



## FLORIDA DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

**RON DESANTIS**  
Governor

**CORD BYRD**  
Secretary of State

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Candidates for 2026 Election  
**FROM:** Ikay L. Reeve, Chief, Bureau of Election Records  
**DATE:** March 26, 2026  
**SUBJECT:** Qualifying Tips

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Please refer to the [Florida Division of Elections' website](https://dos.fl.gov/elections/candidates-committees/qualifying/) for specific forms and requirements:

<https://dos.fl.gov/elections/candidates-committees/qualifying/>

**1st Qualifying Period for 2026:** U.S. Senator, Justice of the Supreme Court, District Courts of Appeal Judge, State Attorney (20<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit), Public Defender (20<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit), Circuit Court Judge

- Noon, Monday, April 20, 2026 – Noon, Friday, April 24, 2026

**2nd Qualifying Period for 2026:** U.S. Representative in Congress, Governor and Cabinet, State Senator, State Representative, Multi-County Special District

- Noon, Monday, June 8, 2026 – Noon, Friday, June 12, 2026

The Division of Elections may accept and hold qualifying papers beginning 14 days prior to the first day of your qualifying period. Candidates are encouraged to take advantage of the 14-day period or to file the appropriate qualifying documents as early as possible in the qualifying period.

It is a candidate's responsibility to ensure qualifying papers are timely received in this office and are complete and properly notarized (as applicable). All qualifying fees and paperwork must be received in the Division of Elections no later than Noon (Eastern Time), on the last day of qualifying, for a candidate to be qualified. **Note: Timely hand delivery to our office is the only guarantee.**

Our location and mailing address is: Division of Elections  
R.A. Gray Building, Room 316  
500 South Bronough Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

**Division of Elections**  
**R.A. Gray Building, Suite 316 • 500 South Bronough Street • Tallahassee, Florida 32399**  
**850.245.6200 • 850.245.6260 (Fax) • DOS.fl.gov/elections**



March 26, 2026

Page Two

**Candidate Oath forms** – The candidate must file the appropriate Candidate Oath as it applies to your candidacy no later than the close of qualifying.

- **Notable requirements at the time of qualifying:**
  - The candidate must provide their **address of legal residence** on the Candidate Oath.
    - A [Public Records Exemption Request](#) must be on file for the address to be confidential.
  - The candidate must affirm any outstanding fines, fees, or penalties on the Candidate Oath and provide the amounts and names of entities, as applicable.
  - If the candidate wishes to use a nickname on the ballot, the candidate must complete the Affidavit of Nickname on the Candidate Oath.

**Timely Filing** – The U.S. Postal Service does not deliver directly to the Division of Elections. To ensure the qualifying items are timely submitted, a candidate or someone on their behalf should hand-deliver directly to the Division. The Division does not accept qualifying papers via facsimile or email. The R.A. Gray Building is open to the public during regular business hours. NOTE: Overnight deliveries to the R.A. Gray building are made only by FedEx and UPS; however, they are not made directly to the Division of Elections office in Room 316.

**Qualifying Fees** – Must be on a properly executed check payable to the Department of State or Division of Elections and drawn upon the candidate's **campaign** account. Personal checks, cashiers' checks, certified checks, cash, and money orders are not valid for qualifying. On the qualifying check (including a starter check), ensure the face of the check specifies that the check is from the campaign account, even if it is handwritten on the check (e.g., "Campaign Account of John Doe").

**Notarized Oath** – Oath forms require notarization. Carefully review these documents for proper notarization. Common mistakes include but are not limited to: the state rather than the county entered in venue; failure to indicate physical or online notarization; notary indicates online notarization but is not registered to provide online notarization; and the notary seal with expiration date and name is not legible due to a light stamping, or stamping on a dark line.

**Name on the Ballot** – On the Candidate Oath, type or print your name the way you wish it to appear on the ballot. A candidate's name as it is to appear on the ballot may not be changed after the end of qualifying. The Affidavit of Nickname must be complete for a nickname to appear on the ballot.

**Contact Information** – Provide a telephone number and email address on the Candidate Oath where you can be reached during the day and after normal working hours. The Bureau will make an effort to contact you if there is a problem with your paperwork.

**Qualifying Status** – To check your qualifying status: <https://dos.elections.myflorida.com/candidates>

**Withdrawal** – In order for a qualifying fee to be returned, the candidate must withdraw in writing before the close of qualifying. The withdrawal statement must contain the candidate's signature. The withdrawal may be scanned and emailed to [ElecRecords@DOS.fl.gov](mailto:ElecRecords@DOS.fl.gov) or faxed to 850.245.6260.

If you have any questions, please call the Bureau of Election Records at **850-245-6280**.

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