

Iowa Caucuses—Statutory Overview

Caucus provisions are in Iowa Code, Chapter 43, titled “Partisan Nominations – Primary Election”

Precinct Caucus Timeline

- Set by the state central committees of the political parties and must be held no later than the fourth Monday in February of each even-numbered year (§43.4)
- At least eight days earlier than the scheduled date for any meeting, caucus or primary which constitutes the first determining stage of the Presidential nominating process in any other state, territory or any other group. (§43.4)
- Within fourteen days after the date of the caucus the county central committee shall certify to the county commissioner the names of those elected as party committee members and delegates to the county convention. (§43.4)
- The commissioner shall retain precinct caucus records for twenty-two months. (§43.4)
- Within fourteen days after the date of the precinct caucus, the chairperson of the county central committee must deliver to the county commissioner all completed voter registration forms received at the caucus. (§43.4)

Where can caucus locations be established and how is the public notified?

- The county chairperson shall file with the commissioner the meeting place of each precinct caucus at least seven days prior to the caucus. (§43.4)
- The date, time, and place of each precinct caucus of a political party shall be published at least twice in at least one newspaper of general circulation in the precinct. (§43.92)
- Publication in a news item or advertisement in the newspaper constitutes publication (§43.92)
- The cost of such publication, if any, shall be paid by the political party. (§43.92)
- Wherever possible, each precinct caucus shall be held in a public building or one that is suitable for and available for holding public meetings. (§43.93)
- Upon the application of the county chairperson, the building supported by taxation under the laws of this state shall be available to conduct the caucus without charge during Presidential election years and at a charge no greater than paid by other groups during other years. (§43.93)

Who is elected at a precinct caucus and who can participate in the caucus?

- Two members of the county central committee for each political party shall, at the precinct caucuses, be elected from each precinct. (§43.99)
- The central committee of each political party shall notify the delegates and committee members so elected of the time and place of holding the county convention. (§43.4)
- Any person voting at a precinct caucus must become an eligible by the date of the next general election and be a resident of the precinct. (§43.91)

- A list of the names and addresses of each person to whom a ballot was delivered or who was allowed to vote in each precinct caucus shall be prepared by the caucus chairperson, who shall certify such list to the commissioner. (§43.91)

What happens at a caucus?

- Delegates to county conventions and party committee members are elected. (§43.4)
- The number of delegates from each precinct shall be determined by a ratio adopted by the party county central committees. A statement designating the number from each voting precinct in the county shall be filed by such committee not later than the time the list of precinct caucus meeting places required by section 43.4 is filed in the office of the commissioner. (§43.90)
- If the required statement is not filed, the commissioner shall fix the number of delegates from each voting precinct. (§43.90)
- **When the rules of a political party require reporting of delegates selected as part of the presidential nominating process, or the rules of a political party require the tabulation and reporting of the number of persons attending the caucus favoring each presidential candidate, it is the duty of a person designated as provided by the rules of that political party to report the results of the precinct caucus. (§43.4)**
- If ballots are used at the precinct caucus, representatives of each candidate or other persons attending the precinct caucus may observe the tabulation of the results of the balloting. (§43.4)
- The term of office of delegates to the county convention shall begin on the day following their election, and shall continue for two years and until their successors are elected. (§43.94)
- The term of office of a member shall begin at the time specified by the party's state constitution or bylaws and shall continue for two years and until a successor is elected and qualified. §43.99)
- The party's state constitution or bylaws may permit the election of additional central committee members from each precinct in a number proportionate to the vote cast for the party's candidates for office in the respective precincts at preceding general elections. (§43.99)

County Conventions

- The county convention shall be composed of delegates elected at the last preceding precinct caucus. (§43.90)
- The county convention shall: 1) Make nominations to fill vacancies on the general election ballot; 2) Transact other business according to the political party's state constitution or bylaws; 3) Elect delegates to the state convention and to district conventions upon a ratio determined by the party organization for the state or districts of the state. Delegates to district conventions need not be selected in the absence of any apparent reason therefor. Delegates shall be, or will be by the next general election, eligible electors who are residents of the county. (§43.97)
If the convention is held after the primary election, the chairperson shall also present a list of the offices for which no nomination was made at the primary election.