



# FAQ for Candidates -2021

## What are the required qualifications to be a candidate?

You must be a registered voter and possess the qualifications specified by law. Most offices require the candidate to be registered within the district. Exceptions are US Congress and Superior Court.

If a candidate must be selected by voters from a geographic subdivision of a jurisdiction in the primary, the candidate must be properly registered to vote within that subdivision ([RCW 29A.24.075](#)).

Contact the jurisdiction of the office to learn if there are additional qualifications.

## When can I file for office?

Candidates may submit by mail	Starting May 3
In-person filing begins	May 17, 9:30 a.m.
Online filing begins	May 17, 9:00 a.m.
Online filing ends	May 21, 4:00 p.m.
In person filing ends	May 21, 4:30 p.m.
Last day to withdraw from ballot	May 24, 4:30 p.m.



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### **I moved recently. Do I need to update my registration before I file for office?**

You must update your voter registration before filing for office. At the time of filing, you must be a registered voter in the district and have the qualifications specified by law. Please update at [VoteWA.gov](https://VoteWA.gov) and then complete your filing application.

### **How much does it cost to file for office?**

Filing fees are 1% of the office annual salary.

Salaries for members of the legislature, elected officials of the executive branch of state government, and judges of the state's supreme court, court of appeals, superior courts, and district courts shall be fixed by an independent commission [[Washington Citizens' Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials](#)] created and directed by law to that purpose ([Washington Constitution, Article XXVIII](#)).

*Filing fees for offices filed with your County Auditor are available from your [county elections office](#).*

**Filing fees are nonrefundable** ([RCW 29A.24.131](#)).

Only complete petitions are acceptable. You may not pay partial cash to make up the difference.

### **How is the order of candidates determined?**

A random lot draw conducted after candidate filing ends at 5 pm on May 24, sets the order which applies to all candidates for each race. Each filing officer conducts their own lot draw to determine their ballot orders.



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## How can I withdraw my candidacy?

If you decide you do not want your name on the ballot, your signed withdrawal form must be received by the office where you filed by the end of business on **Monday, May 24**.

Candidate withdrawal forms are available at <http://www.sos.wa.gov/elections/CandidateFiling.aspx>

Filing fees are nonrefundable, even if you filed for the wrong office ([RCW 29A.24.131](#)).

## Can my “ballot name” be different than the name on my voter registration?

Yes, but the last name must be the same as the last name on the voter registration record. A ballot name can include a nickname, however, the last name must still match the last name on the voter registration record. If you recently changed your name and it's not showing in the online filing module, please wait a day and allow time for the change to process.

## What is public record?

- All approved candidate declarations
- Voter pamphlet submissions
- Campaign contact information
- Public disclosure commission documents



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### **How do I submit my Voters' Pamphlet statement and photo?**

We recommend you submit your Voters' Pamphlet information with your declaration and filing fee. All submissions are done online.

If you file **online**, you will be directed to submit your statement and photo after you've completed your office filing.

If you file **in person** or **by mail**, you will receive an email with a link included to allow you access to the online submission tool.

**The deadline to submit for the Voters' Pamphlet is 4:30 p.m. on May 28.**

### **Do I have to file my campaign finance information?**

Candidates for state or local office should refer to the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission for reporting requirements. Forms and information are available at [www.pdc.wa.gov](http://www.pdc.wa.gov)

Candidates for U.S. Senate or U.S. House of Representatives must report campaign finance information to the Federal Election Commission at [www.fec.gov](http://www.fec.gov)

Your campaign finance information is public information. A link to your campaign finance information will appear on your page in the online voters' guide.

### **I've already filed. How do I change the office or position on my declaration of candidacy?**

The only way to change your office or position is to file again. A candidate must withdraw before the close of filing week and submit a new declaration of candidacy. Filing fees are non-refundable.



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## Will my race be in the Primary?

A Primary election depends on the type of office and how many candidates file.

- If the office type is nonpartisan (no party preference), then a Primary is held when 3 or more candidates file.
- Many state offices are partisan (requires party preference) and **all** these offices appear on the Primary ballot.
- Judicial offices fall under [Clearinghouse #15-02](#).
- Park and Recreation Districts will not have a primary even if there are 3 or more candidates.

### **RCW 29A.52.220**

No nonpartisan office primary permitted—Procedure—No primary for the office of commissioner of park and recreation district, office of cemetery district commissioner—Names of candidates.

(1) No primary may be held for any single position in any nonpartisan office if, after the last day allowed for candidates to withdraw, there are no more than two candidates filed for the position. The county auditor shall as soon as possible notify all the candidates so affected that the office for which they filed will not appear on the primary ballot.

(2) No primary may be held for the office of commissioner of a park and recreation district or for the office of cemetery district commissioner.

(3) Names of candidates for offices that do not appear on the primary ballot shall be printed upon the general election ballot in the manner specified by RCW 29A.36.131.