

**State of Iowa  
Ballot Proofing Checklist**

**Required Elements for All Ballots**

Element	Description	Code Cite	Included?
<b>“Official Ballot”</b>	Print at the top front side of optical scan ballots.	§49.57(6), IAC 721-22.102(2)	
<b>Name and date of election</b>	Print at the top front side of optical scan ballots.	§49.57(6), IAC 721-21.202(1), 21.203(1), 22.102(2)	
<b>Facsimile of auditor’s signature and county name</b>	Print at the top front side of optical scan ballots.	§43.36, 49.51, 49.57(6), IAC 721-22.102(2)	
<b>Unique ID number/name for ballot style (if any)</b>	Print at the top front side of optical scan ballots.	§49.57(6), IAC 721-22.102(2)	
<b>Space for PEO’s initials</b>	Print a line for PEO’s to endorse the ballot.	§43.36, 49.50, 49.82, IAC 721-22.102(5)	
<b>Precinct name or number</b>	This is recommended but not required. It may be the same as the required unique ID number/name assigned to the ballot style.	---	
<b>Name and title of auditor</b>	This is recommended below the facsimile of the auditor’s signature but not required.	---	
<b>Instructions on how to mark the ballot</b>	<p>Include how to vote for offices, judges, and public measures.</p> <p><b>Example:</b> Voting mark. To vote, fill in the oval next to your choice.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;"> Candidate Name</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;"> Candidate Name</p> <p>Instructions on how to mark the ballot for a public measure may either be printed with the other instructions to voters or before the public measure question on the ballot.</p> <p><b>Example:</b> Notice to voters. To vote to approve any question on this ballot, fill in the oval in front of the word “Yes”. To vote against a question, fill in the oval in front of the word “No”.</p>	<p>§49.47, 49.92, IAC 721-21.202(1), 21.203(1), 22.261(4), 22.262(4), 22.264(3), 22.666(4)</p>	
<b>“Turn the ballot over”</b>	Must be included at the bottom on each side of two-sided ballots.	IAC 721-21.202(7), 21.203(7), 22.102(1)	

Element	Description	Code Cite	Included?
<b>“Vote for no more than ____”</b>	The number should be the maximum number of candidates to be voted for in each office.  For president/vice president and governor/lt. governor, use “Vote for no more than one team.”	§43.37, 49.31(4), 49.93, 376.7(1), IAC 721-21.202(4), 21.203(4)	
<b>Offices and candidates</b>	Be sure each office and candidate is listed. Proof using the “X-chart” you developed as instructed in the Pre-Election Day chapter of the Election Administrator’s Handbook.  Print office titles on the ballots.	§43.28, 49.37  IAC 721-21.202(3), 21.203(3)	
<b>Write-in votes</b>	Include the same number of write-in lines and voting targets as the number of candidates to voted for in each office.  Under each write-in line, print “Write-in vote, if any.”  For the offices of President/Vice President and Governor/Lt. Governor, print one write-in target to the left of two write-in lines. Under the write-in lines, print “Write-in vote for President, if any” and “Write-in vote for Vice President, if any” or “Write-in vote for Governor, if any” and “Write-in vote for Lt. Governor, if any”.	§49.31(5)  IAC 721-21.202(5), 21.203(5)	
<b>Vacancies</b>	Include any vacant offices for which this election is the “next pending election.”  List vacancies after the other offices in the appropriate group.	IAC 721-21.202(3)(c), 21.203(3)(c)	

### Formatting Elements

Element	Description	Code Cite	Included?
<b>Order of offices</b>	Follow the correct sequence of offices. Federal and state offices must appear on the ballot in the same order in which they appeared on the certificate from the SOS.	§39.17, 39.21, 49.37, IAC 721-21.202(3), 21.203(3)	
<b>No “caterpillar” offices</b>	Do not divide the list of candidates for the same office over more than one column.	IAC 721-22.102(8)	
<b>“To Fill Vacancy”</b>	List offices as “To Fill Vacancy” if they appear on the ballot before the expiration of the regular term.  List vacancies after the other offices in the appropriate group.	§49.57(7), IAC 721-21.202(3)(c), 21.203(3)(c)	
<b>Candidates’ names</b>	Compare spellings with affidavits of candidacy and SOS certification.  Type must be in upper and lower case letters.  Type size must be at least 10-point and uniform for all candidates.  Do not include parentheses, quotation marks, or any titles with candidate names.	§49.57(3), 46.21 IAC 721-21.202(6), 21.203(6)  §43.29, 49.31(6)	

Element	Description	Code Cite	Included?
<b>Party and organization names</b>	<p>Party and organization names must appear with candidates' names for partisan offices (<b>exception:</b> primary elections).</p> <p>Type size must be at least 6-point.</p> <p>Party and organization names may be abbreviated if the full names appear in the straight party section.</p>	§49.31(1), 49.57	
<b>Rotation of candidate names</b>	Only rotate offices when necessary. For the general election, only rotate at-large supervisor races where more than one candidate is to be elected and sanitary district trustees. Check every precinct using your rotation chart.	§43.28, 49.31	
<b>Voting targets</b>	Targets must be printed opposite each candidate's name and yes/no options for measures and judges. Use a single voting target for paired offices (i.e. president/vice president and governor/lt. governor).	§49.33, 49.45, 49.57(5), IAC 721-22.102(3)	
<b>Division lines</b>	Use division lines to separate partisan offices, non-partisan offices, judges and public measures.	§49.37(1)(c), IAC 721—21.203(8)	
<b>Public measures and constitutional amendments</b>	<p>Check wording with SOS certification, governing body motions, or petitions. Do not change the order of statewide questions.</p> <p>Number or letter identifying constitutional amendment or public measure is assigned by SOS or auditor and must be printed on ballots.</p> <p>Use 12-point type for identifying letters/numbers. Assigned letter or number must be centered above the question.</p> <p>Use at least 10-point font for the text of public measures and summaries.</p> <p>Include Code-specific language to phrase the question.</p> <p>The summary, if used, must be printed immediately before the text of the measure or amendment. Do not divide the text over more than one column. If the complete text does not fit on the ballot, the auditor may print only the summary and post the full text inside each voting booth and include it with absentee ballots.</p>	<p>§49.43-47, IAC 721-21.200</p> <p>§49.57(4)</p> <p>§49.43</p> <p>§49.44-45, IAC 721-22.102(8)</p>	

### Required Elements for Primary Election Ballots

Element	Description	Code Cite	Included?
<b>Party names</b>	List at top of ballot in 24-point type at the top of the ballot.	§43.27, IAC 721-21.202(1), 22.102(4)	

## Required Elections for General Election Ballots

Element	Description	Code Cite	Included?
<p><b>Instructions on where to find judges and constitutional amendments</b></p>	<p>SOS provides language. Include this language with the other instructions to voters.</p> <p><b>Example:</b>  <u>Where to find the judges and proposed amendment to the Iowa Constitution</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Judges:</b> on the back of this ballot, in the middle of the right-hand column</li> <li>• <b>Constitutional Amendment:</b> on the back of this ballot, at the end of the right-hand column</li> </ul>	<p>§49.48, IAC 721-21.203(1)(d)</p>	
<p><b>Judges</b></p>	<p>Use the ballot language found in §46.21. Judges must appear on the ballot in the same order in which they appeared on the certificate from the SOS.</p> <p><b>Example:</b> Shall the following judge of the Court of Appeals be retained in office?</p> <p>Judge's Name</p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> YES</p> <p><input type="radio"/> NO</p>	<p>§46.21</p>	
<p><b>Straight party voting*</b></p> <p><i>*Also include this for special partisan elections when two or more partisan offices will be filled at the election.</i></p>	<p>Include instructions for straight party voting.</p> <p><b>Required language:</b>            To vote for all candidates from a single party or organization, mark the voting target next to the party or organization name. Not all parties or organizations have nominated candidates for all offices. Marking a straight party or organization vote does not include votes for nonpartisan offices, judges, or questions.</p> <p>Voting targets must be placed next to the name of the political party or NPPO. Type size for party and organizations names must be at least 12-point.</p> <p>You may abbreviate the party and organization names if the full name and abbreviation are listed in the straight party section of ballot.</p> <p>Include political parties and NPPOs which nominated candidates for only one office under the following heading:</p> <p>Other Political Organizations. The following organizations have nominated candidates only for one office.</p> <p>Non-Party Political Organization 1</p>	<p>§49.37, 49.57(2), 49.94, IAC 721-21.203(1), 22.261(4), 22.262(4), 22.264(3), 22.266(4)</p>	