

# NORTH DAKOTA ELECTION & CANDIDATE FILING INFORMATION



## FOREWORD

---

This guide is intended to provide information for the upcoming election cycle regarding dates and deadlines for:

- Election Events
- Candidate Filings
- Campaign Finance Filings

## CONTACT

---

If you have questions regarding information contained in this guide, please contact:

NORTH DAKOTA  
**SECRETARY OF STATE**

### ELECTIONS DIVISION

600 East Boulevard Avenue Dept 108  
Bismarck ND 58505-0500

**Phone:** (701) 328-4146

**Toll-Free:** (800) 352-0867, ext. 328-4146

**Email:** [soselect@nd.gov](mailto:soselect@nd.gov)

[Vote.ND.Gov](http://Vote.ND.Gov)

## DISCLAIMER

---

The following excerpts and summaries of North Dakota law are taken or derived from the NDCC and pertain to elections, election procedures, and the duties and responsibilities assigned to election officials. Although every attempt has been made for accuracy, the reprint, summarizations, or paraphrasing of these laws does not carry the same authority as the actual NDCC and should not be equated with the official NDCC. This compilation is intended as a helpful resource and reference for consolidated election related laws. For official and legal purposes, the official NDCC should be used.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS ---

<b>ELECTION DATES 2026 .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>FEDERAL, STATE, LEGISLATIVE, JUDICIAL, &amp; COUNTY OFFICES ON THE BALLOT IN 2026 ..</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>TOWNSHIP ELECTIONS .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>SCHOOL DISTRICT ELECTIONS .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>CITY ELECTIONS .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>COUNTY ELECTIONS .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>POLITICAL PARTY PRESIDENTIAL CAUCUSES.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>PRIMARY ELECTION 2026 .....</b>	<b>10</b>
Candidate Requirements.....	10
Withdrawal of Candidate’s Name from Ballot.....	10
Certificate of Write-In Candidacy.....	11
Absentee Ballots Available .....	11
Publication of Sample Ballot.....	11
Distribution and Publication of Measures Analysis .....	11
Public Test.....	11
Polling Hours.....	12
Post-Election Audit.....	12
County Canvassing Board.....	12
Auditor Certifies Results to Secretary of State .....	12
State Canvassing Board .....	13

<b>GENERAL ELECTION 2026 .....</b>	<b>14</b>
Placement of Candidate’s Name on Ballot .....	14
Withdrawal of Candidate’s Name from Ballot .....	14
Certificate of Write-In Candidacy.....	15
Absentee Ballots Available .....	15
Publication of Sample Ballot.....	15
Distribution and Publication of Measures Analysis .....	16
Public Test.....	16
Polling Hours.....	16
Post-Election Audit.....	16
County Canvassing Board .....	17
Auditor Certifies Results to Secretary of State .....	17
State Canvassing Board .....	17
 <b>CANDIDATE/CAMPAIGN FINANCE FILING DEADLINES 2026 .....</b>	 <b>18</b>
 <b>DATES CANDIDATES TAKE OFFICE UPON ELECTION.....</b>	 <b>19</b>
 <b>CAMPAIGN FINANCE STATEMENTS .....</b>	 <b>19</b>
City and School Campaign Finance Reporting.....	19
48-Hour Statements.....	20
Late Filing Fees.....	20
Amendments to Filed Statements .....	20
Filing Officers for Campaign Finance .....	20

## ELECTION DATES 2026

ELECTION TYPE	DATE	NOTES
<b>Township Elections</b>	Between March 1 and March 31, 2026	Set at the discretion of the township board
<b>School District Elections</b>	Between April 1 and June 30, 2026	Set at the discretion of the school board
<b>City Elections</b>	Tuesday, June 9, 2026	Cities with home rule charters may have different election dates
<b>Primary Election</b>	Tuesday, June 9, 2026	Federal, Statewide, District, and County Office Primary
<b>General Election</b>	Tuesday, November 3, 2026	Federal, Statewide, District, and County Office General

## FEDERAL, STATE, LEGISLATIVE, JUDICIAL, AND COUNTY OFFICES ON THE BALLOT IN 2026

### Federal Office

Representative in Congress

### Term

2-Year Term

### Statewide Partisan Offices

Secretary of State  
 Attorney General  
 Agriculture Commissioner  
 Tax Commissioner  
 Public Service Commissioner  
 Public Service Commissioner

### Term

4-Year Term  
 4-Year Term  
 4-Year Term  
 4-Year Term  
 6-Year Term  
 Unexpired 2-Year Term

### Legislative Offices

24 Senate Seats (odd districts)  
 48 House of Representative Seats (odd districts)  
 District 26 House of Representatives Seat  
 District 42 House of Representatives Seat

### Term

4-Year Term  
 4-Year Term  
 Unexpired 2-Year Term  
 Unexpired 2-Year Term

### Statewide Non-Partisan Offices

Superintendent of Public Instruction  
 Justice of the Supreme Court  
 Justice of the Supreme Court

### Term

Unexpired 2-Year Term  
 10-Year Term  
 Unexpired 8-Year Term

### Judicial District

East Central  
 Northeast  
 Northeast Central  
 Northwest  
 South Central  
 Southeast

### Judgeship Number

1, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11  
 3 and 5  
 2, 5, 6  
 2, 3, 4  
 2, 6, 7, 8, 10  
 1

### 6 Year Term Unless Otherwise Noted

Unexpired 4-Year Term on Numbers 10 and 11  
  
 Unexpired 4-Year Term on Numbers 2 and 6  
  
 Unexpired 4-Year Term on Number 2  
 Unexpired 4-Year Term on Number 1

**County (depending on structure)  
& Multi-District Offices**

**Term**

Commissioners	4-Year Term
County Auditor	4-Year Term
County Auditor/Treasurer	
County Auditor/Treasurer/Tax Director	
County State's Attorney	4-Year Term
County Recorder	4-Year Term
County Recorder/Clerk of District Court	
County Treasurer	4-Year Term
County Treasurer/Recorder	
County Treasurer/Recorder/Clerk of District Court	
County Treasurer/Tax Director	
County Sheriff	4-Year Term
County Clerk of the District Court	4-Year Term
Official County Newspaper	4-Year Term
Director – Southwest Water Authority	4-Year Term
(Primary Election Only - each elect one director) – Bowman County, Golden Valley County, Hettinger County, Mercer County, Morton County (1 within Mandan – 1 outside of city limits), Stark County (1 within Dickinson, 1 outside of city limits)	
Supervisor, Soil Conservation District (General Election Only)	6-Year Term
Director, Garrison Diversion Conservancy District	4-Year Term
(Each elect one director) – Benson County, Cass County, McHenry County, Pierce County, Ramsey County, Renville County, Richland County, Stutsman County, Traill County, Ward County, Wells County	

Some counties will vote on:

- A continuation of \$1 per line per month fee on telephone services for the costs associated with E-911 service. NDCC § 57-40.6-02

## TOWNSHIP ELECTIONS

---

Township elections may be held during the month of March. Many townships hold elections on the third Tuesday of March each year. The township clerk is required to give notice of the election at least 10 days prior to the election. [NDCC § 58-04-01](#). Absentee voting is not available in township elections.

A moderator for the election must announce the opening, any adjournment, and closing of the polls with a simple proclamation. Township electors may not vote until the polls are declared open. [NDCC § 58-04-07](#)

### **Township Offices - [NDCC Chap. 58-05](#)**

	<b>Term</b>
Township Supervisor	3-Year Term
Township Treasurer	2-Year Term
Township Clerk	2-Year Term
Township Assessor	2-Year Term

<b>EVENT</b>	<b>DATE</b>
<b>3rd Tuesday in March</b> (If date chosen by township)	Tuesday, March 17, 2026

## SCHOOL DISTRICT ELECTIONS

---

School board elections are held annually on a date chosen by the school district board between April 1 and June 30, although they are often held on the second Tuesday of June. A person running for a position on a school district board must prepare and sign a document stating their name and the position for which they are a candidate. Any person running for an office that is an unexpired term must indicate on their filing paperwork that they are seeking that unexpired position. Additionally, they must file a [Statement of Interests](#) as required by [NDCC § 16.1-09-02](#), and [NDCC § 15.1-09-08](#).

The document with the candidate's name and the position they are seeking on the school district board and the [Statement of Interests](#) must be filed and in the possession of the school district business manager by 4 p.m. on the 64<sup>th</sup> day before the election. This also applies when the school election is held in conjunction with the county (64<sup>th</sup> day prior to the primary election).

### **School District Offices – [NDCC § 15.1-09-08](#)**

	<b>Term</b>
School Board Member	3-Year Term *Some districts may have a 4-year term depending upon their structure.

<b>EVENT</b>	<b>DATE</b>
<b>School District Candidate Filing Deadline</b>	Monday, April 6, 2026
<b>2nd Tuesday in June – Primary Election Day</b> (If date chosen by school district board)	Tuesday, June 9, 2026

# CITY ELECTIONS

---

Cities hold elections on the second Tuesday in June in each even numbered year. To hold the election (unless it is a special city election), the governing body of the city must enter into an agreement with the governing board of the county or counties in which the city lies. The city is required to give notice of the election at least 10 days prior to the election in the city's official newspaper. [NDCC § 40-21-02](#)

## CANDIDATE REQUIREMENTS

A city must post a public notice 30 days before the candidate filing deadline – **March 7, 2026**. Candidates for city offices are required to collect signatures of 10 percent of the electors who voted for that office in the last city election; however, no more than 300 signatures are required. Candidates must file the [Petition/Certificate of Nomination](#), as well as their [Statement of Interests](#), before 4 p.m. on the 64<sup>th</sup> day before the election. A candidate may not circulate or get signatures on a [Petition/Certificate of Nomination](#) prior to **January 1, 2026**. [NDCC § 40-21-07](#)

**Offices that may be on the Ballot for 4-year terms:** (Depending on form of city governance)

**City Offices – Council Form – [NDCC Chapter 40-21](#)**

Mayor  
Council Member at Large  
Council Member  
Municipal Judge

**City Offices – Commission Form – [NDCC Chapter 40-21](#)**

Commission President  
City Commissioner  
Municipal Judge

EVENT	DATE
<b>Earliest Day to Begin Circulating Petitions</b>	Thursday, January 1, 2026
<b>Earliest Day to File Petitions</b>	Friday, January 2, 2026
<b>Last Day to File Petitions</b>	4 p.m., Monday, April 6, 2026
<b>2nd Tuesday in June – Primary Election Day</b>	Tuesday, June 9, 2026

# COUNTY ELECTIONS

Counties hold elections for offices on the second Tuesday in June during the Primary Election, and candidates for county office and the Garrison Conservancy District Director with the highest number of votes and who total twice the number of positions available for the office in the Primary Election advance to the General Election held on the first Tuesday following the first Monday in November. The county is required to give notice of the election at least 10 days prior to the election in the county's official newspaper. [NDCC § 40-21-02](#)

## CANDIDATE REQUIREMENTS

Candidates must file the [Petition/Certificate of Nomination](#), an [Affidavit of Candidacy](#), as well as their [Statement of Interests](#) with the County Auditor, before 4 p.m. on the 64<sup>th</sup> day before the election. A candidate may not circulate or get signatures on a [Petition/Certificate of Nomination](#) prior to **January 1, 2026**. [NDCC § 40-21-07](#).

- **County Offices** - Candidates are required to file a Petition/Certificate of Nomination with signatures of 2% of the electors who voted for that office in the last election; however, no more than 300 signatures are required. [NDCC § 16.1-11-11](#)
- **Director, Southwest Water Authority** – Candidates for county directors are required to file a Petition/Certificate of Nomination with signatures of 2% of the electors who voted for that office in the last election; however, no more than 300 signatures are required. [NDCC § 61-24.5.06](#)
- **Director, Garrison Diversion Conservancy District** – Candidates are required to file a Petition/Certificate of Nomination with no less than 50 signatures and no more than 300 signatures. [NDCC § 61-24-03](#)
- **Supervisor, Soil Conservation** – Candidates are required to file a Petition/Certificate of Nomination with no less than 25 signatures and no more than 300 signatures. [NDCC § 4.1-20-16](#).

### County (depending on structure) & Multi-District Offices

	Term
Commissioners	4-Year Term
Director – Southwest Water Authority (Primary Election Only - each elects one director) – Bowman County, Golden Valley County, Hettinger County, Mercer County, Morton County (1 within Mandan – 1 outside of city limits), Stark County (1 within Dickinson, 1 outside of city limits)	4-Year Term
Supervisor, Soil Conservation District (General Election Only)	6-Year Term
Director, Garrison Diversion Conservancy District (Each elects one director) – Benson County, Cass County, McHenry County, Pierce County, Ramsey County, Renville County, Richland County, Stutsman County, Traill County, Ward County, Wells County	4-Year Term

Some counties will vote on:

- A continuation of \$1 per line per month fee on telephone services for the costs associated with E-911 service. [NDCC § 57-40.6-02](#)

EVENT	DATE
<b>Earliest Day to Begin Circulating Petitions</b>	Thursday, January 1, 2026
<b>Earliest Day to File Petitions</b>	Friday, January 2, 2026
<b>Last Day to File Petitions</b>	4 p.m., Monday, April 6, 2026
<b>2nd Tuesday in June – Primary Election Day</b>	Tuesday, June 9, 2026

EVENT – General Election Only	DATE
<b>Earliest Day to Begin Circulating Petitions</b>	Friday, April 3, 2026
<b>Last Day to File Petitions</b>	4 p.m., Monday, August 31, 2026
<b>General Election Day</b>	Tuesday, November 3, 2026

## POLITICAL PARTY PRESIDENTIAL CAUCUSES

---

During Presidential Election years, an established political party has the discretion to hold a presidential caucus or utilize an alternative selection process acknowledged by the national party. The timeline and procedures are determined by the respective political parties and are not governed by the North Dakota Century Code. For further details, please contact the respective political party directly. Please note that 2026 is a non-presidential election year.



PO Box 1917  
Bismarck ND 58502  
Office: (701) 255-0030  
[www.ndgop.org](http://www.ndgop.org)  
[North Dakota Republican District Chairs](#)



1325 23rd Street, Suite B  
Fargo, ND 58103  
Office: (701) 255-0460  
[www.demnpl.com](http://www.demnpl.com)  
[North Dakota Democratic – NPL District Chairs](#)

# PRIMARY ELECTION 2026

---

The primary election is held on the second Tuesday in June. Offices on the ballot include congressional, statewide, legislative, judicial (see page 4 for federal/statewide/district offices), county offices (see page 5 for county), and city offices (see page 7 for city). [NDCC § 16.1-11-01](#)

## CANDIDATE REQUIREMENTS

Candidates for congressional, statewide, legislative and district offices have varied options to place their name on the ballot.

**Partisan candidates** can be placed on the ballot by using one of the below methods:

1. **Endorsement from their political party in the respective jurisdictions – [Certificate of Endorsement](#)**
  - **Statewide** - endorsed at statewide convention
  - **Legislative** - endorsed at legislative district meeting
2. **By way of petition - [Petition/Certificate of Nomination](#)**
  - **Statewide** – 3% of total votes cast in the same office and with the same political affiliation at the last General Election but no more than 300 signatures of qualified North Dakota voters.
  - **Legislative** - 1% of the total population of the legislative district but no more than 300 signatures of qualified North Dakota voters within the legislative district.

**Non-partisan candidates** can be placed on the Primary ballot by way of petition only and must collect at least 300 signatures - [Petition/Certificate of Nomination](#).

A [Certificate of Endorsement](#) and [Petition/Certificate of Nomination](#) must be accompanied by an [Affidavit of Candidacy](#), as well as the [Statement of Interests](#) and filed with the Office of the Secretary of State before the candidate filing deadline of 4 p.m. on the 64<sup>th</sup> day before the election. A candidate may not circulate or get signatures on a [Petition/Certificate of Nomination](#) prior to **January 1, 2026**. [NDCC §§ 16.1-11-06](#) and [16.1-11-15](#)

EVENT	DATE
<b>Earliest Day to Begin Circulating Petitions</b>	Thursday, January 1, 2026
<b>Earliest Day to File Petitions</b>	Friday, January 2, 2026
<b>Last Day to File Petitions</b>	4 p.m., Monday, April 6, 2026
<b>Primary Election</b>	Tuesday, June 9, 2026

## WITHDRAWAL OF CANDIDATE’S NAME FROM BALLOT

Candidates wishing to withdraw their names from the Primary Election ballot must do so in writing and file the letter with the appropriate filing officer, i.e. Secretary of State or County Auditor. The letter must be in the physical possession of the applicable filing officer no later than 48 hours after the filing deadline. [NDCC § 16.1-11-12\(3\)](#)

EVENT	DATE
<b>Last Day a Candidate May Withdraw</b>	4 p.m., Wednesday, April 8, 2026

## CERTIFICATE OF WRITE-IN CANDIDACY

A person who intends to be a write-in candidate for a congressional, statewide, legislative or judicial district office at the Primary Election must file a [Certificate of Write-In Candidacy](#) with the Office of the Secretary of State no later than 4 p.m. on the 21<sup>st</sup> day before the Primary Election. The sworn [Certificate of Write-In Candidacy](#) must contain the name, address, and signature of the candidate. Forms are available from the Office of the Secretary of State. Write-in candidates for multi-county district, county, city, or school district offices are not required to file these forms. [NDCC § 16.1-12-02.2](#)

EVENT	DATE
<b>Last Day to File for Write-In Candidacy</b>	4 p.m., Tuesday, May 19, 2026

## ABSENTEE BALLOTS AVAILABLE

Absentee ballots are made available to military voters and their families stationed away from their North Dakota residence and residents residing overseas (UOCAVA voters) on the 46<sup>th</sup> day before the Primary Election. Absentee ballots for all other North Dakota residents (domestic voters) are made available on the 40<sup>th</sup> day before the Primary Election. [NDCC §§ 16.1-07-04](#) and [16.1-07-23](#)

EVENT	DATE
<b>UOCAVA Ballots Made Available</b>	Friday, April 24, 2026
<b>Domestic Ballots Made Available</b>	Thursday, April 30, 2026

## PUBLICATION OF SAMPLE BALLOT

The County Auditor must publish in the official county newspaper a notice of election and a sample ballot showing the names of the nominees, once a week for two consecutive weeks before the Primary Election. [NDCC § 16.1-11-21](#)

## DISTRIBUTION AND PUBLICATION OF MEASURES ANALYSIS

The Office of the Secretary of State is required to prepare and distribute educational materials regarding ballot measures to each active voter by mail at least 46 days prior to an election involving any constitutional amendment, initiated measure, or referred measure. These materials must include an objective summary of the measure, its anticipated fiscal impact, and indicate whether the measure was approved by the legislature or originated as an initiative or referendum. Additionally, the analysis should provide an impartial examination of both the arguments in favor of and opposed to the measure. [NDCC § 16.1-01-18](#)

The County Auditor must publish in the official county newspaper, for two consecutive weeks before the sample ballot is published, an analysis of any constitutional amendment, initiated measure, or referred measure. [NDCC § 16.1-13-05](#)

EVENT	DATE
<b>Distribution of Educational Materials on Ballot Measures</b>	Friday, April 24, 2026
<b>Publication of Measures Analysis in Official County Newspapers</b>	Starting by May 10, 2026

## PUBLIC TEST

The County Auditor must conduct a public test of the election equipment at least one week prior to each election. This test is open to the public and the district chairs from each political party are invited to attend. The purpose of this test is to ensure the accuracy of the equipment used in the election. [NDCC § 16.1-06-15](#)

## POLLING HOURS

Polling locations cannot open earlier than 7 a.m. and must remain open until 7 p.m. and close no later than 9 p.m. [NDCC § 16.1-01-03](#)

## POST-ELECTION AUDIT

A post-election audit is a comprehensive review of the results in an election to ensure that the results reported are accurate. Audits are conducted following each statewide election in accordance with procedures prescribed by the Secretary of State. The post-election audit must commence on the 6<sup>th</sup> day following the day of the election and must be concluded no later than the 8<sup>th</sup> day following the day of the election. The county auditor shall report the post-election audit results to the Secretary of State no later than the end of business day on the 8<sup>th</sup> day following the election. [NDCC § 16.1-06-15](#)

EVENT	DATE
<b>County Auditors Conduct Post-Election Audits</b>	Monday, June 15 – Wednesday, June 17, 2026
<b>Post-Election Audit Reports Submitted to Secretary of State</b>	Wednesday, June 17, 2026

## COUNTY CANVASSING BOARD

The County Canvassing Board must meet to canvass the results of the Primary Election 13 days following the election.

### Members of the County Canvassing Board

- County Auditor
- County Recorder
- Chairman, Board of County Commissioners
- At least 1 representative from each of the two political parties receiving the most votes in the last gubernatorial election.
- In multi-legislative district counties, each political party may request additional representation on the canvassing board if there is equal representation from each political party.

The appointed representatives from the political parties may not have served as election board members for that same election. [NDCC §§ 16.1-15-15](#) and [16.1-15-17](#)

EVENT	DATE
<b>County Canvassing Board Meets</b>	Monday, June 22, 2026

## AUDITOR CERTIFIES RESULTS TO SECRETARY OF STATE

The County Auditor must certify the results of the election per the reporting instructions provided by the Secretary of State before 4 p.m. on the 13<sup>th</sup> day after the election. [NDCC § 16.1-15-22](#)

EVENT	DATE
<b>County Auditor Certifies Results to Secretary of State</b>	4 p.m., Monday, June 22, 2026

## STATE CANVASSING BOARD

The State Canvassing Board must meet no later than 17 days after the Primary Election. [NDCC §§ 16.1-15-33](#) and [16.1-15-35](#)

### Members of the County Canvassing Board

- Secretary of State
- Clerk of the Supreme Court
- State Treasurer
- Chairman, or designated representative, of the applicable state political parties.

EVENT	DATE
<b>State Canvassing Board Meets to Certify Election results</b>	Must meet by June 26, 2026

# GENERAL ELECTION 2026

---

The General Election is held on the first Tuesday following the first Monday in November. Offices on the ballot include congressional, statewide, legislative, judicial (see page 3 for federal/statewide/district offices) and county offices (see page 5 for county). [NDCC § 16.1-11-01](#)

## PLACEMENT OF CANDIDATE'S NAME ON BALLOT

Candidate names are placed on the General Election ballot through the following:

### 1. Primary Election – Congressional, Statewide, Legislative, Judicial and County

- The candidates nominated by a political party who received the highest number of votes for that office in the political party's Primary Election are automatically placed on the General Election ballot.
- The two candidates for a no-party statewide, judicial district, or county office receiving the most votes are automatically placed on the General Election ballot.

*No person may be deemed nominated as a candidate for any office at any Primary Election unless the person receives a number of votes equal to the number of signatures that were required to petition for the office at the Primary Election.*

### 2. Certificate of Independent Nomination – Congressional, Statewide and Legislative

- To appear on the ballot as an independent candidate for a congressional and statewide office (excluding no-party identified offices), a candidate must file with the Office of the Secretary of State a [Certificate of Independent Nomination](#). It must be in the physical possession of the Office of the Secretary of State no later than 4 p.m. on the 64<sup>th</sup> day before the election and it must contain the signatures of no fewer than 1,000 qualified electors of the state.
- To appear on the ballot as an independent candidate for a legislative office, a candidate must file with the Office of the Secretary of State a [Certificate of Independent Nomination](#) no later than 4 p.m. on the 64<sup>th</sup> day before the election and it must contain the signatures of a least 2% of the resident population of the legislative district, but no more than 300 signatures of qualified North Dakota voters within the legislative district.

*A [Certificate of Independent Nomination](#) may not be circulated or signed more than 150 days before the date the petition must be filed with the applicable filing officer. Forms are available from the Office of the Secretary of State.*

**Note:** Independent nomination for no-party statewide, judicial, or county office is not allowed for the General Election. To appear on the General Election ballot, candidates for no-party offices must be one of two winners in the Primary Election. [NDCC §§ 16.1-12-02, 16.1-12-02.3, and 16.1-12-04](#)

EVENT	DATE
<b>Earliest Day to Begin Circulating Petitions</b>	Friday, April 3, 2026
<b>Last day to File Petitions</b>	4 p.m., Monday, August 31, 2026
<b>General Election</b>	Tuesday, November 3, 2026

## WITHDRAWAL OF CANDIDATE'S NAME FROM BALLOT

Candidates wishing to withdraw their names from the General Election ballot must do so in writing and file the letter with the appropriate filing officer, i.e. Secretary of State or County Auditor. The letter must be in the physical possession of the applicable filing officer no later than 48 hours after the filing deadline. [NDCC § 16.1-12-07](#)

EVENT	DATE
<b>Last Day a Candidate May Withdraw</b>	4 p.m., Wednesday, September 2, 2026

## CERTIFICATE OF WRITE-IN CANDIDACY

A person who intends to be a write-in candidate for a congressional, statewide, legislative or judicial district office at the General Election must file a [Certificate of Write-In Candidacy](#) with the Office of the Secretary of State no later than 4 p.m. on the 21<sup>st</sup> day before the General Election. The sworn [Certificate of Write-In Candidacy](#) must contain the name, address, and signature of the candidate. Forms are available from the Office of the Secretary of State. Write-in candidates for multi-county district or county offices are not required to file these forms. [NDCC § 16.1-12-02.2](#)

EVENT	DATE
<b>Last Day to File for Write-In Candidacy</b>	4 p.m., Tuesday, October 13, 2026

## ABSENTEE BALLOTS AVAILABLE

Absentee ballots are made available to military voters and their families stationed away from their North Dakota residence and residents residing overseas (UOCAVA voters) on the 46<sup>th</sup> day before the General Election. Absentee ballots for all other North Dakota residents (domestic voters) are made available on the 40<sup>th</sup> day before the General Election. [NDCC §§ 16.1-07-04](#) and [16.1-07-23](#)

EVENT	DATE
<b>UOCAVA Ballots Made Available</b>	Friday, September 18, 2026
<b>Domestic Ballots Made Available</b>	Thursday, September 24, 2026

## PUBLICATION OF SAMPLE BALLOT

The County Auditor must publish in the official county newspaper a notice of election and a sample ballot showing the names of the nominees, once a week for two consecutive weeks before the General Election. [NDCC § 16.1-11-21](#)

## DISTRIBUTION AND PUBLICATION OF MEASURES ANALYSIS

The Office of the Secretary of State is required to prepare and distribute educational materials regarding ballot measures to each active voter by mail at least 46 days prior to an election involving any constitutional amendment or initiated measure. These materials must include an objective summary of the measure, its anticipated fiscal impact, and indicate whether the measure was approved by the legislature or originated as an initiative. Additionally, the analysis should provide an impartial examination of both the arguments in favor of and opposed to the measure.

[NDCC § 16.1-01-18](#)

The County Auditor must publish in the official county newspaper, for two consecutive weeks before the sample ballot is published, an analysis of any constitutional amendment or initiated measure.

EVENT	DATE
<b>Distribution of Educational Materials on Ballot Measures</b>	Friday, September 18, 2026
<b>Publication of Measures Analysis in Official County Newspapers</b>	Starting by October 4, 2026

## PUBLIC TEST

The County Auditor must conduct a public test of the election equipment at least one week prior to each election. This test is open to the public and the district chairs from each political party are invited to attend. The purpose of this test is to ensure the accuracy of the equipment used in the election. [NDCC § 16.1-06-15](#)

## POLLING HOURS

Polling locations cannot open earlier than 7 a.m. and must remain open until 7 p.m. and close no later than 9 p.m.

[NDCC § 16.1-01-03](#)

## POST-ELECTION AUDIT

A post-election audit is a comprehensive review of the results in an election to ensure that the results reported are accurate. Audits are conducted following each statewide election in accordance with procedures prescribed by the Secretary of State. The post-election audit must commence on the 6<sup>th</sup> day following the day of the election and must be concluded no later than the 8<sup>th</sup> day following the day of the election. The county auditor shall report the post-election audit results to the Secretary of State no later than the end of business day on the 8<sup>th</sup> day following the election.

EVENT	DATE
<b>County Auditors Conduct Post-Election Audits</b>	Monday, November 9 – Wednesday, November 11, 2026
<b>Post-Election Audit Reports Submitted to Secretary of State</b>	Wednesday, November 11, 2026

## COUNTY CANVASSING BOARD

The County Canvassing Board must meet to canvass the results of the General Election 13 days following the election.

### Members of the County Canvassing Board

- County Auditor
- County Recorder
- Chairman, Board of County Commissioners
- At least 1 representative from each of the two political parties receiving the most votes in the last gubernatorial election.
- In multi-legislative district counties, each political party may request additional representation on the canvassing board if there is equal representation from each political party.

The appointed representatives from the political parties may not have served as election board members for that same election. [NDCC § 16.1-15-15](#) and [16.1-15-17](#)

EVENT	DATE
County Canvassing Board Meets	Monday, November 16, 2026

## AUDITOR CERTIFIES RESULTS TO SECRETARY OF STATE

The County Auditor must certify the results of the election per the reporting instructions provided by the Secretary of State before 4 p.m. on the 13<sup>th</sup> day after the election. [NDCC § 16.1-15-22](#)

EVENT	DATE
County Auditor Certifies Results to Secretary of State	4 p.m., Monday, November 16, 2026

## STATE CANVASSING BOARD

The State Canvassing Board must meet no later than 17 days after the General Election. [NDCC §§ 16.1-15-33](#) and [16.1-15-35](#)

### Members of the County Canvassing Board

- Secretary of State
- Clerk of the Supreme Court
- State Treasurer
- Chairman, or designated representative, of the applicable state political parties.

EVENT	DATE
State Canvassing Board Meets to Certify Election Results	Must meet by November 20, 2026

# CANDIDATE/CAMPAIGN FINANCE FILING DEADLINES 2026

FILING TYPE	DATE
<b>PRIMARY ELECTION</b>	
<b>Earliest Day to Circulate Petitions</b>	Thursday, January 1, 2026
<b>Earliest Day to File Certificates or Petitions</b>	Friday, January 2, 2026
<b>Last Day to File Certificates or Petitions</b>	4 p.m., Monday, April 6, 2026
<b>Last Day a Candidate May Withdraw</b>	4 p.m., Wednesday, April 8, 2026
<b>Earliest Day to File Pre-Primary Campaign Finance Statement</b>	Friday, May 1, 2026
<b>Last Day to File Pre-Primary Campaign Finance Statement</b>	Friday, May 8, 2026
<b>6-Day Late Filing - \$25 Late Fee Applies</b>	Thursday, May 14, 2026
<b>11-Day Late Filing - \$50 Late Fee Applies</b>	Tuesday, May 19, 2026
<b>12+ Day Late Filing - \$100 Fee Applies</b>	Wednesday, May 20, 2026 and beyond
<b>Write-In Candidacy Deadline – Congressional, Statewide, Legislative and Judicial</b>	4 p.m., Tuesday, May 19, 2026
<b>GENERAL ELECTION</b>	
<b>Earliest Day to Circulate Petitions For Independent Nomination</b>	Friday, April 3, 2026
<b>Last Day to File Petitions for Independent Nomination</b>	4 p.m., Monday, August 31, 2026
<b>Last Day a Candidate May Withdraw</b>	4 p.m., Wednesday, September 2, 2026
<b>Earliest Day to File Pre-General Campaign Finance Statement</b>	Friday, September 25, 2026
<b>Last Day to File Pre-General Campaign Finance Statement</b>	Friday, October 2, 2026
<b>6-Day Late Filing - \$25 Late Fee Applies</b>	Thursday, October 8, 2026
<b>11-Day Late Filing - \$50 Late Fee Applies</b>	Tuesday, October 13, 2026
<b>12+ Day Late Filing - \$100 Fee Applies</b>	Wednesday, October 14, 2026 and beyond
<b>Write-In Candidacy Deadline – Congressional, Statewide, Legislative and Judicial</b>	4 p.m., Tuesday, October 13, 2026

## DATES CANDIDATES TAKE OFFICE UPON ELECTION

OFFICE	DATE
<b>Township</b>	After Annual Meeting of Township
<b>Municipal – City</b>	July 1, 2026
<b>School Board District</b>	1st Meeting in July
<b>Southwest Water District</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday in July
<b>Statewide Offices</b> (except Governor and Lt. Governor)	December 1, 2026
<b>Legislators</b>	December 1, 2026
<b>County Commissioners</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday in December
<b>Governor and Lt. Governor</b>	December 15, 2026
<b>Judges of The District Court</b>	January 1, 2027
<b>County Recorder, States Attorney, Sheriff, Clerk of Court</b> (*unless otherwise specified in home rule charter)	January 1, 2027
<b>Soil Conservation and Garrison Diversion Conservancy District</b>	January 1, 2027
<b>Congress</b>	January 3, 2027
<b>County Auditor</b> (*unless otherwise specified in home rule charter)	April 1, 2027
<b>County Treasurer</b> (*unless otherwise specified in home rule charter)	May 1, 2027

## CAMPAIGN FINANCE STATEMENTS

Complete campaign finance information is found in [NDCC § 16.1-08.1](#)

Statement	Period	Earliest Day to File	Last Day to File
<b>Pre-Primary</b>	January 1 through May 2	Friday, May 1, 2026	Friday, May 8, 2026
<b>Pre-General</b>	January 1 through September 26	Friday, September 25, 2026	Friday, October 2, 2026
<b>Year-End</b>	January 1 through December 31	Friday, January 1, 2027	Sunday, January 31, 2027
<b>48-Hour (If Applicable)</b>	Only filed if a contribution is received in excess of \$500 beginning 39 days prior to the election through the day before election day– Primary, General or Special		

### CITY AND SCHOOL BOARD CAMPAIGN FINANCE REPORTING

Campaign finance reporting is only required in for candidates and office holders in:

- Cities with a population of 5,000 or greater
- School districts with a fall enrollment of 1,000 or greater

**48-HOUR STATEMENTS - SPECIAL FILING DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS OVER \$500 RECEIVED WITHIN 39 DAYS PRIOR TO ELECTION**

If any candidate, political party, or political committee receives contributions in excess of \$500 in the aggregate in the 39 days before any election through the day before election day from any individual contributor, that candidate, political party, political committee, or person shall file a supplemental statement stating the name and street address of the contributor and the aggregated amount of the contribution and file the statement in the appropriate office within 48 hours of the receipt of the contribution. [NDCC §§ 16.1-08.1-02.3 \(2\)](#) and [16.1-08.1-02.4 \(2\)](#)

**LATE FILING FEES**

Candidates who fail to file a campaign finance report by the deadline must pay a late fee. [NDCC § 16.1-08.1-06.1](#)

- \$25 - If filed within 6 days after the due date
- \$50 - If filed between 7 - 11 days after the due date
- \$100 - If filed 12 or more days after the due date

**AMENDMENTS TO FILED STATEMENTS**

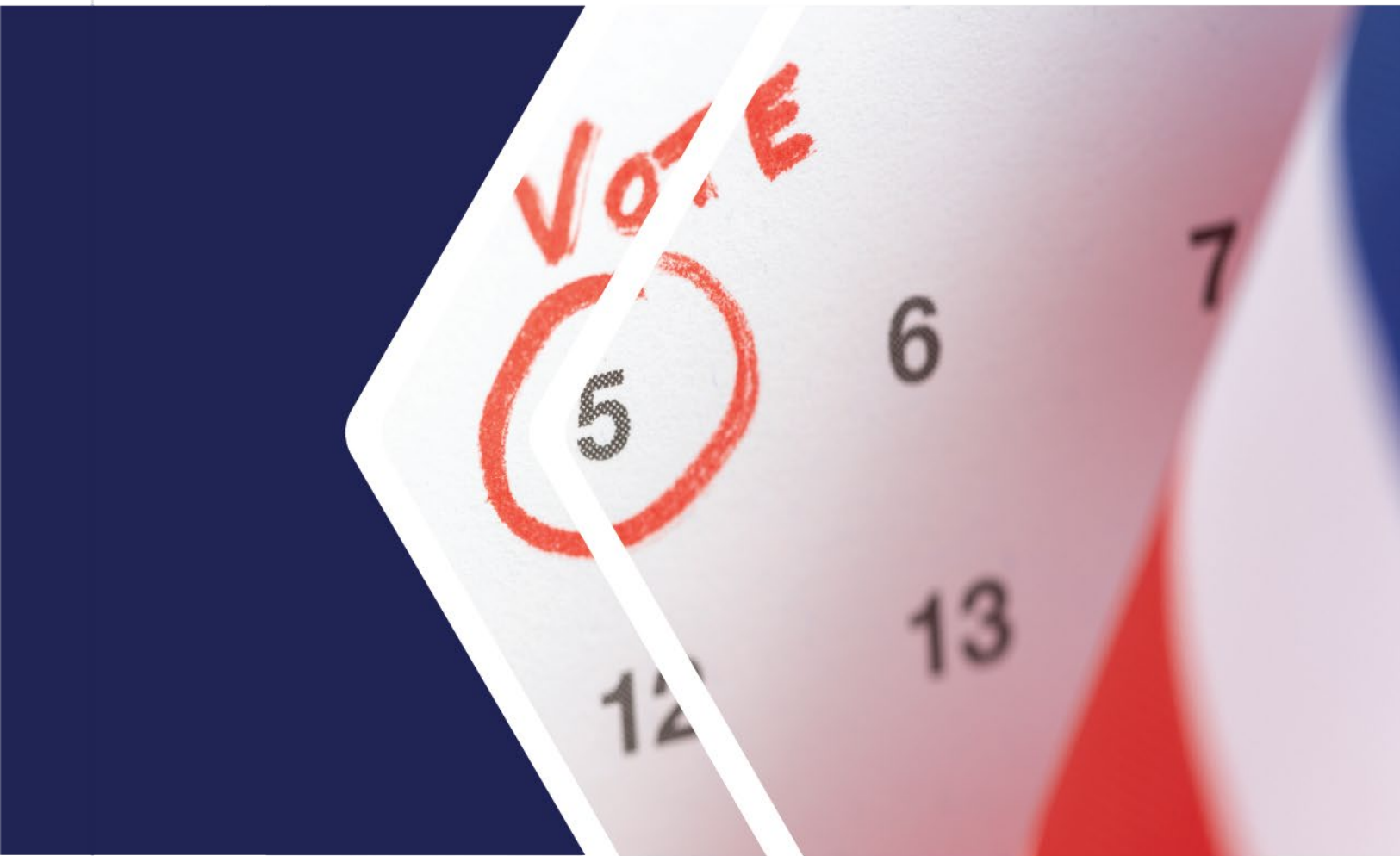
A filing officer may require an amendment to be filed for any statement, registration, or report that is incorrect or incomplete. The amendment must be filed with the filing officer within 10 business days after the amendment has been requested in writing. If an amendment is not filed within the prescribed time, the filing officer is authorized to charge and collect a late fee as follows. [NDCC § 16.1-08.1-06.1](#)

- \$50 - If filed within 6 days after the amendment was due
- \$100 - If filed between 7 - 11 days after the amendment was due
- \$200 - If filed 12 or more days after the amendment was due

**FILING OFFICERS FOR CAMPAIGN FINANCE**

RELATED OFFICES	FILING OFFICER
<b>Statewide</b>	Secretary of State
<b>Legislative</b>	Secretary of State
<b>Other offices under the <a href="#">North Dakota Constitution</a></b>	Secretary of State
<b>County</b>	County Auditor
<b>City</b>	City Auditor
<b>Park District</b>	City Auditor
<b>School District</b>	Business Manager of the School District
<b>Other offices under <a href="#">NDCC § 44-08-21</a></b>	Depends on the Office – County Auditor, City Auditor, or Business Manager of the School District

NORTH DAKOTA  
**SECRETARY OF STATE**



**MICHAEL HOWE | NORTH DAKOTA SECRETARY OF STATE**

600 E BOULEVARD AVENUE, DEPT 108, BISMARCK, ND 58505-0500

**ELECTIONS DIVISION**

701-328-4146

[soselect@nd.gov](mailto:soselect@nd.gov)

[VOTE.ND.GOV](http://VOTE.ND.GOV)