

# Being a Precinct Committeeperson

## **Definition**

Traditionally, a precinct committeeperson is an official of a political party who represents his or her precinct — the area with 300-400 voters who vote at the same polling place — and works to inform the voters about party candidates for election and to get out the vote on election day. The Illinois Statutes use the term “committeeperson” and the older term “committeeman” interchangeably.

Precinct committeepersons of an established political party are generally elected by voters who request that party’s ballot in primary elections (starting with 2008, the first Tuesday in February of every even-numbered year). The candidate’s petition to be placed on the ballot requires ten signatures of registered voters who live in the precinct.

When the position of committeeperson becomes vacant, a person may be appointed to fill the vacancy until the next primary election. Until the primary of February 5, 2008, the Green Party’s former gubernatorial candidate Rich Whitney can appoint committeepersons to fill vacancies. After that, vacancies can be filled through appointment by the Green Party county chairperson.

All votes by an elected precinct committeeperson carry the weight of the number of Green Party votes received by that committeeperson in the primary election at which he or she was elected.

Note: In Cook County, the voters elect ward and township committeepersons instead of precinct committeepersons. These officials have slightly different duties.

## **Statutory Duties (Illinois Compiled Statutes, Chapter 10, Act 5, Article 7)**

Precinct committeepersons in each county will form the “county central committee” and elect its officers, including a county chairperson. This generally is done at the “county convention,” a meeting held in the county 29 days after the primary election.

When a candidate elected in a primary for a non-statewide office withdraws, or when no candidate stands for election in the primary, the county central committee can nominate people to fill these candidate vacancies.

The county central committee will choose delegates to the state convention, which may be responsible for nominating candidates for President and Vice President and selecting delegates to the party’s national convention.

## **What is Expected of Precinct Committeepersons**

- Be a member in good standing with the Illinois Green Party.
- Be active in an Illinois Green Party local (where one exists).
- Establish and maintain contact with voters in the represented precinct.
- Participate in the endorsement decisions by the appropriate part of the Illinois Green Party.
- Inform voters in the represented precinct about Green Party candidates and positions on initiatives.
- Become a deputy registrar and register voters.
- Get out the vote in the represented precinct.