

FairVote Minnesota's Cheat Sheet for Caucuses & Conventions

What: Precinct Caucuses

When: Tuesday, February 3 at 7pm (recommend arriving by 6:30pm)

Where: Find your caucus location at caucusfinder.sos.mn.gov

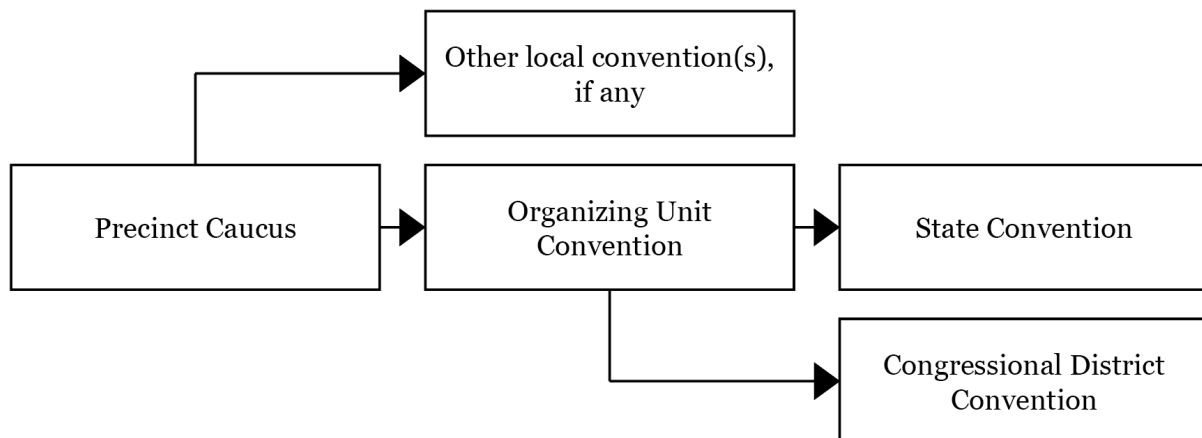
What is a caucus?

A caucus is a gathering of neighbors who affiliate with the same political party, and a precinct is the smallest organizing unit we use for our elections—sometimes as small as just a few blocks. There are many precincts across the state, and each follows a similar procedure to do three things:

1. **Propose and vote on resolutions.** Resolutions are the building blocks of a party's platform, or statement of beliefs, and its agenda, or what it wants to get done if elected.
2. **Elect delegates to conventions.** Conventions are the next step up from caucuses where candidate endorsements happen and the party platform comes together.
3. **Elect local precinct leaders.** These leaders are in charge of representing your neighborhood to larger party units and helping to organize the next caucus in two years.

The convention process

Conventions are a gathering of delegates elected from a number of different precinct caucuses—or delegates elected from a group of smaller conventions. There are a few different types, including “organizing unit” conventions, county conventions, senate district conventions, congressional district conventions, and the state convention. Often, these are combined. If you live in Minneapolis or another heavily populated area, your Organizing Unit Convention is also your State Senate District Convention, and you have a separate Hennepin County Convention to nominate candidates for county attorney, county sheriff, etc.



Becoming a delegate

Delegate spots can be very easy or somewhat difficult to get depending on where you live. Each caucus (and organizing unit convention) has a set number of delegates they are able to pass on to the next level. If fewer people volunteer to go than there are spots, you are in. If more than the number of available spots volunteer, there are a few ways to narrow the field. The caucus at large either can vote on who goes, or they can hold a “walking subcaucus.”

Walking subcaucuses

During a walking subcaucus, people divide themselves into smaller groups, often based on the issues they prioritize and the candidates they support. For example, in a past DFL caucus you might have seen a “Tim Walz” caucus, an “Erin Murphy” caucus, and an “Erin Murphy/Environmentalism” caucus. Once these groups form, the available delegate slots are divided up proportionally between them. The subcaucuses then select the delegates from among themselves. Sometimes, similar groups can join together to get more delegate slots, as the two “Erin Murphy” caucuses above likely would.

Tips and tricks:

1. Raising your hand when they ask for volunteers.
2. Being enthusiastic and not backing down if more people volunteer than there are spots.
3. Being prepared to speak for 15-20s if someone asks why you want to be a delegate.
Emphasize your enthusiasm for making RCV/reform a priority and for any preferred candidates.

Our resolutions

At every caucus, the caucus convener (meeting leader) will ask if anyone has resolutions. This is your time to shine! You will submit your printed resolution to them, read it aloud, or both depending on the preference of the convener. For the DFL party, we have a resolution to keep the RCV Local Option bill—which would allow all cities, counties, and school districts to adopt RCV if they want to—on the DFL’s action agenda. For the Republican party, we have a resolution to add it to the party platform. You can download the resolutions at fairvotemn.org/caucus.

If you live in Hopkins, you also have the opportunity to introduce a resolution in support of RCV use in your city. Send us an email to learn more.

Find your caucus location:



Find your DFL convention location:

