

Filing Officer's Guide



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Filing Officers

For every election, there is a filing officer responsible for receiving, reviewing, and filing or rejecting candidate nomination papers. For some elections, petitions requesting submission of public measures must also be reviewed.

Responsibilities of a Filing Officer

1. Distribute nomination papers and candidate guides to anyone who asks for them.
 - It is not necessary or advised to complete the petition header for candidates.
 - It is not necessary to record the names of people who request nomination papers.
2. Receive, review, and file or reject nomination papers during the candidate filing period.
3. In school and city elections, deliver candidate nomination papers and the full texts of public measures to the auditor by 5:00 p.m. on the day to do so.
4. Be open and available until 5:00 p.m. on the following deadlines:

- The candidate filing period deadline.
- The candidate withdrawal deadline.

Exception: For primary elections only, the auditor is not required to be open until 5 p.m. on the candidate withdrawal deadline.

[§43.24]

- The candidate nomination paper objection deadline.

Exception: For primary elections only, the auditor not required to be open until 5 p.m. on the candidate objection deadline.

[§43.24]

- The write-in nominees' filing deadline (if necessary).
- The write-in winner's resignation deadline (if necessary).

5. Allow inspection of nomination papers in the officer's custody.

Filing Officers for Elections

Election Type	Filing Officer	Code Cite
School	School Secretary	§277.4
Community College	Community College Board Secretary	§260C.15(3)
City	City Clerk	§376.4
Primary	<u>County Offices</u> : County Auditor <u>State and Federal Offices</u> : Secretary of State	§43.11
General	<u>County Offices</u> : County Auditor <u>State and Federal Offices</u> : Secretary of State	§44.4

For special elections, the filing officer is the same individual it is for regularly scheduled elections.

For example, the city clerk is the filing officer for a special election to fill a vacancy on a city council.

The term “special election” applies to any item appearing on the ballot at a regularly scheduled election that would not ordinarily appear on that ballot. Special elections may be held in conjunction with the regular school election, the regular city election, the general election, and on other dates as provided by law.

Primary Election Candidate Qualifications

Federal Office	U.S. Citizenship	Residence	Age	Term	Signatures Needed
U.S. Senator [U.S. Constitution, Art. 1, Sec. 3]	At least 9 years when sworn in.	Iowa resident at the time of the general election.	30 when sworn in.	6 years	Based on votes cast at last general election; refer to signature charts. [§43.20(1)(a)]
U.S. Representative [U.S. Constitution, Art. 1, Sec. 2]	At least 7 years when sworn in.	Iowa resident at the time of the general election.	25 when sworn in.	2 years	Based on votes cast at last general election; refer to signature charts. [§43.20(1)(c)]
State Executive Office	U.S. Citizenship	Residence	Age	Term	Signatures Needed
Governor & Lieutenant Governor [Iowa Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 6]	2 years at the general election.	Iowa resident for 2 years at the time of the general election.	30 at the time of the general election.	4 years	Based on votes cast at last general election; refer to signature charts. [§43.20(1)(a)]
Secretary of State, Auditor of State, Treasurer of State, Secretary of Agriculture, Attorney General	Citizen at the time of the election. [§39.26]	Iowa resident at the time of the election. [§39.26]	18 at the time of the election. [§39.26]	4 years	1,000, including 50 signatures from at least 10 counties. [§43.20(1)(b)]
Iowa General Assembly	U.S. Citizenship	Residence	Age	Term	Signatures Needed
State Senator [Iowa Constitution, Art. III, Sec. 5]	Citizen when sworn in. [§39.26]	1 year in Iowa, 60 days in the district at the time of the general election.	25 when sworn in.	4 years	100 from state senate district. [§43.20(1)(c)]
State Representative [Iowa Constitution, Art. III, Sec. 3-4]	Citizen when sworn in. [§39.26]	1 year in Iowa, 60 days in the district at the time of the general election.	21 when sworn in.	2 years	50 from state representative district. [§43.20(1)(c)]
County Offices	U.S. Citizenship	Residence	Age	Term	Signatures Needed
County Supervisor	Citizen at the time of the election. [§39.26]	Iowa resident at time of election. Registered voter of the county/supervisor district when sworn in. [§39.26, 331.201(2)]	18 at the time of the election. [§39.26]	4 years	Plan 1 and 2 Counties: At least 100 or 2% of the party vote in the county at last general election, whichever is less. Plan 3 Counties: At least 100 or 2% of the party vote in the supervisor district (including election day and absentee) at last general election, whichever is less. [§43.20(1)(d)]
County Attorney Must be admitted to the practice of law in the courts of Iowa when sworn in. [§331.751(2)]	Citizen at the time of the election. [§39.26]	Iowa resident at time of election. Registered voter in the county when sworn in. [§39.26, 331.751(2)]	18 at the time of the election. [§39.26]	4 years	At least 100 or 2% of the party vote in the county at last general, whichever is less. [§43.20(1)(d)]
County Auditor, County Treasurer, County Recorder	Citizen at the time of the election. [§39.26]	Iowa resident at time of election. Resident of the county when sworn in. [§39.26-27]	18 at the time of the election. [§39.26]	4 years	At least 100 or 2% of the party vote in the county at last general, whichever is less. [§43.20(1)(d)]
County Sheriff Must also meet the requirements in <i>Iowa Code</i> §331.651.	Citizen at the time of the election. [§39.26]	Iowa resident at time of election. Resident of the county when sworn in. [§39.26-27]	21 when sworn in. [§331.651(2)(b)]	4 years	At least 100 or 2% of the party vote in the county at last general, whichever is less. [§43.20(1)(d)]

General Election Candidate Qualifications

Federal Office	U.S. Citizenship	Residence	Age	Term	Signatures Needed
President/Vice President [U.S. Constitution, Art. 2, Sec. 1]	Natural born citizen.	U.S. resident for 14 years and at time of election.	35 when sworn in.	4 years	1,500; must run as a team; must collect signatures from at least 10 counties. [§45.1(1)]
U.S. Senator [U.S. Constitution, Art. 1, Sec. 3]	At least 9 years when sworn in.	Iowa resident at the time of the election.	30 when sworn in.	6 years	1,500; must collect signatures from at least 10 counties. [§45.1(1)]
U.S. Representative [U.S. Constitution, Art. 1, Sec. 2]	At least 7 years when sworn in.	Iowa resident at the time of the election.	25 when sworn in.	2 years	375 from the congressional district. [§45.1(2)]
State Executive Office	U.S. Citizenship	Residence	Age	Term	Signatures Needed
Governor & Lieutenant Governor [Iowa Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 6]	2 years at the time of the election.	Iowa resident for 2 years at the time of the election.	30 at the time of the election.	4 years	1,500; must run as a team; must collect signatures from at least 10 counties. [§45.1(1)]
Secretary of State, Auditor of State, Treasurer of State, Secretary of Agriculture, Attorney General	Citizen at the time of the election. [§39.26]	Iowa resident at the time of the general election. [§39.26]	18 at the time of the election. [§39.26]	4 years	1,500; must collect signatures from a least 10 counties [§45.1(1)]
Iowa General Assembly	U.S. Citizenship	Residence	Age	Term	Signatures Needed
State Senator [Iowa Constitution, Art. III, Sec. 5]	Citizen when sworn in. [§39.26]	1 year in Iowa. 60 days in the district at the time of the election.	25 when sworn in.	4 years	100 from state senate district. [§45.1(3)]
State Representative [Iowa Constitution, Art. III, Sec. 3-4]	Citizen when sworn in. [§39.26]	1 year in Iowa. 60 days in the district at the time of the election.	21 when sworn in.	2 years	50 from state representative district. [§45.1(4)]
County Offices	U.S. Citizenship	Residence	Age	Term	Signatures Needed
County Supervisor	Citizen at the time of the election. [§39.26]	Iowa resident at the time of the election. Registered voter of the county/supervisor district when sworn in. [§39.26, 331.201]	18 at the time of the election. [§39.26]	4 years	Plan 1 and 2 Counties: At least 250 or 1% of registered voters in the county as of July 1 of previous year, whichever is less. Plan 3 Counties: At least 150 or 1% of registered voters in the supervisor district as of July 1 of previous year, whichever is less. [§45.1(5-6)]
County Attorney Must be admitted to the practice of law in the courts of Iowa when sworn in. [§331.751(2)]	Citizen at the time of the election. [§39.26]	Iowa resident at the time of the election. Registered voter in the county when sworn in. [§39.26, 331.751(2)]	18 at the time of the election. [§39.26]	4 years	At least 250 or 1% of registered voters in the county as of July 1 of previous year, whichever is less. [§45.1(5)]
County Auditor, County Treasurer, County Recorder	Citizen at the time of the election. [§39.26]	Iowa resident at the time of the election. Resident of the county when sworn in. [§39.26-27]	18 at the time of the election. [§39.26]	4 years	At least 250 or 1% of registered voters in the county as of July 1 of previous year, whichever is less. [§45.1(5)]
County Sheriff Must also meet the requirements in Iowa Code §331.651.	Citizen at the time of the election. [§39.26]	Iowa resident at time of election. Resident of the county when sworn in. [§39.26-27]	21 when sworn in. [§331.651(2)]	4 years	At least 250 or 1% of registered voters in the county as of July 1 of previous year, whichever is less. [§45.1(5)]

Non-Partisan Office Candidate Qualifications

Non-Partisan Offices	U.S. Citizenship	Residence	Age	Term	Signatures Needed
Township Trustee	Citizen at the time of the election. [§39.26]	Iowa resident at the time of the election. Trustees must be registered voters of the township when sworn in. [§39.26, 359.17(1)]	18 at the time of the election. [§39.26]	4 years	No petition is required. [§39.22(2)(a)]
Township Clerk	Citizen at the time of the election. [§39.26]	Iowa resident at the time of the election. Resident of the township when sworn in. [§39.26-27]	18 at the time of the election. [§39.26]	4 years	No petition is required. [§39.22(2)(a)]
Soil & Water Conservation Board	Citizen at the time of the election. [§39.26]	Iowa resident at the time of the election. Cannot reside in the same township as any other board member. [§161A.5(2)]	18 at the time of the election. [§39.26]	4 years	25 from the conservation district. [§161A.5(3)(a)]
County Hospital Trustee	Citizen at the time of the election. [§39.26]	Iowa resident at the time of the election. Resident of the county when sworn in. [§39.26, 39.27, 347.9]	18 at the time of the election. [§39.26]	6 years	50 from the county. [§347.25]
County Agricultural Extension	Citizen at the time of the election. [§39.26]	Iowa resident at the time of the election. Registered voter of the district when sworn in. [§176A.5]	18 at the time of the election. [§39.26]	4 years	25 from the extension district. [§176A.8(3)]
City Offices	Citizen at the time of filing papers and at the time of the election. [§39.26, 376.4(1)(a)]	Resident of the city at time of filing papers. Resident of ward (if any) at time of filing papers and at time of election. [§376.4(1)]	18 at the time of filing papers and at time of election. [§39.26, 376.4(1)]	2 or 4 years	<p>Primary or Runoff Provision Cities: At least 10 or 2% of number of people who voted for the office at last regular city election. [§376.4]</p> <p>Chapter 45 Cities: For cities with a population of 3,500 or greater, at least 25 eligible electors of city or ward. [§45.1(8)(a)]</p> <p>For cities with a population between 100 and 3,499, at least 10 eligible electors of city or ward. [§45.1(8)(b)]</p> <p>For cities with a population of 99 or less, at least 5 eligible electors of city or ward. [§45.1(8)(c), 376.4]</p>
School Board Members	Citizen at the time of the election. [§277.27]	Resident of school district and director district (if any) at time of election. [§277.27]	18 at the time of election. [§277.27]	4 years	Between 10 and 50, depending on the number of registered voters in the district as of May 1. [§277.4, IAC 721—21.500]
Community College Board Members	Citizen at the time of the election. [§39.26]	Iowa resident at the time of the election. Resident of the director district when sworn in. [§39.26, 260C.11(1)]	18 at the time of election. [§39.26]	4 years	At least 50 signatures from director district. [§260C.15(2)]

Nomination Papers

Overview

Nomination papers consist of an affidavit of candidacy and either a nomination petition or convention certificate. All candidates must file an affidavit of candidacy. Whether a candidate will file a nomination petition or a convention certificate will depend on which nomination method the candidate uses.

Availability of Nomination Papers

Nomination papers are prescribed by the Secretary of State's (SoS) Office. Papers for all offices may be obtained on the SoS's website at this address:

<http://sos.iowa.gov/elections/candidates/index.html>

Filing officers must also provide copies of the papers to anyone who asks for them. Candidates may request the papers by mail, email, or in person at the filing officer's office.

Public Information

Filed nomination papers are public records. They may be examined by anyone who wishes to see them. It is not necessary to record the names of persons who examine nomination papers.

Best Practices:

Supervise persons who are examining original nomination papers. A fee may be charged for the supervision. Photocopies of nomination papers may be purchased as well. Officers may charge a fee for the copies as long as the fee is the same for photocopies of other documents the officer may provide.

[§22.3]

Do not permit anyone to remove nomination papers from the office.

Do not allow anyone to alter nomination papers.

[§43.16, 44.16, 44.15, 45.5(4)]

Filing Periods

Candidate filing periods are set by Iowa law.

For regularly scheduled elections, filing periods will always start on a Monday. Dates are determined by starting at election day, with election day being zero, and counting backwards. Include weekends and holidays when counting days.

School Election [§260C.15(3), 277.4]	Filing Period Begins:	64 days before the date of the school election.
	Filing Period Ends:	40 days before the date of the school election.

City Primary Election [§376.4(1)(a)]	Filing Period Begins:	85 days before the date of the regular city election.
	Filing Period Ends:	68 days before the date of the regular city election.
Regular City & City Runoff Elections [§376.4(1)(a)]	Filing Period Begins:	71 days before the date of the regular city election.
	Filing Period Ends:	47 days before the date of the regular city election.

Primary Election State & Federal Offices [§43.11(2)}	Filing Period Begins:	99 days before the date of the primary election.
	Filing Period Ends:	81 days before the date of the primary election.
Primary Election County Offices [§43.11(1)]	Filing Period Begins:	92 days before the date of the primary election.
	Filing Period Ends:	69 days before the date of the primary election.

General Election State & Federal Offices [§43.78(1), 44.4(1), 45.4]	Filing Period Begins:	99 days before the date of the general election.
	Filing Period Ends:	81 days before the date of the general election.
General Election County Offices [§43.78(1), 44.4(1), 45.4]	Filing Period Begins:	92 days before the date of the general election.
	Filing Period Ends:	69 days before the date of the general election.

*Refer to the election calendars for specific dates.

Preparing for the Filing Period

Know the Ballot Contents

One of the best steps a filing officer can take to ensure a smooth filing period is to know which offices will appear on the ballot at that election. Knowing the ballot contents allows the filing officer to convey the correct information to the public and potential candidates. It also allows the filing officer to spot mistakes that might otherwise go unnoticed on candidate nomination papers.

In school and city elections, the filing officer works closely with the auditor to determine which offices and public measures will appear on the ballot.

Receipts, Logs, and Accounting

Nomination papers are unique documents that cannot be replaced. For this reason, it is important to keep track of nomination papers.

Best Practices:

Work with only one set of nomination papers at a time and finish the process completely before starting any other task. Nomination papers should be kept in a secure location (e.g. a locked filing cabinet, the office safe) during the filing period.

Issue a receipt to all persons who file nomination papers. A sample receipt is available in the Election Forms Library on the SoS website.

The filing officer is also encouraged to use a log or accounting system to keep track of the nomination papers in its possession. A sample log system is available in the Election Forms Library on the SoS website.

Receiving Nomination Papers

Overview

In this step, the physical custody of nomination papers is transferred from the filer to the filing officer. Nomination papers are not “filed” at this point; they are only received.

Receiving In-Person Filings

1. Make sure all of the petition pages or convention documents are fastened together.

If petition pages are not bound, ask the candidate to bind them.

2. Make sure the correct forms are being filed.

Each candidate will file an affidavit of candidacy (no exceptions). Each candidate will file nomination petitions or convention certificates.

Exception: Petitions or convention certificates are not required for township offices.

3. Check the affidavit for blank fields. If there are blanks on the affidavit where information is required, ask the candidate to complete a new affidavit of candidacy.

Important Note: Once notarized, an affidavit of candidacy cannot be altered. A new affidavit must be completed by the candidate.

4. Ask any questions about the nomination papers while the filer is still in the office.
5. Complete the nomination paper log and a receipt. Make a copy of the receipt. Give the original receipt to the filer and attach the copy to the nomination papers. Time-stamp the affidavit and the first page of the petition or certificate to note the time the papers were received.

Important Note: Do not “File” stamp the nomination papers until there has been an opportunity to completely review and accept them.

Receiving Nomination Papers in the Mail

1. Make sure that all of the petition pages or convention documents are fastened together.

If petition pages are not bound, bind them.

2. Make sure the correct forms are being filed.

Each candidate will file an affidavit of candidacy (no exceptions). Each candidate will file nomination petitions or convention certificates.

Exception: Petitions or convention certificates are not required for township offices.

3. Complete the nomination paper log and a receipt. Attach the receipt to the nomination papers. Time-stamp the affidavit and the first page of the petition or certificate to note the time the papers were received.

Important Note: Do not “File” stamp the nomination papers until there has been an opportunity to completely review and accept them.

Faxed Affidavits

Candidates may fax a notarized affidavit of candidacy to the filing officer if necessary.

If a candidate chooses to do so:

- The faxed copy must arrive before the filing deadline.
- The candidate must also mail the original notarized affidavit of candidacy to the filing officer.

The affidavit must be postmarked before the filing deadline to be considered on time.

- The filing officer must receive the original affidavit no later than seven days after the filing deadline, regardless of the postmark.

If the original affidavit of candidacy arrives late or is postmarked after the deadline, the nomination papers are void.

Nomination petitions and certificates of nomination cannot be faxed and must be filed before the filing deadline even if the affidavit of candidacy was faxed.

Best Practice: If a candidate needs to fax an affidavit, the candidate should contact the filing officer prior to faxing the document to discuss filing the rest of the nomination papers.

[IAC 721—21.2(3)]

Reviewing Nomination Papers

In this step, the filing officer reviews the nomination papers to ensure they are legally sufficient and can be accepted for filing. Nomination papers must be filed together or they must be rejected. Nomination papers are filed or rejected as a whole. If the affidavit is rejected, accompanying nomination petitions or convention certificates are also rejected.

[§43.19]

A checklist for reviewing nomination papers is available in the Election Forms Library on the SoS website.

Accepted on Their Face

The *Iowa Code* states that nomination papers are to be “accepted on their face” when they appear to be legally sufficient.

[§44.15, 45.4, 277.4, 376.4]

This means that filing officers must inspect nomination papers to be sure they are legally sufficient, but while doing so, accept the information presented on the papers on its face. Do not mistake the “accepted on their face” language of the *Iowa Code* to mean that nomination papers are not to be examined.

Example 1:

In the city of Humboldt City, the office of mayor is on the ballot. A set of nomination papers are received from a man named Wayne Butler. Wayne Butler lists his address on his affidavit of candidacy as: 45 Main Street, Humboldt City. The city clerk knows everyone in Humboldt City but she has never heard of Wayne Butler. The city clerk also knows there is a Main Street in town but she thinks someone else lives at that address.

Q: Should the clerk get out the Humboldt City phone book to check Mr. Butler’s address?

A: No.

The clerk must accept Mr. Butler’s address on its face. Filing officers should assume the candidate is qualified, unless an objection is filed and the resulting hearing proves otherwise.

Noting Deficiencies

Filing officers must mark any deficiencies found on nomination papers. It is a best practice to use a highlighter to mark these deficiencies so the pages cannot be altered and resubmitted.

[§43.14(3), 45.5(4)]

Example:

When a candidate turns in a nomination petition with a header that does not contain the name of the office the candidate is seeking, no signatures on the page can be counted. The blank "Office Sought" field in the header should be highlighted before the rejected papers are turned to the candidate.

Affidavit of Candidacy

All candidates must complete and file an affidavit of candidacy. Nothing can be added to a notarized affidavit. If a notarized affidavit is missing a required element, the candidate must complete a new affidavit.

Required Elements

1. Candidate's Name

- Highlight this field if it was left blank.
- The affidavit must be rejected if it lacks the candidate's name.

The candidate's name should be printed or typed exactly as the candidate wishes the name to appear on the ballot. Affidavits which include parentheses, quotation marks, or titles in the candidate's name may be filed if they are legally sufficient in every other way. However, those extra characters cannot be printed on the ballot.

Name Pronunciation

This is highly suggested of all candidates. If candidates fail to provide a phonetic spelling of their name and the manner of pronunciation is not evident, the best practice is to ask the candidate to provide pronunciation information on a separate piece of paper which the filing officer may then attach to the affidavit.

- Do not reject the affidavit if the name pronunciation is missing.

2. Office Sought

- Highlight this field if it was left blank.
- The affidavit must be rejected if it lacks the name of the office the candidate is seeking.

3. District or Ward (if applicable)

- Highlight this field if it was left blank and it is required.
- The affidavit must be rejected when it is impossible to determine for which district or ward the candidate is filing.

4. To Fill a Vacancy

Candidates should provide a "yes" or "no" answer to the question: Is the candidate running to fill a vacancy due to the death, resignation, removal, or temporary appointment of an office holder?

- Highlight this field only if it was left blank and the office the candidate filed for will only appear on the ballot as “To Fill Vacancy.”
- The affidavit must be rejected when it is impossible to determine for which office a candidate is filing.

Candidates should contact the auditor or SoS if they are unsure whether they are running to fill a vacancy.

5. Type and Date of Election

This information is requested but not required. Do not reject an affidavit of candidacy lacking this information if it is obvious that the candidate is filing papers for a particular election.

[§43.14(4), 44.3(2), 45.5(5)]

6. Candidate’s Affiliation (Partisan Offices Only)

Candidates for the primary election, candidates nominated by political party conventions, and candidates nominated by NPPOs must provide their party or NPPO affiliation.

- Highlight this field if left blank on an affidavit for the primary election.
- The affidavit must be rejected if the affidavit was filed for the primary election or a special election to fill a vacancy in a partisan office and the candidate did not provide a political party affiliation.

If the affidavit is filed for a partisan office at a general or special election, the affidavit can be accepted but the candidate must appear on the ballot as “Nominated by Petition.”

7. Candidate’s Home Address

- Highlight this field if left blank.
- A missing home address is not listed as a reason to reject nomination papers filed under *Iowa Code* chapters 43 and 45.

8. Candidate’s Mailing Address

This is not a required field. Do not reject the affidavit if the candidate’s mailing address was not provided.

9. Phone and Email

These are not required fields. Do not reject the affidavit if these were not provided.

10. Candidate's Affirmation and Signature/Notarization

- Highlight this field if it was left blank or if the notarization is deficient in some way.
- The affidavit must be rejected if it lacks the candidate's signature or is not notarized.

There are two ways an affidavit can be notarized. One way is when the notarization is done by a notary public commissioned by the SoS. The other is when a notarization is done by a person who, because of his or her position, is allowed by law to witness signatures. In the case of affidavits of candidacy, those two professionals are the county auditor and the city clerk. School secretaries are not given this authority by the *Iowa Code*. School secretaries can notarize documents only if they are also notary publics.

Notarized by a Commissioned Notary Public

The notary must complete the verification on the bottom of the affidavit which includes the following:

1. The state the notary is commissioned by (an Iowa notary is not required),
2. The name of the county in which the notarization is taking place,
3. The date of the notarization,
4. The printed name of the candidate, and
5. The seal, signature, and commission expiration date of the notary.

Notarized by a City Clerk or County Auditor who is not a Commissioned Notary Public

If the auditor or clerk is not a notary public appointed and commissioned by the SoS, the auditor or clerk may only witness the signature if the auditor or clerk has a notarial seal or stamp. The seal or stamp must include all of the following:

1. The words "Notarial Seal" and "Iowa,"
2. The auditor's or clerk's name, and
3. The title "____ County Auditor" or "____ City Clerk," as appropriate.
[§43.14(4), 43.18, 44.3, 45.3, 45.5]

Nomination Petitions

There are four types of nomination petition forms prescribed by the SoS. One petition form is for the June primary election only. The second is to be used for partisan offices and the third is to be used for non-partisan offices. The fourth is to be used for community college directors. The nomination petitions are available in the Election Forms Library and in the “Candidates” section on the SoS’s website.

Important Note: Candidates for statewide and federal offices must meet signature requirements in multiple counties (see signature charts). For this reason, petition pages must be county-specific. The signers of the petitions must be from the same county. There is a blank in the header of the petition form to indicate the county in which the petition is being circulated.

Required Elements of Petition Headers

The petition header is the portion of the page which appears above the signature lines. It contains specific information about the candidate and the office for which the candidate is seeking nomination.

1. Candidate’s Name

- Highlight this field if it was left blank.
- The entire petition page must be rejected if the candidate’s name does not appear in the header.

2. Office Sought

- Highlight this field if it was left blank.
- The entire petition page must be rejected if the office sought is missing.

3. Candidate’s County of Residence

- Highlight this field if it was left blank.
- The entire petition page must be rejected if the candidate’s county of residence is missing.

Exception: Iowa General Assembly candidates for the primary election must provide a statement that they are or will be a resident of the legislative district within 60 days before the election.

4. District or Ward

- Highlight this field if it was left blank and is necessary.

- The entire petition page must be rejected when it is impossible to determine for which district or ward the candidate is filing.

5. Type and Date of Election

- Highlight this field if it was left blank.
- The entire petition page must be rejected if the type and date of the election is missing.

6. To Fill a Vacancy

Candidates should provide a “yes” or “no” answer to the question: Is the candidate running to fill a vacancy due to the death, resignation, removal, or temporary appointment of an office holder?

- Highlight this field only if it was left blank and the office the candidate filed for will only appear on the ballot as “To Fill Vacancy.”
- The affidavit must be rejected when it is impossible to determine for which office a candidate is filing.

Candidates should contact the auditor or SoS if they are unsure whether they are running to fill a vacancy.

7. Petitioners’ Residence

A statement identifying the signers of the petition as residents of a single county, supervisor, city, school district, school or community college director district, or legislative district in the state of Iowa.

- Highlight this field if it was left blank.
- The entire petition page must be rejected if this statement is missing.

8. Candidate’s Affiliation (Partisan Offices Only)

- Highlight this field if left blank on a petition for a primary election candidate.
- The entire petition page must be rejected if the petition was filed for a primary election or a special election to fill a vacancy in a partisan office and a political party affiliation is not listed on a petition header.

No Header

Signatures appearing on petition pages that contain no header (e.g. the blank, reverse side of a fully completed petition page) cannot be counted.

[§43.14(1), 43.14(2), 45.5(1), 45.5(2)]

Required Elements of Signature Lines

The signature lines are the portion of the page where the eligible electors of the appropriate county or district (as applicable) may sign nomination petitions.

Be sure the minimum number of signatures has been filed. If not, reject the papers and return them to filer. See the Candidate Qualifications charts for signature requirements.

Important Note: There is no limit on the number of nomination petitions for different candidates that one elector may sign. Candidates may sign their own petitions assuming they are eligible electors.

1. Signature of Eligible Elector

- Highlight this field if it was left blank.
- The signature line must be rejected if the eligible elector did not sign.

Signatures do not have to be legible and may include printed names.

2. Address of Eligible Elector

- Highlight this field if it was left blank or if the address is obviously outside the applicable district.
- The signature line must be rejected if the address field was left blank or if the address is obviously outside the applicable district.

Addresses must include a street name and a house number along with the city. PO boxes are not acceptable. A signer who is homeless should describe where he or she lives or write "homeless" in the space provided.

3. Date Eligible Elector Signed

- Highlight this field if it was left blank.
- Do not reject the signature if the date the eligible elector signed is not included.
[§43.14(2), 43.15(2), 45.5(2), 45.6(2)]

Ditto Marks

Petition signers often use "ditto" marks when appropriate (e.g. when the name of a city or the date of signing the petition is the same as the previous signer). The use of ditto marks alone does not invalidate a signature.

NPPO Convention Certificates

Non-party political organizations (NPPOs) may nominate one candidate for each partisan office as well as make nominations for offices in Chapter 44 cities. NPPOs may make nominations by convention. The chairperson and secretary of the convention must certify the certification of nomination from the convention.

Required Elements

1. Name of NPPO

- Highlight this field if left blank.
- The convention certificate must be rejected if the name of the NPPO is missing.

The name of the NPPO cannot be more than five words and no part or version of the word Democratic or Republican may be used as part of the NPPO's name.

2. Date of Convention

This is optional and not required. Do not reject a convention certificate if it is missing.

3. Name of Each Candidate Nominated

- Highlight this field if left blank.
- The convention certificate must be rejected if the candidate's name(s) is/are missing.

4. Office(s) Sought and District Number (if any)

- Highlight this field if it was left blank.
- The convention certificate must be rejected when it is impossible to determine which district or ward the candidate is filing for.

5. Residence of Each Candidate

- Highlight this field if it was left blank.
- The convention certificate must be rejected if the candidate's address does not appear on the certificate.

6. Date and Type of Election

- Highlight this field if it was left blank.

- When the type and date of the election is not provided on the convention certificate but it is possible for the filing officer to determine for which office the candidate is filing (i.e. there is only one possibility) the certificate should be accepted.

7. To Fill Vacancy

Candidates should provide a “yes” or “no” answer to the question: Is the candidate running to fill a vacancy due to the death, resignation, removal, or temporary appointment of an office holder?

- Highlight this field only if it was left blank and the office the candidate filed for will only appear on the ballot as “To Fill Vacancy.”
- The affidavit must be rejected when it is impossible to determine for which office a candidate is filing.

Candidates should contact the auditor or SoS if they are unsure whether they are running to fill a vacancy.

8. Names and Addresses of Members of Organization’s Executive or Central Committee

- Highlight this field if it was left blank.
- The convention certificate must be rejected if these are missing.

9. Filling Ballot Vacancies

NPPOs may specify the organization’s provisions (if any) for filling vacancies in nominations.

This is optional and not required. Do not reject a convention certificate if it is missing.

10. Name and Address of Each Delegate in Attendance at Convention

- The convention certificate must be rejected if a convention delegate list is not included.

11. Affidavit and Addresses of Chairperson and Secretary

- Highlight these fields if they were left blank.
- The convention certificate must be rejected if the convention chairperson and secretary did not certify that the certificate is true or did not provide their places of residence.

[§44.3]

NPPO Convention Attendance Requirements by Office

Minimum requirements for attendance at nominating conventions are established by law. If the minimum attendance requirements are not met, the nominations made at the convention cannot be included on the ballot. Eligible electors may attend more than one nomination convention.

Office	Minimum Attendance	Number of counties or precincts that must be represented by at least one eligible elector
Statewide Offices	250 eligible electors	25 counties in Iowa
U.S. Representative	50 eligible electors	½ of counties in district
State Senator	20 eligible electors	½ of precincts in district
State Representative	10 eligible electors	½ of precincts in district
County Offices	10 eligible electors	½ of precincts in county
Chap. 44 City Offices	10 eligible electors	½ precincts in city

[§44.1]

Political Party Convention Certificates

Political parties may hold nomination conventions to nominate candidates to fill vacancies for special elections held under §69.14 and 69.14A. Also, prior to the general election candidate filing deadline, political parties may hold nomination conventions to fill ballot vacancies caused by:

- No candidate being nominated at the primary election, or
- An inconclusive primary election (no one received 35% of total votes cast), or
- A primary election winner's withdrawal, death, or failure to qualify (i.e. failure to file an affidavit when nominated by write-in votes).

[§43.77, 43.78]

Important Note: The *Iowa Code* does not provide a “start date” for filing nomination papers from political party conventions held after the primary election to fill general election ballot vacancies. The nomination papers must be filed by the filing deadline but may be filed before the general election candidate filing period begins. Like any other nomination convention candidate, a candidate nominated in this manner must file an affidavit of candidacy and a convention nomination certificate.

Required Elements

1. Candidate's Name

- Highlight this field if it was left blank.
- This information is required to appear on the nomination certificate.

2. Candidate's Home Address

- Highlight this field if it was left blank.
- This information is required to appear on the nomination certificate.

A mailing address for the candidate must also be included if it is different from the candidate's home address.

3. Office Sought

- Highlight this field if it was left blank.
- This information is required to appear on the nomination certificate.

4. District or Ward (if applicable)

- Highlight this field if it was left blank.
- This information is required to appear on the nomination certificate.

5. Name of Political Party

- Highlight this field if it was left blank.
- This information is required to appear on the nomination certificate.

6. Date of Convention

- Highlight this field if it was left blank. Lack of convention date is not a reason for rejecting the nomination certificate.

7. Type and Date of Election

- Highlight this field if it was left blank.
- When the type and date of the election is not provided on the convention certificate but it is possible for the filing officer to determine for which office the candidate is filing (i.e. there is only one possibility) the certificate should be accepted.

8. To Fill Vacancy

Candidates should provide a “yes” or “no” answer to the question: Is the candidate running to fill a vacancy due to the death, resignation, removal, or temporary appointment of an office holder?

- Highlight this field only if it was left blank and the office the candidate filed for will only appear on the ballot as “To Fill Vacancy.”
- The affidavit must be rejected when it is impossible to determine for which office a candidate is filing.

Candidates should contact the auditor or SoS if they are unsure whether they are running to fill a vacancy.

9. Signatures of Convention Chairperson and Secretary

- Highlight these fields if they were left blank.
- This information is required to appear on the nomination certificate.

[§43.88]

Certificate of Presidential Electors

Candidates for president and vice president must file as a team. Along with nomination papers, candidates must file a certificate of presidential electors. The electors must include one person from each of Iowa's four congressional districts and two from the state at-large.

The certificate must include:

- The candidates' names for president and vice president
- Name of political party or NPPO
- Names and addresses of six presidential electors

[§44.3(1)(e), 45.1(7)(a), 54.1, 54.5]

Accepting or Rejecting Nomination Papers

Accepting Papers

If the papers meet all of the legal requirements and are accepted for filing:

1. Stamp the papers "FILED."

Stamp the affidavit of candidacy and the first page of the nomination petitions or convention certificate.

[§43.12]

2. Photocopy the affidavit and store the original nomination papers in a secure place in the office.

Best Practice: Keep copies of all the affidavits in an easily accessible location in the office for quick reference.

The filing officer is strongly encouraged to use a log or accounting system to keep track of the nomination papers in his or her possession. A sample log system is available in the Election Forms Library on the SoS's website.

3. Inform the candidate the nomination papers were successfully filed.

Provide the candidate with a letter stating that the papers submitted appear to meet the basic requirements for filing and that the candidate's name will appear on the ballot at the election.

Give the candidate a file-stamped copy of the affidavit with the letter.

Best Practice: Make a copy of the letter sent to the candidate and keep it with the copies of the affidavits and receipts.

Rejecting Papers

If the papers are rejected, return them to the candidate with a letter stating the papers do not meet the requirements for filing. In the letter, list the defects found in the nomination papers. If appropriate, explain that the papers may be corrected and re-filed before the filing deadline.

[§43.14(3), 45.5(4)]

Best Practice: When nomination papers that were sent through the mail have been rejected, contact the candidate by telephone or email to see if the candidate would rather pick the nomination papers up instead of having them returned by mail.

Special Circumstances Affecting Nominations

Objections to Nomination Papers

Any person qualified to vote for an office may file a written objection to a candidate's nomination paperwork. The objection may call into question the legal sufficiency of the nomination papers or the eligibility of the candidate.

Election Type	Objection Deadline	Objection Filed With	Code Cite
School Election School Board Members	35 days before the school election	School Secretary	§277.5
School Election Community College Directors	35 days before the school election	Community College Board Secretary	§260C.15(4)(b)
City Primary Election	63 days before the regular city election	City Clerk	§44.4(2)(a)(3), 376.4(6)
Regular City Election including Cities with Runoffs	42 days before the regular city election	City Clerk	§44.4(2)(a)(3), 376.4(6)
Primary Election State & Federal Offices	74 days before the primary election	Secretary of State	§43.24(1)(b)(1)
Primary Election County Offices	64 days before the primary election	County Auditor	§43.24(1)(b)(2)
General Election State & Federal Offices	74 days before the general election	Secretary of State	§44.4(2)(a)(1)
General Election County Offices	64 days before the general election	County Auditor	§44.4(2)(a)(2)
Special Elections All Offices	See Special Election chapter or call the auditor or SoS	See Special Election chapter or call the auditor or SoS	

Important Note: The objection hearing is open to the public. Notice of the time and place of the meeting and an agenda must be published at least 24 hours before the time set for the meeting.
[§21.4]

Objections to County Political Party Candidates

1. Objection Filed

- All objections must be in writing.
- Objections must state a specific reason why the objection is being filed (e.g. candidate is not old enough to hold the office or there are not enough signatures on the petition).
- Objections to signatures must also be specific (e.g. signature #8 on page 10 contains an address outside of the applicable district).
- All objections must be filed in the same office in which nomination papers for that particular office were required to be filed.
- All objections must be filed on or before the deadline.

[§43.24, 47.4]

2. Notice to the Candidate

When an objection is filed with the auditor's office, the auditor must notify the candidate by certified mail within 72 hours. The notice must:

- Be sent to the address on the candidate's affidavit of candidacy,
- State that objections have been made,
- State the nature of the objections, and
- State the time and place of the objection hearing.

[§43.24(2)(a)]

3. The Hearing

The chairperson of the board of supervisors appoints three elected officials to consider the objection. No one whose eligibility is in question may serve on the objection panel. A majority vote of those appointed to consider the objection shall decide the issue.

[§43.24(3)(b)]

Objections to NPPO or Unaffiliated Candidates

1. Objection Filed

- All objections must be in writing.
- Objections must state a specific reason why the objection is being filed (e.g. candidate is not old enough to hold the office or there are not enough signatures on the petition).
- Objections to signatures must also be specific (e.g. signature #8 on page 10 contains an address outside of the applicable district).
- All objections must be filed in the same office in which nomination papers for that particular office were required to be filed.
- All objections must be filed on or before the deadline.

[§44.4, 45.4, 47.4]

2. Notice to the Candidate

The auditor must notify the candidate right away. The notice must:

- Be sent to the address on the candidate's affidavit of candidacy or certificate of nomination,
- State that objections have been made, and
- State the time and place of the objection hearing.

[§44.4, 44.5, 45.4]

3. The Hearing

County Offices

The hearing must be held no later than one week after the objection is filed. The county auditor, treasurer and attorney consider the objections, unless the objection is to the nomination certificate of one or more of those officers. The chairperson of the board of supervisors, the sheriff and the county recorder, respectively, must substitute for ineligible officers. A majority decision is final.

[§44.5, 44.7]

City Offices

If a city primary election must be held, the hearing must be held within 24 hours after the objection is filed. The first two members of the objection panel are the mayor and city clerk. The third member must be chosen by the city council members by ballot. No one whose eligibility is in question may serve on the objection panel.

[§44.8]

School Offices

The hearing must be held within two days after the objection was filed. The first two members of the objection panel are the school board president and school secretary. The third member must be chosen by the school board directors by ballot. No one whose eligibility is in question may serve on the objection panel.

[§277.5]

Candidate Withdrawals

Candidates for most offices may have their names removed from the ballot if they withdraw in writing by the deadline.

Election Type	Withdrawal Deadline	Withdrawal Filed With	Code Cite
School Election School Board Members	35 days before the school election	School Secretary	§44.9(3), 277.4(4)
School Election Community College Directors	Not specifically referenced in the <i>Iowa Code</i>		
City Primary Election	63 days before the regular city election	City Clerk	§44.9(6), 376.4(6)
Regular City Election including Cities with Runoffs	42 days before the regular city election	City Clerk	§44.9(6)
Primary Election State & Federal Offices	76 days before the primary election	Secretary of State	§43.16
Primary Election County Offices	67 days before the primary election	County Auditor	§43.16
General Election State & Federal Offices	<u>Candidates Nominated at Primary:</u> 89 days before the general election <u>NPPO and Nominated by Petition Candidates:</u> 74 days before the general election	Secretary of State	§43.76, 44.9(1)
General Election County Offices	<u>Candidates Nominated at Primary:</u> 74 days before the general election <u>NPPO and Nominated by Petition Candidates:</u> 64 days before the general election	County Auditor	§43.76, 44.9(2)
Special Elections All Offices	See Special Elections chapter or call the auditor or SoS	See Special Elections chapter or call the auditor or SoS	

Running for More than One Office Prohibited

If a candidate files nomination papers for more than one office on the ballot, the candidate must file an affidavit on or before the last day to file candidate nomination papers declaring for which office the candidate wants to run. If the affidavit is not filed, the candidate's name cannot appear on the ballot for any of the offices for which the person filed nomination papers.

Exception: This prohibition against seeking more than one office does not apply to:

- County agricultural extension council members, or
- Soil and water conservation district commissioners.

[§39.11, 49.41]

Holding More than One Office

Statewide elected officials, state senators, and state representatives cannot hold more than one elective office at a time.

All other elected officials cannot hold more than one elective office at the same level of government at a time. For example, a person could serve on the school board and county board of supervisors, but a person could not serve on the county board of supervisors and serve as county auditor.

Exception: This prohibition against holding more than one office does not apply to:

- County agricultural extension council members, or
- Soil and water conservation district commissioners.

[§39.11]

Dual Affiliation Nominations Prohibited

A person cannot run for an office as a candidate of more than one political party or organization.

If two or more political parties or organizations nominate the same person for the same office, the nominee must designate with which party or organization the nominee wants to be listed on the ballot. This designation must be filed with the auditor for county offices.

If the nominee does not file this designation, the name will appear on the ballot with the name of the political party or organization that filed the earliest set of nomination papers.

[§49.38, 49.39, 49.40]

NPPO Candidate Substitutions

Only NPPOs may make ballot substitutions. To make a substitution, a NPPO must file the following information with the appropriate filing officer by the candidate filing deadline:

- The names and addresses of the organization's central committee members, chairperson, and secretary (required on convention certificates), and
- A description of the method the NPPO will follow to fill any vacancies resulting from the death, withdrawal, or disqualification of any of its candidates (providing this information on convention certificates is recommended).

[§44.3(g), 44.11]

School District and City Employees

There is nothing in the election statutes of the *Iowa Code* that would prohibit school district and city employees from running as candidates and appearing on the ballot. However, there may be other provisions in the *Iowa Code* that would prevent them from serving the school district or city in both capacities. To determine whether those other *Code* sections would prevent the person from taking office if elected, seek private legal counsel.

Candidate Relationships

You may receive questions whether a husband and wife or parent and child may serve as elected officials for the same city or school. There is no *Iowa Code* provision prohibiting these situations.

Public Measures

Governing bodies or citizens interested in including a public measure on a ballot must consult with the auditor, the SoS, or their own legal counsel to determine what the deadline is for submitting a public measure to the auditor.

Important Note: Public measures cannot appear on the city primary election, city runoff, or the primary election ballot.

[§39.2(1), 47.6(1)(a)(1)(b)]

Standards for Reviewing Special Election Petitions

Every time a petition requesting a special election is received, follow these steps:

1. Make sure the petition is legally allowed to be filed in the office.

Check the *Iowa Code* section on the petition form (if the petitioners have listed one). Direct the petitioners to the correct filing officer (board of supervisors, county auditor, city clerk, school secretary, etc.) if the petition was filed in the appropriate office.

- Most county petitions must be filed with the board of supervisors; however, some may need to be filed with the auditor depending on the authorizing *Iowa Code* section.
- Most city petitions must be filed with the city clerk.
- Most school district petitions must be filed with the school secretary.

2. In all cases, petitions are accepted if they appear to be valid “on their face.” (i.e. no additional investigation or scrutiny on the part of the filing officer is authorized beyond checking for the legally required petition elements).

[§277.7, 331.306, 362.4]

3. Unless the *Iowa Code* section authorizing the petition contains different requirements, in order to count a signature on a special election petition, the signer must have included:

- Signature
- Statement of place of residence
- Date of signing

[§278.2, 331.306, 362.4]

4. Requirements for the number of signatures vary. Check the *Iowa Code* section authorizing the election.

5. If the petition lacks the required number of signatures or is invalid in any other way, reject the petition and return it to the filer(s).

[§277.7, 331.306, 362.4]

6. Written objections to petitions can generally be filed within 5 working days after the petition is filed.

The filing officer for objections and the laws regarding filed objections vary depending on the jurisdiction.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who may file nomination papers?

Anyone may file completed nomination papers on behalf of another person. Candidates do not need to appear in person to file their own papers.

2. May citizens sign more than one set of nomination papers or attend more than one nomination convention?

Yes, assuming they are eligible electors.

3. May candidates sign their own nomination papers or attend their own nomination convention?

Yes, assuming they are eligible electors.

4. How many “Nominated by Petition” candidates are allowed for each race?

There is no limit on the number of candidates who may be “Nominated by Petition” for any race.

5. May non-partisan candidates run for partisan offices?

Yes. Candidates who wish to seek partisan office on a non-partisan basis may circulate nomination petitions stating that the candidate will be “Nominated by Petition.” The words “Nominated by Petition” will accompany the candidate’s name on the ballot. These candidates should file papers during the general election filing period.

6. The objection deadline has passed and I think a candidate who filed nomination papers in my office is unqualified to hold the office. What do I do?

Nothing. Nomination papers must be accepted on their face. If no objection was filed, no further investigation on the part of the filing officer is allowed by law.

7. After nomination papers have been accepted for filing, may they be returned to the candidate?

No. Nomination papers that have been accepted for filing may not be returned to the candidate or anyone else for any reason (even if the candidate withdrew). Nomination papers are “election materials” after they are filed and are subject to document retention pursuant to §50.19.

Only nomination papers that have been rejected may be returned to the filer.

8. May school secretaries and city clerks deliver nomination petitions to the auditor before the day after the candidate filing deadline?

No, papers cannot be delivered early. See *Iowa Code* sections §277.4 and §376.4. Nomination papers must be made available for public inspection by the filing officers during the filing period. Papers cannot be available as provided by law if they are delivered to the auditor early.

9. If someone is planning to run a write-in campaign, what do they need to do?

Nothing. In Iowa, write-in candidates do not need to file nomination papers or declarations of intent to be a write-in candidate.

Glossary

Below are some commonly used election terms that may be helpful to filing officers.

At-Large

At-large refers to offices that are elected by an entire county or district even though the office may only represent one part of the county or district.

Audio Ballot

An audio ballot means the ability of a voting system to read the contents of a ballot to a voter through the use of headphones.

Auditor, County

A county auditor is the county commissioner of elections and county registrar of voters under Iowa law.

Canvass

The canvass is the process of compiling election results. All elections have at least two canvasses. The first canvass is conducted at the precinct after the polls close on election night. It must be completed before the precinct election officials leave. Ballots cast at the polls are counted only at the polling place. Only precinct election officials count votes. Votes are not counted by the county auditor or the auditor's staff.

The second canvass is conducted by the county board of supervisors. The board compiles election results from all precincts and makes the official report of the outcome of the election within the county.

A third canvass takes place after the general and primary elections at the state level and after school elections for community colleges.

Chief State Election Official

The secretary of state is designated as the chief state election official and the state commissioner of elections.

Disqualified Elector

A disqualified elector is a person who is not qualified to register to vote or to vote. A disqualified elector is either of the following:

- A person who has been convicted of a felony and not had rights restored,
- A person who has been judged by a court incompetent to vote.

Eligible Elector

An eligible elector is a person who meets all of the qualifications to register to vote and to vote. An eligible elector does not have to be a registered voter except in some rare circumstances).

Initiative, Statewide Ballot (referendum)

A statewide ballot initiative is the process of legislating by direct vote of the people. It is voter-initiated. Citizens petition to include legislative or constitutional changes on the ballot. Statewide ballot initiatives are not currently permitted under Iowa law.

Merged Area

Community Colleges are referred to as “merged areas” in the *Iowa Code*.

Nominated by Petition

The phrase “Nominated by Petition” follows a non-partisan candidate’s name for a partisan office on the general election ballot.

Non-Partisan Candidate

A non-partisan candidate is a candidate who is not affiliated with a political party or organization.

Non-Partisan Election

A non-partisan election is an election held without reference to the political party affiliation of any candidate. City elections and school elections are always non-partisan in Iowa.

Non-Partisan Office

A non-partisan office is any office for which a partisan nomination is not permitted. The name of a candidate for this type of office is listed without reference to a political party or organization.

Non-Party Political Organization (NPPO)

A non-party political organization is a political organization that is not a political party as defined by Iowa law.

Partisan Election

A partisan election is an election at which the political affiliation of candidates is listed next to the candidates’ names on the ballot.

Partisan Office

A partisan office is any office for which a partisan nomination is permitted. The name of a candidate for this type of office is listed with reference to a political party or organization.

Political Party

Iowa law states that to be a political party in Iowa, an organization must have had a candidate for president or governor who received at least two percent of the total votes cast at the last general election. Then, the organization must apply for political party status in Iowa. Currently, Iowa has two political parties: the Democratic Party and the Republican Party.

Precinct

The precinct is the smallest unit of election geography. All voters in a precinct who vote on election day go to the same polling place to cast their ballots. Precincts are drawn every 10 years after the federal census. No more than 3,500 people can live in a precinct when the lines are drawn.

Public Measure

A public measure is any question authorized or required by law to be submitted to the voters at an election.

Township

A township is a political subdivision of a county. The boundaries are set by the county board of supervisors and may include incorporated territory.

Vacancy

A vacancy is the term used to describe an elective office in need of an officer. Generally, a vacancy is caused when an elected official resigns, dies, or is removed from office.

Ward

A ward is a geographic unit of some city governments from which city council members are elected. A ward may be composed of one or more precincts.

Write-In Vote

A write-in vote is a vote cast for a person whose name does not appear on the ballot.