

★ VIRGINIA ★
DEPARTMENT *of* ELECTIONS

Candidate Bulletin

How to Run for a Local Office

Ballot Access Requirements for the
June 16, 2026, Local Office Primary Elections
and
November 3, 2026, Local Office General Elections

How candidates get on the ballot in VA

Follow these instructions if you are running for one of the following offices:

Constitutional Offices

- Clerk of Court
- Commissioner of Revenue
- Commonwealth’s Attorney
- Sheriff
- Treasurer

Local Offices

- Board of Supervisors
- City Council
- County Board
- Mayor
- School Board
- Soil and Water Conservation Director
- Town Council
- Town Recorder
- Town Treasurer

Follow these instructions to get on the ballot for:

- The Primary Election on Tuesday, June 16, 2026.
- The General Election on Tuesday, November 3, 2026.

2026 Election Calendar

Type of Election	Candidates: Last Day to File
Primary	
Tuesday, June 16, 2026	Thursday, April 2, 2026, 5:00 pm
Find in Code: Va. Code §§ 24.2-503, 24.2-522 and 24.2-524	
General	
Tuesday, November 3, 2026	Tuesday, June 16, 2026, 7:00 pm
Find in Code: Va. Code §§ 24.2-503 and 24.2-507	

Do you fulfill the basic qualifications to be a candidate? (Va. Code § [24.2-500](#))

- You will have been a resident of Virginia for one year immediately preceding the election.
- You will be qualified to vote for and hold the office sought at the time of the election

What, when, and where do I file?

This table is a summary. Find more information below.

	What do I need to file?	Notes or other information	Where do I file this form?	When does filing open?	What is the deadline to file?
1	<p><u>Certificate of Candidate Qualification (Local Offices) ELECT-501(4)</u></p> <p>Va. Code §§ 24.2-501 24.2-503</p>	<p>Deemed to be filed by the deadline if mailed to the <u>general registrar</u> on or before the deadline, postage prepaid by registered or certified mail. Receipt must show date mailed.</p>	<p>The <u>general registrar</u> of your locality of residence.</p>	<p>Primary candidates: Friday, January 2, 2026</p> <p>Non-primary party and independent candidates: Friday, January 2, 2026</p>	<p>Thursday, April 2, 2026, 5:00 pm</p> <p>Tuesday, June 16, 2026, 7:00 pm</p>
2	<p><u>Statement of Economic Interest (SOEI) - State and Local</u></p> <p>Va. Code §§ 24.2-502 24.2-503</p>	<p>Deemed to be filed by the deadline if mailed to the <u>general registrar</u> on or before the deadline, postage prepaid by registered or certified mail. Receipt must show date mailed.</p>	<p>The <u>general registrar</u> of your locality of residence.</p> <p><i>See below for exceptions to the filing requirement</i></p>	<p>Primary candidates: Friday, January 2, 2026</p> <p>Non-primary party and independent candidates: Friday, January 2, 2026</p>	<p>Thursday, April 2, 2026, 5:00 pm</p> <p>Tuesday, June 16, 2026, 7:00 pm</p>
3a	<p>Primary Filing Fee</p> <p>Va. Code §§ 24.2-523 24.2-524</p>	<p>Primary candidates: <u>Fees outlined below.</u></p>	<p>Primary candidates: Treasurer or Director of Finance of your locality of residence.</p>	<p>Primary candidates: Friday, January 2, 2026</p> <p><i>Non-primary party and independent candidates are not required to file.</i></p>	<p>Thursday, April 2, 2026, 5:00 pm</p>
3b	<p>Primary Filing Fee Receipt</p> <p>Va. Code §§ 24.2-522 24.2-523 24.2-524</p>	<p>Primary candidates: Must be filed with your Declaration of Candidacy (4) and Petitions of Qualified Voters (5).</p>	<p>Primary candidates: The political party chair of your locality of residence.</p>	<p>Primary candidates: Monday, March 16, 2026, Noon (12:00 pm)</p> <p><i>Non-primary party and independent candidates are not required to file.</i></p>	<p>Thursday, April 2, 2026, 5:00 pm</p>
4	<p><u>Declaration of Candidacy</u> SBE-505/520</p> <p>Va. Code §§ 24.2-505 24.2-507 24.2-520 24.2-522</p>	<p>Must be filed with your Petitions of Qualified Voters (5) and, if applicable, primary filing fee receipt (3b).</p>	<p>Primary candidates: The political party chair of your locality of residence.</p> <p>Independent candidates: The <u>general registrar</u> of your locality of residence.</p>	<p>Primary candidates: Monday, March 16, 2026, Noon (12:00 pm)</p> <p>Independent candidates: Friday, January 2, 2026</p> <p><i>Non-primary party candidates are not required to file.</i></p>	<p>Thursday, April 2, 2026, 5:00 pm</p> <p>Tuesday, June 16, 2026, 7:00 pm</p>

What do I need to file?	Notes or other information	Where do I file this form?	When does filing open?	What is the deadline to file?
<p>5 <u>Petitions of Qualified Voters</u> ELECT-506/521</p> <p>Va. Code §§ 24.2-506 24.2-507 24.2-521 24.2-522.</p> <p>Va. Admin Code 1 VAC 20-50-20 1 VAC 20-50-30</p>	<p>Candidates may begin collecting signatures on January 1, 2026. Petition pages are not required to be filed all at the same time; you may file pages throughout the filing window. However, the first petition page filed must be filed with your Declaration of Candidacy (4) and, if applicable, primary filing fee receipt (3b).</p>	<p>Primary candidates: The political party chair of your locality of residence.</p> <p>Independent candidates: The <u>general registrar</u> of your locality of residence.</p>	<p>Primary candidates: Monday, March 16, 2026, Noon (12:00 pm)</p> <p><i>Non-primary party candidates are not required to file.</i></p> <p>Independent candidates: Friday, January 2, 2026</p>	<p>Thursday, April 2, 2026, 5:00 pm</p> <p>Tuesday, June 16, 2026, 7:00 pm</p>
<p>6 <u>Statement of Organization</u></p> <p>Va. Code §§ 24.2 Chapter 9.3 24.2-947.1</p>	<p>Not required for ballot access.</p>	<p>Electronically in <u>COMET</u>, then print two copies, sign them, and submit to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Virginia Department of Elections 2. The <u>general registrar</u> of your locality of residence 	<p>Within 10 days of meeting specific conditions. <u>See conditions listed below and in Va. Code § 24.2-947.1.</u></p>	
<p>7 <u>Campaign Finance Reports</u></p> <p>§§ 24.2 Chapter 9.3</p>	<p>Not required for ballot access.</p>	<p>Electronically in <u>COMET</u></p>	<p>According to the <u>schedule</u> published by the Virginia Department of Elections.</p>	



For a candidate for:	Number of petition signatures you need from qualified voters
• A constitutional office.	125 signatures
• Membership on the governing body or elected school board...	
o of any county or city.	125 signatures
▪ or if from an election district not at large containing 1,000 or fewer registered voters.	50 signatures
o of any town that has more than 3,500 registered voters.	125 signatures
▪ or if from a ward or other district not at large.	25 signatures
o of any town that has at least 1,500 but not more than 3,500 registered voters.	50 signatures
▪ or if from a ward or other district not at large.	25 signatures
o of any town that has fewer than 1,500 registered voters.	Petition signatures are not required.
• Director of a soil and water conservation district.	25 signatures
• For any other candidate.	50 signatures

Petition pages are not required to be filed all at the same time; you may file pages throughout the filing window. However, **the first petition page filed must be filed with your Declaration of Candidacy (4) and, if applicable, primary filing fee receipt (3b).**

The pages must be **received** by the applicable deadline listed above. A postmark or other mailing service timestamp does not qualify.

Independent candidates:

May request notification of any problems that can be corrected before the filing deadline. Make this request by email to the general registrar of your locality of residence. The general registrar will provide the requested information when able but cannot guarantee a timely response as it will be dependent on the processing of the petition pages.

If notified by the general registrar that the required number of qualified voter signatures was not submitted, an appeal can be submitted to the local Electoral Board. The appeal must be submitted **within 5 days** of the disqualification notice being issued. **You will need to prove that you have the correct number of signatures from qualified voters before the deadline.** Find more information in 1 VAC 20-50-30.

Things to remember about petitions:

Petition Pages must...

- Be on the Virginia Department of Elections form. The form cannot be altered in any way.
- Be printed on one piece of paper, front and back. If the back is on a second piece of paper, the entire page (front and back) will be rendered invalid.
- Contain the signature, printed full name, and full registered residence address of each qualified voter and the date the voter signed. The last four (4) digits of the qualified voter’s Social Security Number (SSN) would help in confirming the voter but is not required.

The petition circulator...

- Must be a legal resident of the United States.
- Cannot be a minor.
- Can be an individual who was convicted of a felony only if their voting rights are restored.
- Cannot be the circulator of the page on which they signed as a voter.

2026 November General and Special Elections Local Office Independent Candidate Ballot Access Quick Look One Pager



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Additional information can be found in the Local Office General Election Candidate Bulletin found on ELECT’s website:
<https://www.elections.virginia.gov/candidatepac-info/candidate-bulletins/>.

File the following with your **local general registrar** between **1/2/26** and **7:00 pm, 6/16/26**.
(Find your general registrar: <https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation/PublicContactLookup>)

1. Certificate of Candidate Qualification (Local Office)

https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/campaign-finance/2018/candidates/SBE_501_4-rev7-18.pdf

**May be postmarked by 6/16/26 deadline if mailed registered or certified USPS mail. Be prepared to provide a copy of the receipt on 6/16/26.*

2. Statement of Economic Interests (State and Local)

http://ethics.dls.virginia.gov/SLSOEI_Fillable_FINAL_July2022.pdf

**Not required for incumbents or counties, cities, or towns with a population of 3,500 or less.*

**May be postmarked by 6/16/26 deadline if mailed registered or certified USPS mail. Be prepared to provide a copy of the receipt on 6/16/26.*

3. Declaration of Candidacy

[https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/ballot-access-candidate-qualification/sbe-505-520-declaration-of-candidacy/ELECT-505-520-Declaration-of-Candidacy-\(Rev-7-1-24\).pdf](https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/ballot-access-candidate-qualification/sbe-505-520-declaration-of-candidacy/ELECT-505-520-Declaration-of-Candidacy-(Rev-7-1-24).pdf)

**Must be filed with the first petition pages filed.*

4. Petitions of Qualified Voters

[https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/ballot-access-candidate-qualification/sbe-506-521-petition-of-qualified-voters/ELECT-506-521-Petition-of-Qualified-Voters-letter-size-\(rev-5-8-24\).pdf](https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/ballot-access-candidate-qualification/sbe-506-521-petition-of-qualified-voters/ELECT-506-521-Petition-of-Qualified-Voters-letter-size-(rev-5-8-24).pdf)

**Effective July 1, 2024 (SB165) candidates may begin collecting petition signatures on January first of the year in which the election is held.*

**Signature Requirement: Outlined in the Candidate Bulletin or ask your local General Registrar how many signatures are required for the specific office you are seeking election.*

**While you do not need to file all petition pages at the same time, the first page filed must be filed with the Declaration of Candidacy.*

**Find more information on petitions in Virginia Administrative Code 1VAC20-50-20:*

<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/admincode/title1/agency20/chapter50/section20/>

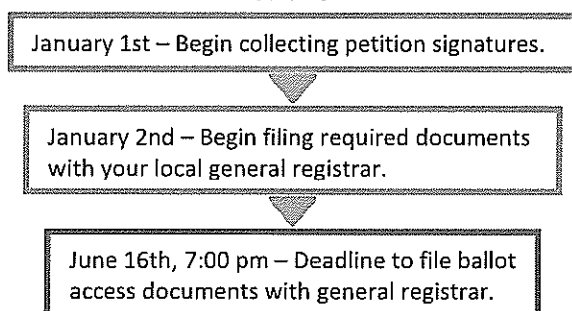
Special Elections: The Local Office Special Election Candidate Bulletin can be found on ELECT’s website:
<https://www.elections.virginia.gov/candidatepac-info/candidate-bulletins/>.

- Candidates may begin filing the above documents when the election is ordered, but not before 1/2/26.
- If this is the 1st November election after the office’s vacancy, the filing deadline is 5:00 pm, 8/14/26.
- If this is the 2nd November election after the office’s vacancy, the filing deadline is 7:00 pm, 6/16/26.

Campaign Finance: While **not** part of ballot access, candidates must also ensure they comply with all campaign finance requirements. Contact the local general registrar with questions or visit ELECT’s website:

<https://www.elections.virginia.gov/candidatepac-info/campaign-finance/>.

Candidate Flow Chart



The list of candidates that qualified for ballot access will be posted on ELECT’s website (<https://www.elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/candidate-list/>) within three weeks after the candidate filing deadline.

Contact your local General Registrar (<https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation/PublicContactLookup>) to confirm your status before then.