

# Mason County Local Voters' Pamphlet Administrative Rules for Candidates

(not for PCO candidates)



## Mason County Elections

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## **Purpose**

The purpose of these Administrative Rules is to establish the requirements for candidates on the ballot for inclusion in the Mason County Official Local Voters' Pamphlet.

## **Inclusion in the Local Voters' Pamphlet (RCW 29A.32.220)**

All districts with a race or measure on the ballot in an election shall be included in the local voters' pamphlet unless exempted by the Board of County Commissioners. Submissions from federal, state and judicial candidates will not be published in the local voters' pamphlet, except Mason County District Court judge candidates. Precinct committee officer candidates are not eligible for inclusion in the pamphlet.

## **General Provisions**

Each candidate may submit a biography, a statement, a photo and contact information.

- The biography and statement should be carefully prepared, edited and spell checked before submission
- Use of public office or agency facilities for campaign purposes is prohibited; this includes but not limited to stationery, postage, machines and equipment, office or agency during work hours, vehicles, office space (RCW 42.17A.555)
- The Auditors office will use Microsoft Word to verify word counts
- No changes will be allowed after submission
- The same biography, statement, photo and contact information will be used for both the Primary and General Election pamphlets
- Candidates filing for an office that spans multiple counties must file in the lead county, which is the county with the largest number of registered voters.
- Mason County will publish submissions for the Elma and McCleary School Districts as approved by the Grays Harbor County Auditor.

**The candidate biography, statement, photo and information must be received no later than 5:00pm the second Tuesday following the last day of the candidate filing period.** We recommend that candidates contact the Elections Department to ensure that their voters' pamphlet material is received prior to the deadline. After the submission deadline, a candidate may not withdraw material submitted for the voters' pamphlet.

## **Biography and Statement Format and Information**

- Only text is permitted and it must be submitted electronically (.doc, .docx or .txt format) via online candidate portal, USB drive or email. A document in .pdf format will not be accepted.
- **Bolding** and ALL CAPS formatting must be limited to no more than ten percent of the word limit
- Tables, lists, bullets, graphs, charts, cartoons, or caricatures are not allowed.

The Auditor's Office, Elections Department reserves the right to edit the formatting, but will not correct errors in spelling, grammar or punctuation. If a biography or statement exceeds the word limit, the Elections Department will contact the candidate by phone or email giving the opportunity to amend the biography and/or statement to meet the word limit. If there is no

response or amendment received within two business days of notification, the text at the end of the biography and/or statement will be deleted until the word limit is met. It is the candidate's responsibility to verify that their biography, statement, photo and contact information are complete, correct and meet the requirements before submitting it.

## **Biography**

Biography information shall not exceed 100 words and shall be organized in accordance with the four subsection headings:

- Elected Experience
- Other Professional Experience
- Education
- Community Service

Subsection headings are not included in the word count. If a candidate does not submit information for a subsection heading, "No information submitted" will appear in the subsection space. A biography received that is not written out into the subsections, will be printed entirely under the 'Other Professional Experience' heading.

## **Statement**

The candidate's statement shall not exceed 200 words and should only address campaign issues, plans, and ideas of the candidate. If a candidate does not submit a statement, "No statement submitted" will appear in the space.

## **Photo**

One photograph of the candidate may be printed. The Auditor's Office, Elections Department has discretion to crop and/or adjust a photo or to accept an updated photo prior to the deadline.

Photos must meet the criteria outlined below:

- A color (recommended) or black/white photo
- Must be high resolution (recommend minimum of 600x600 pixels) in digital format (.jpeg or .tif)
- A head and shoulders portrait only – Cannot be an informal candid photo, cartoon, caricature of any other image that does not accurately portray the candidate or be a group photo
- Must have been taken within 5 years
- No uniforms, judicial robe, or anything suggesting candidate held public office
- Hats (other than religious head coverings) are prohibited
- Background cannot have scenery, flags or other identifiable background images. A plain, light-colored background is recommended
- Photos shall be submitted (in a separate file, not part of the statement or biography) electronically via the Candidate Filing Portal, USB drive or by email

If a candidate does not submit a photo or the photo is rejected, "No photo submitted" will appear in the appropriate space.

## **Contact Information**

The candidate's campaign name, phone number, email address, website and address may be

published in the local voters' pamphlet. If the candidate does not submit campaign information, the information on their Declaration of Candidacy Form or profile will be used as the contact information in the local voters' pamphlet. Contact information is not included in the 100-word biography or the 200-word statement word limits. Per RCW 42.17A.555 if a candidate works in a public office or agency, they shall not use a phone number, work address or email address for campaign information or contact information.

### **Public Inspection of Statements (RCW 29A.32.100)**

Candidate statements submitted for publication in the local voters' pamphlet shall not be available for release to the public until all statements pertaining to the race have been received or the deadline for submissions has passed. Requests for public inspection of candidate statements shall be made in the same manner as requests for public records.

### **Candidate Submission Content Responsibility**

The contents of the candidate's biography, statement, photo and contact information are the sole responsibility of the author and does not represent the position of the Auditor or Mason County regarding any material contained therein; neither the Auditor nor Mason County is responsible for the validity or accuracy of the submission. Submissions should be edited and prepared carefully. Spelling, grammar and punctuation errors will not be corrected. Statement content will be printed exactly as received, so long as it complies with content, format, and word limit specifications

### **Content Rejection (RCW 29A.32.230)**

The Mason County Auditor reserves the right to reject any submission to the local voters' pamphlet. Submissions for publication may be rejected if:

- It is obscene, libelous or otherwise inappropriate
- Contains a commercial advertisement
- Contains matter prohibited by law from distribution through the mail
- Contains matter not limited to candidate themselves
- Contains matter that is otherwise not germane to the candidate's qualifications nor to the office that is the subject of election
- Contains matter that is otherwise inappropriate or does not comply with applicable law
- Does not comply with formatting and other rules herein
- Is received after the submission deadline
- Use of a title, rank, symbol in conjunction with name, including, but not limited to, Mr., Mrs. Dr., Lieutenant, Sargent, General, Captain, except as may be provided by law (WAC 434-215-050)

If any material is rejected by the Mason County Auditor, a notice of rejection shall be sent to the submitter by email within five business days after receipt thereof and shall explain the specific grounds for rejection. The submitter will have until 4:00pm the next business day after the notice is sent to submit an amended statement or information. The Auditor shall review the resubmitted material and will either accept or reject it and will inform the submitter of the decision within one business day.

## **Appeal Process**

The submitter may appeal the decision to reject the resubmitted material to the Mason County Prosecuting Attorney, by 4:00pm the next business day after rejection was sent and shall explain the specific grounds for appeal. The Prosecuting Attorney shall issue a written decision granting or denying the appeal by email no more than five business days after receiving the notice of appeal. The decision of the Prosecuting Attorney to grant or deny an appeal shall be final.

If the material submitted is rejected, the local voters' pamphlet will be printed without the rejected material and will include a notice that the material was rejected.

## **Auditor is a Candidate**

If the County Auditor is a candidate for any office included in the pamphlet, the Auditor will recuse themselves from any involvement in review of statements for that office. The Election Administrator will review the materials and approve or reject them under the terms of these rules without any involvement by the Auditor.

**Administrative Rules Adopted this 17<sup>th</sup> day of April 2024. (RCW 29A.32.230)**



**Steve Duenkel, Mason County Auditor**

