



# FORWARD2004!

## GREEN NATIONAL CONVENTION

### OFFICIAL BYLAWS

Official Bylaws of the Green Party of the United States  
Originally Approved January 29, 2002  
Updated April 19, 2004

#### **ARTICLE I. PURPOSE**

1. Assist in the development of State Green Parties
2. Create a legally structured national Green Party Federation

#### **ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP AND COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

1. Definitions

The term "state" as used in these bylaws shall refer to any state, commonwealth, district or territory entitled to voting representation or non-voting delegate status in the United States House of Representatives.

The term "underrepresented group" as used in these bylaws shall refer to any grouping of Greens, not explicitly ideological in nature, that has historically failed to attain adequate access to power in society at-large and/or within the Green movement, as determined by the Coordinating Committee.

2. Coordinating Committee

The Coordinating Committee of the Green Party of the United States shall consist of the representatives of state parties and accredited caucuses of underrepresented groups.

The Coordinating Committee shall be the final decision-making body of the Green Party of the United States and shall be responsible for approving a deliberative platform process of discussion, debate, and decision-making at the local and state levels leading to a national platform vote by the delegates at the presidential nominating convention.



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The presidential nominating convention of the Green Party is the delegated decision-making body responsible for nominating the national Green Party's presidential and vice presidential candidates and approving the Green Party's national platform.

Meeting of the Coordinating Committee and the nominating convention may be attended by Greens who are not voting representatives or delegates.

Each member state party shall have one vote on the Coordinating Committee for every four Congressional Districts or major fraction thereof into which the state is divided. Regardless, each state party shall have at least two votes. State parties shall make a good faith effort, where reasonable, to have delegates to the Coordinating Committee elected by clusters of local Green groups.

For the purpose of tallying its number of delegates to the Green National Committee a state party may include only Congressional Districts in which there is an organized Green Party Local.

#### **Criteria for an organized Green Party Local shall consist of:**

Recognition by the member state Green Party Bylaws and/or a constitution Adoption of the 10 Key Values and a mission statement and/or platform that demonstrates this commitment.

The member state Green Party shall be responsible for maintaining a current record and validation of active local affiliates, to be provided to the GP-US on request for credentialing purposes.

\*No delegate to the Coordinating Committee may cast more than two of that state's votes. (This clause will be eliminated after the 2004 general election, reverting back to one vote per delegate, if no further action is taken).





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This rule will go into effect January, 2002.

This entire section of the bylaws will be reviewed after the next meeting of the Coordinating Committee.

### 3. Sustaining Membership

Individuals may become sustaining members of the Green Party of the United States by paying dues set by the Coordinating Committee on a sliding scale based on ability to pay. Members of state parties shall be actively encouraged to become sustaining members of the Green Party of the United States. Sustaining members shall receive the Association's publications and other benefits as determined by the Coordinating Committee.

### ARTICLE III. COMMITTEES

"The Coordinating Committee of the Green Party of the United States shall establish standing committees and may create other committees according to need. The CC shall cause to be produced, and then approve a document for each committee including the purpose, duties and general charge of the committee, as a part of the process of creating a committee.

The Steering Committee shall be responsible for oversight for all committees and ensure that the CC is kept informed about the work of the committees.

Delegates to the CC shall automatically be eligible to serve on committees by virtue of their position. Other committee members shall be members of a state green party and have written permission from their state party to serve. Permission shall be submitted by the CC delegates or State Party co-chairs from the various states to the co-chairs of the relevant committee, and can be submitted on paper or via email. No state shall have more than three members per committee without a waiver from





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the Steering Committee. No committee shall have fewer than five states represented.

There shall be three categories of activity for GPUS committees:

1. MEMBERS - Committee Membership shall be defined as being a voting member of a committee who may take part in all decision making. Committee members shall be selected by their committees according to individual committee P&Ps. All committee members shall be approved by their respective state parties according to written, democratically derived state party rules that ensure full and open due process.

2. ADVISORS - It shall be at the discretion of committees to select advisors. Advisor status shall be determined by individual committees in their P&Ps . Anyone may serve as a committee advisor. Advisors shall enjoy limited participation in committee deliberations as determined by committees' written P&Ps . Advisors shall not be voting members of a committee, shall not formally introduce proposals and shall not represent either the committee or the party. Advisors shall serve one-year terms and will be eligible for re-election. State parties shall be free to express objections to committees regarding specific advisors. Such objections shall be considered by committee members in their deliberations.

3. OBSERVERS - Committee approved observers may monitor the listserv activity of a committee but cannot participate in discussions or votes. Observers must be approved by committees according to their P&P documents.

Furthermore, committees may communicate with individual Greens on an as needed basis on specific matters of mutual import.

All committees shall:

1) develop written rules, policies and procedure (RP&P) documents which must be approved by the Coordinating Committee.





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- 2) use consensus-seeking procedure with backup voting for all decision making, and codify the procedure in their RP&Ps.
- 3) when voting, vote by state with each state casting one vote. The CC or the SC may, in their reviews of the work of a committee, allow a committee to waive the one state, one vote rule and replace it with a one member, one vote standard.
- 4) codify RP&Ps used to conduct general committee business and, when appropriate, codify rules for decision making via conference calls, email, and/or in-person meetings.
- 5) report to the CC on a regular basis and set up a schedule for written reporting, with monthly reports being the standard unless otherwise approved by the CC.
- 6) develop policies and procedures by which minority opinions on committee business that relate to the internal workings of the Green Party may be conveyed to the CC.
- 7) have two co-chairs unless directed to have a different number by the CC. Gender balance and co-chairs from different states shall be the norm, though under extraordinary circumstances committees may choose another arrangement.
- 8) detail all non-co-chair leadership position (e.g. secretary, coordinators etc.) in the committee's RP&P document.
- 9) conduct elections for leadership slots using preference voting and codify election procedures in their RP&P document.
- 10) participate in a biannual review of committee RP&Ps conducted by the BRPP, which shall report to the CC on each committee's procedures.
- 11) develop and make available to all members of the committee a packet including all rules, policies and procedures and provide other training and orientation, as appropriate, for new members. This material shall also be available on the committee website.





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12) set up guidelines for member participation, with an emphasis on ensuring participation as a requirement of membership and/or participation in consensus decision-making or quorum voting.

#### **ARTICLE IV. THE STEERING COMMITTEE**

The Steering Committee (SC) of the Green Party of the United States shall be composed of nine members: seven co-chairs, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. Co-chairs shall be selected from and elected by the Coordinating Committee (CC) of the Green Party of the United States for terms of two years, with a limit of two consecutive terms.

The secretary and the treasurer shall be drawn from the membership of the affiliated state Green Parties and shall serve two-year terms without term limits.

The SC shall coordinate the activities of the standing committees and ad hoc committees that may be formed.

Figure 1: ORGANIZATION CHART (doc)

As seen in Figure 1, the SC shall organize using a “portfolio” approach, via which individual designated members of the SC shall coordinate various natural groupings of USGP Committees. As new committees are added, the SC shall decide which portfolio they naturally belong in. Input from the co-chairs of the new committee will be solicited.

Following each year’s SC elections the SC shall organize with all but the secretary, the treasurer and two co- chairs coordinating “portfolio” groups of committees. The remaining two co-chairs shall be utilized at the pleasure of the SC. These two co-chairs may serve as coordinating overseers of the entire Steering Committee (as detailed in Figure 1), may directly assist a portfolio-assigned SC member in their oversight of groupings of committees or the SC may take any alternative approach.



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In addition, although the recommended five portfolio structure does not include portfolio assignments for Secretary and Treasurer, this shall not preclude assignment(s) of portfolios to these two SC positions if, at the time of organization or reorganization, the SC feels it is beneficial to assign certain committees for portfolio coordination to the Secretary and Treasurer.

Grouping of committees shall be determined at the pleasure of the SC as circumstances dictate, using the following groupings as a template for natural groupings.

Internal Coordinator:  
Personnel Committee  
Accreditation Committee  
Bylaw, Rules, Policies and Procedures (BRPP)  
Communications Committee  
Event Planning Committee  
Outreach Coordinator  
Media Committee  
Green Pages  
Merchandise Committee  
Electoral Coordinator  
Coordinated Campaign Committee (CCC)  
Office Holder network  
Presidential Exploratory Committee  
Policy Group Coordinator  
Platform Committee  
International Committee  
Diversity Committee  
Finance Coordinator  
Fundraising Committee  
Finance Committee

Although consensus decision-making on the yearly organizational structure of the SC is preferable, the SC may if necessary, by 2/3 vote, initiate a different organizational structure at the time of each yearly post-election organization.





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The SC may also alter the organizational scheme at any time by consensus, or 2/3 vote if consensus is not achieved.

Responsibilities of the portfolio-holding co-chairs shall include:

- 1) Maintenance of communications with committee co-chairs and, when applicable, other committee designees regarding tasking of the committee, receiving work product and assuring quality and accuracy of work product.
- 2) Eliciting and receiving written reports from committees for distribution to the CC.
- 3) Assuring smooth and efficient functioning of committees by working with committee co-chairs and members.
- 4) Tracking and participating in day-to-day committee activities via listservs and meetings.
- 5) Facilitating work of the committee co-chairs, and communications with, the rest of the SC, CC and other committees.
- 6) Informing the SC of activities and carrying out directive of the SC as they affect the committees in the co-chair's portfolio.
- 7) Carrying out all directives from the CC and or SC, as may be received from time to time.
- 8) Assuring compliance with all internal Committee Policies and Procedures.

#### **ARTICLE V. VOTING RULES**

The Coordinating Committee shall strive for consensus in decision-making. If consensus is not possible, general decisions shall be passed by simple majority and rules, by-laws, and platform issues must pass by a two-thirds majority. A quorum shall





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exist when two-thirds of member states have voted.

#### **ARTICLE VI. SELECTION, ELECTION, AND REMOVAL OF OFFICERS**

At least two months before a national Green Party gathering, the secretary shall ask members of the Coordinating Committee for nominations for the various offices. One month shall be given for all nominations to be submitted. Once all the nominations have been received by the secretary, candidates shall submit a short biography on-line for all delegates to read at least two weeks before the convening of the next Green Party gathering. Nominations may be reopened at the meeting of the Coordinating Committee if there were insufficient nominations. The official announcement of candidates and the elections will be held on separate days during the Green Party gathering. Election of officers will be conducted by preferential voting. For the position of co-chair the individual with the fourth highest vote total will automatically become the alternate and automatically assume the office of co-chair if a vacancy occurs between Green Party gatherings.

The following will be grounds for expulsion of officers:

1. Committing the Green Party to actions, endorsements, and other policy positions outside the decision-making process (see powers of Steering Committee).
2. Misrepresenting the decisions and policies of the Green Party.
3. Misappropriation, embezzlement, or unauthorized disbursement of Green Party funds.
4. Advocacy or practice of discrimination.
5. Advocacy or practice of violent political action.
6. Misrepresentation of self.

Any three Coordinating Committee delegates from different states can bring charges of impeachment against a Green Party officer. Such charges must be in writing. Once charges are brought, a grievance tribunal will be selected by members of the Steering Committee who are not the subject of the





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impeachment. The grievance tribunal will hear both sides and decide the matter in a manner consistent with the principles of due process. The grievance tribunal shall consist of three individuals from states associated with the Green Party and shall not consist of any Green Party officers or individuals from the states that originally brought the charges. The grievance tribunal will make a recommendation to the Coordinating Committee on-line within a reasonable amount of time. The Coordinating Committee will then conduct an on-line vote with a two-third no vote necessary to remove an individual from office.

#### **ARTICLE VII. ETHICAL STANDARDS**

The Green Party accepts that it cannot order the internal politics of its member states. Even so, the Green Party does have a vested interest in ensuring that the internal politics of the Green Parties of the member states meet the highest ethical standards and adhere to Green Values. The Green Party therefore urges member states to:

1. In theory and practice commit to having a membership and leadership reflective of the diversity of the human population within their own states.
2. Commit to opposing racism, sexism, ageism, classism, discrimination against the differently-abled, and other forms of prejudice within the State Green Party and in the larger society.

The Green Party recognizes that winner-take-all/first-past-the-post electoral practices serve to maintain an outdated power structure and prevent members of minority groups from having an adequate impact on policy decisions or serving in leadership position. Therefore the Green Party urges member states to:

1. Use proportional representation, as organizational capability develops, to elect their internal leadership and their delegates to the Green Party and/or Green conventions.

The Green Party recognizes that there are a multiplicity of





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proportional representation voting systems. As long as the form employed is fair, honest, and does honor the principles that encourage the participation that hold minority viewpoints, are members of minority groups, or are from the various geographic regions of the state, the Green Party shall not discriminate against any of the forms chosen by state parties when examining the applications for membership of newly-joining states or in its dealings with the current membership.



