

What is a delegate?

Utah still partially uses a caucus/convention method for elections, using elected delegates instead of the broader voting population to select party nominees. A delegate is an individual chosen to represent their voting precinct at the annual Republican Party conventions. Delegates serve two-year terms and have many duties depending on the type of delegate that they are.

During the first year (even-numbered years) they meet to vote on party primary candidates. This meeting is called the nominating convention.

During the second year (odd-numbered years) they meet to conduct party business, such as voting on party officials and platforms, and most importantly, to vote in party leadership. This meeting is called the organizing convention.

Why do delegates matter?

The primary purpose of delegates is to vote on a party's candidate for primary and general elections. If one candidate receives a majority (60% for Republican delegates) of the delegate votes at a party convention, they will move on to the primary (if there are also signature-gathering candidates) or go straight to a general election. If no candidate receives 60%, then the top two candidates will go to a primary election, along with any signature-gathering candidates. In addition, state delegates also vote to amend the State Party Constitution & Bylaws, and the State Party Platform by adding, subtracting or changing it. This can have a big impact on policymaking by all state elected officials in the party.

What are the types of delegates?

County Delegate

A county delegate must attend and participate in the annual county nominating convention for their party. They must cast ballots and choose the party's nominees for elected positions in the state legislature and county offices for primary and general elections. In addition, delegates may also debate and vote on issues important to their county and attend to county party business.

State Delegate

A state delegate plays a similar role to county delegates but at a state level. These state delegates must attend the annual state convention where they choose party nominees for governor, attorney general, state auditor, and state treasurer and any other candidates for state offices, legislative candidates in districts that include more than one county, and Congressional candidates. They must also debate any changes to state party constitution, bylaws, platform, or rules of convention.

National Delegate

National delegates are elected during the state party caucuses and nominating conventions in the spring of the presidential election years. These national delegates include 3 state delegates from each of Utah's four congressional districts, plus 25 at-large members for a total of 37 for each party. The GOP additionally sends three Utah State party leaders as delegates to the National Party Convention: the National Committeeman, the National Committeewoman (also chosen at the state nominating convention) and the state party chair, for a total of 40.

The national delegates commit to a specific presidential candidate for the National Convention according to the party's by-laws and depending on the number of votes each candidate receives at the party's precinct caucuses in the spring or primary election. For the GOP, any candidate receiving 50% or more of the votes in precinct caucuses automatically receives all 40 National Delegates. Otherwise, the

National Delegates get divided proportionately among the candidates according to how many votes each receives in the caucuses.

Once at the National Convention, the delegates are expected to vote for the presidential candidate they have been pledged to support, though this is not always how it shakes out. Super delegates may vote for whichever candidate they please. This includes the three GOP officials sent from Utah.

National delegates have all the same type of responsibilities as state and county delegates. Delegates must cast their vote in favor of one candidate and, if there is no clear majority reached from the voting, must continue to do so until there is an obvious majority.

How do I become a delegate?

The process for becoming a delegate in Utah is actually not as hard as you think. First, you must meet the following basic qualifications:

- Be a U.S citizen.
- Be 18 years or older by the general election in November.
- Be a registered voter and live within the precinct of the caucus that you attend.
- Attend your precinct caucus (a neighborhood meeting) and get enough votes to win a delegate position.

How to run for a delegate position in Utah

Contact your party and find out your precinct location and where the caucus will be held. You can also find your precinct number by entering your home address at the Lt. Governor's website vote.utah.gov. Bring 20 or so neighbors to the caucus that will vote for you. Republican delegate positions are highly competitive and can have hundreds of attendees at the conventions, so the more friends and family from your precinct you can rally to come and vote for you, the better. That may mean doing some campaigning ahead of the caucus. And remind your supporters to bring a photo ID with them to the caucus meeting.

Make sure to arrive at least 1 hour early to the caucus. Use this time to introduce yourself (and sell yourself) to members of the precinct as they arrive. You could invite your supporters to arrive early also. Ask someone to nominate you, or nominate yourself, and then be prepared to give a short speech as to why you should be elected.

If you win the vote and become a delegate, make sure you can attend the annual county and/or state convention. If you aren't present at the convention, you cannot cast a vote.

Tips for your speech to become a delegate:

- Plan a brief speech of 1-2 minutes that is concise and to the point. Be sure to practice beforehand.
- In your speech, talk about why you would like to be a delegate and what parts of your party platform you are passionate about (NOTE: this requires reading your party's platform in advance).
- Talk about your commitment to careful evaluation of the candidates and to selecting the best person to represent your area, including your criteria for evaluating these candidates.
- Don't endorse specific candidates, but rather be open-minded and determined to vet *all* the candidates.
- End your speech by asking caucus attendees to vote for you.