



## FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF STATE

RON DESANTIS  
Governor

CORD BYRD  
Secretary of State

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Supervisors of Elections

**FROM:** Cord Byrd  
Florida Secretary of State

**DATE:** June 19, 2024

**SUBJECT:** Directive 2024-01 – Implementation of Fla. Stat. 99.0215(2)

1. I issue this directive in my capacity as the “chief election officer” of the State of Florida with the responsibility to “[o]btain and maintain uniformity in the interpretation and implementation of election laws,” section 97.012(1), Fla. Stat., and “[p]rovide written direction . . . to the supervisors of elections on the performance of their official duties with respect to the Florida Election Code.” *Id.* Section 97.012(16).
2. Specifically, I issue this directive to clarify the interpretation and implementation of section 99.0215(2), Fla. Stat. Section 99.0215(2), Fla. Stat. provides as follows:

*If a candidate wishes to designate a nickname, the candidate must file an affidavit that must be verified under oath or affirmation pursuant to s. [92.525\(1\)\(a\)](#), attesting that the nickname complies with the requirements of this section. The affidavit must be filed simultaneously with the oath or affirmation specified in s. [99.021](#). Any nickname designated by a candidate may not be used to mislead voters. A candidate may not designate a nickname that implies the candidate is some other person, that constitutes a political slogan or otherwise associates the candidate with a cause or an issue, or that is obscene or profane. For purposes of this subsection, the term “political slogan” means any word or words expressing or connoting a position, an opinion, or a belief that the candidate may espouse, including, but not limited to, any word or words conveying any meaning other than that of the general identity of the candidate.*

3. Pursuant to 99.061(2)-(3), Fla. Stat., Supervisors of Elections serve as the qualifying officers for county and certain district offices.
4. The Department of State became aware that certain candidates who seek to qualify for county and certain district offices have as part of their qualifying submission designated nicknames that fail to comply with section 99.0215(2), Fla. Stat.
5. Accordingly, I issue the following Directive:

The name of any candidate who, as part of their qualifying submission, designated a nickname that does not comply with section 99.0215(2), Fla. Stat., shall appear on the August 20, 2024, Primary Election ballot **without** the noncompliant nickname.

The qualifying officer shall mail notice to such candidate informing the candidate that, although they will appear on the ballot as qualified, their request to be listed on the ballot with the noncompliant nickname has been rejected. See Attachment A for sample notice.

6. Therefore, on or before **noon, Thursday, June 20, 2024**, all Supervisors of Elections shall review their candidate listing and ensure that the names of candidates implicated by section 99.0215(2), Fla. Stat., comply, and, if not, shall remove such nicknames from the list and submit an amended certified list to the Department as required pursuant to section 99.092(2), Fla. Stat.
7. As always, my staff stands ready to assist you in further reviewing the local candidate qualifying papers and answer questions you may have about candidates' compliance with section 99.0215(2), Fla. Stat.
8. This directive remains in effect until such time as it is superseded or revoked by subsequent directive, law, or final court order.

Attachment A

Dear Candidate

You are hereby notified that your nickname as indicated on your oath violates subsection (2) of section 99.0215, Fla Stat. Although you will remain qualified, your name will appear on the ballot as you designated without the noncompliant nickname. Your name will appear on the ballot as follows: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you.