

CANDIDATE GUIDE



This reference guide has been prepared to answer frequently asked questions and is intended to provide general information only. The San Joaquin County Registrar of Voters is not rendering legal advice. This guide does not have the force and effect of law and is not a substitute for legal counsel. In the unlikely event that there is a conflict between this guide and the law, the law shall take precedence. Before initiating any efforts related to a particular topic within this guide, please note that it is the public's responsibility to obtain the most current and accurate information that may be available on a topic.

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PREPARE TO FILE

BEFORE YOU FILE

- Verify that your voter registration information is correct online at voterstatus.sos.ca.gov
- Please re-register if your information is incorrect.
- Confirm the office and position for which you are filing.
- Make sure you meet and have proof of any qualifications for that office.
- Decide how you want your name to appear on the ballot.
- Decide on your ballot designation (See the Ballot Designation guidelines for assistance)
- Have your authorized agent/campaign contact information ready.

Staff cannot accept documents from an unauthorized person. A signed authorized agent section of the registration form must be completed.

Elections Code § 8028

FIRST STEPS

1. Request an appointment* via the Candidate Services Tab on the ROV website www.sjcrov.org.
2. Upon receipt of the appointment request, a confirmation email containing nomination papers will be sent for you to complete before your in-person appointment.

*An appointment is encouraged, as there may be a long wait time for walk-in candidates. Expect to spend at least 30 minutes to an hour to complete the filing process.

The following documents are included in the candidate filing process:

- Candidate Registration Form (includes district verification and authorized agent section)
- Candidate Handbook
- Nomination Petition
- Ballot Designation Worksheet
- Candidate Statement of Qualifications Form* (optional)
- Code of Fair Campaign Practices (optional)
- Candidate Campaign Statement Form 501, Form 460, or Form 470
- Form 700 Statement of Economic Interests (Mandatory for all candidates except incumbents who have filed within 60 days before filing nomination documents.)
- Declaration of Candidacy (completed in office)
- Character Based Name (if applicable)

*Candidates' Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) will appear in both English and Spanish in the County Voter Information Guide.

Elections Code § 8020(c)

CANDIDATE FILING PROCESS

Candidates should review and follow the first steps section of this guide before coming into the office.

APPLY FOR SIGNATURES IN LIEU OF FILING FEE

(Primary elections only)

A candidate may submit a petition containing signatures of registered voters instead of paying all or a portion of the filing fee to run for office. The signatures submitted may cover all or a prorated portion of the filing fee.

Any registered voter may sign an in-lieu-filing-fee petition for any candidate for whom he or she is eligible to vote.

Elections Code § 8106(b)(1)

No additional signatures may be filed after the filing date, but supplemental signatures may be filed to replace signatures in the original filing that were found to be insufficient. That portion of the filing fee not covered by the signatures must be paid in full before the nomination documents may be filed.

SIGNATURE IN-LIEU OF FILING FEE FORM

(Primary elections only)

1. Each signer must print and sign their name and include their residential address.
 - Spouses may not sign for each other.
 - P.O. Boxes are unacceptable as residential addresses.
 - Ignore precinct/verification columns (this will be completed by the elections office staff)
2. Circulators must complete the “Affidavit of Circulator” on the back of the form.
 - Fill in the appropriate information in blank spaces.
 - Fill in dates signatures are obtained.
 - Fill in the execution date and place of signing.
 - Sign and print the name and include the residential address.
 - Only one circulator is allowed for each in-lieu petition.

A person shall not circulate a state or local initiative, referendum, or recall petition or nominating paper unless the person is 18 years of age or older.

Elections Code § 102

DECLARATION OF INTENTION

(For superior court judicial candidates only)

Candidates for judicial office must file a Declaration of Intention identifying the office for which they intend to run. Judicial candidate filing fees must be paid at the time the Declaration of Intention is filed with the county elections official. Except in the case of a judicial office filled under subdivision (d) of Section 16 of the California Constitution, every candidate for a judicial office, not more than 14 nor less than five days before the first day on which his or her nomination petitions may be circulated and signed or may be presented for filing, shall file in the office of the elections official in which their nomination petitions are required to be filed, a written and signed declaration of their intention to become a candidate for that office on a form to be supplied by the elections official. A candidate for a numerically designated judicial office shall state in their declaration for which office they intend to become a candidate.

No candidate for a judicial office shall be required to state his or her residential address on the declaration of intention.

Elections Code § 8023 (c)

NOMINATION PETITION

Candidates are required to submit nomination petitions signed by a requisite number of voters. No signer shall at the time of signing nomination petitions have signed his or her name to any other nomination petition for any other candidate of the same office or, in the case where there are several seats to be filled for the same office, signed nomination petitions for more candidates for that office than there are seats to be filled.

Elections Code § 8069

For nonpartisan offices and voter-nominated offices requiring nomination petitions, signers shall be registered voters in the district or political subdivision in which the candidate is to be elected.

Once the nomination petition has been processed, candidates will receive their filing packet via email and should complete the forms before scheduling an in-person appointment. Candidates are encouraged to start the process early in the filing period to meet the filing deadline.

BALLOT DESIGNATION WORKSHEET

If a candidate chooses to have a ballot designation title printed on the ballot, then it **MUST** be filed along with the Declaration of Candidacy. A ballot designation is a title printed underneath the candidate's name on the ballot. Any candidate who wishes to have a ballot designation printed on the ballot must complete a Ballot Designation Worksheet. This worksheet will also help a candidate determine an appropriate ballot designation. Please see the Ballot Designation section of this guide for more information.

Elections Code § 13107

CANDIDATE STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS (SOQ)

(Optional)

SOQs must be filed and paid for at the same time as the Declaration of Candidacy. Candidates are required to submit their Statement of Qualifications electronically via email in Word format and attach a written copy to the “Statement of Qualifications” form provided by the ROV Office. Please see the Candidate Statement Section of this guide for more information.

Elections Code § 13307

CODE OF FAIR CAMPAIGN PRACTICES

By subscribing to the Code of Fair Campaign Practices, a candidate vows to follow the principles of decency, honesty, and fair play. Subscription to the code is optional. Completed forms are to be filed with the Registrar of Voters Office and shall be retained for public inspection until 30 days after the election.

DECLARATION OF CANDIDACY

(Completed in office only)

The Declaration of Candidacy is the most important candidate filing document and is required of all candidates. On the Declaration of Candidacy, the candidate indicates how their name and ballot designation are to appear on the ballot, declares that they meet the statutory and/or constitutional qualifications for the office sought, and will accept the nomination and not withdraw.

The ballot name may be designated as follows:

- First, middle, and last name
- Initials may be used in place of first and/or middle names.
- A nickname may be included but must be in quotation marks, not parenthesis.

The name should be recognizable as the name under which the candidate is registered to vote, although it does not need to be identical. For example, a candidate registered as “William James Shaw” may use such variations as “Bill J. Shaw”, “Bill Shaw”, or “W. James (Bill) Shaw”. No title or degree shall appear on the same line as a candidate’s name on a ballot, either before or after the candidate’s name, in the case of any election to any office.

Judicial candidates are not required to state their home address.

Elections Code § 8040 (b)

CHARACTER-BASED NAME

(optional)

Assembly Bill 57 (2019) requires that any ballot providing a translation of a candidate's name, in jurisdictions required to provide translated ballot materials, contain a phonetic transliteration of the candidate's name unless certain conditions are met and as specified:

1. Permits a candidate who has a character-based name by birth, which can be verified by birth

certificate or other valid identification, to use that name on the ballot instead of a phonetic transliteration.

2. Permits a candidate who does not have a character-based name by birth, but who identifies by a particular character-based name and can demonstrate that the candidate has been known and identified within the public sphere by that name over the past two years, to use that name instead of a phonetic transliteration.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE DISCLOSURE

All state and local candidates, their committees, and committees supporting or opposing ballot measures are required to report campaign contributions and expenditures. When a candidate receives nomination papers, he/she will receive an informational overview of all filing responsibilities including electronic filing of all campaign disclosures. Candidates should familiarize themselves thoroughly with the information provided by the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) and carefully note the filing deadlines, as the Act imposes penalties for late filing of campaign statements. Information and requirements can be found at www.fppc.ca.gov.

APPEARANCE OF NAMES ON THE BALLOT

A randomized alphabet drawing is the basis for determining the order of candidates on the ballot. Each candidate will be placed on the ballot in the order that each of the letters of his/her surname was drawn. For example, the placement of candidates with the surnames of Miller and Ramos will depend on the order in which the letters M and R were drawn. Six calendar days after the end of the filing period, the Secretary of State conducts a drawing of the letters. The drawing will be conducted on E-82 (82 days before election day).

Elections Code § 13112

This randomized list is used for all candidates in the upcoming election to ensure that all candidates have an equal opportunity to be the first name listed on the ballot in their respective offices. In Statewide and county offices, the randomized alphabet list drawn by the Secretary of State determines the order of candidate names on all ballots, starting in Assembly District 1. The order is then rotated, so that in Assembly District 2 the candidate who appeared first in Assembly District 1 is moved to the bottom of the ballot list, and the second candidate is moved up to be the first candidate on the ballot in Assembly District 2, and so on. This rotation process continues throughout all the 80 Assembly Districts in California and begins in San Joaquin County with Assembly District 9. County Random Alphabet rotations are only used for Senate or Assembly districts that are in more than one County.

RULES FOR CANDIDATE ROTATIONS

Statewide Offices: Candidates' names appear on the ballot using the Secretary of State's random alphabet and rotate through all 80 Assembly Districts.

Congressional: Candidates' names appear on the ballot using the Secretary of State's random alphabet and rotate by the Assembly Districts that are within the Congressional district.

Board of Equalization: Candidates' names appear on the ballot using the Secretary of State's random alphabet and rotate by the Assembly Districts that are within the Board of Equalization district.

State Senate and Assembly: If the State Senate or Assembly District is in more than one county, the county random alphabet is applied. If the State Senate or Assembly District is wholly contained within the county; the State random alphabet is applied. Candidates' names do not rotate.

Countywide Offices: The candidates' names appear on the ballot using the Secretary of State's random order and rotate by Supervisorial Districts in the county.

All other offices: Candidates' names appear on the ballot using the Secretary of State's random order and do not rotate.

Elections Code § 13111

APPOINTMENT IN LIEU OF ELECTION

Special Districts: If the number of candidates is equal to or less than the number of vacancies to be filled within the district, the office does not appear on the ballot. The Board of Supervisors appoints the unopposed candidates. Appointees by the Board of Supervisors take office and serve exactly as if elected at the General Election.

Elections Code § 8028

School Districts: If the number of candidates is equal to or less than the number of offices to be filled within a particular district, an election will not be held, and the qualified candidates shall be seated at the organizational meeting of the school district governing board.

Elections Code § 5326

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES RUNNING FOR OFFICE

An employee of a local agency may not be sworn into office as an elected or appointed member of the legislative body of that local agency unless they resign as an employee. If the employee does not resign, the employment shall automatically terminate upon them being sworn into office. This does not apply to any volunteer firefighters who do not receive a salary.

Government Code § 53227

HOLDING OR RUNNING FOR MORE THAN ONE OFFICE

Candidates are not prohibited from seeking more than one elective office and may serve in more than one office. The common law doctrine of incompatibility of offices prevents an elected official from holding two offices simultaneously if the offices have overlapping and conflicting public duties the courts have defined this concept as follows: "One individual may not simultaneously hold two public offices where the functions of the offices concerned are inherently inconsistent, as where there are conflicting interests, or where the nature of the duties of the two offices is such as to render it improper due to considerations of public policy for one person to retain both."

Government Code § 1099

INCOMPATIBILITY OF OFFICES

The State of California Attorney General's Office has issued many opinions on compatibility questions. Here are some examples of incompatible offices:

- City council member and school district board member where the city and the school district have territory in common.
- Fire Chief of a county fire protection district and a member of the county board of supervisors of the same county.
- High school district trustee and trustee of an elementary school district which is wholly within the geographic boundaries of the high school district.
- Water district director and a city council member.
- Districts having territory in common:
- Water district director and a school district trustee
- Deputy Sheriff and county board of supervisors.

If you have any questions about whether two public offices would be considered incompatible, contact the Attorney General's office at (800) 952-5225 or visit their website at www.oag.ca.gov.

Government Code § 87100

PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARIES

General Information About Closed Primaries in California. Every 4 years, Americans cast their vote for President. The nominees for President and Vice President are chosen by political parties. Political parties have varied state rules on how to choose their nominees; for example, whether to hold a primary or a caucus, how to apportion votes (winner take all versus proportional), etc. They can be complex events, so voters need to know what to do to participate in a presidential primary election.

In California, the presidential primary is partially closed. That means that, in general, voters can participate in the primary on the condition that the voter is registered with the party for whom they support as their nominee. In other words, Republicans vote in the Republican Primary, Democrats vote in the Democratic Primary, etc. If you want to vote in the primary, you must declare a party preference.

There are currently 6 certified political parties in California that will have a presidential primary:

- American Independent Party
- Democratic Party
- Green Party
- Libertarian Party
- Peace & Freedom Party
- Republican Party

CROSSOVER VOTING

(Presidential Primary elections only)

Some political parties choose to allow No Party Preference (NPP) voters to participate in their primary without having to re-register. That is what's referred to as a "crossover." If voters are not registered with one of the certified political parties, that means that the state election laws consider them to be No Party Preference (NPP) voters and will be given the option to crossover.

Every presidential election cycle, the political parties will notify the Secretary of State as to whether they will allow crossover voting. Counties will then notify voters as to which parties allow crossovers as the presidential primary election draws near.

NPP voters have three choices for how to participate in the primary:

1. Request a crossover card be mailed to you.
2. Re-register.
3. Do nothing. A ballot without presidential candidates on it will be provided.

No matter how voters decide to participate in the presidential primary, everyone will be able to vote for President and Vice-President in the November General Election.

TOP TWO OPEN PRIMARY SYSTEM

(Primary elections only)

On June 8, 2010, California voters passed Proposition 14, which created the "Top-Two Open Primary Act." All candidates running for a voter-nominated office, regardless of their party preference, appear on all ballots in the primary election.

Top-Two does not affect the election of the President and County Central Committees, which are party-nominated contests.

Voter-nominated offices affected by Top-Two rules are:

- Attorney General
- Board of Equalization
- Controller
- Governor
- Insurance Commissioner
- Lieutenant Governor
- Secretary of State
- State Assembly
- State Senator
- State Treasurer
- U.S. Representative
- U.S. Senator

HOW THE TOP TWO AFFECT ELECTIONS

(Primary elections only)

Top-Two requires that only the two candidates for voter-nominated offices who receive the highest number of votes cast at the primary shall appear on the November ballot.

Elections Code § 8141.5

Top-Two does not affect presidential and county central committee elections. They are party-nominated contests governed by party rules.

WHAT TOP TWO MEANS FOR VOTERS

(Primary elections only)

Voters can vote for any top two candidates from any political party. In Gubernatorial election years, all candidates for statewide office in the statewide primary will be shown on the ballot, regardless of the candidate's party affiliation. The two candidates receiving the most votes advance to the November general election.

In Presidential election years, Top-Two only applies to voter-nominated contests like U.S. Representative or State Assembly. In the primary election, voters receive a party-specific ballot based on their current registration which includes all eligible candidates running in voter-nominated contests, regardless of party affiliation.

HOW THE TOP TWO AFFECT WRITE-IN CANDIDATES

(Primary elections only)

A qualified write-in candidate's name may be written on the ballot in a primary election contest. In the general election, only a qualified candidate's name may be written in a party-nominated contest. Write-in votes are not allowed in a voter-nominated contest in a general election.

HOW THE TOP TWO AFFECT NONPARTISAN OFFICES

(Primary elections only)

Nonpartisan offices such as Judges, school board members, special districts, county officers, municipal officers, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction are open to all eligible voters. As always, voters can vote for any candidates for nonpartisan offices in the primary. In "vote for one" contests, if one candidate receives over 50 percent of the vote, then that candidate is declared the winner and does not need to run again in the November general election. If no candidate in a "vote for one" contest receives a majority vote, then the top two vote-getters will be placed on the November ballot.

PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD

After the close of the filing period, anyone may examine any ballot designation and/or statement. During a 10-calendar day period commencing the day after the close of the filing period, any voter of the jurisdiction in which the election is being held or the county elections official may seek a writ of mandate or an injunction challenging any or all the material in a candidate statement or challenging the ballot designation.

Elections Code §§ 13313 & 13314

STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS (FORM 700)

Government Code § 87300 requires every agency to adopt a conflict-of-interest code. A Conflict-of-Interest Code is a document, that designates the positions within an agency, which make, or participate in making, governmental decisions, which may have a foreseeable material effect on any financial interest. Only candidates for elective office under the agency's conflict of interest code, and candidates for public office listed in Government Code § 87200, must file a Statement of Economic Interest with their nomination papers unless they filed a statement for the same jurisdiction within 60 days before filing a Declaration of Candidacy.

All information required to be disclosed per the Conflict-of-Interest Code for the office sought during the 12 months before the nomination deadline must be reported. The candidate's investments, interests in real property, and any income received during the immediately preceding 12 months are disclosed. The Form 700 is to be completed and filed with the ROV before the deadline to file a Declaration of Candidacy. **The ROV will forward the original FORM 700s submitted by County Supervisors and Superior Court Judges directly to the FPPC.** For technical questions regarding completion of Form 700, please contact the FPPC.

www.fppc.ca.gov.

Government Code §§ 87200, 87202, 87203

BALLOT DESIGNATION

BALLOT DESIGNATION GUIDELINES

Any candidate who wishes to have a ballot designation printed on the ballot must complete a Ballot Designation Worksheet. A ballot designation is **the most current** vocation, occupation, profession, or elected position title below your name on the ballot and is optional.

Elective office title: You may use an elective title if you were elected to the office and are still in that office at the time of filing. You may use the term incumbent if running for the same office. If you were appointed, you must use “Appointed Incumbent” or the word “Appointed”, and the title of the office held.

- Exception: Candidates appointed to office in lieu of an election do not have to use the word “Appointed”.

Principal occupation: You are limited to three words to describe your principal profession, vocation, or occupation. If more than one profession, vocation, or occupation is listed they must be separated by a slash “/”.

You may **not** use the following:

- Any designation that would mislead the voter
- No titles or degrees
- Any suggested evaluation, such as “Outstanding”, “Leading Expert”, “Virtuous”, or “Eminent”
- Words indicating a prior status, such as “Former” or “Ex”. You may not use the name of any political party

The ballot designation “Community Volunteer” is permissible if a candidate’s community volunteer activities constitute his or her principal profession, vocation, or occupation and the candidate is not engaged concurrently in another principal profession, vocation, or occupation. The ballot designation of community volunteer may not be used in combination with any other principal profession, vocation, or occupational designation.

Below are examples of acceptable and unacceptable ballot designations.

Elections Code § 13107

ACCEPTABLE

- Retired (must precede profession)
- Mother
- Attorney/Educator/Rancher
- Businessman/Councilmember
- Incumbent (only if elected)
- Appointed Incumbent (only if appointed)
- Attorney at Law
- Community Volunteer
(501(c)(3), educational, or governmental organization)
- City of Stockton Mayor
- County of San Joaquin Auditor-Controller

NOT ACCEPTABLE

- Ret. Policeman
- Former Sheriff
- Incumbent/Business owner
- Community Volunteer/Businessman
- Rotarian
- Activist
- Veteran
- Philanthropist
- Volunteer
- Husband/Wife

STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

The candidate's Statement of Qualifications is optional; it is entirely up to candidates to determine if they wish to pay for and submit a statement. The purpose of the Statement of Qualifications is to explain the candidate's qualifications and experience to voters.

The Statement of Qualifications is published in the County Voter Information Guide and may include the candidate's name, age, occupation, and a brief description of the candidate's education and qualifications for the office sought.

Candidates may not mention political opponents. Candidates for nonpartisan office may not reference political party affiliation or activity in a partisan political organization. If endorsements are mentioned, the candidate must submit a written authorization letter from the individual(s) and/or organization(s) named in the endorsements.

A Statement of Qualifications may be withdrawn, but not changed, during the filing period and until 5:00 p.m. of the next business day after the close of the filing period. Statements are confidential until after the close of the filing period.

Copies of all candidate statements will be available for public inspection during the ten-day public examination period of all candidate statements before submission for printing in the County Voter Information Guide.

Elections Code §§ 13307 & 13308

If the candidate is running in a multicounty district, the ROV will accept the electronic submission of the form from the candidate's county of residence.

Elections Code § 13307.7

Please note that there is a fee in each county to publish a Statement of Qualifications.

FORMATTING RULES

All statements shall be printed in a uniform size, darkness, and with uniform spacing. All statements will be set in a justified format to fit within a 1/4-page space. Generally, any characters that can be produced by a standard keyboard are acceptable (., !, @, *, -, (), %, #).

Statements may not contain bolded, capitalized, or underlined words. Entire statements or phrases in all capital letters, multiple indentations, circles, or arrows are prohibited. Indentations, bullets, or multiple underscoring are not allowed. Items in a list are not allowed.

The candidate should check the Statement of Qualifications for spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Statements with spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors will be printed precisely as submitted by the candidate. The county elections official will not make any edits.

Elections Code § 13307

WORD COUNT GUIDELINES

The Statement of Qualifications cannot exceed 200 words (250 words for candidates for legislative office who meet FPPC eligibility requirements to submit a statement). Candidates for the County Board of Education are limited to 400 words. The governing bodies of School Districts and Special Districts have the option to allow 200 or 400 words.

Elections Code § 13307

Name, age, office title, signature, and punctuation marks are not included in the final word count. Each word should be counted as one word. All proper nouns are counted as one (1) word.

Examples:

- County of San Joaquin
- City of Stockton
- San Joaquin County Delta College
- www.sjgov.org

Any numeric combination of digits, telephone numbers, and monetary amounts utilizing the dollar sign (\$) are counted as one (1) word.

Examples:

- (209) 468-8945
- \$1,000
- 2010-2025
- 1/1/2025

Abbreviations are counted as one (1) word.

Examples:

- UCLA (University of California, Los Angeles)
- CPA (Certified Public Accountant)
- UOP (University of the Pacific)
- PTA (Parent-Teacher Association)

Hyphenated words that appear in any generally available dictionary are counted as one (1) word.

Examples:

- Fast-paced
- Re-election
- Self-assured
- Check-in

Dates consisting of a combination of words and numeric digits and numbers spelled out are counted as one for each word.

Examples:

- One hundred
- One thousand dollars
- June 14, 2025
- January 5th

Elections Code § 9



STATE OF CALIFORNIA

FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES COMMISSION

Local Candidate/Committee Checklist

☐ File Form 501 (Candidate Intention)

You must file [Form 501](#) before soliciting, raising or spending any money in connection with your election. The only exception to this requirement is if you use personal funds to pay a filing fee or ballot statement fee.

Candidates Raising and Spending Less than \$2,000

☐ File Form 470 (Officeholder and Candidate Campaign Statement Short Form)

The [Form 470](#) is filed by candidates who do not have a controlled committee and do not anticipate receiving or spending \$2,000 or more, including personal funds, in a calendar year. These candidates generally do not file a Form 410 or other campaign statements or reports related to their campaign unless they receive or anticipate receiving or spending \$2,000 or more.

Candidates Raising \$2,000 or More

☐ File Form 410 (Statement of Organization)

Once you receive or spend \$2,000 or more in a calendar year, you must file a [Form 410](#) as a recipient committee within 10 days of qualifying. File the original and one copy of the Form 410 with the Secretary of State and a copy with your local filing officer. The Secretary of State's address is on the Form 410.

☐ Open a Campaign Bank Account

All monetary contributions (including all personal funds you use for your campaign) must be deposited in the campaign bank account before being spent. Never deposit campaign contributions in your personal bank account.

☐ Committee Treasurer

The Act requires that every committee appoint a treasurer. The individual listed on the most recent Form 410 with the Secretary of State continues to be legally responsible until an amendment is filed to designate a new treasurer. Please note a candidate may act as his or her own treasurer.

☐ File Campaign Statements

You must file campaign statements ([Form 460](#)) disclosing the committee's activity during a specified period. Please access the Commission's filing schedules to find the schedule that applies to you/your election. Committees are required to file campaign statements as well as other reports including semi-annual campaign statements until the committee terminates.

☐ 24-Hour Reports

Within 90 days before the election, including the date of the election, if a committee receives a contribution(s) of \$1,000 or more from a single source, including loans from the candidate, the [Form 497](#) must be filed within 24 hours.

☐ Local Campaign Contribution Limits

Make sure you are aware of any local contribution limits before accepting contributions.

☐ After the Election

Following the election, your duty to file campaign statements continues until your committee terminates. In order to terminate, you must file a Form 460 with your local filing officer reporting a zero balance AND a Form 410 indicating the termination with the Secretary of State's Office and a copy with your local filing officer.

This factsheet provides guidance and a general overview of the rules for campaigns, but it does not replace any requirements under the [Political Reform Act](#) or [Fair Political Practices Commission Regulations](#). Information here should be used in conjunction with a careful review of the applicable laws.

NETFILE

San Joaquin County Code of Ordinances, Title 6, Division 12, Section 4 (6-12004, "Economic Filings") requires all campaign disclosure reports and documents mandated by the California Political Reform Act to be filed electronically. A filer who receives contributions totaling less than \$2,000.00 and makes expenditures totaling less than \$2,000.00 in a calendar year is exempt from this requirement, however, the filer still has the option to file electronically and is strongly advised to do so.

San Joaquin County has contracted with NetFile to be the filing platform for all local candidates, their committees, and committees supporting or opposing ballot measures to electronically submit Campaign Finance Statements.

NetFile offers tutorials covering how to effectively utilize and navigate their website. As a first step in using this service, you may find it helpful to watch the "How to Create a New Campaign NetFile User" video in the "Videos" section of the page at www.netfile.com/filer.

The screenshot shows the NetFile User Log In page. At the top is the NetFile logo. Below it is the title "NetFile User Log In" and a "Get Help for this Page" link. The login section includes fields for "E-Mail Address" and "Password", both with placeholder text "Enter Your NetFile User E-Mail Address" and "Enter Your NetFile User Password" respectively. A "Log In" button is below these fields. A link "Lost Your Password?" is also present. Below the login section are three columns of links:

- Campaign Committee Filers**
 - New Campaign Committee Filers
 - [Create a New NetFile User](#)
 - Training
 - [Request Campaign Committee Training](#)
 - FPPC Information
 - [Committee Training & Outreach](#)
 - [When & Where to File Campaign Statements](#)
 - Signature Verification
 - [Sign Pending Campaign Statements](#)
 - (For San Francisco & Berkeley Filers Only)
 - Third-Party Uploads
 - [Upload a CAL File](#)
 - Videos
 - [How to Create a New Campaign NetFile User](#)
 - [How to use the "Lost Your Password?" Feature](#)
 - [How to Use the Committee Set-Up Wizard](#)
 - Documents
 - [Create a NetFile User & Link a Campaign Account](#)
 - [How to Use Signature Verification](#)
- Form 700 (SEI) Filers**
 - New Form 700 Filers
 - [New User? Request a Password](#)
 - Videos
 - [How to use the "Lost Your Password?" Feature](#)
 - Documents
 - [FPPC Form 700 Instructions for 2022/2023](#)
 - [FPPC Form 700 Reference Pamphlet for 2022/2023](#)
 - [Current FPPC Local Gift Fact Sheet](#)
 - [Current State Gift Fact Sheet](#)
 - [Current FPPC Form 700 FAQs](#)
- Lobbyist Filers**
 - New Lobbyists
 - [Registration and Links](#)

A large black arrow points from the "Videos" section of the "Campaign Committee Filers" column towards the center of the page.

California Fair Political Practices Commission

California State Contribution Limits

(Effective January 1, 2023 - December 31, 2024)

Candidates seeking a state office and committees that make contributions to state candidates are subject to contribution limits from a single source. Effective January 1, 2021 a state campaign contribution limit will by default apply to city and county candidates when the city or county does not have laws addressing a contribution limit on such candidates. (Sections 85301 - 85303.) Contributions from affiliated entities are aggregated for purposes of the limits. (Regulation 18215.1.) The chart below shows the current limits per contributor for state offices and city and county candidates when the city or county does not have laws addressing a contribution limit on such candidates. The primary, general, special, and special run-off elections are considered separate elections. Contribution limits to candidates apply to each election. Contribution limits to officeholder and other committees apply on a calendar year basis. Contact your city or county about contribution limits for local offices. The state campaign contribution limit will by default apply to city and county candidates when the city or county does not have laws addressing a contribution limit on such candidates.

Contribution Limits to State and Local* Candidates Per Election

Candidate or Officeholder	Contributor Sources		
	Person (individual, business entity, committee/PAC)	Small Contributor Committee (see definition on page 2)	Political Party
City and County Candidates subject to Section 85301 (d)	\$5,500	\$5,500	\$5,500
Senate and Assembly	\$5,500	\$10,900	No Limit
CalPERS/CalSTRS	\$5,500	\$10,900	No Limit
Lt. Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, Treasurer, Controller, Supt. of Public Instruction, Insurance Commissioner, and Board of Equalization	\$9,100	\$18,200	No Limit
Governor	\$36,400	\$36,400	No Limit

*State campaign contribution limit will by default apply to city and county candidates when the city or county does not have laws addressing a contribution limit on such candidates.

Contributions to Other State Committees Per Calendar Year

Committee	Contributor Sources	
	Person (individual, business entity, committee/PAC)	
Committee (Not Political Party) that Contributes to State Candidates (PAC)	\$9,100	
Political Party Account for State Candidates	\$45,500	
Small Contributor Committee	\$200	
Committee Account NOT for State Candidates (Ballot Measure, PAC, Political Party)	No Limit*	

*State committees (including political parties and PACs) may receive contributions in excess of the limits identified above as long as the contributions are NOT used for state candidate contributions. (Regulation 18534.)

Contributions to State Officeholder Committees Per Calendar Year

Committee	Contributor Sources	
	Any Source (Person, Small Contributor Committee or Political Party)	Aggregate From All Sources
Senate and Assembly	\$4,500	\$75,500
CalPERS/CalSTRS	\$4,500	\$75,500
Lt. Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, Treasurer, Controller, Supt. of Public Instruction, Insurance Commissioner, and Board of Equalization	\$7,500	\$151,000
Governor	\$30,200	\$301,900

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information about outdoor advertising and political signs:

Department of Transportation (DOT)

Outdoor Advertising

1120 N. Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

Phone: (916) 654-6473

Website: www.dot.ca.gov

For information about campaign disclosures, conflict of interest disclosure, state contribution limits, or proper use of campaign funds:

Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC)

Campaign Finance Information

1102 Q Street, Suite 3000, Sacramento, CA 95811

Phone: 1 (866) ASK-FPPC (275-3772)

(Mon – Thurs, 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.)

Website: www.fppc.ca.gov

For information about the Elections Code, certified list of candidates, and statewide election results:

Secretary of State (SOS)

1500 11th Street, Room 495, Sacramento, CA 95814

Phone: Elections Division at (916) 657-2166

Phone: Political Reform Division (916) 653-6224

Website: www.sos.ca.gov

For information about committee tax status, tax-deductible contributions, or any other tax-related questions:

State Franchise Tax Board (FTB)

Customer Service

3321 Power Inn Road, Suite 250, Sacramento, CA 95826

Phone: (800) 852-5711

Website: www.ftb.ca.gov

For information regarding the electronic filing of mandated campaign statements:

NetFile

Website: www.netfile.com

Technical Support Email: filerhelp@netfile.com

There are videos and printed instructions available at <http://netfile.com/filer> which outline and demonstrate how to create your free filer account.

CAMPAIGN SERVICES & RESOURCES

REGISTRATION FORMS

For candidates and committees wishing to conduct registration drives to register voters, registration forms are available at the Registrar of Voters' Office. ID is required to request 100 or more registration forms.

COMPUTER PRODUCTS

Registered Voter File: Candidates may purchase the registered voter file on a USB drive. The file is in alphabetical sequence and can be ordered with the names of all voters in San Joaquin County or just the voters in a particular city or district. Products may be purchased at the Registrar of Voters' Office.

WALKING LISTS

All candidates are entitled to purchase indexes. These are printed lists of registered voters by precinct, listed by address, with the street names arranged alphabetically and street numbers in numerical order for each street name. Each candidate may purchase up to two copies (sets) of indexes, one for their use and one for the use of their committee. These may be a complete set, including all precincts within the district in which the candidate is running, or a partial set, including some of the precincts in the district. Walking lists may be ordered by filling out the proper form at the Registrar of Voters' Office.

ELECTRONIC MAPS

Shapefiles and PDFs with district and precinct boundaries are available.

PRINTED MAPS

Printed custom maps are available for a small fee. You can customize your map and complete your purchase at the Registrar of Voters' Office. Printed maps must be picked up at our office.

All services must be paid in advance at the time the product is requested. The candidate must fill out a written request form containing a signed declaration that the data purchased will be used only for election purposes.

PRODUCT PRICING

Vote by Mail Data	\$45.00
Voter Data	\$68.00
Printed Map	\$25.00
Custom Map	\$25.00
Electronic Map	Free
Walking List	\$0.50 per 1,000 names
USB containing ROV data	\$2.00

Products are usually available within 3-4 days of placing the order, depending on job scheduling.

MASS MAILING HANDOUT

ALL CANDIDATES OR THEIR AGENTS AT THE TIME OF FILING A DECLARATION OF CANDIDACY AND THE PROPONENTS OF A LOCAL INITIATIVE OR REFERENDUM AT THE TIME OF FILING PETITIONS SHALL BE PROVIDED A COPY OF CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE 84305 PER ELECTION CODE 16.

84305.

(a) (1) Except as provided in subdivision (b), a candidate, candidate-controlled committee established for an elective office for the controlling candidate, or political party committee shall not send a mass mailing unless the name, street address, and city of the candidate or committee are shown on the outside of each piece of mail in the mass mailing and on at least one of the inserts included within each piece of mail of the mailing in no less than 6-point type that is in a color or print that contrasts with the background to be easily legible. A post office box may be stated instead of a street address if the candidate's, candidate-controlled committee established for an elective office for the controlling candidates, or the political party committee's address is a matter of public record with the Secretary of State.

(2) Except as provided in subdivision (b), a committee, other than a candidate-controlled committee established for an elective office for the controlling candidate or a political party committee, shall not send a mass mailing that is not required to include disclosure under Section 84504.2 unless the name, street address, and city of the committee is shown on the outside of each piece of mail in the mass mailing and on at least one of the inserts included within each piece of mail of the mailing in no less than the 6-point type that is in a color or print that contrasts with the background to be easily legible. A post office box may be stated instead of a street address if the committee's address is a matter of public record with the Secretary of State.

(b) If the sender of the mass mailing is a single candidate or committee, the name, street address, and city of the candidate or committee need only be shown on the outside of each piece of mail.

(c) (1) A candidate, candidate-controlled committee established for an elective office for the controlling candidate, or political party committee shall not send a mass electronic mailing unless the name of the candidate or committee is shown in the electronic mailing preceded by the words "Paid for by" in at least the same size font as a majority of the text in the electronic mailing.

(2) A committee, other than a candidate-controlled committee established for an elective office for the controlling candidate or a political party committee, shall not send a mass electronic mailing that is not required to include a disclosure under Section 84502 or 84504.3 unless the name of the committee is shown in the electronic mailing preceded by the words "Paid for by" in at least the same size font as a majority of the text in the electronic mailing.

(d) If the sender of a mass mailing is a controlled committee, the name of the person controlling the committee shall be included in addition to the information required by subdivision (a) or (c).

(e) For purposes of this section, the following terms have the following meanings:

(1) "Mass electronic mailing" means sending more than two hundred substantially similar pieces of electronic mail within a calendar month. "Mass electronic mailing" does not include a communication that was solicited by the recipient, including, but not limited to, acknowledgments for contributions or information that the recipient communicated to the organization.

(2) "Sender" means the candidate, candidate-controlled committee established for an elective office for the controlling candidate or political party committee who pays for the largest portion of expenditures attributable to the designing, printing, and posting of the mailing which are reportable under Sections 84200 to 84216.5, inclusive.

(3) To "pay for" a share of the cost of a mass mailing means to make, to promise to make, or to incur an obligation to make, any payment: (A) to any person for the design, printing, postage, materials, or other costs of the mailing, including salaries, fees, or commissions, or (B) as a fee or other consideration for an endorsement or, in the case of a ballot measure, support or opposition, in the mailing.

(f) This section does not apply to a mass mailing or mass electronic mailing that is paid for by an independent expenditure.

(Amended by Stats. 2019, Ch. 558, Sec. 1. (AB 864) Effective January 1, 2020.

Note: This section was added on June 4, 1974, by initiative Prop. 9.)

CYBERSECURITY HANDOUT

HOW CYBERSECURITY AFFECTS CANDIDATES AND CAMPAIGNS

(Information provided in part by the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center)

Electronically maintained data, as mandated for all states by the federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA), poses unavoidable privacy risks when people register to vote. Personal information, such as date and place of birth and current residence, can be used by identity thieves, hackers, and bad actors. Such confidential information is available to candidates and campaigns under *Elections Code* § 2194. Consider how much of your personal/voter information is stored either on your computer or on someone else's system. How that data and the systems on which that data resides is kept secure? How is that data transmitted securely?

There are three core principles of cyber security: *Confidentiality, Integrity, and Availability*.

Confidentiality:

Information that is sensitive or confidential must remain protected and be shared only with appropriate users. Think of voter data as you would medical information in the healthcare environment.

Integrity:

The information must retain its integrity and not be altered from its original state.

Availability:

Information and systems must be available to those who need it and those authorized to use it. For example, voter data should be released by the registrar only to those people or political organizations authorized to see (confidentiality); the records should be well protected so that no one can change the information without authorization (integrity); and the voter's information should be available and accessible to authorized users (availability).

Type of threats:

The increasing volume and sophistication of cybersecurity threats, (i.e., targeting phishing scams, data theft, and other online vulnerabilities), demand that candidates and campaigns remain vigilant about securing their systems and information.

The average unprotected computer (i.e., does not have proper security controls in place) connected to the internet can be compromised in seconds. Thousands of infected web pages are being discovered every day. Hundreds of millions of records have been involved in data breaches. New attack methods are launched continuously and targeted at campaigns, voting, and elections.

Denial-of-service:

Refers to an attack that successfully prevents or impairs the authorized functionality of networks, systems, or applications by exhausting resources. This can affect voter's ability to access information quickly and accurately.

Social Engineering, Phishing and Spear-Phishing:

Almost every type of attack contains some kind of social engineering. The classic email “phishing” and virus scams, for example, are laden with social overtones. Phishing emails attempt to convince users they are in fact from legitimate sources, in hopes of producing even a small bit of personal or company data. Emails that contain virus-filled attachments, meanwhile, often claim to be from trusted contacts or offer media content that seems harmless, such as “funny” or “cute” videos. Some attacks rely on actual communication between attackers and victims, here the attacker convinces the user to grant access. Many people do not realize that with only a few pieces of information, such as a victim’s name, date of birth, or address, hackers can gain access to data by masquerading as legitimate users. From there it is easy to reset passwords and gain almost unlimited access.

“Scareware” – fake security software warning:

This type of scam can be particularly profitable for cybercriminals, as many users believe the pop-up warnings tell them their system is infected and are lured into downloading and paying for the special software to “protect” their system. Your vigilance in updating security software must include verifying the source!

Ransomware:

Ransomware is a type of malware that prevents you from using your computer or accessing certain files unless you pay a ransom. It often encrypts files so that they cannot be opened. Ransomware is often distributed as a Trojan (malware disguised as a legitimate file). Once installed, it may lock your computer and display a “lock screen” with a message saying you must pay a ransom to regain use of your computer. Some ransomware may allow you to use your computer but will prevent you from opening certain files. You may see a message or alert box stating your files are being held for ransom and you must pay a fee to regain access to them. The best way to deal with ransomware is to prevent it. Don’t open unknown files or downloads from untrusted websites.

Social Network Attacks, Disinformation, and Misinformation:

Social network attacks are major sources of attacks due to the volume of users and the amount of personal information that is posted. Users’ inherent trust in their online friends is what makes these platforms a prime target. For example, users may be prompted to follow a link on someone’s page, which could bring users to malicious websites or provide inaccurate information. Disinformation and misinformation are information warfare, which is an attack on intellectual infrastructure, on people themselves, on society, and on systems of information and belief. Inaccurate but persuasive news about politics regularly appears in our daily lives. The goal is not to fool people into believing any particular lie. It’s to overwhelm individuals’ ability to determine what’s true. Directing voters to a trusted source of up-to-date and accurate information is key to helping voters.

Malware, Worms, and Trojan horses:

These are spread by email, instant messaging, malicious websites, and infected non-malicious websites. Some websites will automatically download the malware without the user’s knowledge or intervention. This is known as a “drive-by download.” Other methods will require the users to click on a link or button.

Botnet and Zombies:

A *botnet*, short for *robot network*, is an aggregation of compromised computers that are connected to a central “controller.” The compromised computers are often referred to as “zombies.” These threats will continue to proliferate as the attack techniques evolve and become available to a broader audience, with less technical knowledge required to launch successful attacks. Botnets designed to steal data are improving their encryption capabilities and thus becoming more difficult to detect.

What can you do?

- Properly configure and patch operation systems, browsers, and other software programs. Use resources that are available to you such as Customer Service from your software provider or company brand.
- Use and regularly update firewalls, anti-virus, and anti-spyware programs. (Did you know that some update reminders that pop up are sometimes spoofs?)
- Use strong passwords (a combination of upper- and lower-case letters, numbers, and special characters).
- Be cautious about all communications, especially links in emails. Do not click on links even if you know the sender. Their account could have been hacked or the sender address could be spoofed (masked to look like it came from the address you trust when it didn't). If you trust the website the link appears to lead to, go to the website yourself by typing in the link with your browser.
- Allow access to systems and data to only those who need it and protect those access credentials. Always use the principle of least access and permissions.
- Consider using a dedicated system to store data rather than risking data security on systems you have no control over or are not monitored by you.

You are responsible and accountable for the security of the data provided to you by election officials.

POLITICAL SIGNS

The ROV does not have jurisdiction over the placement or removal of campaign lawn signs or other outdoor advertising within city limits. The placement of political signs is subject to local regulations, it is the candidate's responsibility to know the requirements before placing their signs.

STATE

The California Department of Transportation, Right of Way Program - Outdoor Advertising Branch, has specific requirements about political signs placed within their areas of jurisdiction. If a candidate chooses to post campaign signs, a completed Statement of Responsibility for Temporary Political Signs form must be filed with the Department of Transportation.

Political signs may be placed 90 days before the election and removed 10 days after.

CA Business and Professions Code § 5405.3 (b)

COUNTY

All political signs in unincorporated San Joaquin County shall be placed any time before an election and removed within 30 days following the conclusion of an election.

San Joaquin County Ordinance 9 § 1710.5 (c) (d)

CITIES WITHIN THE SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY

Escalon: Signs may be placed 90 days before the election and removed 5 days after.

Escalon Municipal Code § 17.42.180

Lathrop: Signs may be placed 90 days before the election and removed 7 days after.

Lathrop Municipal Code § 17.84.060

Lodi: Signs may be placed any time before the election and removed 10 days after.

Lodi Municipal Code § 17.34.070

Manteca: Signs may be placed any time before the election and removed 7 days after.

Manteca Municipal Code § 7.54.040 b (7)

Ripon: Signs may be placed 90 days before the election and removed 7 days after.

Ripon Municipal Code § 16.172.030 (L)

Stockton: Signs may be placed upon filing for office and removed 7 days after an election.

Stockton Municipal Code § 16.76.040 (D)

Tracy: Signs may be placed 45 days before the election and removed 5 days after.

Tracy Municipal Code § 10.08.4460 (f)

Public Utilities prohibit the posting of signs on their property including telephone poles.

CITY CLERKS

City of Escalon

2060 McHenry Avenue, Escalon, CA 95320

Phone: (209) 691-7400

Email: cityclerk@cityofescalon.org

Website: www.cityofescalon.org

City of Lathrop

390 Towne Centre Drive, Lathrop, CA 95330

Phone: (209) 941-7230

Email: website_cco@ci.lathrop.ca.us

Website: www.ci.lathrop.ca.us

City of Lodi

221 W. Pine Street, Lodi, CA 95240

Phone: (209) 333-6702

Email: cityclerk@lodi.gov

Website: www.lodi.gov

City of Manteca

1001 W. Center Street, Manteca, CA 95337

Phone: (209) 456-8000

Email: mayorcouncilclerk@ci.manteca.ca.us

Website: www.ci.manteca.ca.us

City of Ripon

259 N. Wilma Avenue, Ripon, CA 95366

Phone: (209) 599-2108

Email: cityclerk@cityofripon.org

Website: www.cityofripon.org

City of Stockton

425 N. El Dorado Street, Stockton, CA 95202

Phone: (209) 937-8458

Email: city.clerk@stocktonca.gov

Website: www.stocktonca.gov

City of Tracy

333 Civic Center Plaza, Tracy, CA 95376

Phone: (209) 831-6105

Email: cityclerk@cityoftracy.org

Website: www.cityoftracy.org

ELECTION OBSERVERS

GENERAL RULES FOR ELECTION OBSERVERS

The number of observers may be limited so as not to interfere with the process. Operations will continue as scheduled whether or not observers are present. Observers who fail to follow these rules will be required to leave the facility for the day.

1. Discussion of politics, campaigns, or candidates is **not** allowed among observers within the facility or at polling places. This is considered a form of electioneering.
2. Observers shall **not** interfere with the orderly processing of Vote by Mail (VBM) ballot return envelopes or processing and counting of VBM ballots, including touching or handling of the ballots or envelopes.

Elections Code § 15104e

3. Observers will be permitted access to a designated observation area, sufficiently close to observe and challenge whether individuals handling VBM ballots are following established procedures.

Elections Code § 15104d

4. Challenges shall be discontinued if the challenge process unduly impedes or interferes with the verification process.
5. Briefcases, purses, backpacks, cell phones, cameras, radios, and recording devices are not allowed. You may not use your cell phone in the building.
6. Observers may not assist in operations, touch, or handle ballots or other election-related materials or equipment.
7. All questions concerning the election process must be directed only to Management, Assistant Registrar of Voters, or Registrar of Voters.
8. Observers are prohibited from physical contact with employees.
9. Observers are to hold conversations outside the designated work areas.
10. Observers must remain in the area they were assigned to. If observers are found unsupervised in an area that was not assigned, the observer will be escorted from the building.

POST-ELECTION ACTIVITIES

BALLOT RETURN

After the close of polls on election night, election activities focus on completing necessary procedures and forms, as well as delivering voted ballots and supplies from all polling places to the receiving centers.

ELECTION NIGHT RESULTS

Election results for San Joaquin County will be available to candidates and the public on the department's website (www.sjcrov.org) after the close of polls on Election Day.

On rare occasions, the government by court order may extend the voting period after 8:00 p.m., delaying the initial release of results. If this occurs, a notice will be posted on our website providing details of the court-ordered actions.

SEMI-OFFICIAL ELECTION RESULTS

Following election night, updated semi-official results will be posted Monday, Wednesday, and Friday **after 5:00 p.m.**, both at the election's office and on our website until the completion of the official canvass.

COMPLETION OF OFFICIAL CANVASS

A certified statement of election results must be completed within 30 days of the election, or 28 days for primary elections.

RECOUNTS

Requests for recounts for statewide offices and propositions are filed with the Secretary of State.

Elections Code § 15621

Following the completion of the official canvass, any voter may, within 5 days, file with the Registrar of Voters a written request for a recount of the votes cast. The request shall specify on behalf of which candidate or position on a measure it is filed. If the election is conducted in more than one county, the request for the recount may be filed with the elections official, and the recount conducted within, any or all of the affected counties.

Elections Code § 15620

Any voter or campaign committee requesting a recount is required to deposit the costs for recount each day before the counting board commences recount activity. The request may specify the order in which the precincts shall be recounted, and the method of a recount. All recount activity shall be conducted publicly. If the recount reverses the results of the official canvass, all deposits shall be returned. If the results are not reversed, the requestor shall be entitled to a return of funds more than the actual costs of conducting the recount. The requestor may terminate the recount at any time.

Elections Code §§ 15620, 15621, 15624, 15627

For more information on court-ordered recounts, grounds, probable cause, etc. refer to *Elections Code § 15640*.

