

Cowlitz County Elections

2026

Candidate Guide

Filing Week: May 4 - 8, 2026

Cowlitz County Elections
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About this guide

Use this guide in conjunction with state and local laws, not in place of them. The Revised Code of Washington (RCW), Washington Administrative Code (WAC) and other notations are offered as references for additional research. The material contained herein may change due to new legislation, judicial determinations, or rule changes.

The requirements described in this guide are contained in the Cowlitz County Local Voters' Pamphlet Administrative Rules as authorized by [RCW 29A.32.230](#).

Offices Open for Election in 2026

Information on offices open for filing, incumbents, and filing fees



Federal Office - Congressional District 3 - Partisan			
Office (Term)	Incumbent	Fee	File With
U.S. Representative (2 Year)	Marie Gluesenkamp Perez	\$1,740.00	State
State Legislature - 19th and 20th Legislative Districts - Partisan			
Office (Term)	Incumbent	Fee	File With
19th Legislative Dist., State Representative Position 1 (2 Year)	Jim Walsh	\$676.88	State
19th Legislative Dist., State Representative Position 2 (2 Year)	Joel McEntire	\$676.88	State
20th Legislative Dist., State Representative Position 1 (2 Year)	Peter Abbarno	\$676.88	State
20th Legislative Dist., State Representative Position 2 (2 Year)	Ed Orcutt	\$676.88	State
State Supreme Court - Nonpartisan			
Office (Term)	Incumbent	Fee	File With
Justice Position 1 (2 Year Unexpired)	Colleen Melody	\$2,620.11	State
Justice Position 3 (6 Year)	Raquel Montoya-Lewis	\$2,620.11	State
Justice Position 4 (6 Year)	Charles W. Johnson	\$2,620.11	State
Justice Position 5 (2 Year Unexpired)	Theodore J. Angelis	\$2,620.11	State
Justice Position 7 (6 Year)	Debra L. Stephens	\$2,620.11	State
Cowlitz County - Partisan			
Office (Term)	Incumbent	Fee	File With
Assessor (4 Year)	Emily Wilcox	\$1,187.30	Cowlitz
Auditor (4 Year)	Carolyn Fundingsland	\$1,187.30	Cowlitz
Clerk (4 Year)	Staci L. Myklebust	\$1,187.30	Cowlitz
Commissioner District 3 (4 Year)	Rick Dahl	\$1,187.30	Cowlitz
Coroner (4 Year)	Dana M. Tucker	\$1,187.30	Cowlitz
Prosecuting Attorney (4 Year)	Ryan P. Jurvakainen	\$2,136.90	Cowlitz
Sheriff (4 Year)	Brad Thurman	\$1,469.62	Cowlitz
Treasurer (4 Year)	Debra Gardner	\$1,187.30	Cowlitz
Cowlitz County Superior Court - Nonpartisan			
Office (Term)	Incumbent	Fee	File With
Judge Position 4 (2 Year Unexpired)	Jill Karmy	\$2,374.60	State
Cowlitz County District Court - Nonpartisan			
Office (Term)	Incumbent	Fee	File With
District Court Judge Position 1 (4 Year)	Kevin G. Blondin	\$2,260.96	Cowlitz
District Court Judge Position 2 (4 Year)	M. Jamie Imboden	\$2,260.96	Cowlitz
District Court Judge Position 3 (4 Year)	John Hays	\$2,260.96	Cowlitz
Cowlitz Public Utility District - Nonpartisan			
Office (Term)	Incumbent	Fee	File With
Commissioner District 1 (6 Year)	Bruce Pollock	\$388.56	Cowlitz
Precinct Committee Officer - Partisan			
Office (Term)	Incumbent	Fee	File With
Democrat & Republican PCO (2 Year)	Various (All precincts)	\$0.00	Cowlitz

For a complete list of all federal and state positions open for filing in 2026, please visit: www.sos.wa.gov/elections and select the "CANDIDATES" tab.

Before You File for Office

What you will need, where and how to file, important dates, qualifications, and approval

What you will need

- Declaration of Candidacy (if not filing online)
- Filing fee (if applicable)
- Voters' Pamphlet statement & photo

Where to file

The Secretary of State accepts filings for federal and statewide executive offices, and for any legislative, court of appeals, and superior court offices.

RCW 29A.24.070

Cowlitz County Elections accepts filings for all other offices in the county.

How to file

Online

Online filing starts May 4 at 8 a.m. and ends May 8 at 5 p.m. at: www.co.cowlitz.wa.us/elections.

All you need is an email address and a credit card (if the position has a filing fee).

By mail

Mail your Declaration (page 17 of this guide) and filing fee between April 20 and May 8 to:

Cowlitz County Elections
207 N 4th Ave, Rm 205
Kelso, WA 98626

In person

File in person between Monday, May 4, and Friday, May 8, from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. at:

207 N 4th Ave, Rm 205
Kelso, WA 98626

Important dates

- April 20 Candidate filing by mail begins
- May 4 Candidate filing online & in person begins
- May 8 Candidate filing ends / ballot order by lot draw
- May 11 Last day to withdraw
- May 19 Last day to submit your statement & photo

Qualifications

You must be a registered voter and possess the qualifications specified by law.

If a candidate must be selected by voters from a geographic subdivision of the jurisdiction in the primary, the candidate must be properly registered to vote within that subdivision.

RCW 29A.24.075

Candidates are responsible for ensuring they meet the qualifications for an office. If you are unsure of your qualifications, contact the jurisdiction of the office to learn if there are additional qualifications.

Visit votewa.gov if you need to update your voter registration address before filing.

Approval

Provide an email address when you file. This is how we will communicate with you. This can be separate from your public campaign email. Once you have been approved as a candidate, you will receive a confirmation email.

Your name will not appear on any official lists as a candidate for office until your declaration is approved and your filing fee is paid.

The final ballot order of candidates in your race will be determined by lot draw after candidate filing ends on Friday, May 8, 2026. The lot draw is open to the public.



Online filing recommended

We encourage each candidate to submit their Declaration of Candidacy and Voters' Pamphlet information online.

The online filing tool will give you step-by-step instructions, email you a confirmation of your filing, and alert you when other candidates file in your race.

Prepare Your Filing Fee

Cost of filing, accepted forms of payment, and filing fee petitions



Cost of filing

You must submit your filing fee when you file for office. Your filing fee is based on the salary of the office. For offices without a fixed annual salary, candidates pay no filing fee.

For any office with a fixed annual salary of \$1,000 or less, candidates pay a filing fee of \$10.

For any office with a fixed annual salary exceeding \$1,000, candidates pay a fee equal to one percent of the office's fixed annual salary.

Specific filing fees are available in the list of offices open for election on page 1 of this guide.

Accepted forms of payment

Online filing requires a credit card.

Candidates who file in person or by mail with Cowlitz County Elections may pay via:

- Check
- Cash
- Money order
- Valid filing fee petition

Filing fees are nonrefundable, even if you withdraw or file for the wrong office.

Filing fee petitions

Candidates without sufficient assets or income to pay the filing fee may instead submit a filing fee petition.

Petitions must include a total number of valid signatures equal to the dollar amount of the filing fee.

A candidate submitting a filing fee petition cannot file electronically. You must submit a paper Declaration of Candidacy along with your petition.

Filing fees may not be paid by combining petition signatures and currency.

Valid signatures are those of registered voters eligible to vote on the office in the General Election.

No additional signatures are accepted after the initial submission of a Filing Fee Petition and Declaration of Candidacy.

Petition sheets are not returned to the candidate, even if the petition is insufficient.

Each petition page must:

- Be printed on uniform color and size paper;
- Include a place for each voter's registration name, address, city, and county;
- Provide 20 numbered lines or less; and
- Display the required warning and statement found in RCW 29A.24.101 and RCW 29A.72.140.

Filing fee petitions may be rejected if:

- The petition is not in the proper form;
- The petition does not have enough signatures;
- The petition does not have a Declaration of Candidacy with it; or
- The time to file the petition and Declaration of Candidacy has expired.

Cowlitz County Elections recommends that candidates planning to submit a filing fee petition do so as early as possible during the week of candidate filing. Our office also recommends you submit at least 25% more signatures than required.

A sample filing fee petition page is available on page 19 of this guide and at www.co.cowlitz.wa.us/elections under the "Candidate Resources" tab.

Complete Your Declaration of Candidacy

Candidate information, campaign contact information, ballot information, ballot name, party preference, filing fee, and oath



All candidates must submit a Declaration of Candidacy during the regular filing period. This can be done online or at a kiosk available in the Cowlitz County Elections Office.

Candidate information - 1

Enter your name and address exactly as it appears on your voter registration. You may confirm your voter registration information at votewa.gov.

Provide an email and phone number. This is how Cowlitz County Elections will contact you and relay important information. This information will not be provided to the public. Online filing requires an email.

Campaign contact information - 2

Provide a campaign mailing address, telephone number, email, and website. This may be different from your candidate information provided above.

If you do not provide a campaign mailing address, your voter registration address will be published online in the list of candidates who have filed.

Campaign phone number, email, and website are optional. Government offices may not be used for campaign contact information.

Ballot information - 3

Enter the jurisdiction, office name, and position or district number for the office you want to run for.

You are responsible for meeting all qualifications and filing for the correct office. The list of offices open for election is available online and on page 1 of this guide.

Ballot name - 4

Print your name exactly as you want it to appear on the ballot. Nicknames are acceptable; however, your last name must be how it appears on your voter registration.

Titles with occupations like military rank, positions on issues, political affiliation, symbols, or anything intentionally designed to mislead voters are not allowed.

SAMPLE
of the printed candidate filing declaration

Washington State Declaration of Candidacy

1 candidate information as registered to vote	James Noothername Doe	first name middle last
	100 Main Steet Apt Q Anywhere	residential address city / zip
	1/1/1950 james4office@anywhere.com	date of birth email address phone number
2 campaign contact information for publication	201-555-5555 james4office@anyw	campaign phone campaign email
	PO Box 123 Anywhere 9999	mailing address (if different from residential address) city / zip
	www.james4office.com	campaign website
3 ballot information	Legislative Dist 40 Representative	jurisdiction office name position
4	Jimmy (James) Doe	exact name I would like printed on the ballot
	political party I prefer to be printed on the ballot, if filing for partisan office: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (Prefers <u>H a p p y</u>) <input type="checkbox"/> (States No Party Preference)	
filing fee	<input type="checkbox"/> The office has no filing fee <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A filing fee of \$ <u>454.74</u> accompanies the declaration of candidacy <input type="checkbox"/> I lack sufficient funds and submit a filing fee petition in lieu of the filing fee	
oath	I declare that the above information is true, that I am a registered voter residing at the address listed above, and that I am a candidate for the office listed above, and that, at the time of filing this declaration, I am qualified to assume office. I swear, or affirm, that I will support the Constitution and laws of the United States and laws of the State of Washington.	
for office use only	sign here <u>Jimmy Doe</u>	submission date _____ office code _____

Public Disclosure Commission Information

PDC frequently asked questions and resources



What is the PDC?

The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) was created and empowered by Initiative of the People to provide timely and meaningful public access to accurate information about the financing of political campaigns, lobbyist expenditures, the financial affairs of public officials and candidates, and to ensure compliance with and equitable enforcement of Washington's disclosure and campaign finance laws.

What starts the process?

Become a candidate to start the process. According to disclosure law, you become a candidate when you do one of these things:

- Accept a contribution or spend money for your campaign;
- Reserve space or purchase advertising to promote your candidacy;
- Authorize someone else to do any of these activities for you;
- State publicly that you are seeking office; or
- File a Declaration of Candidacy.

Once I become a candidate, then what?

Within two weeks of the date you become a candidate, you must file a Personal Financial Affairs Statement (F-1) and a Candidate Registration (C-1) with the PDC (if required).

Candidates for state or local office should refer to the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission for reporting requirements.

An incumbent officeholder who has filed an F-1 earlier in the year does not need to file a second F-1 in the same year after becoming a candidate.

Do I have to file disclosure reports?

One of two things determines what a candidate discloses. For most candidates, it's the number of registered voters in the jurisdiction where the candidate runs for office. How much money a candidate raises or expects to raise determines what reports are filed with the PDC.

Where do I find instructions?

Find brochures, manuals, and other filer resources at www.pdc.wa.gov.

Submit questions to the PDC's online help desk.

The PDC also offers free compliance training and online training videos.



PDC contact information

Phone: (360) 753-1111
 Toll Free: (877) 601-2828
 Website: www.pdc.wa.gov

Voters' Pamphlet Instructions

Guidelines and how to submit your Local Voters' Pamphlet information



Candidate participation in the Voters' Pamphlet

The deadline to submit Voters' Pamphlet information is 5 p.m. on **Tuesday, May 19, 2026**.

The Local Voters' Pamphlet provides an opportunity for every candidate to publish a candidate statement, photo, and contact information.

The office of Precinct Committee Officer does not participate in online or printed pamphlets.

A printed Local Voters' Pamphlet, as well as an online guide, will be available for all elections in Cowlitz County. The published Voters' Pamphlet is mailed to every household in Cowlitz County. The Auditor will determine how the pamphlet is produced and distributed based on the size of the election and the number of jurisdictions participating.

All candidates are encouraged to participate. Submission deadlines for candidate statements and photos are the same for the Primary and General Election.

Candidates may not submit new information for the General Election. The information submitted will be used for the Primary and General Election Voters' Pamphlet.

Candidates must submit statements and photos electronically online or by email. **Paper copies of statements or photos will not be accepted.**

Photo rules - 1

You may submit one self-portrait of your head and shoulders, or you may choose to have Elections staff take your photo for you.

If submitting your own photo, use a light-colored background. Do not use a white background for your photo. Photos must be no more than five years old.

Photos must be high resolution and cannot be digitally altered.

Hats, clothing, or insignias that suggest holding a public office are not allowed. Examples: judicial robes, law enforcement or military uniforms, or any political party symbols.

The final deadline to submit a candidate photo is May 19, 2026. If, after your initial submission, you wish to change your photo, you may submit a different photo by the deadline.

SAMPLE

of the printed Voters' Pamphlet



1

Warren G. Magnusen

(Nonpartisan)

Senator Magnuson has always given the highest priority to advocating for children and families, including veterans, the elderly and disabled. Scourges such as identity theft, methamphetamine users and dealers have been the subject of his legislative efforts to increase penalties and protect victims.

District growth has been more than 30% over the past two years, creating a strain on schools and other services. He helped make difficult choices to balance needs and restrain the budget, working to secure funding for the Pierce County Skills Center in Frederickson, the Yelm Loop, the Cross Base Highway, the Orting Bridge for kids, the Nisqually-Mashel State Park, an upgraded early warning system and work to keep transportation dollars here at home.

He believes the WASL should only be one of several tools used to measure academic success. Warren is honored to represent you and he is and always will be, there for you.

Statement rules - 2

You may submit a 200-word statement. The word limit will be checked using Microsoft word count.

Statements exceeding the word limit will be shortened by deleting full sentences from the end.

Submit one statement only. The statement you submit will be displayed through the Primary Voters' Pamphlet, then the General Election Voters' Pamphlet (if you advance to the General Election).

Proofread carefully. Your statement will be printed exactly as submitted. Once a statement is submitted, only factual information may be updated in the best interest of the voters. Examples: correcting a date or a dollar amount. All changes must be submitted by the May 19 deadline. Rewritten or additional information submitted will not be accepted.

Use only italics to emphasize words or phrases. Bolding, underlining, and all caps are not allowed. Bold, underlines, and caps will be converted to italics.

Statements are limited to four paragraphs. Do not use tables, lists, and bullets. Text must be written in paragraphs. Tables, lists, and bullets will be converted to a block paragraph with a semicolon to separate each item.

Obscene, profane, libelous, and defamatory language will be rejected.

The words "No Statement Submitted" shall be inserted next to the name of any candidate that fails to submit a statement.

Correct

I approve of justice for all, fairness of the law, and rehabilitation.

Incorrect

- I approve of:
- JUSTICE for all
 - **Fairness** of the law
 - Rehabilitation

Candidate contact information - 3

Contact information is published with your statement in the Local Voters' Pamphlet:

Campaign phone number

Campaign email

Campaign website

Contact information does not count towards the word limit, but web addresses such as LinkedIn, Facebook, or social media websites are not allowed.

You may update your contact information at any time.

SAMPLE
of the printed Voters' Pamphlet



Warren G. Magnusen
(Nonpartisan)

2 Senator Magnuson has always given the highest priority to advocating for children and families, including veterans, the elderly and disabled. Scourges such as identity theft, methamphetamine users and dealers have been the subject of his legislative efforts to increase penalties and protect victims.

District growth has been more than 30% over the past two years, creating a strain on schools and other services. He helped make difficult choices to balance needs and restrain the budget, working to secure funding for the Pierce County Skills Center in Frederickson, the Yelm Loop, the Cross Base Highway, the Orting Bridge for kids, the Nisqually-Masheh State Park, an upgraded early warning system and work to keep transportation dollars here at home.

He believes the WASL should only be one of several tools used to measure academic success. Warren is honored to represent you and he is and always will be, there for you.

3 **Contact Information**
Phone: (509) 123-4567
Email: warren@magnuson.net
Website: www.magnuson.com



Helpful candidate statement tips

The candidate statement portion of the Local Voters' Pamphlet is your opportunity to show the voters who you are. Think of it as a resumé to the voters.

Do:

- Offer your vision for the future. Be positive.
- Write what you stand for or support.
- Describe your goals, if elected.
- Detail what makes you a great candidate.

Don't:

- Criticize your opponent or other individuals.
- Name people specifically, or make references to "my opponent" or "the incumbent."
- Make false or misleading statements.
- Use technical terms that may not be understood.

Do this!	Not this!
If elected, I will ensure all laws are followed and applied fairly.	My opponent ignores the law and regularly breaks the rules.
I do not support nor will I vote for future tax increases.	My opponent voted to increase taxes.
Using my skills and abilities, I will bring improved decision making to the council.	The current council is made up of tax-loving bureaucrats.
I will bring fresh ideas to the city council.	The current city councilmembers are unimaginative and have offered no new ideas.
I do not support the following projects...	My opponent supports many risky projects.
Using my background in finance, I will make sure your money is spent wisely under my guidance.	The incumbent has wasted taxpayer money and has cost you millions of dollars on poorly run projects.



How to submit your Voters' Pamphlet information

Your Voters' Pamphlet submission is important. We recommend you submit your information as early as possible. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Submit your photo and statement online when you file, or send them via email to elections@cowlitzwa.gov.

Submission deadline

The deadline to submit your Local Voters' Pamphlet information is 5 p.m. on **May 19, 2026**.

Late or incorrect submissions will not be accepted. If a submission is not received by the deadline, the text "No Statement Submitted," and "No Photo Submitted" will appear in the applicable sections.

Rejected statements

All or any part of a candidate's statement may be rejected if it includes information, statements, photos, or contact information that:

- Is obscene;
- Is libelous;
- Contains a commercial advertisement;
- Contains matter prohibited by law from distribution through the mail;
- Contains matter not limited to the candidate himself or herself or the political office;
- Contains matter that is otherwise inappropriate or that does not comply with applicable law; or
- Was received after the submittal deadline.

Candidates that have had any portion of their statement rejected will be notified in writing (email) and by phone. Candidates will have 3 days following notification to appeal the rejection.

The Auditor will render a final decision on the appeal within 2 business days.

In a year the County Auditor appears on the ballot, the Auditor will recuse themselves from any involvement in the review of statements for the office of County Auditor.

Provisions applicable to all statements

The contents of the statement, photo, and contact information are the sole responsibility of the author.

Submissions don't represent the position of Cowlitz County Elections. Likewise, Cowlitz County Elections is not responsible for the validity or accuracy of submissions. Spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors will not be corrected. Submissions will be printed exactly as received, as long as they comply with format specifications and content rules.

Once the candidate statement and photo deadline has passed, all statements and photos submitted are final. They cannot be amended by the candidate.

Reviewing your submission

Prior to publishing the Voters' Pamphlet, Cowlitz County Elections will email each candidate a proof of their candidate statement and photo as it will appear in the pamphlet. Upon receipt of the proof, candidates should ensure that there are no discrepancies between the proof copy and the information they submitted.

No changes to the originally submitted statements or photos will be accepted. Only changes to candidate contact information will be accepted.

RCW 29A.32.230

Campaign Sign Regulations

The role of Cowlitz County Elections, state and county regulations, illegally placed signs, and contact information for all jurisdictions



The role of Cowlitz County Elections

Cowlitz County Elections has **no** role in the regulation of campaign signs.

Sign regulations

If you plan to post campaign signs, please note that it is the responsibility of each candidate to contact the jurisdiction in which they plan to place political signs for sign regulations and rules. Jurisdictions may have size restrictions, deadlines for removal, and/or require a deposit.

State sign regulations

View the complete Highway Advertising Control Act through a link provided at the Department of Transportation’s website at wsdot.wa.gov/business-wsdot/highway-signs/political-signs-highways.

Complaints

If you have questions about the placement of campaign signs along state highways, call WSDOT at (360) 705-7000.

Sign violation complaints do not fall under the jurisdiction of Cowlitz County Elections.

To report illegal roadside signs or potential sign violations on private property in unincorporated Cowlitz County:

- Contact Cowlitz County Public Works at 360-577-3030.

To report potential sign violations in a city or town:

- Contact the local jurisdiction regarding regulations and requirements.

Contact information for all jurisdictions

Washington State Department of Transportation
(360) 705-7000

Cowlitz County Public Works
(360) 577-3030

City of Castle Rock
(360) 274-8181

City of Kalama
(360) 673-4562

City of Kelso
(360) 423-9922

City of Longview
(360) 442-5083

City of Woodland
(360) 225-8281

Campaign Assistance

Historical election turnout information, new legislation, voter data requests, matchbacks, candidate walking lists, voter registration drives, completing the voter registration form, and voter concerns



Historical election turnout information

Historical election turnout for elections from 1998 to 2026 can be found on the Cowlitz County Elections website under the "Archived Elections" tab.

The recent passage of Senate Bill 5892 requires local elections offices to direct requestors to submit certain records requests to the Office of the Secretary of State for fulfillment.

Primaries - Even Year Turnout

<i>Year</i>	<i>Registered Voters</i>	<i>Ballots Cast</i>	<i>Turnout %</i>
2006	53,466	17,336	29.43%
2008	53,724	22,837	42.51%
2010	55,794	22,121	39.65%
2012	56,486	19,710	34.89%
2014	58,354	19,148	32.81%
2016	60,927	19,718	32.36%
2018	63,688	25,779	40.48%
2020	67,816	37,704	55.60%
2022	71,301	31,781	44.57%
2024	73,662	30,000	40.73%

General Elections - Even Year Turnout

<i>Year</i>	<i>Registered Voters</i>	<i>Ballots Cast</i>	<i>Turnout %</i>
2006	52,272	31,643	60.54%
2008	55,331	45,793	82.76%
2010	55,265	37,783	68.37%
2012	58,555	45,506	77.72%
2014	58,156	32,081	55.16%
2016	63,430	47,869	75.47%
2018	64,613	45,152	69.88%
2020	72,696	60,647	83.43%
2022	71,857	45,267	62.99%
2024	75,812	59,822	78.91%



New legislation

Senate Bill 5892 amends RCW 42.56.425 to prohibit local elections offices from producing certain records in response to a request for records or reports generated by the statewide voter database.

Our office is now required to direct requestors to submit their request to the Office of the Secretary of State. A knowing violation of this is a violation of RCW 29A.84.150.

At this time, our office is still able to produce the following:

- Registered Voter Lists
- Matchbacks
- Candidate Walking Lists

Visit www.co.cowlitz.wa.us/elections for the most current information on data and records requests, or to obtain an Election Data Request form.

Visit www.sos.wa.gov/elections for any requests beyond those listed above.

Data requests and public information

Current lists of registered voters are public records.
RCW 29A.08.720

Data may be used for political purposes only. Voter registration data may not be used for commercial purposes.

RCW 29A.08.720

RCW 29A.08.740

RCW 42.56.070

Registered voter lists

Voter data lists may include:

- Name
- Residential address
- Mailing address
- Precinct name, number, and split
- Voter ID
- Date of registration
- Birth year
- Gender
- Last election voted

To request voter data, visit: www.co.cowlitz.wa.us/elections.

Matchbacks

Matchbacks include a list of all voters in a current election that have returned a ballot. The file may contain the same information as a voter data request but will also include:

- Ballot issue date
- Ballot return date
- Ballot status
- Ballot status reason

To request matchbacks, visit: www.co.cowlitz.wa.us/elections.

Candidate walking lists

Candidate walking lists are available by precinct or district. Limited information is available in a walking list, including:

- Voter name
- Residential address
- Registration date
- Voting history

To request a candidate walking list, visit: www.co.cowlitz.wa.us/elections.



Voter registration drives

Every eligible person is encouraged to register to vote and to participate fully in all elections. Make sure the people in your community have a voice in the next election.

Tips for a successful drive:

- Plan your drive well in advance of voter registration deadlines.
- Complete a voter registration drive application and submit it to the Elections Office.
- Consider coordinating with other groups to maximize your efforts.
- Obtain permission from the owner or manager before conducting drives on private property.
- Obtain current voter registration forms from the Elections Office or Secretary of State.
- Treat everyone the same.
- Know how to complete the form so that you can assist individuals.
- Allow people to take a registration form and submit it themselves.
- Let people know they may fill out a form to update their existing registration (name change, address change, etc.).
- Assist people with disabilities only when they ask for help.
- Have contact information for the Elections Office available to aid in referring people with questions.
- Submit completed forms within 5 business days. You may submit completed forms by mail or in person to the Elections Office.

Do not...

- refuse to give anyone a registration form;
- offer gifts or promotional items for registering someone to vote unless you offer the same item to someone who does not register to vote; or
- accept registrations you know to be fraudulent.

Completing the voter registration form

The following information is required on voter registration forms:

- voter's name;
- date of birth;
- affirmation of United States citizenship;
- a Washington State residential address (include both mailing and residential addresses if mail is not delivered to the residential address); and
- signature attesting to the truth of the information provided.

*16 and 17-year-olds can now pre-register to vote. Registrants under the age of 18 will have their registrations held until they become eligible to vote.

Voter concern information

If you believe you have witnessed irregularities, discrimination, or fraud, please report the incident by accessing the HAVA Complaint Form on the Secretary of State's website.

Clearly and specifically state your concern(s) and include the event(s), date(s), time(s), address(es), and name(s) pertaining to your concern(s).

Post-Election Information

The steps to take to assume office after the election has been certified



Get qualified

Once you have been elected, you must be “qualified” before you can actually assume office in local government.

Per RCW 29A.04.133, “qualified” means:

- The election results have been certified;
- Any required bond has been posted; and
- The winner has taken the oath of office.

Certification of election

In Washington State, the General Election results are certified 21 days after the date of election. This means the election is complete and the results are official.

The Cowlitz County Elections Office will then prepare and send all oaths of offices to the election winners.

Oath of office

Newly elected officials typically begin their term on the first day of January following the General Election. The oath of office may be taken anytime between the date of the final certification of the election and the day before the term of office begins

It is recommended that newly elected officers take their oath of office prior to January, as this ensures that they are able to legally take office on January 1.

The oath must be given and certified by any officer or notary public authorized to administer oaths. This includes, but is not limited to the following officers:

- Judges and Notary Publics
- County Commissioners
- County Auditors or Deputies
- Town Clerks
- School Officials

Once you take your oath, it must then be filed and retained by the County Auditor.

Assuming office

When does the election winner assume office?

Most newly elected or re-elected local officials take office on January 1 following the General Election. However, if the office is currently held by a person who had been appointed to fill a vacancy, the newly elected official may assume office immediately after becoming qualified.

The terms for Supreme Court justices, judges of the Court of Appeals, Superior Court judges, District Court judges, Municipal Court judges and state legislative offices all begin on the second Monday in January.

County, city, and town officials may take their oath between the date of the final certification of the election and the day before the term of office begins. January 1 is the beginning of terms for county officials, except for charter counties that specify otherwise. January 1 is also the beginning of terms for special purpose districts, with the exception of school district directors or districts where ownership of land is a prerequisite of voting (e.g. diking or flood control districts).

School district directors’ terms of office begin at the first official meeting of the board of directors after certification of the election results.

Unexpired terms and short terms also begin immediately after certification of the election. Officials elected to these offices must be administered an oath before assuming the duties of the office.



What if the election winner fails to take office on January 1?

Until the winner becomes qualified, the incumbent will continue to hold office.

For more information, contact your jurisdiction's legal counsel or visit www.MRSC.org

Other Information and Forms



Withdrawal of candidacy

If you decide you do not want your name on the ballot, your signed withdrawal form must be received by Cowlitz County Elections by the close of business on the Monday immediately following Candidate Filing Week. A Withdrawal of Candidacy form is located on page 18 of this guide. Filing fees are nonrefundable.

No withdrawal is permitted if you filed during a special filing period.

RCW 29A.24.131

Write-in candidates

Write-in candidates are required to file a Declaration of Write-in Candidacy in order to be counted. Write-in candidates may submit their declarations up until 8 p.m. on Election Day.

Candidates who submit their write-in candidacy prior to the 18-day deadline before the Primary or General Election are not required to pay a filing fee. If a candidate wishes to file on or after the 18-day deadline, **they must pay the filing fee.**

Filing fees must accompany the declaration and are non-refundable. The amount depends upon the office and annual salary.

- The filing fee is equal to 1% of the office's annual salary, if the salary exceeds \$1,000.
- The filing fee is \$25 for offices with an annual salary of \$1,000 or less.

You may not file as a write-in candidate if you were a candidate for the same office in the preceding Primary or you are already a candidate for a different office (other than PCO).

Write-in candidates must meet the same qualifications as any other candidate for that office.

Declaration of Write-in Candidacy forms are available at www.sos.wa.gov/elections/candidatefiling.aspx

Special filing period and vacated offices

If a race lacks a candidate after the close of the regular filing period and before the Primary, a special filing period opens for three business days.

RCW 29A.24.181

Such three-day filing period shall be fixed by the Auditor.

Filings during special filing periods are conducted in the same manner as regular candidate filing periods.

If an office is filed for during a special filing period, the race skips the Primary and appears on the General Election ballot.

Washington State Declaration of Candidacy

candidate information
as registered to vote

first name	middle	last
residential address		city / zip
date of birth	email address	phone number

campaign contact information
for publication

campaign phone number	campaign email
mailing address (if different from residential address)	city / zip
campaign website	

ballot information

jurisdiction	office name	position number																				
exact name I would like printed on the ballot																						
political party I prefer to be printed on the ballot, if filing for partisan office:																						
<input type="radio"/> (Prefers <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"> </td> </tr> </table> Party)																						
<input type="radio"/> (States No Party Preference)																						

filing fee

The office has no filing fee
 A filing fee of \$ _____ accompanies the declaration of candidacy
 I lack sufficient funds and submit a filing fee petition in lieu of the filing fee under RCW 29A.24.091

oath

I declare that the above information is true, that I am a registered voter residing at the address listed above, that I am a candidate for the office listed above, and that, at the time of filing this declaration, I am legally qualified to assume office.

I swear, or affirm, that I will support the Constitution and laws of the United States, and the Constitution and laws of the State of Washington.

sign here [date here [
--	--

for office use only

submission date	voter registration number
office code	fee

3/2024

Withdrawal of Candidacy

RCW 29A.24.131

important
information

The deadline for withdrawing is the Monday following candidate filing week, May 11, 2026.

Once filed, a declaration of candidacy may not be altered. If the candidate decides during the filing period to change the declaration of candidacy, the candidate must first withdraw and then re-file.

Note: Filing fees are nonrefundable.

office
information

jurisdiction and office name

position number (if applicable)

personal
information

first name

middle

last

signature

I withdraw my candidacy for the office listed above and understand that the filing fee is nonrefundable.

sign
here

[]

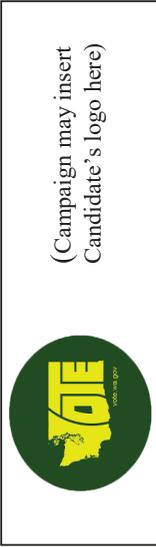
date
here

[]

Washington State Filing Fee Petition

Submitted in support of a candidate lacking sufficient funds to pay the filing. (RCW 29A.24.091)

WARNING: EVERY PERSON who signs this petition with any other than his or her true name, knowingly signs more than one of these petitions, signs this petition when he or she is not a legal voter, or makes any false statement on this petition may be punished by fine or imprisonment or both.



We, the undersigned registered voters of _____, (either state of Washington or the political subdivision) hereby petition that the name of _____, (candidate's name) be printed on the ballot for the office of _____, (insert name of office including applicable district / position number)

SIGNATURE	PRINT FIRST NAME	PRINT LAST NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	ADDRESS	CITY	COUNTY
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						

THIS SPACE FOR SOS USE ONLY - IF EXTRA LINE NEEDED USE NEW SHEET- NOT BACK SIDE