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# **King County Republican Party**

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**2015.2016  
District Chair Manual**



“My philosophy of life is that if we make up our mind what we are going to make of our lives, then work hard toward that goal, we never lose – somehow we win out.”

- Ronald Reagan



**KING COUNTY REPUBLICAN PARTY  
District Chairman Duties 2015-16**

- Attend monthly KCGOP Executive Committee / Legislative GOP District Chair meetings with a maximum of 3 excused absences per year. You must provide a proxy for absences to be considered excused.
- Appoint Legislative GOP District structure to include (at a minimum) Vice Chair(s), Region Chairs, Area Chairs, Treasurer, Secretary, GOTV Chair, and Precinct Recruitment Chair. Provide the KCGOP Chairman with a list of the District Leadership Team.
- Establish a regular method of communication, such as a monthly newsletter, with Legislative GOP District Leadership, Precinct Committee Officers and Volunteers. Include KCGOP Chairman and Executive Director on communications.
- Hold regular district meetings – preferably every month, but no fewer than 9 times a year at a location publicized in advance to PCOs/PCs and District email list. Provide a schedule of meetings, with date/time/location, to the KCGOP for the website calendar.
- Establish a Legislative GOP District website and Facebook Page to support communication and outreach activities.
- Attend PDC Treasurer Training with your District Treasurer and comply with Public Disclosure Commission requirements for your District treasury.
- Recruit PCOs/PCs in support of KCGOP recruitment goals. Sign off on the appointment of new PCOs/PCs for unfilled precincts in your Legislative GOP District who are acceptable to the KCGOP Chairman.
- Support and participate in official KCGOP meetings, trainings and events, such as County and State Conventions, Lincoln Day and Fall Dinners, Annual Picnic, Precinct Committee Officer Orientation and Training and Get out the Vote.
- Actively participate in KCGOP voter identification, registration and GOTV activities and entering the data into GOP Data Beacon.
- Appoint representatives to KCGOP Committees and provide volunteer support for events, as requested by KCGOP Chairman.
- Observe Ronald Reagan's 11th Commandment, " Thou shalt not speak ill of any fellow Republican."
- Publicly support and work to elect Republican Party Nominees and Endorsed Candidates on the General Ballot.
- Attend Legislative GOP District Chairman training and orientation.

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District Chairman

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Date

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District



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# **Building a District Team**

## What is a GOP District Chair?

A King County GOP District Chair is the person directly responsible for the successful operation and conduct of the District Republican Party. This includes recruiting and training PCOs, developing a volunteer network, recruiting candidates for office, raising money, conducting voter registration and voter identification programs, coordinating with Republican campaigns, working with the local press, and making sure there is Republican representation at all major District events.

This is a large job description and it is essential to build a team of people that will support you in your role as District Chair. The following is a list of positions to which you as chair can appoint leaders and activists:

- District Vice Chair(s)
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Region Chairs and Area Chairs
- Canvassing and Get Out The Vote
- Precinct Committee Officer Recruitment
- Precinct Committee Officer Training
- Event Coordinator
- Canvassing Technology
- Volunteer Organizer
- Meeting Programming Chair

These positions are important as they will help you to be successful as District Chair and the more people that are involved in leadership positions, the stronger your District will be.

Please review the document [King County Republican Party District Chairman Duties 2015-16](#) with the KCGOP Chairman.

## **PCO Recruitment and Training**

**PCO Recruitment:** The PCOs are the building blocks and most important members of the Republican Party. A good PCO canvasses his or her precinct regularly, knows who in his precinct votes which way, can provide volunteers for activities, and understands and participates in two key grassroots activities: voter identification and voter registration. Recruiting good PCOs who can and will perform these duties will ensure a robust and thriving District party.

Many PCOs were elected or ran unopposed in the August 2014 primary and these PCOs will continue to serve until December 1st, 2016. However, many precincts currently have no PCO. As District chair, you have the privilege of appointing new PCOs to these empty precincts. You will work closely with your Precinct Committee Officer Recruitment Chair to fill as many of these empty spots as possible. The County Chair will make the final appointment decision, but will not appoint any PCO without your approval first.

A good place to start looking for potential PCOs is the caucus list from the last cycle's presidential caucus. Many new people got involved in 2012 and will get involved in 2016 because these are presidential years. Becoming a PCO is the best way to get people to continue to be involved in the party in a meaningful way.

There are occasions where you may not find anyone who lives in a particular precinct who wants to be a PCO, but someone from another precinct that already has a PCO may be willing to serve outside their precinct. In these instances, you can appoint the interested individual as a "Precinct Chairman." This means they perform the duties of a PCO but they do not live in that precinct. It allows them to be involved in doing many of the important duties of a PCO. Precinct Chairmen don't have a vote in the KCRCC, as that is reserved for elected and appointed PCOs only, however most districts allow them a vote in district business, such as endorsements.

**PCO Training:** As you bring in new PCOs or Precinct Chairmen, it is important to make sure that these individuals understand their roles. Seasoned PCOs will need to update or refresh their canvassing skills, as well. The important thing is that everyone understands how important their role is in getting Republican candidates elected and what they need to do to fulfill their duties as PCOs.

The KCGOP will provide training for new PCOs covering the essentials of being an effective PCO. There are two key activities for PCOs must be up to speed with: voter identification and voter registration canvassing. The two most important duties of PCO are to, first, know who in their precinct is registered to vote and whether they are Democrat or a Republican, and, second, to make sure the Republican Party does everything possible to make sure every Republican in their precinct votes. This is called getting out the base!

## **Voter Registration & Identification, GOTV, and Election Operations**

As a District chair, cultivating good voter registration and Voter Identification programs is key to your success in the weeks leading up to an Election. It's all about the ground game...Boss!

Having a Voter Registration and ID Coordinator on your leadership team is essential. Your candidates will need a strong voter database to use, because nothing allows a candidate to be as successful as a list of good Republicans they can count on for support. Your district will also need an accurate voter list to conduct voter outreach activities such as GOTV and Voter Education.

**Voter Registration:** There are two different ways to register voters: first, the door-to-door canvass and, second, the mass registration drives at events or busy locations. Both are effective. The key to voter registration is that we want to spend our time and resources only registering Republicans. This means being selective about precincts you canvass and events you attend.

**Voter Identification:** Voter identification canvassing is the primary activity in which PCOs, PCs and grassroots volunteers participate. A reliable list of Republicans is one of the most powerful tools that our candidates can possess. Having an aggressive and robust voter identification program will ensure a much smoother transition into GOTV activities as you near the election.

There are two commonly used Voter ID activities: 1) canvassing door-to-door and 2) by telephone. Doorbelling is extremely effective because it provides face-to-face contact and is truly a great way for new PCOs to get to know their neighboring voters. Phone banking can also be effective, especially

when the weather is bad or in large, rural or hilly precincts that are difficult to walk. As much as possible, PCOs should be encouraged to canvass instead of make phone calls.

**Get Out the Vote - GOTV:** GOTV is the most important activity any grassroots volunteer can be involved with during the election cycle. It is essential that you, your leadership team, and your PCOs understand the importance of GOTV in your political planning.

In Washington State, we are now entirely vote-by-mail. As a result, we have a very long period for GOTV activities – 21 days. GOTV is the point in the election cycle where the Republican Party shifts from identifying voters to encouraging them to fill out their ballots and send them in. A robust Voter ID program that includes doorbelling and phone banking will be a great foundation for a robust GOTV program. It also means you already have a group of trained volunteers mobilized and ready to go. This is one reason why building a Voter ID program early in the election cycle is essential to Republican victories.

**Election Operations:** Election Operations is essential to our success. There are two parts to Elections Operations that you as a District chair should be focused on: observation and ballot rehabilitation. Although elections oversight activities are conducted year round, official party observation begins when the King County Auditor begins gearing up their tallying machines to process the mailed in ballots and continues until every ballot has been counted. It is important to have a team of volunteers ready and trained to watch the ballots as they are processed and tallied at King County Elections. Observer coordination is organized by our Elections Committee Chair.

In addition to observation activities, the Republican Party may also coordinate activities to help Republican voters “rehabilitate” ballots that have mismatched or missing signatures, or that were received electronically in electorally close election contests. These activities are called Ballot Rehabilitation. Ballot Rehab is very similar to Get out the Vote in that canvassing activities door to door and by telephone are used to contact voters whose ballots are waiting to be fixed. It takes a team of volunteers willing to make phone calls and walk neighborhoods after Election Day to ensure every Republican’s vote gets counted.

## **GOP DataBeacon**

GOP Data Beacon is an important tool for Republican grassroots activists, PCOs and PCs. It contains our voter file and is particularly important in a state like ours because Washington voters do not register by party. While GOP Data Beacon is an essential tool, it is not perfect or exhaustive. It has been improved, but needs further enhancements and updates. Ultimately, it will only be as good as the information inputted into it, which is why the active participation of your District is so important. The more voters we identify and actually record in GOP Data Beacon, the more information we have to give to candidates.

The most important task for you as District Chair is to decide on the best way to utilize GOP Data Beacon in your Districts. Each District Chair has access to the desktop version of GOP Data Beacon and can create electronic and paper walking lists for PCOs and PCs from there. Each individual PCO will have access to their mobile canvassing application account and can access their electronic walking lists from there. This is a different system than what was available previously through GOP Data Center. Each District Chair will be responsible for ensuring their PCOs or PCs have access to walking lists. Most importantly, you should develop a plan with your GOP DataBeacon Coordinator to ensure GOP Data Beacon is being regularly updated.

## **Fundraising**

Raising money for your District is one of your duties as a District chair. Having sufficient funds for meetings, materials, printing, and supplemental activities (fairs, parades, district events) is an important part of messaging. During an election cycle, it is also important to be able to contribute to candidates. Some districts ask local businesses to contribute to the District party, some hold garage sales, and all of them ask the PCOs to contribute to the cost of any meeting and event.

**Lincoln Day Dinner:** An event almost every County puts on every year is the Lincoln Day Dinner, which generally takes place anytime from February to early April. The Lincoln Day Dinner is the event where we honor our PCOs. We try to keep the costs down to the bare minimum, so that as many PCOs as possible can enjoy attending. However, still not all PCOs

can afford to attend. There should be some funds available for a Legislative GOP organization to cover some or all of the cost in special cases in your district where activists cannot afford to attend. As district chair, you are probably aware of which PCOs this applies to and can make private arrangements with the county party to have them there. You need to keep these "scholarships" down to those who truly need a bit of help.

**Donor Programs:** Every district has individuals, businesses or organizations who would be willing to help by sponsoring an event like your annual picnic or meetings. It can be difficult to cultivate donor lists or to create any sort of donor program but it is very much worth the effort. Remember the old saying about fundraising: "They've already said 'No' if you never ask."

**Raffles:** Keep in mind that state gambling laws don't usually allow the sale of raffle tickets unless it's to your own members. Conducting a raffle to members who attend your monthly meetings or at districts events can be a great way to raise funds.

## **Working with the Press**

As a District chair, you cannot afford to be dismissive of the press. Even in the internet era, they wield much power. Too many Republicans deal flippantly with reporters, believing that because the press tilts to the left, our perspective will get short shifted anyway. This is a mistake. The uncommitted voters we need to attract do look to local media for political information, especially near Election Day.

Voters don't distinguish between legislative district, state, and national party organizations. To them, it's all the "Republican Party." As District chair, you have the opportunity to shape how voters in your District view all Republicans, and the operative word is "opportunity." Talking to the press is your chance to ensure that the Republican perspective is delivered to voters.

### **Get out the good word**

Gather a list of all the local press and media organizations that are regularly viewed by voters in your district.

After an organization meeting, put out a press release to the local newspapers and political blogs announcing the new leaders of the District party, from the chairman and board members to the area chairs. Consider including short bios to show that the local leadership is made up of community leaders committed to good government.

Let the press know about your public events such as Lincoln Day Dinners, 4th of July picnics, and campaign rallies, district meetings. Always include the date, time, and location, the cost of the event (if it's free, mention that), and give a contact phone number and e-mail. Specifically mention in your release that the public is invited. Directing people to the District party website for event information is a great way to drive traffic to your site.

Because Washington uses a Top Two primary system, it is important to let the public know which candidates your district organization supports. If your district issues endorsements, let the press know who you support, and which issues.

Do not be shy about bragging. If you have a record number of event attendees at a local Republican even, put out a press release. If you recruited candidates for every partisan slot on the ballot, let the press know you have a full slate of dynamic Republican candidates. Put every positive press release on the District party website. You can generate enthusiasm and momentum to attract new people into the party.

### **Be assertive**

The press may view you as the go-to person for Republican perspective in your District, but do not wait for them to come to you. Monitor the newspapers, political websites, and radio programs and listen for attacks on our principles. Prepare a few talking points you are comfortable with and stick to those points. Don't let a reporter get you off-topic. Instead, make sure you return to the main topic and make the points that need to be made.

Appoint volunteers in your organization to handle different media. One person should handle an organized campaign of letters to the editor. They will be charged with finding willing people and writing talking points. The goal is to have letters from respected community members in the newspaper making targeted, cogent points. Give another person the job of reading, at least daily, any local political blogs. They should alert you of important stories and have volunteers ready to fight back, in a respectful way, in the comments sections.

## **Contain the negative**

When a negative story comes out about a candidate or someone in party leadership, sometimes the best you can do is lessen its impact. Most importantly, do not feel as if you have to respond to a media inquiry immediately. You can tell a reporter that this is the first you are hearing about the situation, and that you need to gather more information before responding. Ask the reporter when their deadline is, and politely repeat that you need to gather info first if they pepper you with follow-up questions.

In critical situations, contact the KCGOP Executive Director for guidance as soon as possible. It is important to respond before a deadline. You want your perspective included in the earliest version of the story possible. If it is a story of regional interest, it could go out on the Associated Press wires fairly quickly.

Take a deep breath, then gather the facts. If the story is about allegedly bad behavior of one person, call them to get their perspective. Obtain any available reports. Coordinate your response with the KCGOP.

## **Utilizing Technology**

Utilizing technology available to us can help District Organizations to be more effective. The internet can be an essential outreach tool to spread our message .

Having a current District website is critical. It is like your bulletin board to the voters in your district! On your website District events, upcoming meetings, and how to get involved. In addition, as the District chair, it can be very effective to have a "Chairman's Blog" on the website; essentially, an updated message from you on how things are going in the District and for our state.

In addition to having an updated website, Facebook can be another useful tool. Facebook is a social networking site that is available for anyone to use. You can create your own personal page and you can create groups. Your activists can create their own personal pages to keep up to date with Facebook Friends, Groups and Events with which they want to connect. It is a fantastic way to network within your District and across the state.

As District chair, create your own page and then create a District Organization Facebook page or group. Invite your leadership team, PCOs/PCs, and grassroots volunteers to join Facebook and join the group. This is a great way to network with other like-minded individuals in your district, King County and across the state and nation. The site is [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com).

Another social networking tool is Twitter. Twitter is what you could call a "micro blog." Essentially, in 140 characters or less, you can update people on the internet about what you are doing. People can "follow" you, which means they get your updates and can see what you are doing. You could send a Twitter message like "I'm at party HQ doing ID calls until 8:00. Come join me!" Twitter is a good way to communicate with your community in a creative way. Local press often monitors Twitter feeds for their news leads. The site is [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com).

## **Supporting Candidates and Campaigns**

The important thing to keep in mind throughout all of this is that your job is to support Republican candidates and help get them elected. Everything covered in this manual is the jumping-off point for you as District chair to begin electing Republicans in King County and Washington.

Electing Republicans is simple in theory: find out who the Republicans are, make sure they are registered to vote, and then make certain that on Election Day they cast their ballots. In reality, there is a lot that has to happen in every District to ensure all this happens. And it all begins with YOU as the Republican leader in your District.

Developing good relationships with your PCOs and volunteers that will translate into phone banking and doorbelling in the height of an election cycle is the best support you can give any candidate. You will be pleasantly surprised at the extent to which your local activists are looking for the leadership and direction needed to produce the next Republican resurgence. As a Republican District Chair, you have a tremendous opportunity, and a tremendous responsibility, to help make that resurgence into a reality.