

U.S. House Vacancy Press Memo

This memo is designed to explain the process of electing someone to fill a vacancy in New Mexico's delegation to the United States House of Representatives. For the full description of this process, please see the New Mexico Election Code NM Stat § 1-15-18.1.

Key Terms

- **Vacancy:** A vacancy occurs when a United States House member resigns his or her seat. This date is distinct from the nomination or confirmation process, and will serve as "Day 1" in the process to fill a vacancy.
- **State Central Committee:** The State Central Committee is the elected governing body of the Democratic Party of New Mexico. Each State Central Committee member is elected by Democrats from their areas to represent their interests in the party.
- **Major Political Parties:** In New Mexico, Democrats, Libertarians, and Republicans are considered major political parties.

The Process

- Within 10 days of a vacancy, the New Mexico Secretary of State will release a Proclamation of Election, which will set the date for the election
 - This date must be between 77 and 91 days after the vacancy
- Upon the Secretary of State's proclamation, the Democratic Party of New Mexico will send out a call to their respective State Central Committees, instructing members who reside in the relevant district (CD-1) to convene on a specific date at least 56 days before the election date.
 - New Mexico's other major political parties will elect their own nominees based on their party rules
 - The Democratic Party of New Mexico's rules provide for an entirely virtual State Central Committee election under circumstances such as the COVID-19 pandemic
- Interested candidates will submit a declaration of candidacy to the Democratic Party of New Mexico
 - The declaration of candidacy form is now publicly available and will remain publicly available after a vacancy occurs
- State Central Committee Members who reside in the relevant district (CD-1) will elect a nominee
 - A candidate must receive (50% + 1) of the vote in order to win the nomination
- The Democratic Party of New Mexico Chair will certify the State Central Committee nominee with the New Mexico Secretary of State at least 56 days prior to the election date
- The remainder of the election will be conducted in the same way as any general election
 - This includes opportunities for early and absentee voting.

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Important Information

- The entirety of the SCC voting process is open to the public and press, with votes conducted through a non-secret ballot.
 - Any Democrat who wishes to review these ballots may do so for up to 90 days by submitting a written request to review the ballots to DPNM staff
- The majority of SCC Members are elected by County Central Committees (CCC) and take office immediately. Due to the nature of these elections, the composition of the SCC at the time of any vote will be those who have been elected and taken office immediately upon their certification to DPNM. Due to timing differences in elections on a county-by-county basis, this could mean an SCC composed of newly-elected SCC members in some counties and previously existing SCC members in other counties.
 - Non-elected SCC Members are appointed by caucuses or other stakeholders who retain permanent positions on the SCC. These members are eligible to vote in the CD-1 election only if they reside in CD-1.

Our Role

- The Democratic Party of New Mexico is committed to conducting a State Central Committee election that allows every Democratic candidate to put their best foot forward. As in any primary, we will maintain neutrality while offering the same resources and support to every candidate. We encourage debate and discussion within our party, because we know that it makes us stronger in the long run.
- Once a Democratic nominee is chosen, the Democratic Party of New Mexico looks forward to supporting them wholeheartedly and electing another strong leader who will fight for hardworking New Mexicans in the United States Congress.