.

(B) Except as otherwise provided in this division, a state or county political party shall file deposit and disbursement statements, in the same manner as the party is required to file statements of contributions and expenditures under section [3517.10](#) of the Revised Code, regarding all deposits made into, and all disbursements made from, the party's restricted fund. Deposit and disbursement statements filed in accordance with this division by a county political party shall be filed by electronic means of transmission to the office of the secretary of state at the times specified in division (A) of section [3517.10](#) of the Revised Code for the filing of statements of contributions and expenditures if the county political party accepts gifts from a corporation or labor organization under division (A)(2) of this section.