



*Los Angeles County*  
**DEMOCRATIC PARTY**

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**GUIDE TO THE**  
**ENDORSEMENT RECOMMENDATION PROCESS**

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# INTRODUCTION

The Los Angeles County Democratic Central Committee, also known as the Los Angeles County Democratic Party (LACDP), has the authority to grant the endorsement of the Democratic Party in local, municipal and nonpartisan elections in Los Angeles County.

A political party's endorsement is one of the principal tools used to influence the outcome of an election. It is the way the Party signals to Democratic voters those candidates or ballot measures it considers most worthy of support.

The endorsement must be the result of a clean, open and fair process to command the respect of voters. Disappointed candidates may question or challenge an endorsement that goes to an opponent. If the endorsement process is not well-documented, it might not withstand the challenge. The challenge may also nullify the value of the endorsement. While all of us want to see the best Democrats endorsed, we also want our endorsements to "stick."

This guide is designed to assist LACDP members through the endorsement process. In addition, LACDP has a Political Director and Endorsement Coordinators who can help guide you through endorsing in elections for municipal offices, school and college boards, water boards, special districts and other local races.

In elections that involve four (4) or fewer Assembly Districts (AD's), the LACDP AD delegations from those districts, individually or jointly, recommend who should receive the Party's endorsement. Recommendations require a 60% vote of the delegation and must be adopted or rejected by the LACDP general membership by a vote of 60%.

In elections involving more than four (4) Assembly Districts, and for offices of the County of Los Angeles, City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles Unified School District, and Los Angeles Community College District, the recommendation is made by a countywide Candidate Interview Committee. Recommendations for endorsements for judicial office are made by the Judicial Interview Committee. Recommendations for statewide and local propositions and measures are made by the Ballot Measure Committee. Standing Committee recommendations require a 60% vote and must be adopted or rejected by the LACDP general membership by a vote of 60%.

Additionally, in rare circumstances, LACDP may select certain races and candidates to qualify to be included in a candidate recruitment track, allowing these candidates to receive training, endorsements, and Party support before the close of candidate filing deadline if the given races meet the criteria set in the LACDP Bylaws. In these cases, the endorsement recommendations from the Screening and Early Endorsement Recommendation Committee (SEER Committee) require a 60% vote of the SEER committee and must be adopted or rejected by the LACDP general membership by a vote of 60%.

All LACDP endorsement recommendations must originate from an endorsement recommendation committee as described above.

Timing and fairness are essential. The process must begin at the earliest possible opportunity, with proper notice of the date, time and location of all proceedings provided to all candidates and participants. Each step of the process must be carefully documented. Please remember that all meetings of the Democratic Party are open to all Democrats and must be held at venues which are accessible for people with disabilities.

If you have any questions or need assistance during your endorsement recommendation process, please contact the LACDP Political Director at (213) 382-1211 or [clarklee@lacd.org](mailto:clarklee@lacd.org).

# OVERVIEW

The endorsement recommendation process is divided into different stages. This guide will assist you through each stage of the process. Below is a summary of the steps involved in each stage.

## BEFORE THE ENDORSEMENT RECOMMENDATION MEETING

Your AD Delegation, along with any other appropriate AD Delegations, will prepare for the endorsement recommendation process for a particular race. The AD Delegation(s) conducting this process is also referred to as the Endorsement Recommendation Committee.

- Research all races in your area and determine the AD(s) involved for each race.
- Set up endorsement recommendation meeting location, date, time, and duration.
- Determine those candidates eligible for consideration for endorsement in each race.
- Notify *all candidates* by written notice about the endorsement recommendation process/meeting and send the Application for Consideration of Endorsement and Candidate Questionnaire along with LACDP Bylaws excerpt on endorsement to each candidate. Note to the candidates that only registered Democrats are eligible for endorsement consideration.
- Notify all LACDP members resident in those districts included in each race by written notice about the endorsement recommendation meeting.
- Complete a Proof of Service for each race considered, including a list of all candidates and LACDP members to whom written notices are served.
- Begin collecting the Application for Consideration of Endorsement and Candidate Questionnaire and the appropriate administrative fee from each candidate eligible for endorsement.

## DURING THE ENDORSEMENT RECOMMENDATION MEETING

This is the meeting during which your AD Delegation, along with any other appropriate AD Delegations, will interview candidates for office and vote on endorsement recommendation(s) for each race.

- Sign-in the LACDP members and candidates being considered for endorsement. Determine the voting eligibility of the LACDP members present (see LACDP Bylaws for details).
- Be certain a quorum is present.
- Collect the Application for Consideration of Endorsement and Candidate Questionnaire and the appropriate administrative fee from each candidate eligible for endorsement prior to interviewing.
- Interview the candidates.
- Following a discussion of the candidates, conduct the vote on the endorsement recommendation for each race (a 60% vote of those members present and voting is required to make an endorsement recommendation).
- Be sure to understand the options available to the Endorsement Recommendation Committee:
  - Recommendation of a candidate (or group of candidates).
  - Recommendation of “No Endorsement.”
  - Recommendation of “No Consensus.”\*
  - Finding that a candidate is “Unacceptable” for endorsement (only in rare circumstances).

\* Failure to make a recommendation becomes a recommendation of “No Consensus” by default.

- Complete the Post-Meeting Checklist for each race immediately following the meeting, including the vote count and the designated spokesperson who will report on the race(s) at the LACDP Meeting during which the endorsement recommendation will be considered.

### **BETWEEN THE ENDORSEMENT RECOMMENDATION MEETING AND THE LACDP MEETING**

Within seventy-two (72) hours of the Endorsement Recommendation Meeting, you will need to submit all relevant documents and notify the LACDP Chair of the committee's recommendation.

- Complete and submit the Administrative Fee Submission Form and all fees to the LACDP Treasurer (also submit copies to the LACDP office).
- Complete and submit the Decision Notification Form (for the LACDP Chair) to the LACDP office within seventy-two (72) hours of the meeting.
- Complete the Reimbursement Request Form for any expenses incurred for the meeting, and submit it to the LACDP office.
- Complete and submit the Document Submission Form and other relevant documents to the LACDP office.
- Inform LACDP staff of any possible challenges to the endorsement process or contentious recommendations.

### **AT THE LACDP MEETING**

Endorsement recommendations from your AD Delegation(s) will be presented for consideration at the next LACDP General Membership Meeting.

- Work with LACDP staff to resolve any challenges to the endorsement process.
- Report on the results of the endorsement recommendation(s) from your meeting.
- Conduct the LACDP vote on the endorsement recommendation (requires 60% vote for adoption).
- Be sure to understand the LACDP Bylaws and procedures regarding:
  - Severance of motions
  - Debate
  - Order of consideration
  - Percentage required to adopt recommendation
  - Failure of the Endorsement Recommendation Committee's recommendation

If you have any questions or need assistance during your endorsement recommendation process, please contact the LACDP Political Director at (213) 382-1211 or [clarklee@lacd.org](mailto:clarklee@lacd.org).

# LIST OF FORMS AND SAMPLES

The following is a list of items, forms and samples that are necessary for the LACDP endorsement recommendation process. The list indicates which items you need to during each stage of the endorsement process.

## **BEFORE THE ENDORSEMENT RECOMMENDATION MEETING**

- City Clerk Roster
- Elections Calendar
- LACDP Leadership List
- Meeting Location Planning Form
- Sample Letter to Candidates for Consideration of Endorsement
- Sample Notice to Members for Endorsement Recommendation Interviews
- Proof of Service
- Proof of Service List – Candidates Served
- Proof of Service List – Members Served
- Application for Consideration of Endorsement and Candidate Questionnaire
- California Democratic Party Platform Information

## **DURING THE ENDORSEMENT RECOMMENDATION MEETING**

- Candidate Sign-In Sheet
- Member Sign-In Sheet
- Endorsement Recommendation Ballot
- Post-Meeting Checklist

## **BETWEEN THE ENDORSEMENT RECOMMENDATION MEETING AND THE LACDP MEETING**

- Decision Notification Form
- Administrative Fee Submission Form

## **AT THE LACDP MEETING**

- Reimbursement Request Form
- Document Submission Form
- Committee Report Script
- Consent Calendar (For Candidate Interview Committee, Judicial Interview Committee, and Ballot Measure Committee use only)

# BEFORE THE ENDORSEMENT RECOMMENDATION MEETING

## BACKGROUND RESEARCH

You will need the following item(s) for this step:

- City Clerk Roster
- Elections Calendar
- LACDP Leadership List
- Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder Contact

In preparation for the meeting, you will need to:

- **Districts.** Determine which local offices are up for election are within your AD, and determine which other AD's share the district; contact the AD Delegation chair(s) of those AD's.<sup>1</sup>
- **Offices for Election.** Ascertain the office with which the candidates file their Notice of Intent to run for office (i.e., Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder, City Clerk, etc.).<sup>2</sup>
- **Dates.** Find out the dates of:<sup>3</sup>
  - First and last day to file "intent to run" ("pulling papers" to run for office).
  - First and last day to file to run for office.
  - Any possible extensions of deadline (i.e., in the event that no incumbent files to run).
  - Primary election date, if applicable.
  - Run-off election date or general election date, if applicable.
- **Candidate Filing Status.** Find out who has pulled papers to run for office and has filed to run for each office. Compile a list of all candidates and their contact information. Do not wait until the filing deadline to obtain the list of candidates.
- **Candidate Party Registration.** Only registered Democrats are eligible for LACDP endorsement consideration.<sup>4</sup> Check the party registration of all candidates in each race and determine which candidates are eligible for consideration of endorsement. Do not rely on hearsay regarding the candidates' party affiliation, as they must be registered Democrats to be considered for endorsement. Be sure to recheck the final list of candidates to avoid excluding late-filers or including candidates who have dropped out or do not qualify for the ballot otherwise. If possible, re-check the party registration of those candidates who have expressed interest in participating in the endorsement process prior to your endorsement recommendation meeting.

The LACDP Political Director and the LACDP Endorsement Coordinators are available to help you with the above steps, but as the person(s) closest to the offices in question, you and the other members of your delegation owe it to your constituents to be up-to-speed on these questions. It is part of the duties for which you were elected by the voters of your district.

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<sup>1</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section C. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section A. 7.

## **MEETING SETUP**

**You will need the following form(s) for this step:**

- Meeting Location Planning Form

**In order to set up the meeting date, time, and location, you should consider the following:**

- **Time-Frame.** Look at the window between the last possible filing date for an office and the next LACDP Monthly Meeting. Ideally, this is when you should schedule your endorsement recommendation meeting.
- **Setting Meeting Date.** Confer with the chair(s) of any other AD Delegation(s) involved and set the date and time for your meeting.
  - If possible, avoid the meeting dates of any of the bodies to which candidates will be seeking election or reelection (i.e., City Council or School Board).
  - Set a meeting date and time as soon as you know the close of filing date. You do not have to wait until the close of filing to notify your AD Delegation of the meeting.
- **Find Meeting Location.** Find an appropriate location for the meeting that adheres to the specifications prescribed in the Meeting Location Planning Form (i.e., accessibility for people with disabilities, candidate waiting area, and parking).
  - Whenever possible, visit the meeting location site before you set the meeting and make sure that it meets the specifications prescribed in the Meeting Location Planning Form.
- **Meeting Location Planning Form.** Submit the Meeting Location Planning Form to the LACDP Political Director via fax or email as soon as your meeting details are set.
- **Bylaws.** Review the provisions of the LACDP Bylaws pertaining to endorsements (Article X).

## **NOTIFYING LACDP MEMBERS AND CANDIDATES**

**You will need the following form(s) for this step:**

- Sample Letter to Candidates for Consideration of Endorsement
- Application for Consideration of Endorsement and Candidate Questionnaire
- California Democratic Party Platform Information
- Sample Notice to Members for Endorsement Recommendation Interviews

You must notify LACDP members from the AD Delegation(s) involved in each race and all candidates in that race for consideration for endorsement by written notice at least seven (7) days prior to the endorsement recommendation meeting. Note only registered Democrats are eligible for endorsement consideration.<sup>5</sup>

**You should consider the following steps:**

- **Letter to Candidates.**<sup>6</sup>
  - Using the Sample Letter to Candidates for Consideration of Endorsement, prepare a letter addressed to all candidates, informing them of the eligibility for LACDP endorsement consideration (noting that only registered Democrats are eligible) and the date, time and location of the endorsement recommendation meeting and the subsequent LACDP meeting. The Application for Consideration

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<sup>5</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section A. 7.

<sup>6</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section A. 8.

of Endorsement and Candidate Questionnaire should be included along with the letter. Be sure to date the letter.

- Make copies of all letters, which will be sent to the LACDP office, along with Proof of Service form. See “Proof of Service” section below.
- Send the individualized letters addressed to each candidate, along with an Application for Consideration of Endorsement and Candidate Questionnaire, the relevant sections of LACDP Bylaws on endorsement, and the California Democratic Party (CDP) Platform information by United States Postal Service (USPS) to all candidates.
- **Notice to AD Delegation Members.**
  - Using the Sample Notice to Members for Endorsement Recommendation Interviews, prepare a notice addressed to each LACDP member in the AD Delegation(s) and make sure to date the notice.
  - The notice should be sent to all LACDP members in the AD Delegation(s), including Elected members, Appointed members, Ex Officio members, Alternate members, and Associate members. Note that Associate members can participate in the endorsement recommendation meeting as nonvoting participants.
  - Make copies of all letters, which will be sent to LACDP office, along with Proof of Service form. See “Proof of Service” section below.
  - Send the Notice to Members for Endorsement Recommendation Interviews by USPS to each LACDP member in the AD Delegation(s) involved in the races being considered for endorsement.
- **Other Notes.** In addition to sending written notices (as required by LACDP Bylaws), you should also fax, phone, and/or email the candidates and LACDP members to ensure receipt of the information. Additionally, you should also require RSVP from candidates and LACDP members to gauge attendance. Please note that RSVP status does not affect the eligibility of a candidate (i.e., even if an eligible candidate as defined by LACDP Bylaws does not RSVP, the candidate is still eligible to participate in the endorsement process provided that the requirements are met.

#### **The letter to each candidate should include:<sup>7</sup>**

- Eligibility for consideration of endorsement. Only registered Democrats are eligible for LACDP endorsement consideration. Additionally, only candidates who have timely paid or had properly requested and granted waiver of the administrative filing fee and have timely submitted a completed standard candidate questionnaire/application is eligible for endorsement consideration. (Note: “Timely” in this context is defined as no later than the time of the endorsement recommendation meeting.)
- Date, time, location, and duration (if possible) of the candidate interview.
- Details of the endorsement process. The purpose of the interview is to *recommend* endorsement to LACDP, *not* to make the actual endorsement. A recommendation requires a 60% vote of the committee. It must subsequently be adopted at the next LACDP General Membership meeting with a 60% vote. Abstentions do not count toward the total number of votes cast. Votes for “No Endorsement” do count toward the total.
- Request for a \$50 non-refundable administrative fee (or \$100, if conducted by the Candidate Interview Committee or the Judicial Interview Committee), which can be reduced by presentation of proof of registration of Democrats during the three (3) months immediately preceding the endorsement recommendation meeting, at the rate of \$1 per Democratic voter registration.
- Information for the LACDP Meeting during which the actual endorsement will be considered. Inform the candidates that they are welcome to attend the meeting but they may only speak if they are LACDP members or if a LACDP member yields time to them.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

- Your contact information to confirm their participation, to schedule interview time, or if they have any questions.
- Make sure to date the letter.
- Copy of LACDP Bylaws Article X on Endorsement.
- Copy of the Application for Consideration of Endorsement and Candidate Questionnaire.
- Copy of the California Democratic Party Platform Information.

## **PROOF OF SERVICE**

**You will need the following form(s) for this step:**

- Proof of Service
- Proof of Service List – Candidates Served
- Proof of Service List – Members Served

You must complete a Proof of Service for each race in which you sent out notices.

**Steps to complete the Proof of Service form for each race:<sup>8</sup>**

- **Proof of Service Form.** Complete the form for each race in which you have sent out notices.
- **Letter and Notice Copies.** Attach the copies of the letters to candidates and notices to the appropriate LACDP members to the Proof of Service form.
- **Proof of Service List – Candidates Served.** Using the Proof of Service List – Candidates Served form, provide the contact information of all candidates to whom you sent letters. Attach to Proof of Service form.
- **Proof of Service List – Members Served.** Using the Proof of Service List – Members Served form, provide the contact information of all LACDP members to whom you sent letters. Attach to Proof of Service form.
- Maintain the Proof of Service package for each race and submit to LACDP office following your meeting. See “Between the Endorsement Recommendation Meeting and the LACDP Meeting” and “At the LACDP Meeting” sections for details.

## **OTHER RELEVANT STEPS BEFORE THE ENDORSEMENT RECOMMENDATION MEETING**

**You will need the following form(s) for this step:**

- Post-Meeting Checklist
- Endorsement Recommendation Ballot

**Below are additional preparation tips for this stage of the process:**

- **Copies.** Make a copy of the Post-Meeting Checklist for each race considered. You will need this form during and after the meeting.
  - For the purposes of using this form, “each race” is defined as (1) one specific seat with district number or seat number in a jurisdiction, or (2) one group of at-large seats in the same race (i.e., non-districted city council or school board races).

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<sup>8</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section A. 8. (d).

- Thus, for example, if City A has City Council District 1 and City Council District 2 on the same ballot, you would complete separate Post-Meeting Checklists, one for Council District 1 and another for Council District 2. And, if School Board X has 2 at-large seats, you would complete one Post-Meeting Checklist for that school board race for both at-large seats.
- **Ballots.** Any member can request paper ballots, but not secret ballots. Using the Endorsement Recommendation Ballot template provided, prepare a sufficient number of identical ballots for each race considered. Ballots should include the names of all eligible candidates and the option of “No Endorsement.” Ballots must contain the printed name of the LACDP member and a space for the member to sign.<sup>9</sup>
- **Provisional Ballots.** Print ballots in a different color to use as provisional ballots; each ballot should have the printed name of the LACDP member and a space for the member to sign; label ballots clearly as “provisional ballots.” Make sure to save the ballots and seal them in an envelope after the meeting.
- **Candidate Application and Fees.**<sup>10</sup> As early as possible, but not later than the time of the meeting/interview, collect the Application for Consideration of Endorsement and Candidate Questionnaire and the appropriate administrative fee (check, cash or credit card) from each candidate. Make sure the checks are made payable to the Los Angeles County Democratic Party. Transmit administrative fees directly to the LACDP Treasurer ASAP; make copies of checks and submit them to the LACDP office. See “Between the Endorsement Recommendation Meeting and the LACDP Meeting” section for details.
- **Candidate Interview Questions.** With the help of other members of the AD Delegation(s), prepare a set of questions in advance to ask each candidate for a given office. In the interest of fairness, each candidate for a given office should generally be afforded the opportunity to respond to the same questions.
- **Candidate Interview Scheduling.** Whenever possible, it is recommended that each candidate participating in the endorsement process be scheduled for a specific interview time slot to streamline the endorsement recommendation meeting.

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<sup>9</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section A. 3.

<sup>10</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section B. 3.

# DURING THE ENDORSEMENT RECOMMENDATION MEETING

## SETTING UP THE MEETING

**You will need the following item(s) for this step:**

- Candidate Sign-In Sheet
- Member Sign-In Sheet
- LACDP Bylaws
- Endorsement Recommendation Ballots
- Post-Meeting Checklist and Endorsement Recommendation Vote Tally Sheet (second page of the Post-Meeting Checklist)

**After you arrive at the meeting location and prior to the meeting, complete the following:**

- **Sign-In.** Set up a sign-in table for candidates and LACDP members involved in the meeting. As LACDP members sign in, make sure they indicate their eligibility to vote in accordance with the LACDP Bylaws. Make sure that the Sign-In Sheets are on the table and ensure that each person signs-in as they arrive. Set-up a waiting area for candidates who have arrived prior to their assigned interview time.
- **Candidate Application and Fees.**<sup>11</sup> As the candidates sign in, collect the Application for Consideration of Endorsement and Candidate Questionnaire, along with their administrative fees. If candidates are paying by check, ensure that the checks are made payable to the Los Angeles County Democratic Party. Remember: Only candidates who have timely paid or had waived the administrative fee and have timely submitted a completed Application for Consideration of Endorsement and Candidate Questionnaire are eligible for endorsement consideration.<sup>12</sup>
- **Quorum.**<sup>13</sup> Determine the quorum necessary to conduct the meeting. Only Regular Members are counted toward a quorum. Regular Members are defined as all Elected, Appointed, and Ex Officio members. To calculate a quorum, determine the number of Regular Members in the delegation and then subtract any disqualified members. Associate members do not count toward a quorum. Alternate members only count if their appointing member is not present or has been disqualified. Quorum requirements are as follows:
  - In the case of one (1) AD Delegation, a majority of the filled positions of all Regular Members, with a maximum quorum requirement of 6;
  - In the case of two (2) AD Delegations meeting jointly, a majority of the filled positions of all Regular Members, with a maximum quorum requirement of 9;
  - In the case of three (3) AD Delegations meeting jointly, a majority of the filled positions of all Regular Members, with a maximum quorum requirement of 12; and
  - In the case of four (4) AD Delegations meeting jointly, a majority of the filled positions of all Regular Members, with a maximum quorum requirement of 15.

Check the LACDP Bylaws provision on quorum requirement for additional information.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section B. 5.

<sup>13</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section A. 11.

## **CONDUCTING THE MEETING, INTERVIEW AND VOTE**

### **Considerations for this step:**

- **LACDP Bylaws.** Make sure a copy of the LACDP Bylaws is available at all times during the meeting and refer to the Bylaws if you are unsure about any part of the endorsement recommendation process.
- **Member Voting Eligibility.** All Regular Members who do not fall into one of the “Conflict of Interest Provisions” listed below may fully participate in an AD Delegation endorsement recommendation meeting. Regular Members include all Elected, Appointed and Ex-Officio members.
  - In AD Delegation endorsement recommendation meetings, Alternate members may participate in the interview and debate, but can only vote or make recommendation motions if their appointing member is not present or is disqualified from voting.<sup>14</sup> Associate Members may also participate in the interview and debate, but may not vote nor make motions for recommendation.
  - In Standing Committee endorsement recommendation meetings (i.e., Candidate Interview Committee, Judicial Interview Committee, and Ballot Measure Committee) and Screen and Early Endorsement Recommendation (SEER) Committee meetings, only the committee members who serve on those respective committees may vote.<sup>15</sup>
  - Thus, Alternate members serving on Endorsement Recommendation Committees that are Standing Committees (such as the Candidate Interview Committee, Judicial Interview Committee and Ballot Measure Committee), have the same rights and privileges on that committee as Regular Members.
- **Conflict of Interest Provisions.**<sup>16</sup> A member may not vote nor make a motion concerning a recommendation for endorsement of a candidate if:
  - The member is a candidate for the office under consideration; or
  - The member is a paid employee or independent contractor of the controlled committee of a candidate for the office under consideration; or
  - The member is an employee who serves or works in paid employment at the pleasure of a person standing for election to the office under consideration; provided, however, that nothing in this rule shall preclude any person serving on a non-salaried basis as an appointee to a public panel, board or commission from voting on such a recommendation for endorsement.
  - Disqualified members may participate in discussion and debate.
- **Interview and Deliberation.** AD Delegations, Endorsement Standing Committees, and SEER Committees must interview each candidate individually. You may prepare a set of questions in advance. In the interest of fairness, each candidate for a given office should generally be afforded the opportunity to respond to the same questions. Deliberations should occur after all interviews for a particular race are complete.
- **Voting Process.** Only LACDP members eligible to vote may do so.
  - **Ballots.** Any member can request paper ballots for voting, but secret ballots are not permitted. Use the Endorsement Recommendation Ballot template provided to prepare sufficient identical ballots for each race; ballots should include the names of all eligible candidates and the option of “No Endorsement.”<sup>17</sup> Paper ballots must contain the printed name of the LACDP member and a space for the member to sign.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section A. 12.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section A. 10.

<sup>17</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section C. 3.

<sup>18</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section A. 3.

- **Voting By Using Vote Tally Sheet.** In lieu of ballots, you can also choose to use the Endorsement Recommendation Vote Tally sheet on the second page of the Post-Meeting Checklist. Make sure that each member indicates his/her vote and signs in the spaces provided on the sheet.
- **Recommendation Options.**<sup>19</sup> The Endorsement Recommendation Committee has four options:
  - Recommendation of a candidate (or group of candidates).  
Only registered Democrats may be endorsed and only those candidates who have (1) timely paid their appropriate administrative fee or received a fee waiver and (2) submitted a completed Application for Consideration of Endorsement and Candidate Questionnaire are eligible for endorsement. The committee may not endorse more candidates for an office than the number to be elected for that office.
  - Recommendation of “No Endorsement.”  
This recommendation states that your committee affirmatively believes that none of the candidates in a race deserves the Democratic Party endorsement.
  - Recommendation of “\*No Consensus.”  
This recommendation states that your committee could not achieve a 60% consensus for any candidate and that the committee affirmatively recommends that the Democratic Party take a position of “No Consensus.”
  - Finding that a specific candidate is “Unacceptable” for endorsement.  
This recommendation should only be used in rare circumstances where your committee agrees that a specific candidate (or group of candidates) is unacceptable. This recommendation may be used in conjunction with other recommendations above.

\* Note: If a committee fails to make a recommendation, the committee’s position becomes “No Consensus,” by default.
- **Percentage Necessary for Recommendation.**<sup>20</sup> A motion requires 60% of the valid votes cast to become the endorsement recommendation. First, determine the total number of valid votes by subtracting any void or blank ballots or abstentions. Then, determine the number of votes required to meet the 60% threshold required for a recommendation. When determining the votes required, round up to the next whole number.
  - For example, if you have 6 valid votes, you would multiply by 0.6 to get 3.6, and round up to determine that it would take 4 valid votes to make an endorsement recommendation.
  - Similarly, if you have 9 valid votes, you would multiply by 0.6 to get 5.4, and round up to determine that it would take 6 valid votes to make an endorsement recommendation.
- **Challenges.**<sup>21</sup> An alleged violation of the endorsement process may only be challenged by an LACDP member or the candidate whose race is being considered. Challenges should be made at the earliest possible point in time. If you receive a challenge at any point in your process, please immediately alert LACDP staff.
  - **Provisional Ballots.** If there is a challenge to your ruling regarding an LACDP member’s eligibility to vote, you must provide that member with a provisional ballot. When you inform the members and candidates of the results of the recommendation vote, be sure to note that the results are pending adjudication of the challenge. The provisional ballots should be a different color from the regular ballots and should be clearly labeled as a “provisional ballot.”

**IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE VOTE**

**You will need the following item(s) for this step:**

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<sup>19</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section C. 3.

<sup>20</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section A. 4.

<sup>21</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section E.

- Endorsement Recommendation Ballot(s)
- Post-Meeting Checklist and Endorsement Recommendation Vote Tally Sheet

**Considerations for this step:**

- **Vote Tally.** Use the Endorsement Recommendation Vote Tally Sheet on the second page of the Post-Meeting Checklist to tally the votes cast.
- **Challenges.** If you receive a challenge at any point in your process, please immediately alert LACDP staff.
- **Post-Meeting Checklist.** Begin completing the checklist as soon as the meeting is over.
  - Complete one checklist for each race considered.
    - As noted earlier, for the purposes of using this form, “each race” is defined as (1) one specific seat with district number or seat number in a jurisdiction, or (2) one group of at-large seats in the same race (i.e., non-districted city council or school board races).
    - Thus, for example, if City A has City Council District 1 and City Council District 2 on the same ballot, you would complete separate Post-Meeting Checklists, one for Council District 1 and another for Council District 2. And, if School Board X has 2 at-large seats, you would complete one Post-Meeting Checklist for that school board race for both at-large seats.
  - Make copies of the Applications for the Consideration of Endorsement and Candidate Questionnaire and the administrative fees received. See “Between the Endorsement Recommendation Meeting and the LACDP Meeting” and “At the LACDP Meeting” sections for more details.
  - Make a copy of the Post-Meeting Checklist(s) for use by your designated spokesperson (see below) who will be present the results of the Endorsement Recommendation Meeting.

**Endorsement Recommendation Report Presenter.** Designate a member of the delegation to present the delegation’s endorsement recommendation report at the LACDP Meeting. Please see the “Between the Endorsement Recommendation Meeting and the LACDP Meeting” section for important steps and notes in preparing the endorsement recommendation report.

# BETWEEN THE ENDORSEMENT RECOMMENDATION MEETING AND THE LACDP MEETING

## ENDORSEMENT RECOMMENDATION NOTIFICATION

**You will need the following item(s) for this step:**

- Decision Notification Form

**After the Endorsement Recommendation Meeting, you need to notify the LACDP Chair and candidates whose races have been considered of the endorsement recommendation results:**

- The decisions of the Endorsement Recommendation Committee shall be transmitted to the LACDP Chair, LACDP staff, and all candidates in a given race within seventy-two (72) hours of the decision, but no later than twenty-four (24) hours prior to the LACDP Meeting at which the endorsement recommendations will be presented.<sup>22</sup>
- You may provide the notice orally, in writing, telephonically, or electronically, or by any other form of actual notice.<sup>23</sup>
- Please note that the results of the endorsement recommendation are public information and are not to be kept secret.<sup>24</sup>
- **Decision Notification Form.** Complete the Decision Notification Form and send it to the LACDP office via fax or email as instructed on the form. Include all races considered during your Endorsement Recommendation Meeting and the committee's recommendations. Make a copy of this form for your records and include a copy when you submit the documents from your meeting to the LACDP office.
- **Notifying Candidates.** Notify all candidates of the endorsement recommendation results, as described above.
- Additionally, inform the Political Director whom your delegation has assigned to give the committee's report and whether there are any possible procedural challenges or contentious recommendations.

## DOCUMENT SUBMISSION

**You will need the following item(s) for this step:**

- Administrative Fee Submission Form
- Reimbursement Request Form
- Document Submission Form
- All other relevant documents pertaining to the endorsement recommendation process

**Following the meeting, you will need to submit all documents and fees as prescribed in the LACDP Bylaws. Please follow these steps:**

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<sup>22</sup>LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section A. 9.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

- **Administrative Fee.** Immediately after the Endorsement Recommendation Meeting, make copies of all administrative fees submitted (i.e., checks and cash) and all Applications for Consideration of Endorsement and Candidate Questionnaires.
  - Within twenty-four (24) hours after adjournment of your meeting, submit the Administrative Fee Submission Form, the administrative fees, and the Application for Consideration of Endorsement and Candidate Questionnaire from each candidate to the LACDP Political Director (for forwarding to LACDP Treasurer) by USPS Priority Mail (or hand delivery) to:

Los Angeles County Democratic Party  
 Attn: Clark Lee, Political Director  
 3550 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 1203  
 Los Angeles, CA 90010

- Do not mail cash. You can bring the cash to the LACDP Meeting and submit it along with the paperwork to the LACDP Controller or Political Director.
- Retain all copies made for the “Document Submission” step below.
- **Reimbursement Request.** If you have incurred any expenses for the Endorsement Recommendation Meeting, please complete the Reimbursement Request Form and attach all receipts for each itemized expense. Submit these along with all other documents described below. Please note that any expenses other than postage and photocopying need to be pre-approved.
- **Document Submission.** Complete the Document Submission Form and use it as a checklist of all relevant documents you need to submit to the LACDP office.
  - Please do not throw away any documents or notes used during the Endorsement Recommendation Meeting. Include those items in the document submission package.
  - Send the Document Submission Form and all other documents by USPS Priority Mail (or hand delivery) to:

Los Angeles County Democratic Party  
 Attention: Clark Lee, Political Director  
 3550 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 1203  
 Los Angeles, CA 90010

### **ENDORSEMENT RECOMMENDATION COMMITTEE REPORT PREPARATION**

The presenter of the endorsement recommendation committee report at the LACDP Meeting should prepare a written script to accompany the report before the LACDP Meeting. Here are some important points about the report:

- **Consent Calendar.**<sup>25</sup> LACDP Chair may use the consent calendar at his/her discretion.
  - It can only be used for reports from the Candidate Interview Committee, Judicial Interview Committee, and/or Ballot Measure Committee.
  - It is *not* used for endorsement recommendation committee reports from AD Delegations.
  - When consent calendar is used, it must be in writing and distributed at or before the LACDP Meeting at which the consent calendar is considered.

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<sup>25</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section D. 1. (a).

- **Endorsement Recommendation Reports Not on Consent Calendar (i.e., All AD Delegation Endorsement Recommendation Reports).**<sup>26</sup> The following should be included in the endorsement recommendation report:
  - Brief description of the endorsement recommendation process with the reason for the recommendation for each race presented (i.e., “the AD Delegation met on (date) at (location) to consider the candidates for City Council A, School Board X, and Water District Y...”). Please see “Presenting the Endorsement Recommendation Committee Report” portion under “At the LACDP Meeting” section on page 20 for more details.
  - Each jurisdiction (endorsement recommendation for each race) will be presented and voted on individually. Here are two important points about presenting and voting:
    - Different jurisdictions are presented and voted on separately. For example, if the endorsement recommendations for City Council A and School Board X are to be reported, the City Council A endorsement recommendation would be presented and voted on; then, the School Board X endorsement recommendation would be presented and voted on.
    - At-large offices should be presented and voted on separately from all other offices.
      - Example: In a city with multiple City Council Members elected in separate districts (whether districted by voting population or districted with seat numbers but with at-large voting), plus an elected Mayor and an elected Treasurer, all of these offices would be presented together in one motion.
      - Example: In a city with multiple City Council Members elected at-large, plus an elected Mayor and elected Treasurer, there would be two motions: first, endorsement recommendations for the City Council would be presented and voted on as one motion; then, endorsement recommendations for the Mayor and the Treasurer would be presented and voted on as one motion.

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<sup>26</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section D. 1. (b).

# AT THE LACDP MEETING

## DOCUMENT SUBMISSION

**You will need the following item(s) for this step:**

- Post-Meeting Checklist (Copy)
- Any previously un-submitted documents or administrative fees

**Immediately upon arrival at the LACDP Meeting, submit all previously un-submitted documents and administrative fees to the LACDP Political Director or other designated person. Inform the Political Director whom your delegation has assigned to give the committee's report.**

## PRESENTING THE ENDORSEMENT RECOMMENDATION COMMITTEE REPORT

**You will need the following item(s) for this step:**

- Endorsement Recommendation Committee Report Script

**At the LACDP Meeting, your delegation's designated spokesperson will report the results of your meeting. Please see "Endorsement Recommendation Committee Report Preparation" portion of the "Between the Endorsement Recommendation Meeting and the LACDP Meeting" section on page 18 for details on preparing your report and how to present your report when there are multiple races in the same jurisdiction.**

**Please be sure the report for each jurisdiction includes the following:<sup>27</sup>**

- **Description of the Race.** Number of seats on the electoral body being considered (i.e., 5 seats on city council) number of seats up for election, and current partisan breakdown.
- **Description of Candidates.** Number of candidates running, partisan breakdown of candidates, number of candidates who participated in the endorsement recommendation process, and whether or not candidates are incumbents.
- **Description of Recommendation Process.** Briefly describe the endorsement recommendation meeting and the key points that led the committee to make its recommendation.
- **Recommendation Results.** Include vote totals.
- **Other.** A short explanation of positives for the recommendation of particular candidates, or reasons for recommendations of "No Endorsement," "No Consensus" or a finding of "Unacceptability."
- **Note.** Remember, consent calendar can only be used by the Candidate Interview Committee, Judicial Interview Committee, and/or Ballot Measure Committee,<sup>28</sup> at the discretion of the LACDP Chair.<sup>29</sup> It is not used by AD Delegation endorsement recommendation reports.<sup>30</sup>

## CONDUCTING THE VOTE

**After presenting the Endorsement Recommendation Committee's report, the designated spokesperson will be responsible for conducting the vote on the committee's recommendation. Although we encourage to you seek**

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<sup>27</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section D. 1. (b).

<sup>28</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section D. 1. (a). (1).

<sup>29</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section D. 1. (a).

<sup>30</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section D. 1. (a). (2).

**advice or direction from the LACDP Chair or LACDP Parliamentarian if you are uncertain of any part of the procedures at any time during the vote, it is helpful for you to understand the basic principles and procedures.**

- **Presenting the Motion.** As previously noted, only the Candidate Interview Committee, the Judicial Interview Committee, and/or the Ballot Measure Committee may use consent calendar, at the discretion of the LACDP Chair. For presenting motions (reports) not on the consent calendar, as previously noted on page 18, each jurisdiction (endorsement recommendation for each race) will be presented and voted on individually. Here are two important points about presenting and voting:
  - Different jurisdictions are presented and voted on separately. For example, if the endorsement recommendations for City Council A and School Board X are to be reported, the City Council A endorsement recommendation would be presented and voted on; then, the School Board X endorsement recommendation would be presented and voted on.
  - At-large offices should be presented and voted on separately from all other offices.
    - Example: In a city with multiple City Council Members elected in separate districts (whether districted by voting population or districted with seat numbers but with at-large voting), plus an elected Mayor and an elected Treasurer, all of these offices would be presented together in one motion.
    - Example: In a city with multiple City Council Members elected at-large, plus an elected Mayor and elected Treasurer, there would be two motions: first, endorsement recommendations for the City Council would be presented and voted on as one motion; then, endorsement recommendations for the Mayor and the Treasurer would be presented and voted on as one motion.
- **Severance of Motions.** In sum, candidates, at-large offices and/or ballot measure positions may be severed from a consent calendar or from a motion presented during an Endorsement Recommendation Committee report (1) upon request of a credentialed LACDP Member and (2) seconded by twenty (20) LACDP Members who show their credentials at the time that the motion is in order. No written petitions are required for this process.<sup>31</sup>
- **Debate.** Except when the recommendations are presented as a consent calendar (see LACDP Bylaws), LACDP members may debate the recommendation presented by the Endorsement Recommendation Committee.<sup>32</sup>
  - Speakers are limited to no more than three (3) in favor and three opposed, with a time limit of no more than one (1) minute per speaker.
  - The number of speakers or time allotted may be extended by a majority vote of those present and voting.
  - Note that a candidate cannot address LACDP unless s/he is a LACDP member or a LACDP member yields time to him/her.
- **Order of Consideration.** During the presentation of the Endorsement Recommendation Committee reports, the order of endorsement recommendation consideration for voting on the Committee's recommendations is as follows:
  - All parts of a consent calendar, or Endorsement Recommendation Committee's motion (from the report) which has not been severed,<sup>33</sup>
  - The candidates or positions (i.e., for ballot measures) severed from a consent calendar or Endorsement Recommendation Committee recommendation, with the first vote being on the Endorsement Recommendation Committee's recommendation.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section D. 2.

<sup>32</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section D. 4.

<sup>33</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section D. 3. (a).



would be conducted.<sup>46</sup> If no candidate receives 60% majority required but all candidates receive at least 20% of the vote, then balloting ceases.

- Third Ballot: In the same fashion described above, if no candidate receives 60% majority required on the second ballot, any candidate who receives less than 20% would be dropped and a third ballot would be conducted.<sup>47</sup> If no candidate receives 60% majority required for endorsement on the second ballot, but all candidates receive at least 20% of the vote, then balloting ceases.<sup>48</sup>
- If no candidate is endorsed, the LACDP position shall be “No Consensus.”<sup>49</sup>
- **No Consensus.** In the event that LACDP fails to endorse, the LACDP position shall be “No Consensus.”<sup>50</sup>
- **Ballot Measures.** If the endorsement recommendation of the Ballot Measure Committee is defeated, there should be one (1) ballot, which includes the option of “Yes” (support), “No” (oppose), and “No Endorsement.”<sup>51</sup>

## **CHALLENGES**

An alleged violation of the endorsement process may only be challenged by a member of LACDP or the candidate whose race is being considered.<sup>52</sup> Challenges should be made at the earliest possible point in time.<sup>53</sup> All challenges are subject to review and adjudication by the Appeals Committee.<sup>54</sup> The Appeals Committee shall determine the validity of any challenge and has authority to resolve the challenge and to order such remedy as may be just, equitable and appropriate.

## **NOTE: ENDORSEMENT PROCEDURES FOR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

In addition to the important endorsement process outlined in this Guide, the LACDP Bylaws also prescribes other endorsement procedures for special circumstances. For more information, please consult the LACDP Bylaws.



<sup>46</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section D. 5. (c).

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section D. 5. (c). (3).

<sup>50</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section D. 7.

<sup>51</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section D. 5. (d).

<sup>52</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section E. 1. (a).

<sup>53</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section E. 1. (b).

<sup>54</sup> LACDP Bylaws Article X. Section E. 2.