

EL CERRITO DEMOCRATIC CLUB
ECDC Standing Rules on Endorsement Procedures
Effective February 28, 2012, approved 11/24/15 and amended 1/26/16

ECDC may endorse candidates for public office, take positions on ballot issues, and contribute to political campaigns according to the procedures set by the ECDC Bylaws and these ECDC Standing Rules.

A. Definitions. As used in these rules:

1. "Candidate" means a person seeking elected public office.
2. "Candidates' Forum" means an ECDC meeting at which 1) Candidates or representatives of Candidates are heard and questioned and/or 2) reports and recommendations are made regarding the election of Candidates.
3. "ECDC member" or "member" means a member in good standing and on the membership roll of ECDC for at least 45 days prior to the endorsement meeting and by June 1st.
4. "Election" is either a "general" or "special" election, in which voters make a final selection of candidates for elected public office and/or determine ballot issues, or a "primary" in which voters determine candidates for the "general" or "special" election.
5. "Endorsement Meeting" means an ECDC meeting to which members have received notice that ECDC will vote on whether to endorse Candidates. This is held after or concurrent with a Candidates' Forum.

B. Candidate Endorsements.

1. **Notice:** Members will receive notice of the date, place, and time for a Candidates' Forum/ Endorsement Meeting, in the ECDC News or otherwise, mailed at least 10 days prior to the meeting. Additionally, ECDC shall provide notice to Candidates registered as Democratic Party Preference of a Candidates' Forum/ Endorsement Meeting. The notice shall invite the Candidate to provide written material for those attending the Candidates' Forum/ Endorsement Meeting. Notice shall be provided to other Candidates at the ECDC Executive Board's discretion.
2. **Type of Forum:** The ECDC Executive Board shall conduct a Candidate Forum for contested races with more than one registered Democratic Party Preference Candidate. The ECDC Executive Board may also invite all candidates for certain offices to be heard and questioned at a Candidate Forum. Typically, for non-partisan races, such as El Cerrito City Council, West Contra Costa County School Board, County Board of Supervisors, Stege Sanitary District, and Kensington Police Protection and Community Services District Board, all Candidates, including Candidates who are not registered Democrat Party Preference, are heard and questioned. Other offices for which a Candidates' Forum may be held include:
 - a. Special districts such as BART Directors, AC Transit Directors, and West Contra Costa County Health Board.
 - b. County offices such as county clerk, district attorney, treasurer, auditor, and Democratic Central Committee member.

- c. State offices such as Assembly, Senate, Governor, Lt. Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Controller, Attorney General, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Insurance Commissioner, and Board of Equalization.
- d. Federal offices such as House of Representatives, Senator, and President/Vice President.
- e. Judicial offices such as Superior Court, District Appeal Court, and State Supreme Court.

The members present at an Endorsement Meeting may determine not to have an endorsement vote on an office.

3. ECDC Endorsement: ECDC may endorse a Candidate when:

- a. five days have passed from the deadline for filing a statement of intention, if applicable, and if not applicable, filing for the office, except when the ECDC Executive Board determines that this requirement is impractical under the circumstances;
- b. notice has been provided to Candidates as required by Section B.1 above;
- c. except for Candidates for US President, the Candidate is a registered Democrat Party Preference;
- d. at least 15% of ECDC membership are eligible to vote in the election for which the Candidate is to be endorsed; and
- e. the endorsed Candidate receives an affirmative vote of at least 60% of the members present and voting, but not less than 5% of the membership or 10 members, whichever is greater.

The Candidates meeting the requirements of this Section with the greatest number of votes, up to the number of seats to be filled in the election for an office, shall be endorsed. The endorsement of a Candidate in a primary election shall remain in effect for the general or special election, except when the Candidate endorsed in the primary election is not among the top two vote-getters and as a result is not on the ballot (other than as a write-in candidate) for the general or special election.

4. ECDC Endorsement Voting: All members present at the Endorsement Meeting are eligible to vote on all endorsements, except endorsements for El Cerrito City Council or El Cerrito Municipal ballot measures. Only members who are El Cerrito residents are eligible to vote on endorsements for El Cerrito City Council and El Cerrito ballot measures. Voting members shall have one vote per seat to be filled in each election for an office. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted. Balloting for offices in which Candidates or representatives of Candidates are heard and questioned shall be by secret ballot. For all other offices, balloting shall be by show of hands or by secret ballot at the discretion of the ECDC Executive Board. Voting for each office shall contain the option of “no endorsement”. A “no endorsement” vote shall be counted in the total present and voting. A ranked choice or instant runoff system shall not be used. For each office, the voting shall consider only registered Democrat Party Preference. The ECDC Executive Board shall determine the process for voting administration, and may select a member or members to serve as judge(s) to monitor the fairness of the voting.

C. Ballot Issue Positions.

1. **Definition:** A “Ballot Issue” means an initiative, referendum, or measure placed before voters for which at least 15% of ECDC membership are eligible to vote in the Election.

2. **Notice and Voting:** Members will receive notice of the date, place, and time for a meeting to consider ballot issue positions, in the ECDC News or otherwise, mailed at least 10 days prior to

the meeting. The affirmative vote of at least 60% of the members present and voting, but not less than 5% of the membership or 10 members, whichever is greater, is necessary to endorse or disapprove a ballot issue. All members present at the meeting are eligible to vote on all ballot issues brought to a vote, except for El Cerrito municipal ballot issues, which may be voted on by only members who are El Cerrito residents. The members present at the meeting may determine not to have a vote on a ballot issue. Before the vote, members shall have a reasonable opportunity to present and hear arguments for and against the ballot issue. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted. Balloting shall be by show of hands or by secret ballot at the discretion of the ECDC Executive Board. Voting for each ballot issue shall contain the option of “no position”. A “no position” vote shall be counted in the total present and voting. The ECDC Executive Board shall determine the process for voting administration, and may select a member or members to serve as judge(s) to monitor the fairness of the voting.

D. Political Contributions. ECDC may contribute money to a political campaign of a Candidate or Ballot Issue it has endorsed or to the Contra Costa Central Committee when notice has been provided to members of the date, place, and time for a meeting to consider the political contribution, in the ECDC News or otherwise, mailed at least 10 days prior to the meeting. The notice shall specify the amount to be considered and the expected impact of such contribution on the ECDC budget. The affirmative vote of at least 60% of the members present and voting, but not less than 5% of the membership or 10 members, whichever is greater, is necessary to authorize a political contribution. All members present at the meeting are eligible to vote on a political contribution. Before the vote, members shall have a reasonable opportunity to present and hear arguments for and against the political contribution. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted. Balloting shall be by show of hands or by secret ballot at the discretion of the ECDC Executive Board. Voting for each political contribution shall contain the option of “no position”. A “no position” vote shall be counted in the total present and voting. The ECDC Executive Board shall determine the process for voting administration, and may select a member or members to serve as judge(s) to monitor the fairness of the voting.

E. Distribution of Endorsed Candidate and Ballot Measure Literature. ECDC may distribute literature on behalf of endorsed candidates up to a double sided 5.5” by 8.5” card stock piece. ECDC volunteers will not distribute larger pieces of literature.

F. Selection of Delegates to the Pre-Endorsement Caucus of the California Democratic Party. Members shall select the allowed number of delegates, as determined by the California Democratic Party, during the September meeting. The affirmative vote of at least 50% of the members present and voting, but not less than 5% of the membership or 10 members, whichever is greater, is necessary to authorize a delegate. All members present at the meeting are eligible to vote. Before the vote, candidate may speak. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted. Balloting shall be by show of hands or by secret ballot at the discretion of the ECDC Executive Board. The ECDC Executive Board shall determine the process for voting administration, and may select a member or members to serve as judge(s) to monitor the fairness of the voting. Members that are already selected as delegates (i.e. CADEM, appointed or Central Committee) are not eligible candidates to represent ECDC. The ECDC Executive Board shall appoint members to serve any unfilled delegate positions.