



Precinct Committee Person Handbook

PCDEC Communications and Training

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Paid for by the Pinellas County Democratic Party

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Letter to the Newly Elected Precinct Committee Person

Congratulations on your election or appointment as a Precinct Committee Person!

Being a Precinct Committee Person (PCP) is one of the most important roles in our party. As a PCP, you are on the front lines of winning elections up and down the ballot - from the School Board to the Senate.

You are the main point of information and contact for voters in your neighborhood and within the Democratic Party. You are the person who gets to know them, their family, and their priorities - the person who shows up and listens, encourages people to vote, and makes sure that our party represents and reflects their voices and priorities.

Our nation is facing difficult times. Americans have historically had low trust in public media and institutions. Many of us move through our lives without engaging with folks who have different opinions or backgrounds from our own. Now, more than ever, face-to-face conversations among neighbors has a critical role to play in fixing our politics and repairing our social fabric.

As a PCP, you are an important- and very personal- link to civic life for your neighbors.

As a party, we believe that there is an incredible amount of power in building relationships door- knock by door-knock, call by call, text by text. **Your role as a PCP is more important than ever. You have the power to make a difference.**

All it takes is getting in touch with your neighbors--as little as a few times each year, or as frequently as every few weeks. There are fantastic new tools available to help you engage with your community more efficiently and effectively than ever before:

Knocking on doors:

- The [miniVAN app](#) lets you knock on doors from a list that you create in Votebuilder.

More Resources:

- We continually collect and update resources for PCPs and activists. One of our best resources is the [National Democratic Training Committee](#). You'll find trainings for everything from canvassing and phone-banking, to walk-throughs on using VAN to make lists of voters in your neighborhood; and much more. Try bookmarking it and checking back frequently!

This handbook has been designed to give you a blueprint of the responsibilities of a PCP. We will highlight our best practices and offer ideas for doing the work. This handbook is an incredible resource, designed by PCPs who have done the work in their own neighborhoods. These experienced folks have developed a series of best practices for their precincts, which now can help you be successful in yours!

Above all, thank you for everything you do. Activism is the engine that powers our party. Now let's go win some elections!

The Pinellas County Democrats have replicated and adapted this manual with permission from the Washington State Democrats. The above letter was originally written by Tina Podlodowski, Washington State Democrats Chair and included here with gratitude.

Using this Handbook

This version of the Pinellas County Democrats PCP Handbook is managed by the PCDEC Communications and Training Committee. This handbook evolved from earlier publications created by knowledgeable and dedicated Pinellas Democrats party volunteers, and references presentations, training and information provided, with permission, by the Washington State Democrats' staff. We also relied on information about canvassing, Votebuilder, and phone-banking from other Democratic organizations nationally. Where appropriate, we have done our best to cite those sources.

Our intent is to treat this handbook as a living document. We would appreciate any feedback you have regarding items for inclusion; topics which need to be expanded upon; or any input on necessary changes or updates.

The handbook is available online at:

<http://bit.ly/PCPHandbook>

Send feedback to:

training@pinellasdemocrats.com

Click on the link below to take a brief survey about the handbook:

[PCP Handbook Survey v.01](#)

Thank you for becoming a PCP and taking on the challenge!

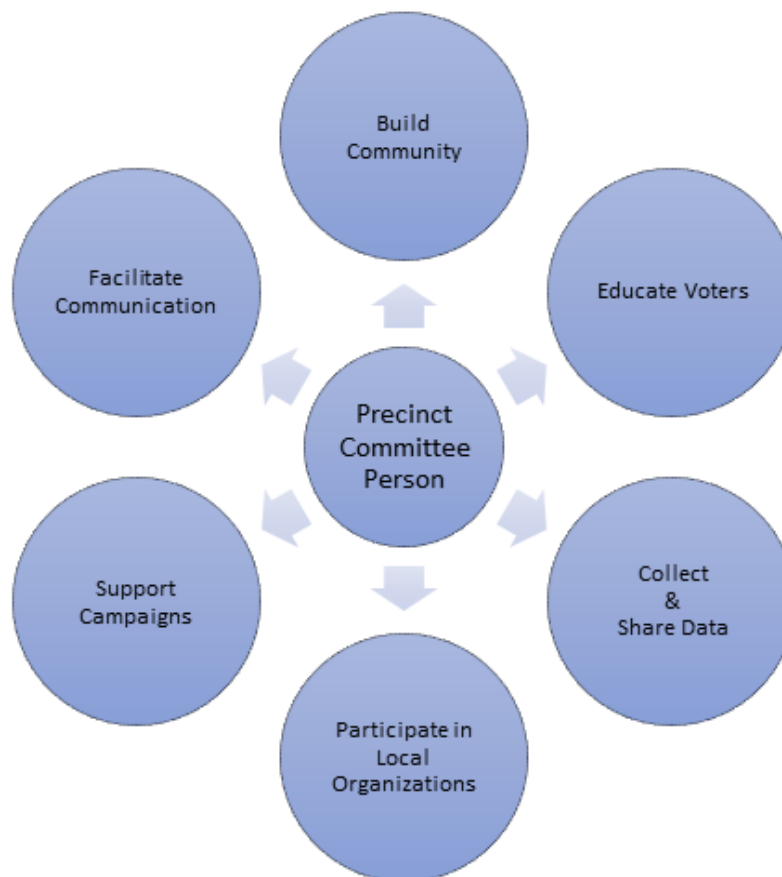
Being a Precinct Committee Person (PCP)

A Precinct Committee Person (PCP) is an elected official of the Democratic Party. As a PCP, you serve as the primary conduit between voters in your neighborhood and the Democratic Party. Becoming active with your local Democratic organization- the Pinellas County Democrats- will make you a more effective PCP, and provide you with the opportunity to make a real difference in your community.

The most important day-to-day job of a PCP is talking to your neighbors. Your conversations with voters in your neighborhood help you represent them effectively at our local party meetings. You provide us with important information for identifying the key voters in your area, which helps us reach out to them effectively during campaigns. To make sure the information you gather is shared and put to use, you'll be using tools such as VoteBuilder. VoteBuilder, aka "VAN," is an online database of voter information that helps us run successful campaigns.

Additionally, being a PCP is a great way to "build our bench" of future candidates. As a PCP you will be actively participating in the Pinellas County Democrats; you'll be making connections in your community and throughout your precinct; and you'll be learning about campaigns and Get Out the Vote during election time. With everything you learn and experience, you may decide to run for one of the thousands of elected positions in Pinellas and throughout Florida!

What Does a PCP Do?



PCP responsibilities include:

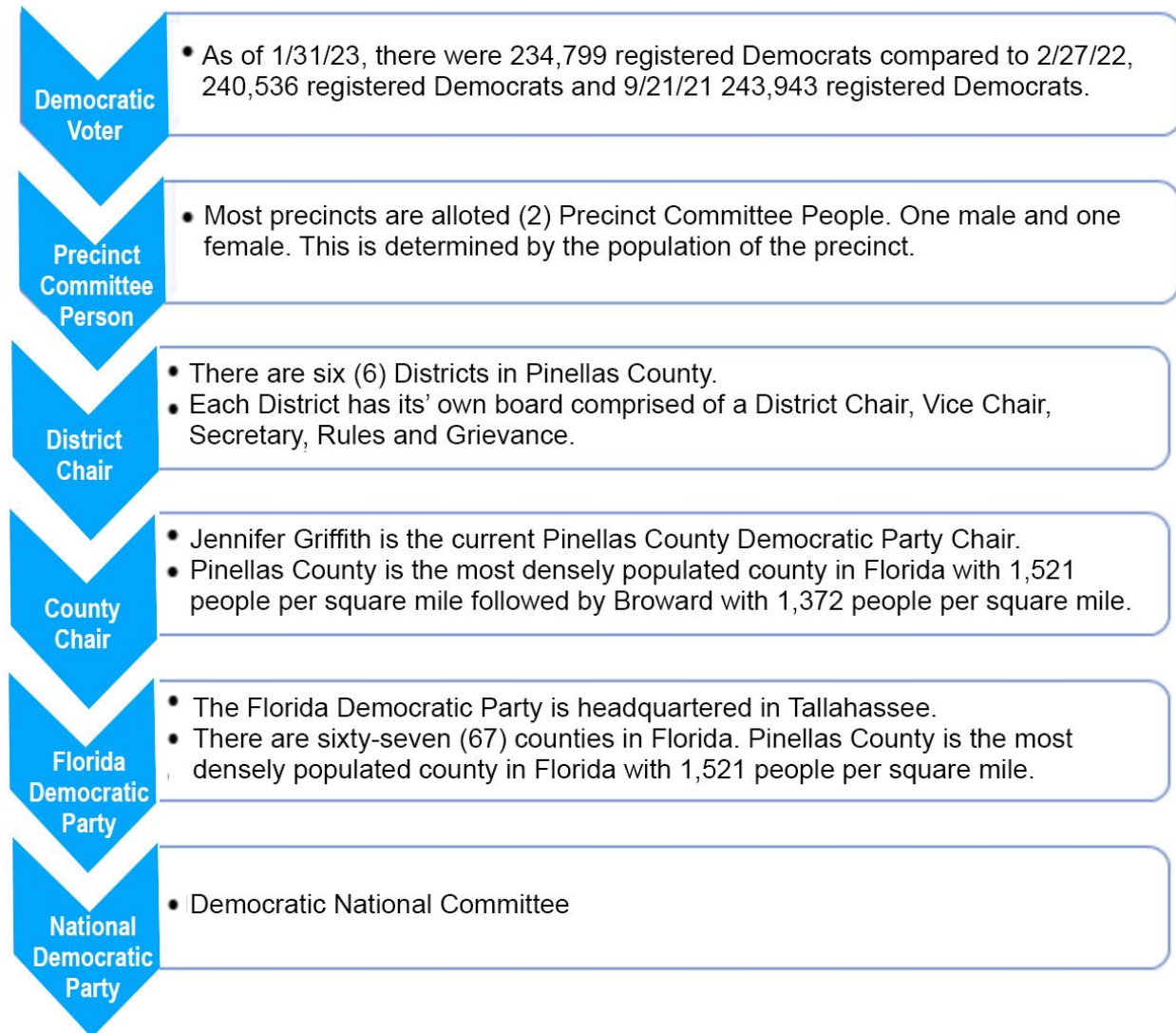
- Knocking on your neighbors' doors (or call them) to build relationships with voters in your neighborhood
- Educating undecided or swing voters
- Identifying those who support Democrats and Republicans in your precinct
- Registering Democrats to vote
- Finding out what issues motivate your neighbors, and share that information with local parties and campaigns
- Ensure that the voices of voters in your precinct are heard at the Pinellas County Democrats level
- Communicating regularly with your District Chair and other PCPs in your district
- Coordinating with campaigns in educating voters and generating interest in an election on behalf of candidates and ballot measures
- Get Out the Vote
- Reminding voters to return ballots
- Working with the county Campaign Committee to find candidates for office in partisan races

- Participate in the appointment process when vacancies occur in partisan offices: When a vacancy occurs, PCPs can help choose which candidates are submitted for appointment based on their circles and community knowledge
- Participate in the candidate, proposition and ballot issue endorsement process: PCPs are voting members who vote on the recommendations of our county Democratic Executive Committee. Check our bylaws for more information on this process [Bylaws of the Pinellas County Democratic Executive Committee](#)

All this hard work adds up to precinct-by-precinct victories and the election of Democratic candidates.

This is what grassroots politics is all about!

Understanding Your Relationship to the Democratic Party



There are almost 1 million people in Pinellas County, and 681,511 of these are registered voters. The Democratic Party uses the official voter files from Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections and the Secretary of State to identify each voter by the following criteria. This information is searchable in Votebuilder.

- Precinct
- Municipality
- County
- State House
- State Senate
- Congressional District

What is a Precinct?

Pinellas County Precincts

- In Pinellas County, we have six (6) districts.
- Our districts include:
 - District 57 has 46 precincts
 - District 58 has 50 precincts
 - District 59 has 52 precincts
 - District 60 has 49 precincts
 - District 61 has 64 precincts
 - District 62 has 26 precincts

The precinct is where the voters are—it’s where it’s happening! It is the base unit of organization for the Democratic Party. A precinct may contain several blocks in an urban area or consist of a group of houses near one another in a more rural setting. Both the geographical and population size of precincts in Pinellas can vary. There are 306 precincts in Pinellas County, most of which have registered voters.

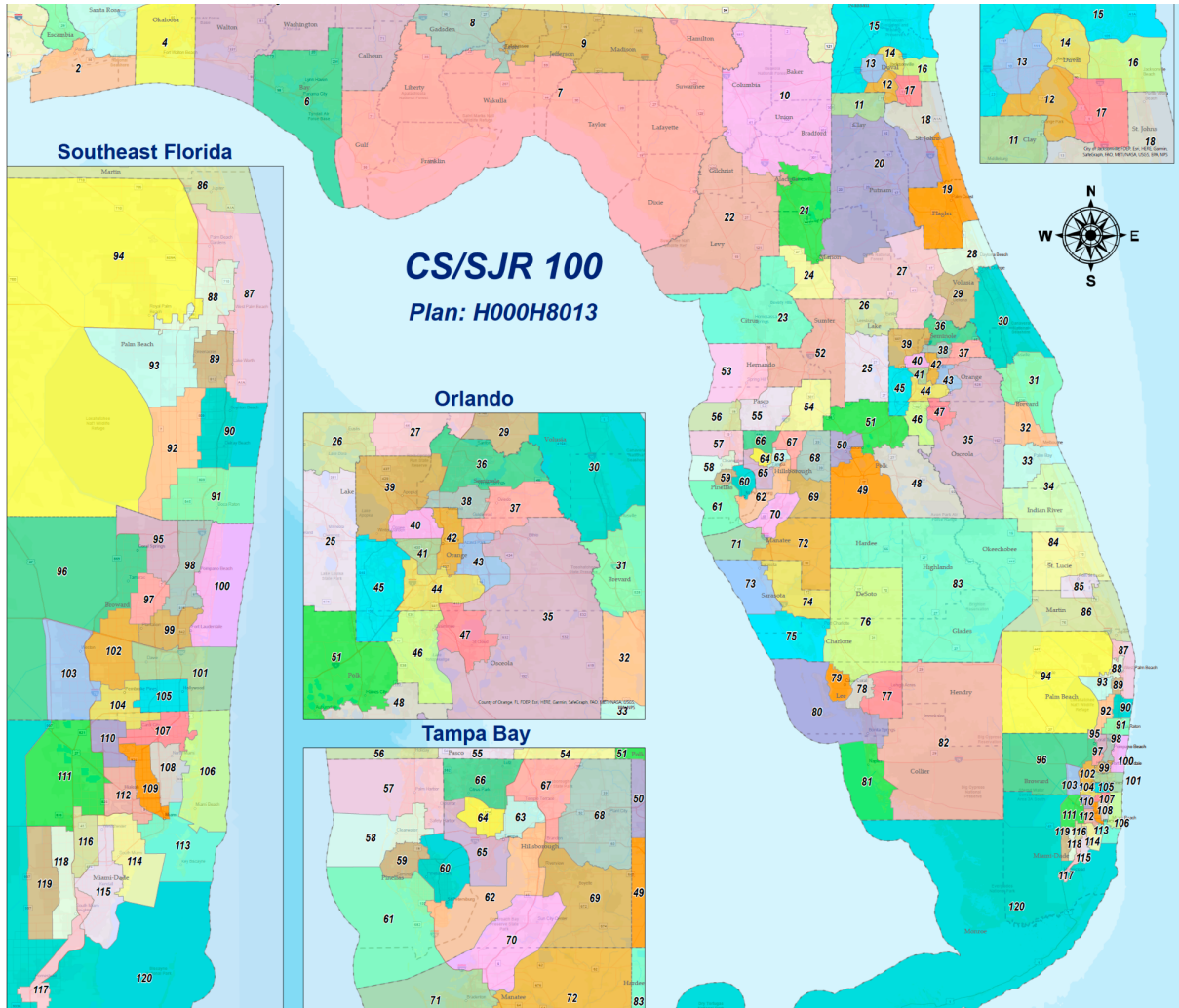
The average number of registered voters in a precinct in Pinellas is around 2,200. Some precincts have fewer voters, some have more. Precinct size limits, area, and numbering or naming systems are set by the County Supervisor of Elections and the County Government.

Precincts are grouped into districts of many types, municipal, county, state legislature, and federal. The Pinellas County Democrats are organized by State House Districts. The districts are drawn by population, not registered voters, so voter registration in “red” and “purple” districts is a priority along with outreach to make sure that voters hear from Democrats.

Each State House District has one State Representative and one State Senator as part of the Florida State Legislature. Each of Pinellas County’s two Congressional Districts has one congressperson in the United States House of Representatives. Our state is also represented by two Senators in the United States Senate.

What are House District Organizations (HDs) and the Democratic Executive Committee (DEC)?

There are 120 State House Districts and 67 Counties in Florida. In Pinellas, we have 6 State House Districts, each of these is represented by a House District Democratic Organization and our County Democratic Executive Committee.



Click on the link below to find out what House District you're in:

[Pinellas County State House District Map](#)

Click on the link below to see the Pinellas County Democratic Party's website:

[Pinellas County Democratic Party](#)

Your House District Organization may meet monthly, or quarterly, and our County Party meets monthly. Each of these organizations also has an Executive Board that meets separately.

The membership of your local HD and our DEC is made up of elected, appointed and associate PCPs in addition to other active Democrats and members of the community.

HD and DEC **Organizational Meetings** happen every other year, after Congressional elections. At the DEC Organizational Meeting, in December following a Congressional election, elected PCPs vote for the organization's Executive Board which includes, a Chair, a Vice-Chair, a Treasurer, a Secretary, and a Sergeant-at-Arms. The Executive Board also has two representatives to the State Committee of the Florida Democratic Party. One State Committee member generally identifies as female while the other generally identifies as male. Elections for State Committee Members are held in December of Presidential Election years.

House District Organization's have their **Organizational Meeting** in January of odd numbered years, after Congressional Elections. Elected AND Appointed PCPs vote for the organizations Executive Board which includes, a Chair, a Vice-Chair, a Treasurer-Secretary, a District Rules & Bylaws Committee Member, and a District Grievance Committee Member. Associate PCPs are ineligible to vote for or serve as District Chair or Vice Chair, but may serve in other District roles.

The election of other officers is dictated by our bylaws. Both elected and appointed PCPs are eligible to vote to fill vacancies that occur in party offices before the next Organizational Meeting.

Official "calls" to general meetings are dictated by the bylaws and are posted on our website, emailed, or advertised on Facebook. General meetings share information about party matters, current events, and candidates.

HDs and the DEC:

- Recruit, support, and train PCPs
- Collect and manage local voter data
- Represent their local communities at the state level
- Raise funds to help finance operating costs of the DEC and campaigns
- Endorse candidates after Primaries

Our Pinellas County Democratic Party Offices are located at:

South County Headquarters

2250 1st Ave N

St. Petersburg, FL 33713

Phone: (727) 327-2796

Email: Office@PinellasDemocrats.com

North County Headquarters

1402 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue North

Clearwater, Florida 33755

727-230-1812

What are Congressional Districts (CDs)?

Currently there are 28 congressional districts in the state of Florida. Each congressional district represents approximately 500,000 people. We have two congressional districts in Pinellas.

Click on the link below to find out about your Congressional District:

[Find Your Elected Officials Florida](#)

Democrats who organize and meet at the congressional district level, often form Political Action Committees (PACs) to support candidates within the district.

Florida Democratic Party (FDP)

This is our statewide organization, consisting of the State Committee Members from each county DEC. All State Committee Members representing county DECs are also PCPs. FDP is presided over by a Chair and other officers who are elected by the State Executive Committee.

The FDP sets the tone for the Democratic Party in Florida by articulating the Party's position on issues that may include a state platform and/or resolutions. It assists county organizations in supporting, recruiting, training, and financing campaigns for state, CD, SD (State Senate District), HD, and local office. It also takes the lead in recruiting and assisting Democratic candidates for federal and statewide office. The FDP meets at least 2 times a year at locations throughout the state.

The FDP, and County organizations are supported by the paid staff and volunteers within the Florida Democratic Party, who provide guidance, organizational assistance, technical support, and training to Democrats across the state.

For more information, go to www.floridadems.org or call 850-222-3411.

Florida Democratic Party
214 S Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32301
Email: FDPinfo@fladems.com

Democratic National Committee (DNC)

This national Party organization is mainly composed of members elected from each state. The FDP elects ten DNC members. The State Party Chair and Vice Chair are also members of the DNC. It is presided over by a Chair and other officers elected by its members. For more information, go to www.democrats.org or call 202-863-8000.

Democratic National Committee
430 S. Capitol St. SE
Washington, DC 20003

Florida Delegate Selection for the Democratic National Convention

Description of Delegate Selection Process

For the 2016 National Convention, Florida had a total of 245 delegates and 18 alternates. Florida uses a proportional representation system for allocating delegates to the Democratic National Convention. ***Participation in Florida's delegate selection process is open to all voters who wish to participate as Democrats.*** Due to Florida being a closed primary state, a person wishing to be a delegate must register as a Democrat at least 29 days before the primary.

Scheduling of Delegate Selection Meetings

The dates, times and places for all official Party meetings and events related to the state's delegate selection process will be scheduled to encourage the participation of all Democrats. The Florida Democratic Party will select the dates, times and to provide facilities for all official party meetings and events related to the national convention delegate selection process.

Selection of Delegates and Alternates

For 2016, Florida was allocated 140 district-level delegates. District-level delegates were allocated to presidential preferences through a proportional representation system based on a Presidential Preference Primary held in March 2020. Each Congressional District was allocated between 4-8 District-Level Delegates, based on the CD's Democratic vote performance.

The Congressional District Chair determined the location of each Congressional District Caucus by February of the Presidential Election year, and reported the location to the Florida Democratic Party.

National Convention

In presidential election years, the DNC holds a convention to adopt a platform and nominate a Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidate. It also conducts other business, such as adopting resolutions. Automatic Delegates, elected State and National office holders and others, also attend and vote.

Information on Democratic Party Delegate Selection in Florida:

[FDP 2017 State Convention Rules](#)

[FDP 2016 Florida Delegate Selection Plan](#)

How Do I Become a PCP?

As a PCP, you are the responsible Party official at the precinct level. All PCPs must be registered Democrats.

NOTE: When you file to become a PCP, your filing information becomes public record, and is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Three Types of PCP
<p>Elected PCP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must live in the precinct• Must file as a PCP candidate with county auditor• Voted into office during the primary election in even-numbered election years to serve four-year terms.• If no PCP is elected in a particular precinct, then a Democrat who lives in that precinct can be “Elected” by the county DEC to be the <i>Elected</i> PCP.
<p>Appointed PCP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appointed by Legislative District or County Chair• Must live in the precinct• Must file in the next even-numbered election year• May be required to submit an application
<p>Associate PCP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Associate PCP’s are typically Democrats who enjoy having a voice in the Democratic Party’s governance structure but prefer to volunteer as their time allows.• Cannot vote on any DEC issues or Elections

Elected PCPs

There are two ways a person can become an *Elected PCP*. The first way is by being voted into office during the primary election in August during the presidential election year to serve four-year terms. If you were the only one to file for your precinct, you are automatically elected. In contested precincts, candidates for PCP appear on the August primary ballot and are elected by voters in their precinct. Once elected, you take office on December 1st of that year and help elect the officers and vote on or amend by-laws in your House District and in our DEC during the **Organizational Meeting**.

The second, if no PCP is elected in a particular precinct, then a Democrat who lives in that precinct can be “Elected” by the county DEC to be the *Elected PCP*. You are required to fill out an application, and to attend the monthly DEC meetings.

If you were Elected by the DEC to the precinct in which you reside, you have the same benefits and length of office as someone Elected by the voters of their precinct.

Appointed PCPs

If you are interested in serving as a PCP, but live in a precinct that already has one, you can be appointed to serve as an *Appointed PCP* in your precinct or adopt a neighboring precinct that does not have an Elected PCP. The primary mission of an Appointed PCP is to assist the Elected PCP in your precinct, or if adopting a neighboring precinct, find someone within that precinct who is willing and able to become an Elected PCP there and help them file to be the Elected PCP. While the search for that person is underway, an Appointed PCP can do everything else necessary to be the connection between that precinct and the party.

If you were appointed as a PCP, you have much the same benefits and length of office as someone elected—the only difference is you cannot vote for the DEC’s Executive Board and your term is one year, to be renewed automatically by committee vote in January of each year. You are required to fill out an application, and to attend the monthly DEC meetings.

Associate PCPs

If you have a desire to affiliate with and volunteer with the local Democratic Party, but wish to be freed from the membership duties, you may become an Associate PCP. Associate PCP’s are typically Democrats who enjoy having a voice in the Democratic Party’s governance structure but prefer to volunteer as their time allows. Associate PCP’s are not required to attend monthly meetings and cannot vote on any DEC issues or Elections, however they often work at the most local level as Block Captains, and are indispensable to the Democratic grassroots network.

How do I file to become a PCP?

There are two ways to become a PCP:

To become an *Elected PCP* in a Presidential Election year

Running for election as a PCP is easy! Just submit a **Candidate Oath - Committeemen and Committeewoman** to the Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections during filing week (typically in mid-June of a *Presidential Election year*). Because PCP positions are unpaid, there is no filing fee.

When filing, be sure to:

1. Enter office name (Precinct Committeeman/Precinct Committeewoman) for which you will be a candidate
2. Print your name *exactly* as you want it to appear on the ballot (Nicknames are acceptable)
3. Enter your Precinct number for your home address
4. Enter your name and address *exactly* as it appears on your voter registration
5. Enter **Democrat** for party preference
6. Read, sign, and date the oath, and have it notarized. Your Declaration of Candidacy won't be approved without your signature and notary seal.

Click below to view the Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections PCP Qualifying Requirements:

[Pinellas County SOE PCP Requirements 2020](#)

Click below for a PCP Candidate Oath form for the Supervisor of Elections:

[Candidate Oath - Precinct Committeeman and Committeewoman](#)

To become an *Elected PCP* in non-Presidential Election years, or to become an *Appointed or Associate PCP*

To become an Elected PCP without running during a Presidential Election year, or to become an Appointed or Associate PCP, all you need to do is complete the following membership form and oath, make sure to have it witnessed by two other Democrats or notarized, and submit it to the Pinellas County Democratic Party.

Click below to view the Pinellas County Democratic Party's PCP Membership Form:

[Pinellas County Democratic Executive Committee Membership Form](#)

How Should I Prepare Myself?

Now that you're officially a PCP, and before you start canvassing, spend some time getting to know your precinct. If you are replacing a PCP, ask them to share their wealth of information and insights into your precinct. Find out if your House District (HD) or County Organization has a PCP mentoring program; if not, ask them to pair you with a seasoned PCP.

Research your precinct's demographics, and be sensitive to the economic and cultural makeup of its residents. Census information, and community websites are useful. Check if your local HD or County Organization has demographic information. Data in VoteBuilder, an online database, often referred to as "VAN", will also help you get a sense of your voters.

Ask these sorts of questions regarding the makeup of your precinct:

- What percentage of adults are registered voters?
- How many young people?
- How many working families?
- How many retirees?
- How many union members?
- How many migrant or seasonal workers?
- How many military veterans?
- Are there religious centers?
- Are there immigrant communities?
- How civically engaged are people?
- What other communities are part of the precinct?
- What languages are spoken?
- Does a particular employer or industry dominate your precinct?
- Is your precinct part of a residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, or second-home area?

Does your precinct have unusually high population turnover possibly caused by being near a military installation, or a college or university? Are there a lot of apartment units? If your precinct's population changes often, you'll need to focus more on voter registration, and the turnover may impact how your precinct votes.

Learn about the issues that impact your precinct. You might find it helpful to keep a list of your precinct's elected officials and civic leaders, and the different districts such as school, hospital, parks, fire, EMS, water, irrigation, cemetery, etc., of which your precinct is part. Consider subscribing to any local newspapers and joining community organizations, neighborhood associations and social media groups.

Do you know how your precinct voted in previous elections? You can find out online by going to our county Supervisor of Elections website and looking for archived election results. Election results are recorded by precinct and give you a quick snapshot of how your precinct votes.

Click below to see the 2022 General Election results of each precinct in Pinellas:

[Pinellas 2022 General Election Results by Precinct](#)


Organization

Tips for managing your PCP responsibilities:

- Set up a filing system (electronic and/or paper-based) to organize your materials. Set it up in a way that works best for you and makes information sharing with your local organization seamless and efficient.
- Keep a calendar of your canvassing schedule, precinct events, party meetings, and caucus and convention schedules
- Post a map of your precinct for easy reference
- Consider setting up a dedicated email address
- Set up folders to manage email
- Consider ordering business cards with contact information, *but only include information you are comfortable sharing with the public*. You can always write a note on the back.
- Create a personal checklist for canvassing.

Canvassing Checklist

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Precinct Map
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Walking List
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Voter Registration Forms
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Campaign Materials (as needed)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Script (for reference)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cell Phone
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Water
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Comfortable Shoes!



Building a Walking Packet

You are almost ready to go! Before you head out, you will want to have a plan of action and a walking packet.

Your walking packet might include:

- Voter registration forms in the languages spoken in your precinct (even if the person registers online later, it'll remind them to register)
- Vote By Mail Sign up forms
- Times and locations of your local organization meetings
- Campaign materials (during election season)
- Endorsement lists (during election season)
- Locations of ballot drop boxes
- Links to all of the above to share via Text

Turning Out Voters

The purpose of the Democratic Party is to advance our shared values by electing good, Democratic candidates up-and-down the ballot. PCPs play an important role in our campaign plan. As you work your way through your neighborhood, you should get an idea of who the Democratic voters are, and which ones might need a reminder to send in their ballots. Make sure these voters vote in every election. The more they vote, the more likely they are to vote in the future. You may also run into progressive-minded people in your neighborhood who haven't registered to vote. Get some voter registration forms from a designated Voter Services Committee member in your House District and carry them with you as you walk your precinct. You never know when you'll find a new Democratic voter!

Click on the link below to access Voter Registration forms available in multiple languages:

[Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections Voter Registration](#)

*(*please note - the forms provided by the Supervisor of Elections must be returned by the person registering, themselves. They can also register via the above link online with a valid Florida state issued ID.)*

Three Stages of a PCP/Voter Relationship
Identification <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Find voters in your precinct that are likely to vote for Democrats.● Ask them directly.● Talk to every voter in your precinct about party identification.
Team Building <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Draw your voters into the Party.● Focus on easy asks at first.● Escalate to harder volunteer asks.● Always work to build your team. The larger the team, the easier it is to accomplish your goals.● Respect. Empower. Include. As volunteers we have diverse skills, find a way to include everyone, set clear goals and train them to set them up for success.
Get Out the Vote (GOTV) <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Talk to every Democratic voter in your precinct in the month before the election● Identify NPA/Independent voters who will vote for Democrats.● Pass local party endorsements on to voters.● Reach out to campaigns and offer to contact "targeted voters".● Make sure your contacts are marked in Votebuilder.

Identification

To be an effective PCP, means building relationships with voters every year and all year long. You should canvass your precinct (do a census) once a year. Because of the changes in people's lives, up to 10% of a list can change in just one year (Census Bureau, 11/16/16).

Door-to-door canvassing is one of the most effective means of reaching voters. Voters can change the channel or mute the TV if an ad is played; they can hang up the phone on campaign/canvass calls. Campaign literature can be tossed without reading it. Emails can be deleted without being read. Some people don't use social media. When people have a meaningful conversation with someone in their community, when we LISTEN to their concerns, they feel heard and it's proven this has an impact. Building relationships with voters, even if it's only a hello to check in, you become a familiar face and this also prevents voters from feeling that we only care about them during an election.

Team Building

There are lots of good Democrats who aren't involved with the Party because no one ever asks them to help. Break the ice first, "Do you want to join me for coffee?" If you get good responses, try asking for more: "Would you help me talk with other neighbors?" Always try to build your team. The most successful PCPs have help.

When you are not canvassing, there are a number of ways to stay engaged with your precinct and continue to build relationships:

- Host potlucks and barbecues
- Host discussions about issues affecting your precinct
- Meet informally at a local coffee house or restaurant
- Maintain a Facebook or online group
- Host virtual meetings
- Send regular updates, emails, etc.
- Invite candidates to speak to your precinct voters
- Attend community events in your precinct—you can talk to many neighbors at once. It also shows you support your community and are involved even when it isn't "election season"
- Always be respectful. Support "issue based" allies, like unions, environmental groups, etc.

Build that "grassroots" base by noting community issues. Expand your precinct's base of people who vote. Do you know influential people that can help us contact voters (i.e., churches, community clubs, etc.)? Remember to send a note/email thanking them.

Get Out The Vote (GOTV)

Get Out The Vote is the effort of candidates, parties and ballot measures to increase the number of campaign supporters who will vote in an approaching election.

Typically, GOTV is a distinct phase of the overall campaign. Tactics used during GOTV often include:

- Telephoning or sending personalized audio messages to known supporters on the days leading up to an election (or on election day itself)
- Canvassing known supporters (Canvassing for voter registration usually ends when GOTV begins)
- Literature drops when ballots drop or near election day
- Texting voters (If you are comfortable texting to check in on voters from your phone to the area of your precinct you organize, they know who you are and are more likely to respond to you during election time).
- Active tracking of eligible voters who have already voted

GOTV can also be important in high turn-out elections when the margin of victory is expected to be close.

During GOTV, you'll want to talk to every Democratic voter in your precinct in the month leading up to the election. If your local party makes endorsements, pass those endorsements on to voters. Major campaigns will all have lists of "targeted voters" (voters they expect will swing the election) in each precinct. Once you've done your first pass through your precinct, reach out to the campaigns and help them re-canvass their targeted voters.

Make sure your contacts are marked in VoteBuilder! We don't want to be talking to the same person over and over again.

VoteBuilder

More than likely you'll be using VoteBuilder to help us gather and analyze voter data. Our campaigns rely on good data, and this is where you as a PCP play a crucial role! To get started, Ask your local organization or House District Chair for a VoteBuilder account.

VoteBuilder is where we house information so that we know what our voters are most concerned and enthusiastic about. This tool is what allows us to run the smartest, most efficient campaigns, with your important work leading the way. When you talk to your neighbors, you'll have conversations about the issues that motivate them to vote for Democrats. And when you find a neighbor who is not registered to vote, you get to talk about what motivates you as a Democrat, and sign them up as a registered voter.

VoteBuilder: Can be a PCP's Best Friend

VoteBuilder

- DNC online database of voters maintained by the Florida Democratic Party (FDP).
- A County Democratic Party is granted access to Votebuilder from the FDP.
- Has a physical address for every voter and phone numbers for many voters.

1

What is VoteBuilder?

VoteBuilder is an online database, often referred to as "VAN", that contains two sections:

- **My Voters** which contains information about every registered voter in the state
- **My Campaign** which allows political parties and candidate campaigns to track and manage their volunteers.

VoteBuilder is exclusive to Democratic organizations and is used by every State Democratic Party and Democratic candidates ranging from presidential campaigns to local races. This standardization across states and campaigns has given Democrats an enormous advantage over other political parties for several reasons:

- Existence of a large user-base familiar with VAN
- Data is no longer kept in silos walled off and is now accessible.
- Democratic Parties and campaigns have been putting data into the system regarding voters candidate preferences since 2007
- Constituency issue data is stored which has helped create finely tuned models of political preferences and voting behaviors
- VoteBuilder reduces the time a candidate's committee would have to spend acquiring data allowing them to spend more time on other campaign activities¹

¹ John Fass, VANual: A Guide to VoteBuilder, Vermont Democratic Party, 2015, page 3
<http://www.vtdemocrats.org/sites/vtdems/files/pictures/VANual%20v15.1.1.pdf>

As a PCP using VoteBuilder you will be able to:

- Search for Voters
- View a Voter's information
- Create Lists
- Save Lists
- Share Lists
- Print Lists
- Use VoteBuilder's Turf Cutter to create walking turfs
- Enter data into VoteBuilder.

VoteBuilder has other capabilities as well, and the more you use it, the more you'll discover. To get started using VoteBuilder, ask your House District Chair for a VoteBuilder account. Once you have an account, check out the "VANual" as a user guide: [The Official VANual](#).

Why Use VoteBuilder?

Why should you use VoteBuilder instead of a paper list or a locally created database?

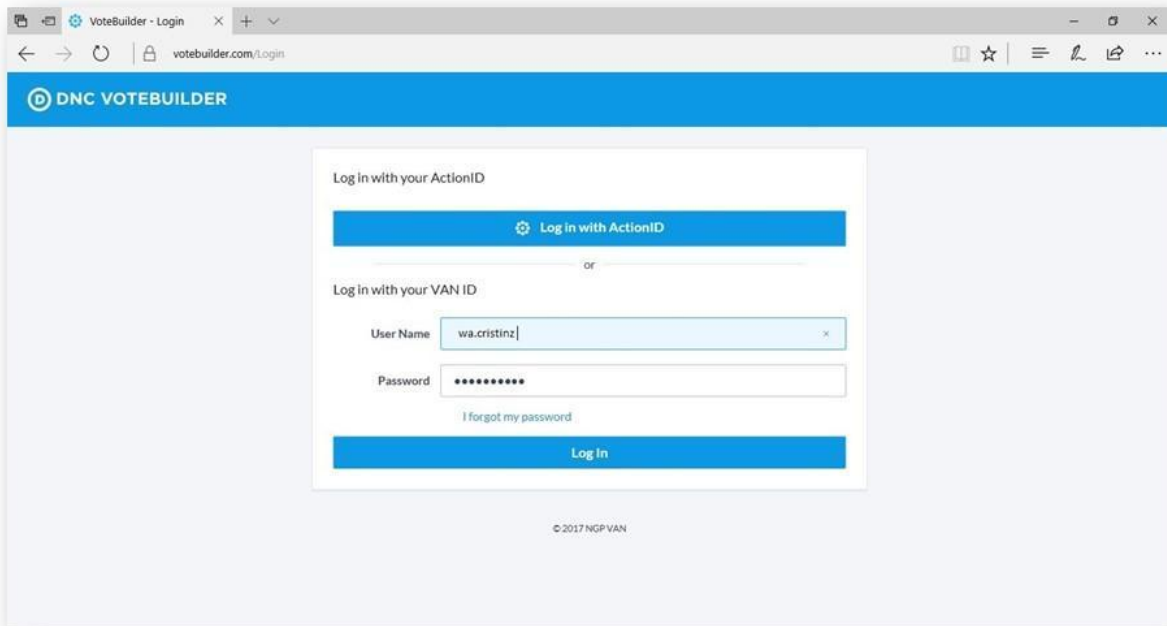
- VoteBuilder is updated regularly with the statewide Voter File obtained from the Secretary of State which has up-to-date registration information on all voters
- VoteBuilder contains voting history information for General, Primary, Presidential, and local elections in one easily searchable place
- Years of collecting Survey Responses from voter contact have helped create the *Likely Party Model* contained in VoteBuilder which classifies voters as a Democrat, Republican, Independent, No Party Affiliation or Other
- VoteBuilder contains data enhancements such as additional phone numbers, address corrections, and certain consumer information that is not available from the Secretary of State or local lists
- VoteBuilder organizes your data in a secure place that can be accessed anywhere as long as you have an internet connection
- VoteBuilder allows you to save the lists you create and share them digitally with other users²
- VoteBuilder provides historical voter contact information on Democratic Party support and a voter's previous voting history.
- VoteBuilder allows your to organize historical data on volunteer activities.

Logging into VoteBuilder

Once you have an account from your local party organization, you can access VoteBuilder from any computer with a current web browser signing in with an ActionID. It is important that you update your browser regularly since using an out-of-date browser may cause some

² John Fass, VANual: A Guide to VoteBuilder, Vermont Democratic Party, 2015, pages 3-5

loss of functionality. VoteBuilder is updated regularly, so your interface may be different from the example below.³



Once you have become an official PCP you can submit a request for VAN access through [this form](#) and our VAN Data Team Leader will email you a login link to set up your VoteBuilder account. If a VAN administrator has already created an account for you with a password, you will be asked to change that password the first time you login to ensure your password is only known by you. Once you have your account you can refer to the “VANual” as a user guide:

VoteBuilder User guides and Training

Once you have logged into VoteBuilder, you have access to more than 40 training guides and videos for the beginner, intermediate, and advanced user. Here is the [2023 NGP VANual](#)

Topics titles are categorized under:

- Administration
- Data Entry
- Output
- Phone Services
- Searching

I'll be Canvassing, but won't be using VoteBuilder. What should I do?

If you are not comfortable using VoteBuilder, or are unable to access it while canvassing, keep careful records and coordinate with someone who does have an account to make sure your data

³ John Fass, VANual: A Guide to VoteBuilder, Vermont Democratic Party, 2015, pages 3-5

transfers in a timely manner. Be sure to let your House District Chair know if you won't be using VoteBuilder.

Ultimately, the information you gather needs to be in the VoteBuilder database!

How to Canvass your Precinct

Ideally, you'll be able to canvass your precinct by knocking on doors. However, in some areas, phoning may be more practical than walking your precinct. In order to keep our records up-to-date, you should be canvassing at least once a year. Candidates or ballot measures may also seek your help especially if you are in a "swing" precinct. By attending the HD and County DEC meetings, you'll be informed on issues and candidates, and you can present "endorsement" lists, campaign materials, and voter registration cards to your precinct.

Best Canvassing Times

Door-to-Door

- Monday through Thursday: 3:30 pm to Dark
- Saturday: 11:00 am to 6:00 pm
- Sunday: 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm



Phone Calls or Phone Banking

- Monday through Thursday: 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm
- Sunday: 1:00 pm to 8:00 pm



Don't try to do this all by yourself in one day, as most precincts have too many residents to reach in a day. For safety reasons, always have a buddy when you canvass. Try to organize friends and volunteers into teams to cover more ground.

You'll likely have a walking list, generated by cutting turf (dividing your precinct into smaller neighborhoods) from the VoteBuilder database. VoteBuilder also offers the mobile app, MiniVAN ([MiniVAN app](#)). The ease of a mobile app is convenient to many, you can find more instruction in the MiniVANual: [Official MiniVANual](#)

Walking Lists

Sample Walking List

Reg Date:	VH-G 1/3 VH-P 1/3 Poll	Age: 20 Sex: F
111118	Scarlet, Jane A	(555) 555-0008
Active	11113 SE Democrat St	Party: IR
Reg Date:	VH-G 2/3 VH-P 1/3 Abs	Age: 39 Sex: F
111119	Scarlet, John A	(555) 555-0009
Active	11113 SE Democrat St	Party: ND
Reg Date:	VH-G 2/3 VH-P 1/3 Abs	Age: 41 Sex: M
111120	Plum-Black, Jane A	(555) 555-00010
Active	11114 SE Democrat St	Party: SD

Plum, John A	(555)-0011
11114 SE Democrat St	Party: LD ← Likely Democrat
VH-G 3/3 VH-P 2/3 Poll	Age: 53 Sex: M

Reg Date:	VH-G 3/3 VH-P 0/3 Abs	Age: 24 Sex: F
111124	Mustard, Jane A	(555) 555-00014
Active	11111 SE Democrat St	Party: ID
Reg Date:	VH-G 3/3 VH-P 1/3 Abs	Age: 52 Sex: F
111125	Mustard, John A	(555) 555-00015
Active	11111 SE Democrat St	Party: U
Reg Date:	VH-G 3/3 VH-P 0/3 Abs	Age: 29 Sex: M
111126	Mustard, John B	(555) 555-00016

General 3 of 3 times
Primary 2 of 3 times

Polling station or
Absentee/mail-in ballot

A walking list typically is just a part of your precinct. If you don't have a copy of your precinct map, ask your District Chair, the Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections or you can use the link below.

Precinct Map of Pinellas County

[Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections Precinct Map](#)

If you are canvassing a precinct with non-English speakers, try to recruit volunteers who speak the language of the voters, and ask them to join you when canvassing. Remind your local organization to prepare literature in languages other than English.

The VoteBuilder walking list will note whether the voter is a Democrat (D), Republican®, Independent (I) or No Party Affiliation (NPA). VoteBuilder also identifies voters as strong or leaning Party specific voters. Craft your conversation accordingly.

During the canvass, we want to listen more than talk:

- We want to hear our neighbors' interests and concerns
- Get to know them—smile!
- If someone wants to argue, politely excuse yourself

Whenever possible, match extra canvassers to the demographic of your target contacts, especially when contacting younger voters or those speaking another language.

It is one of the Pinellas County Democratic Party's goals to provide name badges to all our PCPs, so they can wear them as identification—until we have the badges, wear some Democratic clothing or buttons. Introduce yourself and ask for the voter by name. Don't ask if the voter is an Independent (they'll usually say they vote for the 'best person'). You can start with a simple, "As residents, we want to get to know our neighbors, and find out what's most important to you both locally and nationally." Get a current phone number, email address, etc., and after leaving, jot down the information on the walking list or on the smartphone App (MiniVAN). If you phonebank instead of walking your precinct, follow the same steps.

Before you set out, practice your script on a friend or neighbor or in front of a mirror. Rehearsing allows you to remember key points and feel comfortable. Some House Districts may host practice sessions. It's perfectly OK to have bullet points if you're nervous. Feel free to refer to any paperwork you have, but avoid referring to your phone, as it often makes people uncomfortable.

Approach every door confidently. After knocking or ringing the doorbell, stand back a few feet so you are respecting their personal space. Maintain good eye contact and open body language. Assume they support our platform (America is with us on most progressive issues: they may call it 'single payer' instead of "Medicare for All"). We have a lot of people to talk to, so focus on short, effective conversations. Don't waste time debating with non-supporters: it's pointless, and keeps you from knocking more doors. Persuasion contacts occur during campaign season.

If you live in a "swing" precinct, be able to talk to all types of voters. Issues like money in politics and infrastructure cross party lines. Conversations where the voter/non-voter does most of the talking (and we listen) can actually change people's minds. In households with more than one voter, if one person votes, usually all do.

If the residents aren't home, leave any literature at their front door, somewhere it will be visible and won't blow away (e.g. sticking out from under the doormat, or folded in the door handle). Do NOT leave literature in or on the mailbox, or even under the little 'flag' alerting postal carriers to pick up letters—that is against the law. If the yard is fenced, the driveway gated, or there's a menacing dog, skip the house and phone them instead. Apartment buildings may be locked or inaccessible. Try to find a helpful resident to let you in, or appoint a volunteer who lives in the building to contact residents.

Phone Banking

As a PCP, there may be times when you use phone banking for canvassing your precinct. Phone banking is particularly useful in rural areas, and is also useful if you have to contact voters quickly and for reminding them to mail-in ballots. Campaigns will also ask you to volunteer for phone banks or run one in your precinct.

Contact your VAN Administrator to get permission to set up phone banks, or they may decide to set them up for you, which also works fine. They will also let you know what scripts or information should be shared.

VoteBuilder's Virtual Phone Bank Tool vs. OpenVPB

VoteBuilder's Virtual Phone Bank tool is a way to divide up lists of people to be called among multiple volunteers, and record the results of their work without extra data entry.

The basic difference between Virtual Phone Bank, and OpenVPB is that lists made accessible through OpenVPB can be worked on by people without VoteBuilder accounts. This is very useful to enable PCPs to recruit their neighbors to help, as it avoids the need for the neighbors (i.e. non-precinct committee members) to be given separate VoteBuilder accounts.

Once you've identified a list of voters you want to contact, the steps to create a Virtual Phone Bank are as simple as deciding what information should be included for each voter, what script to use, and what times of the day the phone bank should be available. To make an existing phone bank accessible on OpenVPB, you just select the "Publish to openvpb.com" option in the phone bank settings.

Click below for more information:

<https://action.dccc.org/pdf/virtual-phone-bank.pdf>

The following links are only accessible to people with a VoteBuilder account:

[VoteBuilder - How To: Make Calls from a Virtual Phonebank](#)

[VoteBuilder - Virtual Phone Bank](#)

[VoteBuilder - Canvassing Results and Virtual Phone Bank](#)

Setting up a Phone Bank

A centralized location for phone banking is more effective than giving call lists to your volunteers. You can choose to invite people to use their own cell phones, or provide a location with multiple phone lines. The Pinellas County Democratic (PCD) Headquarters at 2250 1st Ave N, in St. Petersburg is open for all members to use for voter outreach.

Your location should be relatively quiet. If you are using a space after hours, or one that requires security for access, be sure to have a plan for people to get in. This applies to the PCD's HQ as well, please be sure to email office@pinellasdemocrats.com to reserve the office and ensure access to the building. Have signage if your location is in a large building. If you are phone banking from a coffee shop or restaurant, encourage your volunteers to patronize that business.

4

Where to Host a Phonebank

- Rooms in community centers, schools, churches, union halls, etc.
- Any business with a meeting room
- Legislative District or County Organization Office
- Coffee shops or restaurants
- Private homes



<https://www.flickr.com/photos/barackobamadotcom/5244879373/>

The last several years have proved we can host a Virtual Phone Bank with success. Talk to your District Chair about options.

Phone bank location requirements:

- Phone lines or reliable cell service (pre-check cell phone signal strength)
- Computers and Internet access for data input
- Accessibility for your volunteers with specific needs
- Enough space for all your volunteers to be comfortable
- Tables or desks and seating
- Lighting, heating or cooling (especially at after-hours locations!)
- Bathrooms
- Parking and mass transit access!

⁴ Guide to Running Your Own Phonebank, Organize for America, date unknown
<https://my.ofa.us/page/content/phonebankguide/>

Phone Bank Volunteers

Invite as many people as possible to attend your phone bank. Invite neighbors, precinct residents, fellow PCPs, and friends. If you haven't already, create a Facebook or other online group for your precinct; create a Facebook event for your phone bank.

Work with your volunteers to establish dates and times. Community or school events will impact scheduling for your volunteers. Keep your volunteers informed regarding your purpose, goals, and any changes in location or schedule. Be sure to make reminder calls to everyone who has signed up online or has told you verbally they plan on attending. Turnout will increase if you ask them for a firm commitment and call to remind them. If you expect a large group, ask some of your volunteers to help with setup and mentoring your volunteers.

Through your House District Chair or our DEC, you'll be provided a written script for the volunteers to use. Explain the purpose of the phone bank, how they will tally any results, and explain how to deal with difficult calls. Consider preparing an agenda with a timeline for introductions, sharing your purpose and objectives, orientation and training, debriefing, and celebrating.

Avoid "pitting" volunteers or groups of volunteers against each other in "friendly" competitions. All of your volunteers are working towards the same goals.

Tips for working with your volunteers:

- Make sure you are organized
- Have all your materials prepared and available
- Start the phone bank on time
- Provide an orientation or training
- Provide food and drinks (*this is something that can be paid for through District fundraising goals)
- Show your appreciation
- Thank your volunteers
- Have fun and celebrate your hard work!

At the end of the phone bank have everyone tally up the number of calls made and the number that were successful contacts. Ask how your group fared overall and ask about good calls. Also ask about challenging calls, and how the phone bank can be improved.

Use the debrief to recruit for help in your precinct and get involved in your local organization. If possible, organize a potluck or an optional social gathering afterwards. Talk about your success together!

Preparing For your Phone bank

You've selected a location, your volunteers are onboard, and your phone bank is scheduled. If you haven't participated in a phonebank, consider volunteering in a neighboring phone bank or asking for someone in your local organization to mentor you.

You'll need to have your materials prepared and printed out ahead of time. The PCD's Headquarters can assist in printing materials. Ask for scripts from your District Chair or PCD Board and establish a system for inputting your data into VoteBuilder.

Plan an agenda for the event and have a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of your event. Think about any information and training your volunteers will need to have, and provide supporting materials.

What you need to have on hand:

- Sign-in sheets
- Scripts and call lists
- Relevant talking points
- Relevant campaign materials
- Tally sheets or electronic systems
- Pens and paper

Your volunteers will need orientation and training. Ask your District Chair or PCD Board for any existing training, or check online or in VoteBuilder for general phone bank training.

Key things to remember when phone banking:

- Smile! People will hear it in your voice.
- Follow the script, but speak from the heart. You are passionate about Democratic issues and values, or you wouldn't be here—make that clear.
- Keep the conversation positive. Don't argue—be polite and move on.
- You don't need to be an expert. If you don't know the answer, record the response and ask someone to get back to your contact.

With some pre-planning and preparation, phone banks are another useful tool for listening to and informing voters, and sharing our Democratic values.

NOTE: Avoid Canvassing

- **During Bucs games, other "big games" or events**
- **After 8 pm**
- **Most holidays**

PCP Legal and Party Responsibilities

Legal Responsibilities

While US Supreme Court rulings recognize the Party's ultimate authority for determining its own structure and processes, there are also provisions about Precinct Committee members and Party organization in the 2018 Florida Statutes. The State of Florida has 67 Counties, most but not all of them have official Democratic Executive Committees. The County Democratic Executive Committees consist of the Elected, Appointed and Associate PCPs for precincts within each County. Here are the passages in the 2018 Florida Statutes that deal with the responsibilities of County Executive Committees:

103.091 Political parties

(1) Each political party of the state shall be represented by a state executive committee. County executive committees and other committees may be established in accordance with the rules of the state executive committee. A political party may provide for the selection of its national committee and its state and county executive committees in such manner as it deems proper. Unless otherwise provided by party rule, *the county executive committee of each political party shall consist of at least two members, a man and a woman, from each precinct, who shall be called the precinct committeeman and committeewoman.* For counties divided into 40 or more precincts, the state executive committee may adopt a district unit of representation for such county executive committees. Upon adoption of a district unit of representation, the state executive committee shall request the supervisor of elections of that county, with approval of the board of county commissioners, to provide for election districts as nearly equal in number of registered voters as possible. Each county committeeman or committeewoman shall be a resident of the precinct from which he or she is elected. Each state committeeman or committeewoman must be a member in good standing of the county executive committee for the county in which the state committeeman or committeewoman is a registered voter.

(2) The state executive committee of a political party may by resolution provide a method of election of national committeemen and national committeewomen and of nomination of presidential electors, if such party is entitled to a place on the ballot as otherwise provided for presidential electors, and may provide also for the election of delegates and alternates to national conventions.

(3) The state executive committee of each political party shall file with the Department of State the names and addresses of its chair, vice chair, secretary, treasurer, and members and shall file a copy of its constitution, bylaws, and rules and regulations with the Department of State. Each county executive committee shall file with the state executive committee and with the supervisor of elections the names and addresses of its officers and members.

(4) Any political party other than a minor political party may by rule provide for the membership of its state or county executive committee to be elected for 4-year terms at the primary election in each year a presidential election is held. The terms shall commence on the first day of the month following each presidential general election; but the names of candidates for political party offices shall not be placed on the ballot at any other election. The results of such election shall be determined by a plurality of the votes cast. In such event, electors seeking to qualify for such office shall do so with the Department of State or supervisor of elections not earlier than noon of the 71st day, or later than noon of the 67th day, preceding the primary election. The outgoing chair of each county executive committee shall, within 30 days after the committee members take office, hold an organizational meeting of all newly elected members for the purpose of electing officers. The chair of each state executive committee shall, within 60 days

after the committee members take office, hold an organizational meeting of all newly elected members for the purpose of electing officers.

(5) In the event no county committeeman or committeewoman is elected, or a vacancy occurs from any other cause in any county executive committee, the county chair shall call a meeting of the county executive committee by due notice to all members, and the vacancy shall be filled by a majority vote of those present at a meeting at which a quorum is present. Such vacancy shall be filled by a qualified member of the political party residing in the district where the vacancy occurred and for the unexpired portion of the term.

(6)(a) In addition to the members provided for in subsection (1), each county executive committee shall include all members of the Legislature who are residents of the county and members of their respective political party and who shall be known as at-large committeemen and committeewomen.

The State of Florida Statutes and Constitution can be found in the link below:

[Florida Statutes & Constitution](#)

Beyond the Florida Statute language, all of the details of how the County and District organizations exist and operate depends on language within the Florida Democratic Party Charter and Bylaws, as well as the Bylaws of the Pinellas County Democratic Executive Committee.

The County Democratic Executive Committee is defined as the Elected and Appointed PCPs from precincts within that County. In practice, House Districts may include precincts in multiple counties or may be a subset of precincts within a single county. Remember, after December 1st all Appointed PCPs end their term and will need to be reappointed before they can officially be members of the County Democratic Executive Committee.

Party Responsibilities

In addition to the specific legal responsibilities defined in state law, the PCP has responsibilities defined by the Florida Democratic Party. Let's start with the FDP Charter section on DEC's:

ARTICLE V. FDP Charter - COUNTY DEMOCRATIC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

Section 1. Creation and Authority: There shall be a county Democratic Executive Committee within each county in the state responsible for discharging Florida Democratic Party affairs within the county.

Section 2. Membership: Membership shall be as set forth in the Bylaws of the Florida Democratic Party.

Section 3. Officers: County Democratic Executive Committees, at their organizational meetings, shall elect a chair, a vice chair, who shall be of the opposite sex from the chair, a secretary, and a treasurer, a state committeeman and a state committeewoman, each of whom shall be elected from among the elected membership of the county Democratic Executive Committee. Other officers may be prescribed in a county Democratic Executive Committee's bylaws. The term of office shall be for a maximum of four (4) years; however, the bylaws of a county Democratic Executive Committee may provide for lesser terms of office. The term of office for the state committeeman and state committeewoman is for four (4) years.

3.1 Duties of the State Committeeman and State Committeewoman: The duties of the State Committeeman and State Committeewoman are to serve as liaison between the Florida Democratic Party and the county DEC; liaison between the county DEC and the clubs; members of the State Executive Committee and county DEC Steering Committee; members of the county DEC Campaign Committee; and members of other committees as designated by the DEC Charter and Bylaws.

Section 4. Meetings: County Democratic Executive Committees shall meet at least once every calendar quarter with such calendar quarter beginning in January of each year.

Section 5. Policy and Procedure: Each County Democratic Executive Committee shall submit a copy of its bylaws and any amendments thereto to the State Chair and the Rules Committee Chair. The State Chair, with the approval of the Central Committee, may develop guidelines and suggested bylaws for promoting uniformity among county Democratic Executive Committees. County Democratic Executive Committee bylaws shall be in compliance with Florida Statutes and the Charter and Bylaws of the Florida Democratic Party. The FDP Charter and Bylaws and the Florida Statutes shall prevail in the case of a conflict with a county's bylaws and shall govern in all cases to which the county's bylaws do not speak.

Section 6. Finances: County Democratic Executive Committees receiving party assessment fees shall spend same assisting in the election of Democrats. County Democratic Executive Committee audits shall be subject to review by the Florida Democratic Party concerning the appropriateness of the county Democratic Executive Committee's expenditures.

Section 7. Penalties: The State Chair, at the direction of the Central Committee, shall be responsible for the imposition of penalties which shall be as set forth herein.

7.1 Compliance: A county Democratic Executive Committee found in noncompliance with the Charter and Bylaws of the Florida Democratic Party or Florida Statutes may be notified by certified mail of such noncompliance by the State Chair. Said county Democratic Executive Committee shall have thirty (30) days to comply.

7.2 Suspension and Removal: County Democratic Executive Committees or officers may be suspended by the State Chair for failure to comply within thirty (30) days. The Central Committee shall review the actions of the State Chair at the next meeting of the Central Committee and either affirm the suspension and remove the officer or county Democratic Executive Committee upon a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire membership of the Central Committee, or, in the alternative, reinstate said officer or county Democratic Executive Committee. A county Democratic Executive Committee officer who has been removed from office shall not be eligible to hold any county Democratic Executive Committee office for the remainder of said term.

The State Executive Committee (which is composed of the state committeeman and state committeewoman from each county, Democratic National Committee members from Florida, and automatic and appointed members of the Central Committee) elects the State Party Officers. There is a direct line from PCPs to the election of the State Party Officers and the FDP through our DEC's state committeeman and committeewoman, as written in the FDPs Charter.

Article II, Section 3: "...at its organizational meeting, shall elect a Chair, a First Vice Chair, who shall be of the opposite sex from the Chair, a Secretary, and a Treasurer, who shall be the opposite sex from the Secretary, each of whom shall be elected from among the county chairs, county first vice chairs, state committeemen and state committeewomen."

DECs and PCPs are further defined in Article V of the FDP Bylaws:

ARTICLE V FDP Bylaws - COUNTY DEMOCRATIC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

SECTION 1. Membership:

1.1. Elected Members:

1.1.1 Definition: Elected members shall be defined as those persons elected pursuant to Article V, Section 1.1.4 and those elected by the county Democratic Executive Committee to fill vacancies in precincts or districts. Once a person is elected in a precinct or district, even if that person should move out of that precinct or district and be appointed at-large or to fill a vacancy in the precinct or fill a vacancy in the precinct or district into which he or she moved, for the purpose of eligibility to seek office, such person shall be classified as an elected member for the duration of that term. If a vacancy does not exist in the precinct or district where the member moves, a special at-large status shall be created for that member not to be counted against the total number of appointed members available to that county.

1.1.2 Precinct System: The elected membership of the county Democratic Executive Committee shall consist of a man and a woman from each precinct who are registered Democrats, and who reside in, are registered to vote in, and are elected from the precinct they are to represent. Should the Democratic registration of any precinct total more than one thousand (1,000) as of January 1 of a year in which qualifying for election to county Democratic Executive Committee occurs, an additional one (1) man and one (1) woman are entitled to be elected to represent all such precincts. They shall be elected by a plurality vote on the First Primary Ballot of each presidential election year. At any time a precinct totals one thousand (1,000) registered Democrats or when new precincts are created, additional County Democratic Executive Committee positions may be created. Such positions shall be filled by the county Democratic Executive Committee according to its procedure for filling vacancies.

1.1.3 Optional Precinct System: In a county consisting of fewer than two hundred (200) precincts...**(does not apply to Pinellas County)**

1.1.4 District System: In a county consisting of more than one hundred (100) precincts, the elected membership of the county Democratic Executive Committee may, by a majority vote of all county Democratic Executive Committee members prior to December 31 of each year before the year in which an election for the office of President of the United States is to be held, consist of a man and a woman who are registered Democrats, and who reside in, are registered to vote in and are elected from election districts. The chair of the county Democratic Executive Committee shall notify the State Chair of such decision by certified mail. The Florida Democratic Party shall request, no later than December 31, 1983 and every fourth year thereafter, the Supervisor of Elections of that county, with approval of the board of County Commissioners, or the body having ultimate responsibility for the conduct of elections within the county, to provide for election districts as nearly equal in number of registered voters as possible. Such districts shall be created in accordance with the following requirements:

- (1) The election districts shall have as equal a number of precincts as possible.
- (2) The number of registered voters in any election district shall not vary by more than ten percent (10%) of the average number of registered voters in all election districts.
- (3) No precinct shall be divided in the formation of districts.
- (4) A district shall be composed of contiguous precincts.

County Democratic Executive Committees adopting district systems pursuant to this Section shall file notice of same with the State Chair, the Florida Department of State, and its board of County Commissioners, or the body having ultimate responsibility for the conduct of elections within the county. Said body shall forthwith direct the Supervisor of Elections, or other appropriate official within the county, to complete such formalities as may be necessary to conduct elections within the county, to complete such formalities as may be necessary to conduct elections within such districts.

1.1.5 Election of Members: County Democratic Committee members shall qualify and be elected to office at such times and in such manner as provided by Florida Statutes.

1.1.6 Term of Office: Elected members of the county Democratic Executive Committee shall take office on the first day of the month following each presidential general election and shall serve for a term of four (4) years.

1.1.7 Attendance: The State Chair, First Vice Chair, Vice Chairs, Secretary, and Treasurer of the Florida Democratic Party shall be exempt from the attendance requirements of the county Democratic Executive Committee to which they may belong.

1.2 Automatic Members:

1.2.1 Definition: Automatic members shall be defined as those who are members by virtue of Florida Statutes or those who are members by virtue of county Democratic Executive Committee bylaw provision naming county Democratic elected officials, presidents of duly chartered Democratic Clubs, or presidents of chartered local Democratic caucus chapters who reside in said county. Such members shall serve for the duration of their term of office. Automatic members shall enjoy voting privileges, however, they shall not serve as officers of the county Democratic Executive Committee.

1.2.2 Attendance: Automatic members shall not be required to meet attendance requirements. Automatic members shall not be computed when determining a quorum.

1.3 Appointed Members:

1.3.1 Definition: Membership of a county Democratic Executive Committee may include an additional ten percent (10%) of the total elected membership to which entitled. These members shall be appointed by the county Democratic Executive Committee chair and approved by a majority vote of the membership of the county Democratic Executive Committee present and voting. Appointed members shall be registered Democrats residing in the county. Appointed members shall serve at-large and shall enjoy voting and other privileges and responsibilities of membership except holding office. Selection of appointed members shall be made in order to achieve political, economic, or minority balance within the county Democratic Executive Committee.

1.3.2 Term of Office: The term of office for appointed members shall be one (1) year commencing with the date of appointment, however, it shall expire immediately prior to the commencement of the organizational meeting of the next committee. Said members may be appointed.

1.3.3 Special At-Large Status: At any time after the election of officers, a county Democratic Executive Committee may allow, at the request of a Democratic Party elected official from the county, state, or national Democratic Party level, a special at-large status for that person. Such positions shall not be included in a county Democratic Executive Committee's appointed membership quota. If the elected official is an elected member of the county Democratic Executive Committee, a vacancy would be created in the district or precinct that he or she represents. Said vacancy shall be filled in accordance with that county Democratic Executive Committee's bylaws.

1.4 Vacancies: An office shall be deemed vacant when a member accumulates three (3) unexcused absences in any one (1) calendar year. Vacancies on a county Democratic Executive Committee shall be filled by action of the county Democratic Executive Committee within sixty (60) days in accordance with Florida Statutes. After a vacancy has existed for sixty (60) days, it may be filled by the State Chair. Those persons appointed to fill precinct or district vacancies must be registered Democrats residing within the precinct or district that they are appointed to represent. An absence is excused for reason of illness, business, out-of-town or other reasonable excuse, with prior notification to an officer.

The Charter of the Florida Democratic Party can be found by clicking on the link below:

[The Charter and Bylaws of the Florida Democratic Party](#)

The Bylaws of the Pinellas County Democratic Executive Committee are much the same as the bylaws of the FDP, and cannot conflict with any state bylaw or statute. Below is Article IV of our bylaws which reference PCPs.

ARTICLE IV PCDEC Bylaws - Membership

Section 1. Elected Members – All duly elected Pinellas County Democratic Precinct Committee persons, as certified under Florida Statutes, and all persons elected by the County Committee to fill vacancies occurring in the position of Precinct Committee person constitute the elected membership of the County Committee.

Section 1.1. Procedure for Filling Vacancies – Any member of the Board of Directors may nominate a qualified person to fill a vacant Precinct Committee position, and such nominee shall become a member upon 1) approval by a majority vote of the Board of Directors and 2) approval by a majority vote of the general membership at a regularly scheduled meeting. However, members elected to fill vacancies, pursuant to this section of these Bylaws, shall not have the right to vote in any election, removal proceeding, or to amend the Bylaws during the first sixty (60) calendar days of their membership. The sixty days referred to in the preceding sentence shall begin with the date of approval at DEC general meeting.

Continuity of Membership Status – An elected member moving to another precinct shall continue to enjoy uninterrupted voting and other rights, and, if no vacancy exists in the new precinct of residence, shall enjoy a special At-Large status not to be counted against the total of allowable appointed members.

Section 1.2. Appointed Members

Provisions – The County Chair may appoint members to serve at-large from among registered Democrats residing in the County upon approval by a majority of the County Committee membership at a regular meeting. Appointed membership shall terminate after one year following the date of approval or at midnight before an election for County Chair, whichever comes first. If after such automatic termination a member is re-nominated and reapproved at the next regular meeting, the membership shall be deemed to not have lapsed and member immediately regains all rights and privileges previously accorded.

Number of Appointed Members – The number of appointed members shall not exceed ten percent (10%) of the total number of elected members to which the County Committee is entitled.

Rights and Responsibilities – Appointed members shall have all privileges and responsibilities of membership except those restricted to elected members, and except that within their first 60 calendar days of membership they may not vote in any election, in any removal proceeding, or to amend the bylaws.

Section 1.3. Automatic Members – All Democrats elected to partisan public office shall be automatic members of the County Committee. Automatic members who hold public office shall not be required to meet attendance requirements, shall not be counted in determining the presence of a quorum, and may not serve as officers of the County Committee.

Section 1.4. Associate Members – An associate member is a member who wishes to serve in a limited capacity. They may not vote, may serve on committees and do not need to meet the attendance requirements.

Section 2. Proxy Voting – see ARTICLE VI Section 5.4. Voting.

Section 3. Oath of Office – Before performing any duty as a member of the County Committee, each member shall file with the Secretary a notarized Oath of Office in the form prescribed by the FDP.

Section 4. Removal of Members

Section 4.1.1 Automatic Removal – Except as otherwise provided by law or the FDP bylaws, any member who has three (3) unexcused absences in any one (1) calendar year is automatically moved from voting member to Associate (nonvoting) member. Attendance by proxy shall not be considered fulfillment of the attendance requirement. Vacancies on a county Democratic Executive Committee shall be filled by action of the county Democratic Executive Committee within sixty (60) days in accordance with Florida Statutes. After a vacancy has existed for sixty (60) days, it may be filled by the County Chair.

Section 4.1.2. Reinstatement – A member removed pursuant to 4.1.1 above may re-apply for membership. A member reinstated pursuant to this provision shall not be eligible to vote in any election for sixty days following the date of his/her reinstatement being approved.

Section 4.2. Removal For Cause – Except as otherwise provided bylaw or the FDP bylaws, any member may be removed from County Committee membership for violating his/her oath of office, in accordance with the procedures of the Grievance Committee, established in Article X, Section 1.3 et seq.

Section 5. Obligations of Members – All members shall have the obligation of promoting the philosophy and interests of the Democratic Party in every manner available to them. It shall be the duty of each and every member, to the best of his/her ability, to protect the County Committee, its officers and members, and all Democratic candidates against any fraud, misrepresentation, or unethical practices.

The Pinellas County DEC Bylaws can be found by clicking the link below:

[Bylaws of the Pinellas County Democratic Executive Committee](#)

Resources

Once you are a Precinct Committee Person you can be added to your House District's Facebook group (closed). You're also invited to join the Pinellas County Democrats PCP Group (closed) where PCPs from across Pinellas share innovative tools and have informative discussions. Please ask your House District Chair for access.

Florida Democratic Party www.floridadems.org

Pinellas County Democratic Party www.pinellasdemocrats.org

You may direct people to these websites if they have questions about our Platform, if they need contact information for officials/candidates, or if they want to get further involved in the Party by attending an event in our county or state. People in your precinct may want to join the email list to learn more about the party and how they can get involved.

Young Democrats www.pinellasyoungdems.org

Young Democrats is an organization of people aged 40 and younger who are involved and engaged. If you meet young people in your precinct who are interested in becoming more active within the Party, encourage them to contact the Pinellas County Young Democrats. Colleges and even some high schools have branches. Consider contacting the group if you need help in your precinct. They have an amazing amount of energy and a more flexible schedule than others involved in the party.

Training Resources

National Democratic Training Committee <https://www.traindemocrats.org/>

Emerge America <http://www.emergeamerica.org/>

Additional Online Resources

www.opensecrets.org: also shows fundraising/expenditures

www.govtrack.us has information on Congress, legislation, etc.

www.congress.gov is another information source on Congress

www.countable.us covers bills in Congress

www.dailypress.senate.gov is the Press Gallery in the Senate

Social Networking Sites: Pinellas County Democrats are here, too:

- Twitter (short messages): www.twitter.com/pinellasdems
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PinellasDemocrats/>