

BOOTH GUIDELINES  
DOUGLAS COUNTY DEMOCRATS  
DRAFT



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## INTRODUCTION

For several years, the Douglas County Democrats have had a booth at public events to increase visibility, increase membership, raise funds, and have fun. Although the number of registered Democrats in Douglas County continues to grow, it is surprising how often booth volunteers hear, "Am I glad to see I am not the only Democrat in Douglas County!" Having an attractive, well-organized, well-manned booth is essential for Douglas County Democrats to continue gaining positive exposure throughout Douglas County.

## BOOTH EVENTS

Douglas County Democrats have had a booth at the following events:

**Front Range Lifestyle Showcase**, sponsored by the Castle Rock Chamber of Commerce. This event usually occurs in April, and begins on Friday afternoon and concludes Sunday late afternoon. It takes place in the Events Center at the Douglas County Fairgrounds, just off Plum Creek Parkway, in Castle Rock.

**Parker Country Days**, usually occurs in June over a weekend. It takes place in Parker, at O'Brien Park.

**4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration**, sponsored by the Highlands Ranch Chamber of Commerce. This is a one-day event, taking place in Highlands Ranch.

**Douglas County Fair**. This event usually occurs in early August, at the Douglas County Fairgrounds. The final weekend of the fair includes a parade on Saturday morning. Booth operation is from

Friday afternoon to Sunday evening. Booths have been set up within a large "big-top" tent over the past two years.

### **Octoberfest.**

Castle Rock Octoberfest is sponsored by the Castle Rock Merchant's Association. It is a one-day event on a Saturday, and takes place along Perry Street, between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Streets, and includes 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Streets, between Wilcox and Perry Streets.

Castle Pines Octoberfest is also a one-day event in Castle Pines.

### **APPLICATION PROCESS**

Normally, the sponsors of the events mentioned above send information about their respective events to Douglas County Democrats well in advance of the event. The information provides specifics about date, time, location, fees, rules, etc. It is important to get the applications filled out in a timely manner and sent to the appropriate sponsor organization so that Douglas County Democrats is ensured space at the event. The application generally asks for the name of the organization, type of organization (Douglas County Democrats is a non-profit group!), name, address, telephone and e-mail address of a contact person, and asks about additional needs, such as access to electricity, additional space (beyond the normal 10' x 10' space, extra tables, chairs, etc. It is generally appropriate to request an extra chair, and access to electricity.

**FEES** - Fees will vary depending on the event. Generally, lower fees are available for non-profit organizations (Douglas County Democrats is a non-profit organization!) Also, Douglas County

Democrats is a member of various Chambers of Commerce, so if the event is sponsored by a Chamber of Commerce, it is likely the fee will be reduced for members!

The application will probably include a question whether items will be sold and specifics about sales tax requirements. Douglas County Democrats do not sell products at their booth (we ask for donations) and consequently, we do not need to be concerned about sales tax collection and reporting.

There may be questions regarding the preparation and sale of food at the booth. Douglas County Democrats have purchased two "chocolate fountains" and will be operating them at the booth. The purpose is to attract people to the booth. Donations will be accepted, but we will not be actually "selling" the food products.

It is appropriate to ask the Treasurer of Douglas County Democrats to cut a check, made out to the sponsoring organization, in the appropriate fee amount. The check can be sent along with the application, or later - however, it is important to get our fees paid prior to deadlines, after which fees increase! It is important that the person filling out the application and requesting the check maintain copies of the application and check for reference purposes.

The sponsoring organization will send the contact person information once the application and fee has been received. This information will likely include the location of the booth site, timeframes for booth set-up and take-down, hours of booth operation, rules and regulations, unloading areas, parking areas, and other pertinent information.

## BOOTH EQUIPMENT

Douglas County Democrats have a significant amount of equipment associated with operating its booth. The following list itemizes the equipment:

1. 1- 10' x 10' E-Z Up Tent, including four side flaps, and four sandbags to secure the tent legs.
2. 2- 10' x 3' vinyl banners
3. A wooden frame for the front of the tent to hold the banner.
4. 1- 10' x 10' white drape for the back of the tent, with snaps for the felt display stars.  
2- 1' x 10' white side panels for the back corners of the tent.  
2 - 10' x 10' blue side drapes.  
3 - white felt valances with blue stars for the tops of the drapes.  
11- red, white, blue felt stars with snaps to attach to the back white drape.
5. 3- folding tables (ranging from 4' to 6' in length), and 3 tablecloths.
6. 2- wooden fold-up easles
7. 1- helium tank on dolly.
8. 2 - chocolate fountains
9. Upon request, Paul Thompson will lend Douglas County Democrats a display table, set up on two wooden horses. The display table has plastic boxes Velcro-ed to the tabletop and political literature and candidate literature can be stored in these plastic boxes.

At this time, Douglas County Democrats do not have any chairs included in its booth equipment. It is recommended at least 2 personal camp chairs be brought along at the time of booth set-up. If the event sponsors indicate chairs can be made available by requesting them on

the application, this can be an alternative to bringing personal camp chairs for the booth.

## BOOTH SUPPLIES/MATERIALS/DECORATIONS

It is important to make the booth attractive and eye-catching to attract the public as they walk by the booth. To this end, Douglas County Democrats have been continuing to enhance its supply of patriotic decorations for the booth. These decorations range from bunting, flags, posters, garland, a 3' high Uncle Sam on a stand, 2 stuffed bears wearing patriotic clothes and hats, etc. Placement of these decorations are variable and generally left to the discretion of the booth set-up team. We also have balloons, wrapped candy, and other small "giveaway" items for children such as stickers, flag pins, etc.

Booth materials include information pamphlets and flyers about Douglas County Democrats, meeting schedules, upcoming events, voter registration forms, volunteer forms, candidate information (if during election cycle), information about pertinent issues or legislation, etc. It is important to have this type of information available to provide to the public. Specific requirements are associated with Voter Registration so volunteers manning the booth must be knowledgeable about these requirements. For instance, not everyone is trained to accept completed voter registration forms for the public. There are penalties associated with improper voter registration completion and tardy turn-in of the forms to the County Clerk's Office. When in doubt, provide the voter registration form to the requesting individual and have them complete and turn the form in.

Douglas County Democrats maintains a "tool kit" among its booth equipment. This plastic storage box is VALUABLE to booth set-up and take-down. It includes such items as:

- Screwdriver, hammer, wrench
- Assorted bungee cords
- Masking, electrical, scotch tape
- Scissors
- Straight pins, tacks, rubber bands, safety pins, paper clips, curtain hooks, large "S" hooks, screws, nuts, bolts
- Velcro strips
- Stapler and staples
- Twine
- Paper towels, baby wipes, band-aids, sun screen, hand lotion

Booth decorations, materials, merchandise and supplies are kept in large plastic storage bins.

Merchandise is also made available in the booth. Again, we do NOT SELL merchandise - we ask for a donation. The merchandise includes bumper stickers, tee-shirts, donkey earrings, Democrat pins, and assorted other items such as toys, bandanas, etc. When a donation is made, booth volunteers are asked to try and get the person making the donation to fill out the information on our donation envelopes, such as their name, address, etc. If this information is on a check, then put the check in the donation envelope and indicate if the money was for merchandise or just a monetary donation. IF CASH IS GIVEN, IT IS IMPORTANT TO TRY AND GET THE INFORMATION FROM THE PERSON, PARTICULARLY IF THE DONATION IS \$20 OR MORE. And, it is helpful if the booth volunteer indicate on the envelope if it is a donation for merchandise or just a financial donation. If booth volunteers are vigilant about trying to manage donations, it makes the job of Treasurer for the Douglas County Democrats a lot easier to comply with financial reporting!

## BOOTH EQUIPMENT STORAGE

Douglas County Democrats is looking into renting a small storage locker for all the booth equipment. This will make it easier to have one location to pick up and store our booth equipment. Whoever is in charge of Booths will be responsible for maintaining the key to the storage facility. It is recommended that whoever is picking up or dropping off the booth equipment have a large enough vehicle to contain all the booth equipment. Having a "dolly" is strongly recommended to help move all the equipment between the vehicle and the booth set-up location, and later during booth take-down.

## BOOTH SET UP

Allow at least 2 to 3 hours for booth set-up. It is recommended to have at least four people to help. It is helpful to bring along one or two step stools!

1. Get the 10' x 10' tent up first. The specific location of the booth will be marked on the floor or pavement. It is helpful to have one person at each of the four legs of the tent to help lift the top into place. Once the tent is fully opened, secure the legs with the sand bags.
2. Deal with the tent side flaps. If the tent is indoors, you may not need to the tent's side flaps. But, if the tent is outdoors and the weather is likely to be windy or rainy, the side flaps may be needed. Then, using the Velcro-ed tabs, attach the back white drape and two small white side panels to the top framework of the tent. The side panels snap onto the back drape along the length. Then put up the blue side drapes. Get the stars snapped onto the back drape and put up the valances. Drapery hooks should already be on the valances and they hook over the

framework of the tent. If the drapery hooks are not on the valances, check the tool kit.

3. Secure the Douglas County Democrat's banner to the front of the tent. Presently, there is a wooden frame that needs to be assembled. Two side legs attach to a plywood face board with nuts and bolts. Once the frame is assembled, it is lifted up along the front of the tent. "U-bolts" are used to secure the frame legs to the tent's front legs. The frame is heavy so it is helpful to have two people working on it. Once the frame is attached, the banner's grommet holes are placed over the nail heads along the perimeter of the plywood face board.
4. Next, set up the three tables. Generally, the tables are placed along the back and sides of the tent to keep the front of the tent "open" to the public. We like to have people "come in" rather than have a table separating the public from booth volunteers. Put tablecloths on the tables.
5. Roll the helium tank (on its dolly") into one of the back corners of the tent. A Douglas County Democrat's tee-shirt can be placed over the tank. Unscrew the tank's top cylinder cap and store cap in safe place. Screw on the pressure nozzle to the top of the helium tank. The black nipple should be pointing straight up. There is a gauge which indicates how full the tank is. There is a knob that opens the flow of helium. You know the knob is in the open position if you push the black nipple and you hear the release of helium.
6. Start placing merchandise, literature, "giveaway" items on the tables. Try to arrange in eye-catching manner. Use decorations as needed, including balloons tied to the front of the tent.
7. Set up chocolate fountain and arrange food items on sticks. (needs further development ...)
8. Put one or two volunteers in charge of the helium tank for blowing up and trying ribbons to balloons. The blown up balloons can be "stored" by letting them rise to the top of the tent.

Balloons can be done "in batches", so there aren't a lot of balloons left over at close-up because the helium will not last through the night.

9. Once booth is set up, place cooler with food items on sticks (associated with chocolate fountain) and storage boxes under tables and out of the way. The booth should look neat and organized. If materials, merchandise, chocolate fountain food, and giveaway items need replenishment, get additional items from cooler and storage boxes under table.
10. Make sure the booth is fully set-up and ready to go at the designated time.

It is recommended that bottled water be available for booth volunteers. The water can be stored in an additional cooler.

## BOOTH OPERATION

Make sure volunteers are at the booth at least 15 minutes prior to opening or shift change. That gives volunteers time to familiarize themselves with merchandise, literature, giveaways, and other aspects of booth operation. If there are specific volunteer wrist bands or badges provided by the event management, then arrangements should be made to have at least one volunteer who is on-duty, to meet the next shift volunteers at the gate to provide the on-coming shift volunteers with their wristbands or badges. Having the volunteers' cell phone numbers' helps so on-coming volunteers can call the booth and let them know they have arrived. Sometimes, if we provide a list of our volunteers' names to the people in the ticket booth, they will let the volunteers in once they confirm their names are on the list. The important point is that we do not want our on-coming volunteers to have to pay an entrance fee.

**GREETING THE PUBLIC** - One ingredient to having a successful booth is to have volunteers who look and act friendly. Volunteers should stand at the entrance to the booth and try and make eye contact to people as they pass by the booth. Say hello and ask if they would like some information about the organization, or if pertinent, issues or candidates. Volunteers should be prepared for "rebuffs" by people who are staunch Republicans or those who do not like Democrats. The simple way to handle rebuffs is to just say "Okay" or smile and try to engage another person. There will be times when volunteers encounter very RUDE people. Please do not engage these people or be rude back to them. We are representing the Douglas County Democrats while we are volunteering in the booth and we certainly do not want to be rude to the public, no matter how rude someone may be to us.

One successful way to engage the public is to offer them the opportunity to sign up for our door prize. The door prize is typically an embroidered display flag, made in the United States. The door prize should be set in the front of the booth where it is easy to see. Door prize sign up sheets and pens should be in easy reach and you can assure the person they can indicate on the sign up sheet whether they want to be contacted by the Douglas County Democrats for additional information about the organization or upcoming events. This is usually sufficient for non-Democrats to feel comfortable signing up for the door prize and could provide an opportunity to engage them in some discussion.

Many times children are likely to approach the booth since there are "freebies" such as candy, stickers, and balloons available. By letting children know these are available for them provides an opportunity for volunteers to engage the parents. Do not be stingy with the freebies!

PROVIDING INFORMATION - If someone is receptive to your invitation for more information, provide them with whatever written materials are available about Douglas County Democrats, and or issue or candidate information. During an election cycle, when there are numerous printed materials, it may be worth making up packets of the information and putting into a manila envelope so the person can easily take all the materials with them.

Often, people may indicate they are not registered to vote so our booth is an excellent opportunity to provide these people with the proper form. PLEASE REMEMBER, you must be trained and certified to take the completed forms from people and then turn the completed forms into the Clerks Office. IF YOU ARE NOT CERTIFIED, just provide the people with the form and let them fill it out and turn it in.

SALE OF MERCHANDISE - Since Douglas County Democrats are not actually SELLING merchandise, it is important to tell people what the suggested donation is for items of interest. A printed list of the suggested donations for the various merchandise should be prepared and set up in the booth so volunteers can refer to it. Once the person gives the volunteer the money, the volunteer needs to place the money in one of the donation envelopes. If the donation is \$20 or more, IT IS IMPORTANT to try and get the person to fill out their name and address so the Treasurer can accurately report this donation. If the person refuses, at least mark on the envelope if the donation just a monetary donation to the party or a donation for merchandise, or a combination. A donation jar is usually placed on the table to receive the donations. If the event runs over multiple days, the money should be secured overnight, generally by the booth manager taking the money home.

CHOCOLATE FOUNTAIN - (needs to be developed)

**DOOR PRIZE** - An American-made, embroidered display flag has been the door prize of choice of the Douglas County Democrats. Door prize sign up sheets are pre-printed and should be placed on the table, along with pens, by the display flag. Generally, the selection of the door prize winner occurs on the last day of the event, or an hour or two prior to booth closing if it is a one-day event. Someone should be placed in charge of contacting the winner and making arrangements to getting the prize to the winner. All the door prize sign-up sheets should be provided to the booth manager to ensure the information of those interested in being contacted by Douglas County Democrats is entered into Colorado Van.

**CLOSING THE BOOTH FOR THE NIGHT** - When the event occurs over two or more days, someone must be responsible for closing up the booth for the night. This involves removing all the donations, making sure all valuable items are set out of sight, closing, removing, and storing the valve on the helium tank, screwing the protective cap on the helium tank, and putting up the front flap up and securing it by the Velcro ties. The booth should not be closed up prior to the designated time as provided by the event organizers. For instance, if booth hours are from 10 a.m. until 9 p.m., the booth should remain open until 9 p.m. and then closed up.

**REOPENING THE BOOTH** - The booth should be reopened and ready for business the next day, by setting out merchandise and any other materials that were secured for the night. The helium tank valve should be put back on the tank and opened. Additional balloons can be inflated and tied off with ribbons. The freebie dish should be refreshed.

**BOOTH TAKE-DOWN** - At the official close of the event, booth take-down can begin. Try to have at least 3 or 4 people available for booth take-down. Take-down goes twice as fast as booth set-up, but

generally people are tired after the event and the more help the better. The event organizers generally allow vehicles to park close to the booths so loading is not too difficult. Again, having a dolly available makes loading the vehicle much easier.

Try and get booth supplies organized and put into the storage boxes in some reasonable manner - not just thrown in. Having the tool kit readily available will assist with booth take-down. Someone should be working on taking down the banner and disassembling the banner frame. It is likely the drapes and table cloths will need laundering, so the booth manager should be responsible for making sure they are laundered, folded, and put back in their storage boxes ready for the next event.

The tent should be collapsed and put back in its canvas cover. However, if the tent is wet from rain, the booth manager should take it out of the cover and pull it partially open to allow it to dry in order to prevent mildew.

All the booth equipment should be returned to the storage location. It is recommended that the booth manager sort through all the storage boxes to discard any materials that may not longer be relevant, replenish any materials that have been depleted (e.g., door prize sign up sheets, voter registration forms, etc.), organize any of the materials or merchandise that may have been haphazardly placed during booth take-down, clean any equipment that may have gotten soiled, etc. It is preferred that once the equipment is stored after an event, it is totally ready for the next event.

All donations obtained during the booth event must be turned over to the Douglas County Treasurer as soon as possible.

RE-ORDERING SUPPLIES - Printed materials pertaining to Douglas County Democrats can be obtained by contacting the officers. Similarly, voter registration forms, candidate materials, issues, etc. can be obtained by contacting party officers, candidates, etc.

Merchandise, such as bumper stickers, balloons, stickers, toys, tee-shirts, come from a variety of sources. Contact Douglas County Democrats officers regarding Douglas County-specific tee-shirts, balloons, and bumper stickers. General bumper stickers, Democrat earrings, pins, and other jewelry can be obtained from Max Hobbes (see contact information in appendix). Patriotic toys, stickers, pins, etc. can be obtained from U.S. Toys and Construction, located at County Line Road and Quebec, or other hobby shops such as Hobby Lobby or Michaels.

One source for the U.S. made-embroidered display flag is, unfortunately, Wal-Mart. Other sources should be explored.

Candy - bags of individually wrapped candy is readily available for purchase. Try to find candy on sale. A variety of candy is nice to have on the freebie tray. SPECIAL CANDY may be desired for the Parades and the Parade Coordinator should be responsible for this decision. In the past, the American flag wrapped taffy, available from Mountain Man, has been passed out along the parade routes. This special candy is only available from Mountain Man around the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Last year, 25 lbs of this taffy was purchased in bulk for about \$75 and it was enough for all the parades the DC Democrats participated in. If the Parade Coordinator wants to use this specific candy in the upcoming parades for the year, they should check with the local Mountain Man distributor in the May timeframe and they can help get the order placed. Hopefully, the order can be shipped to the local Mountain Man distributor you're working with. If not, the order may need to be picked up from Mountain Man HQ in Parker.

## APPENDICES