

Robert D. Bender

Escambia County Supervisor of Elections

2026

Escambia County Candidate Handbook



Definition of a Candidate

A candidate is defined in 97.021(7), Florida Statutes, as any person to whom any one or more of the following applies:

- Any person who seeks to qualify for nomination or election by means of a petitioning process.
- Any person who seeks to qualify for election as a write-in candidate.
- Any person who receives contributions or makes expenditures or gives his or her consent for any other person to receive contributions or make expenditures with a view to bringing about his or her nomination or election to, or retention in, public office.
- Any person who appoints a treasurer and designates a primary depository.
- Any person who files qualification papers and subscribes to a candidate's oath as required by law.

However, this definition does not include any candidate for a political party executive committee.

NOTE: If political party executive committees accept contributions or make expenditures, they are required to file a campaign report. (See Section 106.07 F.S.)

ATTENTION: Sections 99.021(1)(b)2 and (1)(c), Florida Statutes, requires:

- A person seeking an office with party affiliation has been a registered member of that political party for 365 days BEFORE the beginning of the applicable qualifying period.
- A person seeking an office with no party affiliation has been without any political party affiliation for 365 days BEFORE the beginning of the applicable qualifying period.

The last day for a person to make a political party change before the 2026 qualifying period was April 20, 2025, for the first qualifying period, and June 8, 2025, for the second qualifying period.

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Explanation

The information contained in this handbook is intended as a reference guide only and is current upon publication. Chapters 97-106, Florida Statutes, the Constitution of the State of Florida, Division of Elections' Opinions and Rules, Division of Elections' Candidate Handbook, Attorney General Opinions, city charters and ordinances, special acts and other sources should be reviewed in their entirety for complete information regarding qualifying.

This handbook contains relevant information regarding running for local office and for those who qualify with Robert D. Bender, Escambia County Supervisor of Elections Office as party candidates, no party affiliation candidates, nonpartisan candidates, and write-in candidates. It summarizes the qualifications for each office, and the methods of qualifying for each local office including the number of signatures required for petition method candidates.

Please direct any questions to Robert D. Bender, Escambia County Supervisor of Elections, Candidate Qualifying Department at (850) 595-3900 or visit our website EscambiaVotes.gov.



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ESCAMBIA COUNTY
SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS

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Escambia County

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Dear Prospective Candidate:

On behalf of the voters of Escambia County, I commend you for your interest in public service. I know full well what a momentous decision it is to run for office.

Enclosed you will find the necessary paperwork to get you started should you choose to become a candidate. Our office is here as a resource for you, and I encourage you to use us as such. When you have questions or need additional information, pick up the phone, visit us online at EscambiaVotes.gov, e-mail us, or drop by the office. We will do our best to help you.

You can reach our Candidate Qualifying Department at (850) 595-3900. Our staff stands ready to provide you with the information you need should you become a candidate for office. As always, you can reach me at (850) 595-3900 if I can answer any questions or be of any assistance to you.

Again, thank you for your interest in public service. I wish you all the best in your endeavors.

Sincerely,

Robert D. Bender
Supervisor of Elections



This handbook is intended to supplement Chapter 106 of the Florida Statutes and the State Division of Election's Candidate's Handbook which may be downloaded from: <https://dos.fl.gov/elections/forms-publications/publicationsreports/>

We recommend as a candidate and/or treasurer you read the State Division of Election's candidate & treasure handbook. It will guide you through samples of disclaimers and financial reporting.

Important Dates for Candidates

2026 Election Dates <i>Primary Election: August 18, 2026</i> <i>General Election: November 3, 2026</i>	
Qualifying Dates	
Judicial Offices Noon, April 20, 2026 – Noon, April 24, 2026 1st Day to accept qualifying papers: April 6, 2026 (14 days prior to the beginning of qualifying)	Federal, State & Local Offices Noon, June 8, 2026 – Noon, June 12, 2026 1st Day to accept qualifying papers: May 25, 2026 (14 days prior to the beginning of qualifying)
Petition Submission Deadline	
Judicial Offices Date pre-filed until Noon, March 23, 2026	Federal, State & Local Offices Date pre-filed until Noon, May 11, 2026
Voter Registration Deadline	
Primary Election: July 20, 2026 General Election: October 5, 2026	
Vote-By-Mail “Send” Deadline	
Absent Stateside, Overseas Military & Overseas Civilian Voters Primary Election: July 4, 2026 General Election: September 19, 2026	Domestic Voters (7-day window) Primary Election: July 9 – July 16, 2026 General Election: Sept. 24 – Oct. 1, 2026

2026 Local Offices Up for Election and Terms

Judicial (Nonpartisan)

Per State Constitution, Article V, Section 10

Term Begins

1st Tuesday after 1st Monday in January

County Court Judge, Group 2 (6-year term)

Tuesday, January 5, 2027

County and School Board

Per Florida Statutes 100.041(2)(a) & (3)(a)

Term Begins

2nd Tuesday following General Election

County Commissioner, Districts 2 and 4 (Partisan, 4-year term)

Tuesday, November 17, 2026

School Board Member, Districts 1, 2 and 3 (Nonpartisan, 4-year term)

Tuesday, November 17, 2026

Special Districts

Per Laws of Florida Chapter 2001-324 Section 4(b)

Term Begins

2nd Tuesday following General Election

Emerald Coast Utilities Authority, Districts 2 and 4 (Partisan, 4-year term)

Tuesday, November 17, 2026

Per Laws of Florida, Chapter 83-407 Section 3(b)(2) - Election Night

Term Begins

Santa Rosa Island Authority (Nonpartisan, 2-year term)

Tuesday, November 3, 2026

Per Florida Statutes 582.18

Term Begins

1st Tuesday after 1st Monday in January

Escambia Soil and Water Conservation District, Groups 1, 3 and 5
(Nonpartisan, 4-year term)

Tuesday, January 5, 2027

City of Pensacola (Nonpartisan)

Per City Charter, Article III, Section 6.07

Term Begins

4th Tuesday in November

Mayor of Pensacola (4-year term)

Tuesday, November 24, 2026

City Council, Districts 2, 4 and 6 (4-year term)

Tuesday, November 24, 2026

Town of Century (Nonpartisan)

Per Century Town Charter Section 5.05

Term Begins

1st Monday in January, following the regular town election

Century Town Council, Seats 3, 4 and 5 (4-year term)

Monday, January 4, 2027

Schedule of Campaign Reports for Candidates and Political Committees

60 days prior to Primary ✧ Biweekly ✧ 25th day prior ✧ 11th day prior ✧ 4th day prior to General

Period Covered	Report	Report Type	Due Date
7/1/25 – 9/30/25	Q3	Quarterly	10/10/25
10/1/25 – 12/31/25	Q4	Quarterly	1/12/26
1/1/26 – 3/31/26	Q1	Quarterly	4/10/26
Primary Election Reports			
4/1/26 – 6/12/26	P1	60 prior to Primary	6/19/26
6/13/26 – 6/26/26	P2	Bi-Weekly	7/3/26
6/27/26 – 7/10/26	P3	Bi-Weekly	7/17/26
7/11/26 – 7/17/26	P4	25 Days Prior	7/24/26
7/18/26 – 7/24/26	P5	Bi-Weekly	7/31/26
7/25/26 – 7/31/26	P6	11 Days Prior	8/7/26
8/1/26 – 8/13/26	P7	4 Days Prior	8/14/26
General Election Reports			
8/14/26 – 8/21/26	G1	Bi-Weekly	8/28/26
8/22/26 – 9/4/26	G2	Bi-Weekly	9/11/26
9/5/26 – 9/18/26	G3	Bi-Weekly	9/25/26
9/19/26 – 10/2/26	G4	25 Days Prior	10/9/26
10/3/26 – 10/16/26	G5	11 Days Prior	10/23/26
10/17/26 – 10/29/26	G6	4 Days Prior	10/30/26
Termination Reports			
4/1/26 – 7/23/26	JQ-TR	Judicial Qualifying Termination	7/23/26
6/13/26 – 9/10/26	Q-TR	State/Local Qualifying Termination	9/10/26
8/16/26 – 11/16/26	P-TR	Primary Termination	11/16/26
11/1/26 – 2/1/27	G-TR	General Termination	2/1/27

Note: Candidates must dispose of all funds in the campaign account and file a Termination Report within 90 days after having withdrawn, become unopposed, eliminated, or elected to office. Candidates may refer to the Candidate & Campaign Treasurer Handbook, chapter 17 termination reports for information on how to submit termination reports. Please make sure you keep good records of all contributions and expenses. You need to make sure these two numbers are the same when you file your final termination report.

F.S. 106.07 Penalty for Late Filing: Any candidate or committee failing to file a report on the designated due date shall be subject to a fine of \$50 per day for the first 3 days late and, thereafter, \$500 per day for each late day, not to exceed 25% of the total contributions or expenditures, whichever is greater, for the period covered by the late report. However, for pre-election reports, the fine shall be \$500 per day for each late day, not to exceed 25% of the total contributions or expenditures, whichever is greater, for the period covered by the late report. For Termination Reports the fine is \$50 per day for each late day, not to exceed 25% of the total contributions or expenditures, whichever is greater, for the period covered by the late report.

Overview

Each candidate and treasurer are responsible for following all applicable laws provided by the State of Florida during his or her run for elected office.

Each candidate must sign a Statement of Candidate Form within 10 days of filing the DS-DE 9 Appointment of Campaign Treasurer Form. The DS-DE 84 Statement of Candidate Form states that the candidate has been given access to, read, and understood the requirements of Chapter 106, Florida Statutes.

The Florida Election Commission in Tallahassee investigates violations of Chapter 106 should any individual wish to file a complaint. The Escambia County Supervisor of Elections does not have investigative authority. Criminal penalties are associated with many provisions.

Completion and correctness of finance reports are the responsibility of the candidate and campaign treasurer. The Supervisor of Elections is required to notify the Florida Elections Commission for failure to file a report, repeated late filings, or failure to pay a fine imposed.

The Escambia County Supervisor of Elections requires that all campaign reports be filed through the Online Reporting System. Each candidate will be issued a password, candidate ID, and PIN number(s) that will be mailed after filing the DS-DE 9 Appointment of Campaign Treasurer Form. Reports must be filed by 11:59:59 p.m. central time on the date it is due, otherwise the report is considered late. Candidates must file online by each due date, even if there are no contributions or expenditures. This would be a **waiver**.

Each candidate, campaign treasurer, and deputy treasurer will receive a personal identification number and password to submit reports using the electronic filing system. The PIN numbers will be considered a signature for the submitted report.

Campaign reports are public records. These reports will likely be reviewed by opposing candidates, the public, and media outlets. In some cases, investigators from different governmental agencies review these reports. It is important that great care is taken to ensure that campaign reports are complete, accurate, and in compliance with all election laws.

If a campaign report has been accepted and is found to be incomplete, the candidate will be notified and required to file an **amended** campaign report. You can find the candidate finance manual on the candidate login page after you login. (click the red help button) We recommend you read this manual before you start reporting.

<https://escambiavotes.gov/candidate-login-page>

Common Mistakes Made by Candidates, Political Committees & Campaign Treasurers

- One of the most serious mistakes a candidate can make is to accept a cash contribution and then spend it before it is deposited into the campaign account.
- Accepting anonymous contributions, such as passing the hat or selling tickets for fund raisers without getting the required information from contributors.
- Accepting cash contributions more than \$50, in aggregate, per election, from same donor.
- Failing to include correct political disclaimers on political advertisements and campaign literature.
- Filing Campaign Treasurer Reports late.
- Showing a deficit in campaign contribution and expenditure reports.
- Spending monetary contributions before they are deposited into the campaign account.
- Paying for items with cash and personal check instead of a campaign check.
- Not listing PayPal full contribution and listing fees as expenditure.
- Accepting contributions to cover outstanding expenses after the election.
- Listing contributor occupation as “business owner”, “sales” or other vague descriptions.
- Listing a contribution from “Mr. and Mrs.” – the contribution must be listed from the individual who signed the check (Division of Elections Opinion 93-10).

2026 Candidate Qualifying

Judicial: Noon, April 20 – Noon, April 24, 2026

1st Day to accept qualifying papers: April 6, 2026 (14 days prior to beginning of qualifying)

Federal, State, Multi-County, Escambia County and City Offices:

Noon, June 8 – Noon, June 12, 2026

1st Day to accept qualifying papers: May 25, 2026 (14 days prior to beginning of qualifying)

The following pages contain specific qualifying information for local offices.

Century Town Council, Seats 3, 4 and 5 (Nonpartisan)

Qualifications <i>Section 3.02 Town of Century Charter</i>	• Must be a registered voter in the Town of Century (Precinct 22.1) • Century Town Charter does not provide for petitions
Petition Requirements	Century Town Charter does not permit petitions
Salary	\$3,714.92
Qualifying Fee	1% Election Assessment \$37.15 + filling fee \$12.85 = \$50.00
Forms to File	<i>To get started:</i> • Appointment of Campaign Treasurer & Designation of Campaign Depository (DS-DE 9) • Statement of Candidate Form (DS-DE 84) <i>During qualifying: (Noon, June 8, 2026 – Noon, June 12, 2026)</i> • 1st Day to accept qualifying papers: May 25, 2026 (14 days prior to the beginning of qualifying) • Candidate Oath - Nonpartisan Office (DS-DE 302NP) • Form 1 - Statement of Financial Interests 2025
Term of Office	4 years
Commence Term	Monday, January 4, 2027

County Commissioner, Districts 2 and 4

Qualifications <i>F.S. 124.011</i>	- Registered voter - Resident of the district at the time of election
Petition Requirements	At least 1% of the total number of registered voters of that geographical area (district) as shown by the preceding general election. 370 Valid Petitions District 2 452 Valid Petitions District 4 <i>(Must meet petition requirements <u>or</u> pay Qualifying Fee listed below.)</i>
Salary	\$104,942.00
Qualifying Fee	6% Partisan -\$6,296.52 or 4% Nonpartisan - \$4,197.68
Forms to File	<i>To get started:</i> - Appointment of Campaign Treasurer & Designation of Campaign Depository (DS-DE 9) - Statement of Candidate Form (DS-DE 84) <i>During Qualifying: (Noon, June 8, 2026 – Noon, June 12, 2026)</i> <i>1st Day to accept qualifying papers: May 25, 2026 (14 days prior to the beginning of qualifying)</i> - Candidate Oath – State and Local Partisan Office (DS-DE 301A) - Form 6 - Full and Public Disclosure of Financial Interests 2025
Term of Office	4 years
Commence Term	Tuesday, November 17, 2026

County Court Judge, Group 2 (Nonpartisan)

Qualifications <i>Constitution of the State of Florida Article V Sections 8 and 13</i>	• Elector of the state; • Present member of the Florida Bar and have been a member for the preceding 5 years prior to qualifying; • Residence established in the territorial jurisdiction of the court at the time of assuming office; • May not be over 70 years old except on temporary assignment or to complete a term one-half of which has been served; • Shall not engage in the practice of law or hold office in any political party.
Petition Requirements	At least 1% of total number of registered voters in the geographical area as shown by the preceding general election. • 2,147 Valid Petitions <i>(Must meet petition requirements <u>or</u> pay Qualifying Fee listed below.)</i>
Salary	TBD (July 1, 2025, or as soon as available)
Qualifying Fee	4% Nonpartisan –TBD
Forms to File	<i>To get started:</i> • Appointment of Campaign Treasurer & Designation of Campaign Depository (DS-DE 9) • Statement of Candidate Form (DS-DE 84) • Statement of Candidate for Judicial Office (DS-DE 83) <i>During qualifying: (Noon, April 20, 2026 – Noon, April 24, 2026)</i> • Candidate Oath - Judicial Office (DS-DE 303JU) • Form 6 - Full and Public Disclosure of Financial Interests 2025
Term of Office	6 years
Commence Term	Tuesday, January 5, 2027

Emerald Coast Utilities Authority, Districts 2 and 4

Qualifications <i>Special Act 81 - 376</i>	- Registered voter - Resident of the district at the time of assuming office
Petition Requirements	25 valid petitions <i>(Must meet petition requirements <u>or</u> pay Qualifying Fee listed below.)</i>
Salary	\$50,367.00
Qualifying Fee	\$25.00 for Special District Offices
Forms to File	<i>To get started:</i> - Appointment of Campaign Treasurer & Designation of Campaign Depository (DS-DE 9) <i>(If opening campaign account)</i> - Statement of Candidate Form (DS-DE 84) - Affidavit of Intent (located on EscambiaVotes.gov website). To be used if no contributions are to be received. <i>During Qualifying: (Noon, June 8, 2026 – Noon, June 12, 2026)</i> 1st Day to accept qualifying papers: May 25, 2026 (14 days prior to the beginning of qualifying) - Candidate Oath – State and Local Partisan Office (DS-DE 301A) - Form 1 - Statement of Financial Interests 2025
Term of Office	4 years
Commence Term	Tuesday, November 17, 2026

Escambia Soil and Water Conservation District, Groups 1, 3, and 5 (Nonpartisan)

Qualifications	- Registered voter - Resident of the county at the time of assuming office
Petition Requirements	25 valid petitions from voters county-wide are required (Must meet petition requirements <u>or</u> pay Qualifying Fee listed below.)
Salary	No salary for this office
Qualifying Fee	\$25.00 for Special District Offices
Forms to File	To get started: - Appointment of Campaign Treasurer & Designation of Campaign Depository (DS-DE 9) <i>(If opening campaign account)</i> - Statement of Candidate Form (DS-DE 84) - Affidavit of Intent (located on EscambiaVotes.gov website). To be used if no contributions are to be received. During Qualifying: (Noon, June 8, 2026 – Noon, June 12, 2026) 1st Day to accept qualifying papers: May 25, 2026 (14 days prior to the beginning of qualifying) - Candidate Oath - Nonpartisan Office (DS-DE 302NP) - Form 1 - Statement of Financial Interests 2025
Term of Office	4 years
Commence Term	Tuesday, January 5, 2027

Mayor of Pensacola (Nonpartisan)	
Qualifications <i>Article VI Section 6.03 of the Charter for the City of Pensacola</i>	Any person who is a resident of the City, has qualified as a Florida elector, and has been assigned a voter registration number by the County Supervisor of Elections to vote in a City precinct not less than one (1) year prior to the end of the qualification period, shall be an elector of the City who shall be eligible to run for the office of Mayor, while a candidate for a City Council district office must have been a resident of the declared district for at least one (1) year prior to the end of the qualification period. If he or she ceases to possess any such qualifications during his or her term of office, or if he or she violates any express prohibition of this Charter, he or she shall forthwith forfeit the office, and the Council shall remove him or her from office. Per City Charter No person may qualify for election as a write-in candidate.
Petition Requirements	At least 5% of the total number of registered electors in the district, as shown by the compilation for the most recent general election of the City Council. Valid Petitions = 2,018 (If petition requirement is met, candidate is still required to pay the 1% Election Assessment per F.S. 99.093.)
Salary	TBD (will be provided by the City of Pensacola)
Qualifying Fee	Qualifying fee is comprised of a 1% Election Assessment (<i>F.S. 99.093</i>) of TBD plus a 3% filing fee (<i>City Charter Section 6.03</i>) of TBD. Using the petition method only waives the 3% portion of the filing fee per City Charter <i>Section 6.03</i> <u>No</u> Petitions & <u>No</u> Affidavit of Financial Hardship - Qualifying Fee is TBD <u>No</u> Petitions & Affidavit of Financial Hardship - Qualifying Fee is TBD Petitions & <u>No</u> Affidavit of Financial Hardship - Qualifying Fee is TBD Petitions & Affidavit of Financial Hardship - Qualifying Fee is TBD
Forms to File	To get started: - Appointment of Campaign Treasurer & Designation of Campaign Depository (DS-DE 9) - Statement of Candidate Form (DS-DE 84) During qualifying: (Noon, June 8, 2026 – Noon, June 12, 2026) 1st Day to accept qualifying papers: May 25, 2026 (14 days prior to the beginning of qualifying) - Candidate Oath - Nonpartisan Office (DS-DE 302NP) - Form 1 - Statement of Financial Interests 2025
Term of Office	4 years
Commence Term	Tuesday, November 24, 2026

Pensacola City Council, Districts 2, 4, and 6 (Nonpartisan)	
Qualifications <i>Article VI Section 6.03 of the Charter for the City of Pensacola</i>	Any person who is a resident of the City, has qualified as a Florida elector, and has been assigned a voter registration number by the County Supervisor of Elections to vote in a City precinct not less than one (1) year prior to the end of the qualification period, shall be an elector of the City who shall be eligible to run for the office of Mayor, while a candidate for a City Council district office must have been a resident of the declared district for at least one (1) year prior to the end of the qualification period. If he or she ceases to possess any such qualifications during his or her term of office, or if he or she violates any express prohibition of this Charter, he or she shall forthwith forfeit the office, and the Council shall remove him or her from office. Per City Charter No person may qualify for election as a write-in candidate.
Petition Requirements	At least 5% of the total number of registered electors in the district, as shown by the compilation for the most recent general election of the City Council. District 2 – 255 District 4 – 300 District 6 – 296 <i>(If petition requirement is met, candidate is still required to pay the 1% Election Assessment per F.S. 99.093.)</i>
Salary	TBD (will be provided by the City of Pensacola)
Qualifying Fee	Qualifying fee is comprised of a 1% Election Assessment (<i>F.S. 99.093</i>) of TBD plus a 3% filing fee (City Charter <i>Section 6.03</i>) of TBD. Using the petition method only waives the 3% portion of the filing fee per City Charter <i>Section 6.03</i> <u>No</u> Petitions & <u>No</u> Affidavit of Financial Hardship - Qualifying Fee is TBD <u>No</u> Petitions & Affidavit of Financial Hardship - Qualifying Fee is TBD Petitions & <u>No</u> Affidavit of Financial Hardship - Qualifying Fee is TBD Petitions & Affidavit of Financial Hardship - Qualifying Fee is TBD
Forms to File	<i>To get started:</i> • Appointment of Campaign Treasurer & Designation of Campaign Depository (DS-DE 9) • Statement of Candidate Form (DS-DE 84) <i>During Qualifying: (Noon, June 8, 2026 – Noon, June 12, 2026)</i> • 1st Day to accept qualifying papers: May 25, 2026 (14 days prior to the beginning of qualifying) • Candidate Oath - Nonpartisan Office (DS-DE 302NP) • Form 1 - Statement of Financial Interests 2025
Term of Office	4 years
Commence Term	Tuesday, November 24, 2026

Santa Rosa Island Authority (Nonpartisan)

Qualifications <i>Laws of Florida 83-407, Section 3 (2-3)</i>	- Registered voter - Resident and leaseholder on Santa Rosa Island for at least 6 months immediately prior to qualifying and shall remain a resident during the term of office. In addition, the candidate shall be in full compliance with his or her lease at the time of qualifying and shall remain so during the term of office.
Petition Requirements	25 valid petitions from voters in Precinct 94 are required (Must meet petition requirements <u>or</u> pay Qualifying Fee listed below.)
Salary	\$6,600.00
Qualifying Fee	\$25.00 for Special District Offices
Forms to File	To get started: - Appointment of Campaign Treasurer & Designation of Campaign Depository (DS-DE 9) <i>(If opening campaign account)</i> - Statement of Candidate Form (DS-DE 84) - Affidavit of Intent (located on EscambiaVotes.gov website). To be used if no contributions are to be received. During Qualifying: (Noon, June 8, 2026 – Noon, June 12, 2026) 1st Day to accept qualifying papers: May 25, 2026 (14 days prior to the beginning of qualifying) - Candidate Oath - Nonpartisan Office (DS-DE 302NP) - Form 1 - Statement of Financial Interests 2025
Term of Office	2 years
Commence Term	Tuesday, November 3, 2026

School Board, Districts 1, 2 and 3 (Nonpartisan)	
Qualifications <i>F.S. 1001.34 & F.S. 1001.361</i>	- Registered voter - Resident of the district at the time of assuming office
Petition Requirements	At least 1% of the total number of registered voters in the county as shown by the preceding general election, divided by the number of districts. - District 1 - 486 Valid Petitions - District 2 - 370 Valid Petitions - District 3 - 394 Valid Petitions <i>(Must meet petition requirements <u>or</u> pay Qualifying Fee listed below.)</i>
Salary	\$50,367.00
Qualifying Fee	4% Nonpartisan - \$2,014.68
Forms to File	<i>To get started:</i> - Appointment of Campaign Treasurer & Designation of Campaign Depository (DS-DE 9) - Statement of Candidate Form (DS-DE 84) <i>During Qualifying: (Noon, June 8, 2026 – Noon, June 12, 2026)</i> <i>1st Day to accept qualifying papers: May 25, 2026</i> <i>(14 days prior to the beginning of qualifying)</i> - Candidate Oath - School Board Nonpartisan (DS-DE 304SB) - Form 6 - Full and Public Disclosure of Financial Interests 2025
Term of Office	4 years
Commence Term	Tuesday, November 17, 2026

Write-In Candidates

Note: write-in candidate names do not appear on the ballot
(Per the City Charter, write-in candidates for City of Pensacola are expressly prohibited)

Qualifications	- Registered voter - See specific office
Petition Requirements	No petition requirements for write-in candidates
Salary	See specific office
Qualifying Fee	No qualifying fee for write-in candidates
Forms to File	See Specific Office
Term of Office	See specific office
Commence Term	See specific office

Petitions

(Florida Statutes 99.095, 99.097 & 105.035)

Refer to each office for specific petition requirements.

Under current Florida law, which is subject to change the deadline to submit petitions is:

Noon, March 23, 2026 – Judicial Offices

Noon, May 11, 2026 – Federal, Statewide, Multi-County, County and City Offices

<i>Name of Office</i>	<i>Petitions Required</i>
<i>Multi-County and District Offices</i>	
Governor/Lt Governor	139,492
Attorney General	139,492
Chief Financial Officer	139,492
Commissioner of Agriculture	139,492
State Representative, Districts 1 and 2	District 1 – 1,181 District 2 – 1,268
<i>County Offices</i>	
County Commissioner, Districts 2 and 4	District 2 - 370 District 4 - 452
School Board Members, Districts 1, 2 and 3	District 1 – 486 District 2 – 370 District 3 - 394
County Court Judge, Group 2	2,147
Emerald Coast Utilities Authority, Districts 2 and 4	25
Santa Rosa Island Authority	25
Escambia Soil and Water Conservation District, Groups 2 and 4	25
<i>City Offices</i>	
Mayor of Pensacola	2,018
City Council, Districts 2, 4 and 6	District 2 – 255 District 4 – 300 District 6 – 296

Petition Facts

- Petition signatures may not be obtained until the candidate has filed the DS-DE 9 form, Appointment of Campaign Treasurer.
- The most current version of the petition DS-DE 104 (dated 09/11 or later) must be used. Candidates are responsible for reproducing the correct petition form.
- Find Petition Form at: <http://files.floridados.gov/media/693291/dsde104.pdf>
- The DS-DE 104 petition form must be reproduced for use by candidates in its exact wording and format without any changes in its text or format, except it may be reduced or enlarged **proportionally in size** as a whole document – no less than 3 inches by 5 inches and no larger than 8 1/2 inches by 11 inches. A separate petition form is required for each voter. They are submitted to the Supervisor of Elections for verification, at a pre-paid cost of 10 cents each.
- A petition form may be included within a larger advertisement, provided the form is clearly defined by a solid or broken border. Once an advertisement is added the petition must contain a political disclaimer. See State Candidate handbook for disclaimer examples.
- Field entries on the petition form may be completed by the candidate except for the signature and the date signed fields which must be completed by the voter.
- Collecting petition signatures in government owned buildings is not expressly prohibited, but a candidate may not solicit or accept contributions as stated in F.S. 106.15(4).
- A voter may sign a candidate's petition regardless of their party affiliation.
- Voter must reside in the applicable district of the candidate. In a year of apportionment, there are exceptions for certain offices. Refer to each office for specific petition requirements.
- The candidate's information on the petition must be complete, including the district if applicable.
- There is no prohibition in the Florida Election Code on paying someone to collect petition signatures on their behalf. However, the candidate may not then file an Undue Burden Oath.
- If a candidate qualifies by the petition method and filed Oath of Undue Burden, and has surplus funds, the candidate must pay any petition verification fees that were waived due to filing an Undue Burden Oath.

Note: Petitions should be thoroughly examined prior to submitting them to our office for verification. Voter must personally complete the signature and date signed fields. The petitions will be counted, and candidate or representative will be given a receipt.

These are the most common reasons that a petition may be invalidated.

- Voter's name not listed and printed.
- Voter did not indicate or indicated the incorrect date signed.
- Voter did not include or listed incorrect date of birth.
- Voter listed wrong voter registration number.
- Voter listed their party affiliation (not candidate's or didn't leave blank if nonpartisan).
- Voter's signature does not match our records.
- Voter signed more than one petition for this candidate in this election.
- Voter not in correct district (if applicable).
- Voter not registered.

Note: This is not a complete list, just most common reasons.

CANDIDATE PETITION			
<i>Notes:</i> - All information on this form becomes a public record upon receipt by the Supervisor of Elections. - It is a crime to knowingly sign more than one petition for a candidate. [Section 104.185, Florida Statutes] - If all requested information on this form is not completed, the form will not be valid as a Candidate Petition form.			
I, _____ the undersigned, a registered voter (print name as it appears on your voter information card)			
in said state and county, petition to have the name of _____ placed on the Primary/General Election Ballot as a: [check/complete box, as applicable]			
☐ Nonpartisan ☐ No party affiliation ☐ _____ Party candidate for the office of _____ (insert title of office and include district, circuit, group, seat number, if applicable)			
Date of Birth (MM/DD/YY) or Voter Registration Number		Address	
City	County	State	Zip Code
Signature of Voter		Date Signed (MM/DD/YY) [to be completed by Voter]	
Rule 1S-2.045, F.A.C.		DS-DE 104 (Eff. 09/11)	

Must use the most current format published by the Division of Elections.
<https://dos.fl.gov/elections/forms-publications>

Resources:

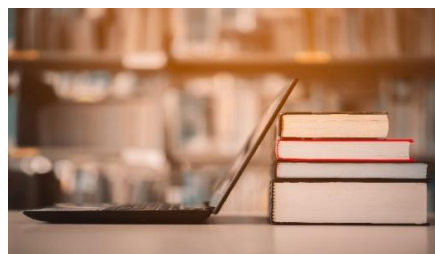
A successful candidate is well informed and educated on all applicable sections of election law and campaign rules set by the Florida Division of Elections. This handbook serves as a guide to assist candidates in the process; however, it is not all inclusive. It is the responsibility, as the candidate and treasurer, to fully understand the law.

The following resources are available at
dos.fl.gov/elections/forms-publications/publications

Florida Statutes, Chapter 106
Florida Division of Elections Candidate Handbook
Candidate Petition Handbook

Detailed information is available on all of the following topics from the sources listed above:

- Becoming a Candidate
- Petition Requirements
- Campaign Treasurer Duties and Responsibilities
- Changing Political Parties for Partisan Offices
- Contributions, Depositories, and Expenditures
 - Use of Paypal and reporting online contributions
- Disclaimers and Political Advertising
- Fund Raisers and Solicitation
- Filing Electronic Campaign Reports
- Petty Cash
- Prohibited Acts
- Termination Reports
- Prohibited Acts



Candidate Forms: <https://escambiavotes.gov/candidate-forms>

- Appointment of Campaign Treasurer/Designation of Campaign Depository (DS-DE 9)
- Statement of Candidate (DS-DE 84)
- Statement of Candidate for Judicial Office (DS-DE 83)
- Affidavit of Intent
- Candidate Petition Form (DS-DE 104)
- Candidate Oath – State and Local Partisan Office (DS-DE 301A)
- Candidate Oath - State and Local Partisan Office without Party Affiliation (DS-DE 301B)
- Candidate Oath - State and Local Partisan Office Write-In Candidate (DS-DE 301C)
- Candidate Oath – Nonpartisan Office (DS-DE 302NP)
- Candidate Oath - Judicial Office (DS-DE 303JU)
- Candidate Oath – School Board Nonpartisan (DS-DE 304SB)
- Form 1- Statement of Financial Interests
- Form 6 - Full and Public Disclosure of Financial Interests
- Affidavit of Financial Hardship (For City only – 1% Election Assessment)

Frequently Asked Questions can be found on our website **Escambiavotes.gov**.

If you have questions or require assistance, please don't hesitate to contact our Candidate Qualifying Department at (850) 595-3900.

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