

# Mason County Guide for Candidates



## Mason County Elections

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## Purpose

The purpose of this guide is to provide candidates information, in addition to the Mason County Local Voters' Pamphlet Administrative Rules for Candidates who may want to file for a local office.

## General Provisions

A candidate must:

- Be a registered voter of the district and meet the residency requirements for the office for which you are filing. RCW 29A.24.075
  - Verify that your voter registration information is correct by contacting the Mason County Election Office or go to [www.VoteWA.gov](http://www.VoteWA.gov)
- File for only one office. A candidate's name shall not appear for more than one office on the ballot. The only exception is for the offices of Precinct Committee Officer who may run for another office.  
RCW 29A.24.075
- Decide how you want your name to appear on the ballot. You may use a nickname by which you are commonly known for your first name, but the last name must be the name under which you are registered to vote. Titles denoting occupations, including military rank, positions on issues, political affiliation, symbols, or anything to mislead voters are not acceptable. RCW 29A.24.060
- Have your campaign contact information ready. You can provide a campaign mailing address, telephone number, email address and website. The campaign contact information is an alternative method of contact and will be displayed on the Who's Filed Candidate List, displayed in the online voters' guide and the local voters' pamphlet. If you do not provide a campaign mailing address, the address in your voter registration file will be used.
- File the Declaration of Candidacy *and* pay applicable filing fees or have completed the petition in lieu of filing fee process before the deadline. Candidate filing is done:
  - Via the online candidate portal (you must have a valid email address)
    - Filing with a mobile device is not recommended
  - In-person at the Elections Department office
  - By email to [elections@masoncountywa.gov](mailto:elections@masoncountywa.gov)

All material and information provided between you and the filing office is public information.

### **Candidate Filing Period** RCW 29A.24.040, RCW 29A.24.050, RCW 29A.24.081

Candidate filing period begins at 9:00am, the Monday two weeks before Memorial Day and closes promptly at 4:00pm that Friday.

Filings by mail will not be accepted if it is received more than ten business days immediately preceding the first day of the filing period.

We recommend that the candidate contact the Elections Department to ensure that their Declaration of Candidacy and applicable payment of fees is received in time.

## Declaration of Candidacy Filing RCW 29A.031, RCW 29A.24.040, RCW 29A.24.050

All properly filed Declaration of Candidacy received on time, will be processed during the candidate filing week period. Any declaration of candidacy received too early or after the close of filing period cannot be processed and will be returned to the submitter.

During the filing period, candidates may file:

- Online at [www.masoncountywaelections.gov](http://www.masoncountywaelections.gov) under Candidate Resources.
- In-Person at the Mason County Auditor's Election Department Office – Vote Center located at 411 N 5<sup>th</sup> St, Shelton (Building 1 Main Entrance, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)
- By Email [elections@masoncountywa.gov](mailto:elections@masoncountywa.gov) or Fax (360) 427-1753
- By Mail (must be received no more than ten days prior to the first day of the filing period and not later than the 4:00pm the last day of the filing period).

## Filing Fee

The filing fee (if applicable) is due at the time of filing. Declaration of Candidacy filings will not be processed without payment.

<u>Annual Salary</u>	<u>Filing Fee</u>
No Salary*	\$0.00
\$1,000 or less	\$10.00
More than \$1,000	1% of the annual salary

\*Offices on a per diem or per meeting attended basis do not pay a filing fee.

A list of offices and the filing fee is available at [www.masoncountywaelections.gov](http://www.masoncountywaelections.gov) on the Candidate Resources page.

Accepted forms of payment:

- Credit/Debit Card is required when filing online. When paying at the Auditor's Office, an additional processing fee of \$2.50 for Debit Card and 3% of the total amount for Credit Card payments is added.
- Check (payable to Mason County Auditor)
- Cash (in-person only)
- Cashier's Check or Money Order (payable to Mason County Auditor)

## Petitions in Lieu of Filing Fees

RCW 29A.24.091, 29A.24.101, 29A.24.111, RCW 29A.84.261, WAC 434-215-025

Candidates lacking sufficient assets or income may submit a filing fee petition. The petition must be presented with the Declaration of Candidacy when filed. For more information visit

<https://www.sos.wa.gov/elections/candidates/>.

**Order of Candidates on the Ballot** RCW 29A.36.131, WAC 434-230-045 (2)

The order in which candidates are listed for the Primary Election ballot and the local voters’ pamphlet is determined by lot draw. The lot draw occurs after the close of candidate filing. The lot draw process is open to the public.

In the General Election, the candidate with the most votes in the Primary Election will be listed first on the ballot and in the local voters’ pamphlet for the General Election.

If no Primary Election is held for an office, candidates will appear in lot draw order on the General Election ballot and in the local voters’ pamphlet.

**Write-in Candidates** RCW 29A.24.311, RCW 29A.24.320, RCW 29A.24.09, WAC 434-215-015

If you want to file for a race, but did not file during the candidate filing period, you must file as a write-in candidate. To file as a write-in candidate, you must file a Declaration of Write-in Candidacy and it must be received no later than 8:00pm the day of the Primary or General election.

Write-in candidates who file more than eighteen days before election day, will not pay a filing fee.

Write-in candidates who file less than eighteen days prior to election day may pay a filing fee:

<u>Annual Salary</u>	<u>Filing Fee</u>
No Salary*	\$0.00
\$1,000 or less	\$25.00
More than \$1,000	1% of the annual salary

\*Offices on a per diem or per meeting attended basis do not pay a filing fee.

Write-in candidates will not appear on the ballot and will not be listed in the online voters’ guide or in the local voters’ pamphlet.

Write-in votes are not tallied unless there is a declared write-in for that race and enough write-in votes are cast to meet the threshold required for tallying those votes.

No person may file as a write-in candidate:

- For the General Election, if the candidate lost the Primary Election, either as a candidate on the ballot or as a write-in candidate.
- A valid write-in declaration has already been filed for another office.
- The candidate already appears on the ballot for another office other than a Precinct Committee Officer.

**Withdrawal of Candidacy**

RCW 29A.24.131, RCW 29A.60.021, WAC 434-215-065, WAC 434-215-180

A candidate who has filed and wishes to withdraw their declaration of candidacy must submit a completed Withdrawal of Candidacy Form no later than 4:00pm the Monday following the close of the candidate filing period. It can be submitted in person at the Elections office, via email

[elections@masoncountywa.gov](mailto:elections@masoncountywa.gov) or faxed to (360) 427-1753. Any filing fees paid are not refundable. The Withdrawal of Candidacy Form is available at [www.masoncountywaelections.gov](http://www.masoncountywaelections.gov) on the Candidate Resources page. We recommended that the candidate contact the Election office to ensure that their Withdrawal of Candidacy is received in time. If the properly completed Withdrawal of Candidacy form is not received in time, the candidate will be on the ballot and in the local voters' pamphlet.

### **Election Results** RCW 29A.60.160

Election results are initially tabulated at 8:00pm on Election day. The results are uploaded and posted on the websites of the Washington Secretary of State [www.sos.wa.gov/elections/](http://www.sos.wa.gov/elections/) and Mason County Elections [www.masoncountywaelections.gov](http://www.masoncountywaelections.gov). After election day, as ballots are processed the results will be updated up to the certification of the election.

### **Public Disclosure Commission (PDC)**

The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) ensures that candidates and campaigns comply with campaign laws. Candidates are advised to verify that they are following all state, county and local laws. For more information and requirements, contact the PDC directly.

Website: [www.pds.wa.gov](http://www.pds.wa.gov)

Phone: (360) 753-1111 or toll free 1-877-601-2828

### **Political Signs**

Before displaying political signs, please review the Political Sign Information handout. The Political Sign Information handout contains information for state, county and city rules. A copy will be provided upon approval of the declaration of candidacy and is available at [www.masoncountywaelections.gov](http://www.masoncountywaelections.gov) on the Candidate Resources page.

### **Open Public Meeting Act Training** RCW 42.30.205

Every member of the governing body of a public agency must complete training on the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act no later than ninety days after the member either takes the oath of office or otherwise assumes the duties as a public official. They must complete the training every four years as long as they are a member of the governing body or public agency.

Training can be completed remotely. Visit <https://www.atg.wa.gov/open-government-training> for more information.

### **Recounts** RCW 29A.64, WAC 434-264

The County Canvassing Board orders recounts as required and schedules the date, time and place that the recount will be conducted.

Required Recounts:

- A machine recount will occur if less than one half of one percent *and* there are also less than 2,000 votes that separate the candidates.
- A manual recount will occur if less than one quarter of one percent *and* there are also less than 150 votes that separate the candidates.

A recount can be requested and the requestor will pay for the recount unless the outcome is reversed. An application for a requested recount must be filed within two business days after the County Canvassing Board has declared the official results. The application must specify the race for which the recount is being requested. At the time of the recount is requested, the requestor must pay a deposit of 25 cents per ballot cast for manual recount or 15 cents per ballot for a machine recount. The requestor is responsible for the full cost as determined by the County Canvassing Board.

### **Precinct Committee Officer Candidates (PCO)**

PCO candidates will not appear in the Mason County Local Voters' Pamphlet. Only contested races appear on the primary election ballot. For example, if two candidates file for a Democratic Party position, but only one candidate files for the Republican Party position, only the Democratic PCO race will be appear on the primary election ballot. If, after the last day to withdraw, only one candidate has filed for a party position, that candidate is deemed elected and Mason County Elections will issue a certificate of election.

### **School Board Director Candidates** RCW 28A.345

The Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA) is a state agency that provides school board members research-based leadership development opportunities, policy and legal resources, and legislative advocacy support. For more information, please visit:

<https://www.wssda.org/leadership-development/board-development/becoming-a-school-director/>

### **Federal Candidates**

Candidates who want to file for a Federal Office, should contact the Federal Elections Commission. <https://www.fec.gov/>