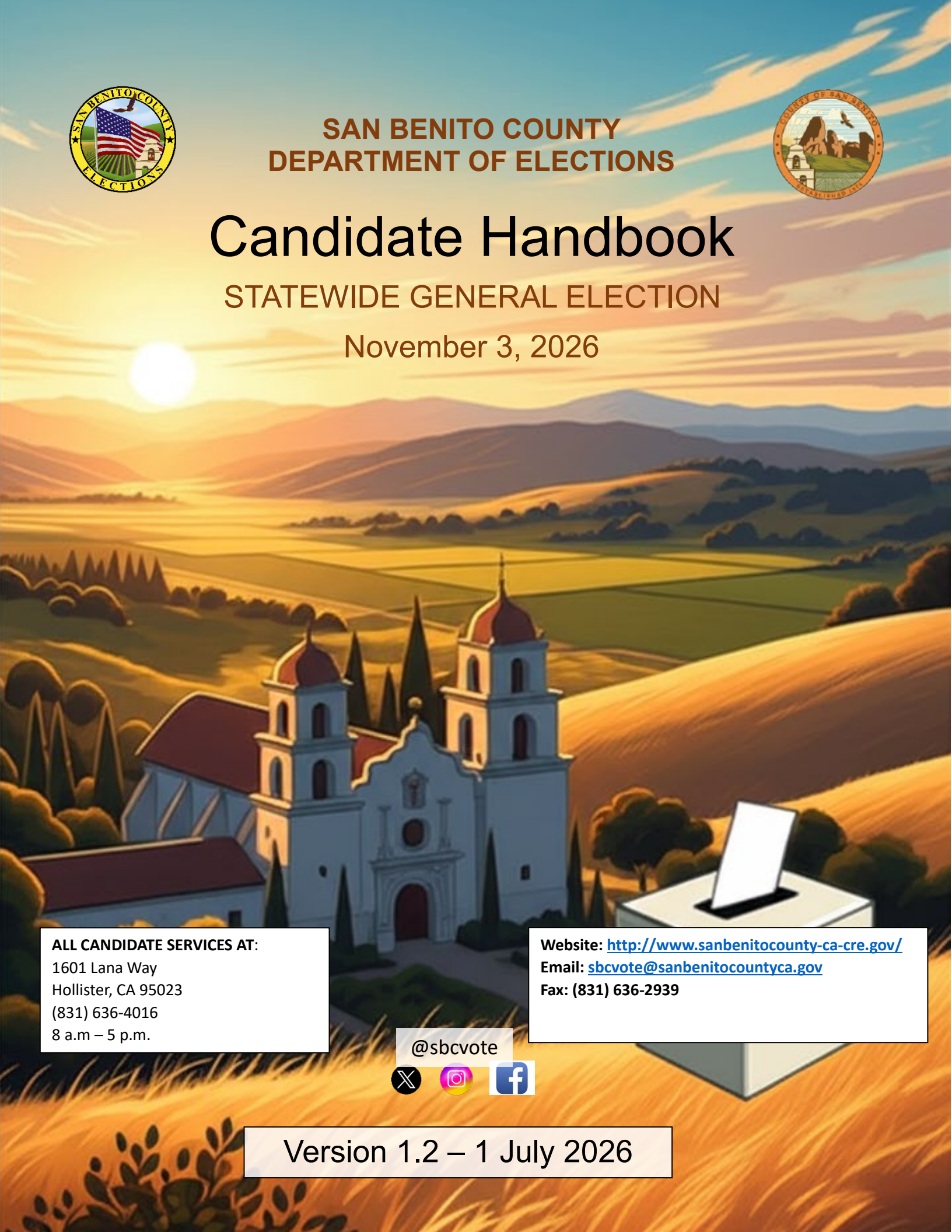

SAN BENITO COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF ELECTIONS

Candidate Handbook

STATEWIDE GENERAL ELECTION

November 3, 2026

ALL CANDIDATE SERVICES AT:
1601 Lana Way
Hollister, CA 95023
(831) 636-4016
8 a.m – 5 p.m.

Website: http://www.sanbenitocounty-ca-cre.gov/
Email: sbcvote@sanbenitocountyca.gov
Fax: (831) 636-2939

@sbcvote

Version 1.2 – 1 July 2026

Francisco Diaz
County of San Benito
County Clerk-Recorder
Registrar of Voters

A MESSAGE FROM FRANCISCO DIAZ

Dear Candidate,

Congratulations on your decision to seek office in the upcoming November 3, 2026, Statewide General Election. Your candidacy provides voters a choice and is crucial to the democratic process.

This candidate handbook summarizes major provisions of the California Elections Code and other laws related to candidates and committees involved in the elections process. We designed this guide to help simplify what may seem to be a complicated process, as well as to provide answers to the most-asked questions in a single place. If you don't find the information you seek, we have a team of dedicated and knowledgeable staff ready to answer your questions and assist with the process.

More information about the upcoming elections and additional resources about running for office are available on our website at www.sanbenitocounty-ca-cre.gov, the Secretary of State's website at www.sos.ca.gov, and the California Fair Political Practices Commission website at www.fppc.ca.gov.

Please note that while we make every effort to include as much information as we can, this guide is not intended to be a legal reference. For your own protection, we recommend that you consult with your attorney if you have specific legal questions.

Running for office is one of the most civic-minded things you can do. The upcoming 2026 election will be significant. The more citizens that become involved in representing and defending our residents' needs, the better for our communities, our County, and our democracy!

I want to thank you personally and on behalf of the residents of San Benito County.

Thank you for stepping up and taking a personal interest in contributing to this important civic process!

All the best to you in your campaign.

Francisco Diaz
County Clerk-Recorder / Registrar of Voters
San Benito County

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Change Log

Date	Name	What Changed
July 1 2026	Version 1	Initial Release

Section 1 - OFFICES UP FOR ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 3, 2026

For Voter-Nominated offices, the top-two candidates from the June election shall appear on the ballot.

Voter-Nominated Offices

Office	Jurisdiction	Term
Governor	Statewide	4 years, commencing Jan 4, 2027
Lieutenant Governor		
Secretary of State		
Controller		
Treasurer		
Attorney General		
Insurance Commissioner		
Member, State Board of Equalization	District 2	4 years, commencing Jan 4, 2027
U.S. Senate	Federal	6 years, commencing Jan 4, 2027 (noon)
U.S. Representative in Congress	18th District	2 years, commencing Jan 4, 2027
Member of State Assembly	29th District	2 years, commencing Dec, 7, 2026
Superintendent of Public Instruction	Statewide	4 years, commencing Jan 4, 2027

County Offices

County Offices

Office	Jurisdiction	Term
Board of Supervisor (District 5)	By District	2 years, commencing Jan 6, 2027

City Offices

Office	Jurisdiction / Office	Term	How Elected	Qualifications
Hollister	Council Member - Dist 2	4 years	By District	Registered voter within the council district at the time nomination papers were issued GC §34882
	Council Member - Dist 3			
	Mayor	2 years	At Large by City	Registered voter residing within the city limits at the time nomination papers are issued GC §34904 GC §36502
	City Treasurer	4 years		
San Juan Bautista	3 Council Members	4 years	At Large by City	Registered voter residing within the city limits at the time nomination papers are issued GC 36502

City offices file with the City Clerk of the respective city.

City of Hollister:
375 5th St.
Hollister, CA 95023

City of San Juan Bautista:
311 Second St
San Juan Bautista, CA 95045

School Districts (Elected by Trustee Area)

District	Term	How Elected	Qualifications
Boards of Education			
County Board of Education TA 3	One - 4-year term	By Trustee Area	Registered Voter of the district residing within the Trustee Area ED § 5030 ED § 72103
County Board of Education TA 4	One - 4-year term		
Fresno Board of Education - TA 4	One - 4-year term		
Community College Districts			
Gavilan Community College - TA 5	One - 4-year term	By Trustee Area	Registered Voter of the district residing within the Trustee Area
Gavilan Community College - TA 7	One - 4-year term		
Hartnell Community College - TA 7	One - 4-year term		
West Hills Community College - TA 1	One - 4-year term		
Unified, High School and Elementary School Districts			
Coalinga-Huran Unified - TA C1	One - 4-year term	By Trustee Area	Registered Voter of the district residing within the Trustee Area ED § 5030 ED § 72103
San Benito Joint Union High - TA 2	One - 4-year term		
San Benito Joint Union High - TA 3	One - 4-year term		
San Benito Joint Union High - TA 4	One - 4-year term		
Aromas-San Juan Unified - TA 3	One - 4-year term		
Aromas-San Juan Unified - TA 4	One - 4-year term		
Hollister - TA 1	One - 4-year term		
Hollister - TA 3	One - 4-year term		-
Hollister - TA 5	One – 4-year term		-

School Districts (Elected at Large)

District	Term	How Elected	Qualifications
South Monterey County High School	Three - 4-year terms	At Large by District	Registered Voter of the district ED § 35107
Bitterwater-Tully	Three - 4-year terms		
Cienega Union	Three - 4-year terms		
Jefferson	Three - 4-year terms		
North County Joint Union	Two - 4-year terms		
Panoche	Two - 4-year terms		
Southside	Three - 4-year terms		
Tres Pinos Union	One – 2-year term Three - 4-year terms		
Willow Grove Union	Two - 4 year term		

Water Districts

District	Term	How Elected	Qualifications
Aromas	Three - 4-year terms	At Large	Registered Voter of the district Water Code 30500
San Benito County - Division 1	One - 4-year term	By Division	Registered Voter of the Water District residing within the division Water Code 30735
San Benito County - Division 4	One - 4-year term		
Sunnyslope County, Division 2	One - 4-year term		
Sunnyslope County, Division 4	One -4-year term		
Sunnyslope County, Division 5	One - 4-year term		
Sunnyslope County	One – 2-year term	At Large	Registered Voter of the district Water Code 30500
Tres Pinos	Two - 4-year terms		

Special Districts

District	Term	How Elected	Qualifications
Aromas Tri-County Fire District	Three - 4-year terms	At Large	Registered voter of the District Health & Safety Code 13841
San Benito Health Care District -Zone 2	One - 4-year term	By Zone	Registered voter of the Zone Health & Safety Code 32100
San Benito Health Care District - Zone 4	One - 4-year term		
San Benito Health Care District - Zone 5	One – 2-year term		

Section 2 - FEES

1. **Filing Fees**: No filing fee is required for offices for which no fixed compensation is payable, or for which the annual salary is $2,500 or less. Only the office of County Supervisor, District 5 has a filing fee for this election.
2. **Candidate Statement Fees**: This is a voluntary fee for printing and translation of your 'Candidate Statement of Qualifications' in the Voter information Guide.
3. **Fees for Voter/Election Information**: Candidates and campaigns can purchase a variety of voter and election information for campaign purposes. A specific form is required, and the fees vary based on the requested information.

Filing Fees

County Offices

Office	Salary	Filing Fee	Sig-In-Lieu **	Value Per Sig. **	Nom. Sigs
Board of Supervisors (Dist. 5)	$100,181.13	$1,001.81 (1%)	86	11.64895	20-40

** The length of time to obtain signatures and the number and value of each has been adjusted to account for reduced timeframe due to the vacated office.

Candidate Statement Fees

Candidate Statement Fees are based upon the size of the statement and the number of voters the statement will be sent to. For a full description of the cost formula, please see the section Cost of Printing Candidate's Statements beginning on page 39.

US REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS - PAID TO SBC ELECTIONS			
DISTRICT	WORD LIMIT	VOTERS	COST OF STATEMENT - Printed & Online
18th Congressional	250	39,904	$2,395.20

STATE LEGISLATIVE OFFICES - PAID TO SBC ELECTIONS			
DISTRICT	WORD LIMIT	VOTERS	COST OF STATEMENT - Printed & Online
29th Assembly	250	39,904	$2,395.20

COUNTY OFFICES - PAID TO SBC ELECTIONS			
DISTRICT	WORD LIMIT	VOTERS	COST OF STATEMENT - Printed & Online
Supervisor, District 5	200	7,658	$632.90

CITY OFFICES - PAID TO THE APPROPRIATE CITY CLERK			
DISTRICT	WORD LIMIT	VOTERS	COST OF STATEMENT - Printed & Online
Hollister Mayor	200	24,260	$1,463.00
Hollister City Treasurer	200	24,260	$1,463.00
Hollister City Council, District 2	200	5,378	$518.90
Hollister City Council, District 3	200	5,913	$545.65
San Juan Bautista City Council	200	1,406	$320.30

** Per City of Hollister Ordinance 1250, the City of Hollister will pay for the candidate statement of any Hollister City Council Candidate.

SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICES - PAID TO SBC ELECTIONS			
DISTRICT	WORD LIMIT	VOTERS	COST OF STATEMENT - Printed & Online
Fresno County Board of Education, TA 4	200	1	$250.05
San Benito County Board of Education, TA 3	200	6,870	$593.50
San Benito County Board of Education, TA 4	200	10,572	$778.60
Gavilan Joint Community College TA 5	200	15,536	$1,026.80
Gavilan Joint Community College TA 7	200	19,693	$1,234.65
Hartnell Community College	200	66	$253.30
West Hills Community College	200	1	$250.05

SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICES Cont. - PAID TO SBC ELECTIONS			
DISTRICT	**WORD LIMIT**	**VOTERS**	**COST OF STATEMENT - Printed & Online**
Coalinga-Huron School	200	1	$250.05
Aromas-San Juan School, TA 3 ***	200	715	$285.75
Aromas-San Juan School, TA 4 ***	200	1,152	$307.60
San Benito High School, TA 2	200	6,418	$570.90
San Benito High School, TA 3	200	6,673	$583.65
San Benito High School, TA 4	200	6,080	$554.00
Hollister School, TA 1	200	5,570	$528.50
Hollister School, TA 3	200	5,199	$509.95
Hollister School, TA 5	200	7,483	$624.15
South Monterey High School	200	66	$253.30
Bitterwater-Tully Union School	200	66	$253.30
Cienega Union School	200	109	$255.45
Jefferson School	200	88	$254.40
North County School	200	2,223	$361.15
Panoche School	200	62	$253.10
Southside School	200	1,584	$329.20
Tres Pinos School	200	535	$276.75
Willow Grove School	200	195	$259.75

*** Per resolution 2627-03, the Aromas-San Juan School district will pay for the Candidate Statement of any Aromas-San Juan School Trustee candidate.

WATER DISTRICT OFFICES - PAID TO SBC ELECTIONS			
DISTRICT	WORD LIMIT	VOTERS	COST OF STATEMENT - Printed & Online
Aromas	200	1,191	$309.55
San Benito County, Division 1	200	8,289	$664.45
San Benito County, Division 4	200	10,037	$751.85
Sunnyslope County, Division 2	200	3,386	$419.30
Sunnyslope County, Division 4	200	4,216	$460.80
Sunnyslope County, Division 5	200	3,719	$435.95
Sunnyslope County, Short Term	200	15,761	$1,038.05
Tres Pinos	200	141	$257.05

SPECIAL DISTRICT OFFICES - PAID TO SBC ELECTIONS			
DISTRICT	WORD LIMIT	VOTERS	COST OF STATEMENT - Printed & Online
Aromas Tri-County Fire	200	1,472	$323.60
San Benito Health Care, Zone 2	200	6,203	$560.15
San Benito Health Care, Zone 4	200	9,984	$749.20
San Benito Health Care, Zone 5	200	7,658	$632.90

Section 3 - CALENDARS

Summary Filing Calendar - Candidates

It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that all filing requirements and deadlines have been met. All candidates are urged to file the required documents as early as possible to avoid a last-minute rush, confusion, or misunderstanding. For City offices, papers are obtained from and filed in the appropriate City Clerk's office. For all other offices, unless otherwise noted (Δ), all papers are obtained from and filed in the San Benito County Elections Department. The elections department can assist potential candidates over the phone or via email prior to coming into the office to finish candidate procedures.

DOCUMENT	APPLIES TO	FILING PERIOD
Candidate Pre-Registration	**Optional** All Candidates who wish to request nomination paperwork be emailed or mailed to the candidate prior to completing the Declaration of Candidacy	Jun 29 - Aug 7
Signature In-Lieu Petition	Optional for Board of Supervisor Candidates	Jun 29* - Jul 8 at 5pm (to E-118)
Nomination Documents (Declaration of Candidacy, Nomination Papers)	ALL Candidates	Jul 13 - Aug 7 at 5pm *(E-113 to E-88)*
Statement of Economic Interests (Form 700) Δ	All candidates *(Excludes Federal Candidates)*	
Code of Fair Campaign Practices	**Optional** for All Candidates	
Candidate's Statement of Qualifications	**Optional** for All Candidates (County Voter Information Guide)	Filed no later than 5pm on Aug 7. (*Aug 12 if extended*)
Extension of Nomination Period	Only applicable if the incumbent fails to file and qualify during the regular Nomination Filing Period	Aug 10 - Aug 12 at 5pm *(E-87 to E-83)*
Campaign Disclosure Statements (FPPC Forms) Δ	All Candidates (Excludes Federal & Central Committee Candidates)	Refer to www.FPPC.CA.gov & Section 6 on page 46

* Duration reduced and signatures in lieu values adjusted.

Δ Filed using eDisclosure (Form 700) or eCampaign (FPPC). We can assist with creating an account and filing.

Summary Filing Calendar - Measures

Listed below are the filing deadlines related to County, School and Special district measures to be placed on the ballot for the November 3, 2026 Statewide General Election. It is the responsibility of the measure's proponents and opponents to ensure that all filing requirements and deadlines have been met. All deadlines are for the date listed, by 5pm. Word text should be submitted to sbcvote@sanbenitocountyca.gov and filing can be completed in person by 5pm.

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Measure Text	Governing body of a district, city, school or other political subdivision which requests to place a measure on the November 3, 2026 ballot.	Aug 7 at 5pm
Tax Rate Statement for Bond Measures	**Optional** if measure is a Bond Measure. Filed by Governing body requesting the measure	Aug 7 at 5pm
Arguments Due for Measures	Opponents and Proponents of Measure	Aug 7 at 5pm
10-day Public Inspection for Local Measures on the Ballot	Public	Aug 8 - Aug 17 at 5pm
10-day Public Inspection for Arguments	Public	Aug 8 - Aug 17 at 5pm
Deadline for Filing Rebuttals to Measure Arguments	Opponents and Proponents of Measure	Aug 18 at 5pm
Impartial Analysis for Measures	County or City Counsel	Aug 18 at 5pm
Fiscal Analysis of measures.	County Auditor, if previously directed by the Board of Supervisors	Aug 18 at 5pm
10-day Public Inspection for Rebuttals and Analysis	Public	Aug 19 - Aug 30 at 5pm

Detailed Calendar - Statewide General Election

All code sections are the California Elections Code, unless otherwise noted.

June 22, 2026 To August 7, 2026	**Candidate Pre-Registration** During this period, candidates may request to receive Nomination Paperwork (except the Declaration of Candidacy) via email or US Postal mail. This pre-registration can be used, to help us prepare your full set of preliminary nomination papers prior to arriving at the San Benito County Department of Elections, to sign the Declaration of Candidacy. All paperwork sent to the candidate must be completed, signed, and returned with wet, original signatures. Click here for the pre-registration form.
June 29, 2026 To July 8, 2026 *(to E-113)*	**Signatures-in-Lieu of Filing Fees – Supervisor, District 5 only** Between these dates, candidates who must pay filing fees, may obtain signature-in-lieu forms from the county elections official or the Secretary of State for circulating petitions to secure signatures-in-lieu of paying all or part of the filing fee. Signatures may also be applied to the nomination signature requirements for office. * Vacancy created adjusted start date for this election only. §8061, 8105, 8106
June 29, 2026 To July 13, 2026 *(E-127 to E-113)*	**Cities Publish Election Notice** Between these dates, any city that is consolidating an election with the November General will publish a Notice of Election one time in a newspaper of general circulation stating: • The date and polling hours of the election • Any offices to be filled and any measure to be voted on, including a synopsis of each measure. §12101, 12111
July 1, 2026 *(E-125)*	**Special Districts & Cities Deliver Notice of Election to County Clerk** Last day for district secretaries and City Clerks to deliver Notice of Election listing the elective offices to be filled, along with terms, and any measure (if known at the time) to be voted on and to deliver a map of the District or City to the Elections Department. Cities and special districts should include in the notice, how a tie vote will be resolved. §10509, 10522, 15651
July 3, 2026	**County Holiday Office Closed - Independence Day (observed)**
July 3, 2026 *(E-123)*	**Schools to Deliver Specifications of the Election Order** Last day for a school board to deliver a resolution known as the "Specifications of the Election Order" and file it with the county Superintendent of Schools and county elections official, stating the date and purpose of the election. Ed. Code §5322 A clause to determine a tie vote is included in the "Specifications of the Elections Order". Ed. Code §5016
July 6, 2026 To August 5, 2026 *(E-120 to E-90)*	**County Publishes Notice of Election** Between these dates the County Clerk, as a matter of policy, will publish a Notice of Election containing the date of the election, the offices to be filled, where nomination papers are available, and the deadline for filing Declarations of Candidacy. Notice of central counting place may be combined with this notice. §12112

July 13, 2026 **To** **August 7, 2026** *(E-113 to E-88)*	**Declarations of Candidacy & Nomination Papers – All Candidates** Between these dates, candidates must file their Declaration of Candidacy and Nomination Papers. §333, 8020, 8040, 8062-8064, 8100, 13107.3
July 13, 2026 **To** **August 7, 2026** *(E113 to E-88)*	**Candidate's Statement of Qualifications – Local County, State Legislative & Congressional Candidates** Between these dates, candidates for local offices may prepare a statement of qualifications, not to exceed 200 words, to be included in the Voter's Information Guide. State Legislative and Congressional offices who qualify under Proposition 34 may prepare a statement not to exceed 250 words. The statement shall be filed and paid for (exception: City of Hollister) no later than 5pm on August 7, 2026 or August 12, 2026 if the office is extended. The statement may not be changed but may be withdrawn up to 5 p.m. on August 10th if the contest closes on the 7th, or August 13th if the contest closes on 12th after the extension period. Gov Code §85601(c), E.C. §13307, 13307.5, 13311
July 13, 2026 **To** **August 7, 2026** *(E-113 to E-88)*	**Statement of Economic Interests (Form 700) – FPPC Filing All Candidates (EXCEPT U.S. Senate & Congress)** Between these dates, candidates filing their Declaration of Candidacy for the election; must also file statements of economic interests disclosing their investments, interests in real property, and any income received during the preceding 12 months. The statement is not required if the candidate has filed such a statement within the past 60 days for the same jurisdiction. Gov. Code §87200, E.C. 87201, 87500
July 15, 2026 *(E-111) Date set by SoS*	**Statewide Candidate Statements Due** Last day for candidates running for statewide offices who have agreed to voluntary expenditure limits to purchase a 250-word candidate statement in the Official State Voter Information Guide. Statements must be filed with the Secretary of State. Gov. Code § 85601(a); E.C. §9084(i)
July 28, 2026 *(E-98)*	**Change of Candidate's Ballot Designation – Runoff or Top 2 Primary Candidates Only** Last day for candidates to request in writing to both the Secretary of State and Elections Department that a different ballot designation be used for the November election than the designation used at the March primary election. §13107(h)
August 5, 2026 *(E-90)*	**Political Signs** First day political signs may be posted. Signs must be removed within 10 days after the election. Business & Professional Code §5405.3
August 5, 2026 **To** **November 3, 2026** *(E-90 to Election day)*	**24-hour Contribution Reports** During the 90 days immediately preceding an election and including Election Day, contributions that total in the aggregate of $1,000 or more must be reported within 24 hours to the county elections official, using the Form 497. Specific contribution types and required forms can be found on the FPPC website www.fppc.ca.gov. Gov. Code § 82036
August 7, 2026 *(E-88)*	**Deadline for Filing Tax Rate Statement for Bond Measures** Last day to file Tax Rate Statement for any bond measure appearing in the Voter Information Guide. §9401
August 7, 2026 *(E-88)*	**Last Day to Submit Resolutions of Consolidation** Final deadline for the governing body of a district, city, school or other political subdivision which requests consolidation of a local election for candidates and/or measures to file the request with the county Elections Department. §10401, 10402, 10403

August 7, 2026 *(E-88)*	**Arguments Due for Measures** The deadline to submit arguments for or against ballot measures for all jurisdictions is 5 p.m.. (Date set by RoV) §9163, 9316
August 8, 2026 **To** **August 17, 2026** *(E-87 to E-78)*	**10-day Public Inspection for Local Measures on the Ballot and Arguments** 10-day public inspection of ballot text and abbreviated ballot statements (ballot questions) will begin the day after the ballot materials are filed and continue for 10 continuous days. Documents will be on public display at the Elections Department, 1601 Lana Way, Hollister. During this period, any voter of the jurisdiction or the county elections official may seek a writ of mandate or an injunction requiring any or all of the materials to be amended or deleted. §9190, 9380
August 10, 2026 **To** **August 12, 2026** *(E-85 to E-83)*	**Extension of Nomination Period** Extension period for anyone other than the incumbent to file a Declaration of Candidacy and Nomination Petition if the incumbent did not file by August 7, 2026. This provision does not apply if there is no incumbent eligible to be elected. §8022, 8024 **NOTE: This extension does NOT apply:** 1) when there is no incumbent eligible to be re-elected.
August 12, 2026 *(E-83)*	**Insufficient Number of Nominees Special Districts** If by 5 p.m. on this day, no one has filed candidacy papers or an insufficient number of persons has filed candidacy papers to fill an office or offices, and a petition signed by 10% or 50 voters (whichever is the smaller number) has not been submitted, the elections official shall certify this fact to the supervising authority. A person who has filed a Declaration of Candidacy shall be appointed by the supervising authority at a regular or special meeting held prior to the first Monday before the first Friday in December. If no one filed, another qualified person shall be appointed by the supervising authority on or before the day of the election and shall take office and serve as if elected. §10515
August 12, 2026 *(E-83)*	**Insufficient Nominees School/County Board of Education Districts** If by 5 p.m. on this day, only one person has filed or there are no filers for the office(s) to be filed or in the case of members elected at large or by trustee areas, there are fewer than the number to be elected, and no petition is signed by 10% or 50 voters (whichever is the smaller number) an appointment will be made. The qualified person nominated shall be seated at the organizational meeting of the board, or, if an insufficient number is nominated, the governing board shall appoint as necessary at a meeting held prior to Election Day. Persons so appointed shall be seated at the organizational meeting and serve as if they had been elected. If pursuant to Section 5326 a district election is not held, the qualified person or persons nominated shall be seated at the organizational meeting of the board, or if no person has been nominated or if an insufficient number is nominated, the governing board shall appoint a qualified person or persons, as the case may be, at a meeting prior to the day fixed for the election, and such appointee or appointees shall be seated at the organizational meeting of the board as if elected at a district election. In the event no one is nominated, the governing board shall publish a notice one time in a newspaper of general circulation in the district stating the board intends to make an appointment and informing the public how to apply for the office. Ed Code. §5326, 5328, 5328.5

August 12, 2026 *(E-83)*	**Withdrawal or Amendment of Measures** Notwithstanding any other provision of law, whenever a legislative body has ordered that a measure or proposal be submitted to the voters of any jurisdiction at a special election, the order of election shall not be amended or withdrawn after the 83rd day prior to the election. The order of election shall be amended or withdrawn upon the filing of a resolution by the legislative body stating the specifics concerning the amendment or withdrawal. The resolution shall be filed with the election official not later than the 83rd day prior to the election. §9605
August 8, 2026 **To** **August 17, 2026** *(E-87 to E-78)*	**10-day Public Inspection for Arguments** 10-day public inspection of arguments file. Documents will be on public display at the San Benito County Elections Department, 1601 Lana Way, Hollister, CA During this period, any voter of the jurisdiction or the county elections official may seek a writ of mandate or an injunction requiring any or all of the materials to be amended or deleted.
August 12, 2026 *(E-83)*	**Party Endorsement List** The State Chairperson of any qualified political party may approve a written copy of the list of candidates endorsed or nominated by the party. Such a list shall be provided no later than 83 days prior to the election where the candidate for a voter-nominated office will appear on the ballot. §13302 (b)
August 13, 2026 **11 a.m.** *(E-82)*	**Randomized Alphabet Drawing** The Secretary of State shall conduct the randomized alphabet drawing to determine the order in which the candidates will appear on the general election ballot. On this same day, the County Elections Department shall conduct a randomized alphabet drawing for the offices of State Senate and Assembly. §13112
August 18, 2026 *(E-77)*	**Deadline for Filing Rebuttals and Analysis to Measures** For those jurisdictions that submitted measure information, on this date Rebuttal Arguments will be due by 5 p.m. §9167, 9317 County Counsel to submit analysis (§9160, §9313) for county and school/special district measures; City attorney to submit analysis of city measures. §9280 County Auditor, if previously directed by the Board of Supervisors, to submit fiscal analysis of measures. (Date Set by RoV) §9160
August 19, 2026 **To** **August 30, 2026** *(E-76 to E-65)*	**10-day Public Inspection for Rebuttals and Analysis** 10-day public inspection of rebuttals and analyses filed. Documents will be on public display at the San Benito County Elections Department, 1601 Lana Way, Hollister, CA.

August 27, 2026 *(E-68)*	**Certified List of Candidates - Federal and State Offices** Last day for the Secretary of State to send to each election official a certified list showing the name, office, political party or party preference, and address of every federal and state candidate entitled to receive votes within the county at the primary. §8120-8125 Last day for the Secretary of State to certify and to send to each county elections official the names of presidential candidates and chairpersons of uncommitted delegations of all parties and the names of delegate candidates who are entitled to be voted for at the primary election. §6180, 6950-6954 By this date, the Secretary of State shall also provide to county elections officials, a list of candidates arranged according to the randomized alphabet drawn previously. §8149
September 7, 2026	**County Holiday Office Closed Labor Day**
September 4, 2026 *(E-60)*	**Special (Military and Overseas) Vote-by-Mail Ballot Applications** The first day county elections officials may process applications for special vote-by-mail ballots. A request for a vote-by-mail ballot from a military or overseas voter will be deemed an affidavit of registration and an application for permanent vote-by-mail status. §300(b), 321, 3102, 3103, 3105
September 4, 2026 **To** **September 14, 2026** *(E-60 to E-50)*	**Report of Registration – 60-day County Report** During this period, county elections officials shall send to the Secretary of State a summary statement of the number of persons registered by party in their counties and in each political subdivision thereof as of September 4, 2026 §2187(c)(5).
September 7, 2026 **To** **October 20, 2026** *(E-57 to E-14)*	**Statement of Write-in Candidacy and Nomination Papers** During this period write-in candidates must file their Statement of Write-in Candidacy and Nomination Papers with the county elections official. §8601
September 19, 2026 *(E-45)*	**State Voter Information Guide Available** By this date, the Secretary of State shall furnish copies of the State Ballot Pamphlet to cities, counties, and members of the Legislature, proponents of statewide ballot measures, public libraries, and educational institutions. §9094
September 24, 2026 *Period Covered* *July 1, 2026* *to* *September 19, 2026*	**First Pre-Election Statement - FPPC Filing** Each candidate listed on the ballot must file Form 460 or Form 470. Gov. Code §84200.5, 84200.8
September 24, 2026 **To** **October 13, 2026** *(E-40 to E-21)*	**Counties Mail Sample Ballots / State Voter Information Guide Mailing** Between these dates the county elections official shall mail a Sample Ballot and Vote Center locations notice to each registered voter. Between these dates the Secretary of State shall mail state ballot pamphlets to all households in which voters were registered by Friday, October 4, 2026 (E-30) The county will do a supplemental mailing of state pamphlets to voters who register after October 4, 2026.§9094, 13303
October 5, 2026 **To** **November 3, 2026** *(E-29 to Election Day)*	**Vote-by-Mail Ballot Mailing Period & Open for Early Voting** Beginning 29 days before the election, all Active Registered Voters will be mailed a Vote-by-Mail kit. Additional mailings will occur as new voters register or update their registrations. §3000.5 Drop Boxes open and Early Voting at the Elections Department available.

October 19, 2026 *(E-15)*	**15-day Close of Voter Registration** The county elections official shall accept an affidavit of registration executed as part of a voter registration card in the forthcoming election if the affidavit is executed on or before the 15th day prior to the election, and if any of the following apply: 1. The affidavit is postmarked on or before the 15th day prior to the election and received by mail by the county elections official. 2. The affidavit is submitted to the Department of Motor Vehicles or accepted by any other public agency designated as a voter registration agency pursuant to the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (52 USC 20501) prior to the election. 3. The affidavit is delivered to the county elections official by means other than those described in paragraphs (2) and (3) on or before the 15th day prior to the election. §2119 Any person who wishes to register and vote after the 15-day close of registration may do so by delivering a valid registration form to the county elections office, or a vote center, in person. Upon verification, the voter will be allowed to vote a ballot for the election. §2170
October 19, 2026 **To** **October 27, 2026** *(E-15 to E-7)*	**Report of Registration – 15-day County Report** During this period, county elections officials shall send to the Secretary of State a summary statement of the number of persons registered by party in their counties and in each political subdivision thereof as of October 19, 2026. §2187(a)(c) &(d)(2)
October 22, 2026 *Period Covered* *September 20, 2026* *To* *October 17, 2026*	**Second Pre-Election Statement – FPPC Filing** The last day to file campaign statements for candidates and committees. Gov. Code §84200.5, 84200.8
October 24, 2026 **To** **November 2, 2026**	**11-day In Person Early Voting (Vote Centers)** The San Benito County Elections Office, and SJB Community Center, will be open from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm, for In-person voting and vote-by-mail drop off. §4005(4)(A)
October 31, 2026 **To** **November 2, 2026**	**4-day In Person Early Voting (Vote Centers)** All five Vote Centers will be open from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm, for In-person voting and vote-by-mail drop off. Vote Centers will be open from 7:00 am – 8:00 pm on Election Day. Locations available at: www.sanbenitocounty-ca-cre.gov/VotingLocations or by calling our office at 831-636-4016. §4005(3)(A)
November 3, 2026	**STATEWIDE GENERAL ELECTION DAY** Vote Centers open at 7 a.m. Vote Centers and drop boxes close at 8 P.M. §1000
November 3, 2026 **08:00 PM**	**Semi-Official Canvass of Votes Cast** Beginning at 8:00 pm, after the close of the polls, and continuously until all voting precincts are reported, the county election official shall begin releasing election results and will continuously update election night results and report totals to the Secretary of State approximately every hour. §15150, 15151
November 5, 2026 **To** **December 3, 2026**	**Official Canvass** The official canvass of precinct returns is to be completed during this time. (E+2 to E+30) §15301, 15372
November 11, 2026	**County Holiday Office Closed - Veterans Day**

November 10, 2026 *(E+7)*	**Vote-by-Mail Ballots Returned Via Post Office - Deadline** Vote-by-Mail ballots that are postmarked on or before Election Day or is time stamped or date stamped by a bona fide private mail delivery company on or before Election Day and received by the county elections official no later than seven days after the election, shall be considered received on time. If the ballot has no postmark, a postmark with no date, or an illegible postmark, the vote by mail ballot identification envelope must be signed and dated by the voter pursuant to section 3011 on or before Election Day in order to be considered received on time. §3017, 3020
November 13, 2026 *(E+10)*	**Political Signs Removed** By this date, Political Signs must be removed. Business & Professional Code §5405.3
November 26, 2026	**County Holiday Office Closed Thanksgiving**
November 27, 2026	**County Holiday Office Closed Thanksgiving**
After Canvass	**Elections Official signs Certified Statement of Vote – Presents to the Board of Supervisors** The elections official shall prepare a certified statement of the results of the election and submit it to the appropriate governing body within 30 days of the election. §15372
December 4, 2026 *(E+31)*	**Statement of Results to Secretary of State** By this date, the county elections official shall send to the Secretary of State, in an electronic format, one complete copy of the returns for all candidates voted for at the election, including U.S. Senator, U.S. Representative in Congress, State Senator, and Member of the Assembly, and for all statewide ballot measures. §15374, 15375
After Canvass	**Certificates of Election or Nomination to be prepared** The governing body shall declare elected or nominated to each office voted on at each election under its jurisdiction the person having the highest number of votes for that office, or who was elected or nominated under the exceptions noted in Section 15452. The governing board shall also declare the results of each election under its jurisdiction as to each measure voted on at the election. The elections official shall make out and deliver to each person elected or nominated, as declared by the governing body, except those elected to a central committee, a certificate of election or nomination, signed and authenticated by the elections official. 15400-15401 Immediately upon completion of the canvass of vote, the election official is responsible to issue certificates of nomination to candidates nominated for nonpartisan offices voted for wholly within one county. §8145, 8146 The Secretary of State will prepare certificates of nomination for Congressional and Legislative candidates. §8147
5 Days After Canvass	**Recount May Be Requested** Within five (5) days after the completion of the official canvass, any voter may request a recount by filing a written request with the elections official and specifying which candidates and/or measures are to be recounted. The request may specify the order of the precincts for the recount, and the petitioning voter shall, before commencement of each day's recount, deposit such sum as the official requires covering costs. "Completion of the canvass" shall be presumed to be the time when the elections official signs the certified Statement of Vote. §15620-15634
December 25, 2026	**County Holiday Office Closed - Christmas**

Varies between 10 days to 6 months following the certification of the vote	**Contesting The Election** Any elector of a county, city, or of any political subdivision of either may contest any election held therein for any of the following grounds: • That the precinct board or any member thereof was guilty of misconduct. • That the person who has been declared elected to an office was not, at the time of the election, eligible to that office. • That the defendant has given to any elector or member of a precinct board any bribe or reward or has offered any bribe or reward for the purpose of procuring his election or has committed any other offense against the elective franchise defined in Division 18 (commencing with Section 18000). • That illegal votes were cast. • That eligible voters who attempted to vote in accordance with the laws of the state were denied their right to vote. • That the precinct board in conducting the election or in canvassing the returns, made errors sufficient to change the result of the election as to any person who has been declared elected. • That there was an error in the vote-counting programs or summation of ballot counts. §16100 The contestant shall verify the statement of contest, as provided by Section 446 of the Code of Civil Procedure, and shall file it within the following times after the declaration of the result of the election by the body canvassing the returns thereof: a) In cases other than cases of a tie, where the contest is brought on any of the grounds mentioned in subdivision (c) of Section 16100, six months. b) In all cases of tie, 20 days. c) In cases involving presidential electors, 10 days. d) In all other cases, 30 days. §16401
February 1, 2027 FPPC Period Covered October 18, 2026 through December 31, 2026	**Semiannual Campaign Statement – FPPC Filing / Supplemental Independent Expenditure Reports – FPPC Filing** Last day to file semiannual campaign statements (Form 460), if required, by all candidates and committees. For period covering 1/1/2026 to 12/31/2026. Gov. Code §84200, 84218 Last day to file supplemental independent expenditure reports (Form 496) for committees making independent expenditures of $1,000 or more in a calendar year to support or oppose a candidate or measure. Independent expenditure reports are filed at the same time and in the same places as would be required if the filer were primarily formed to support or oppose the candidate, measure, or measure qualification affected by the independent expenditure. Gov. Code §84203, 82031
Period Following Election	**Document Retention** Nomination documents and signatures in-lieu of filing fee petitions (if applicable) shall be held during the term of office for which they were filed and for four years after the expiration of the term. They may be destroyed as soon as practicable thereafter provided no legal action or proceeding is pending. Since the November 2026 Election has federal offices on the ballot, precinct supplies and voted ballots must be preserved for 22 months following the election. If no legal action is pending at the time, the documents may be destroyed or recycled. Unused ballots may be destroyed or recycled after the November 2026 Election. Initiative, referendum and recall petitions must be preserved for eight months following certification of the election for which the petition qualified or eight months after final examination of the petition by the clerk. If no legal action or proceeding is then pending, the petitions may be destroyed as soon as practicable. Elections Code Division 17, commencing with §17000

Section 4 - NOMINATION DOCUMENTS & FILING PROCEDURES

Candidate Checklist - November 3, 2026

All candidate filing documents are public at the time they are filed, except for Candidate's Statements of Qualifications that become public the first business day following the deadline to file the statements.

DOCUMENTS	APPLIES TO	FILING PERIOD	☒ Filed
Candidate Pre-Registration	**Optional** for all candidates to complete most nomination paperwork prior to an appointment in our office.	Jun 22 - Aug 7 *1	☐
Signatures-in-Lieu	**Optional** for Board of Supervisor Candidates	Jun 29*3 - Jul 8	☐
Nomination Petition (if applicable), Declaration of Candidacy & Ballot Designation Worksheet	All Candidates	Jul 13 - Aug 7 *2 *Aug 10 - Aug 12* (*Extension Period*)	☐
Candidate Statement of Qualifications	**Optional** for All Candidates *(County Voter Guide)*	No later than 5pm on Aug 7 (*Aug 12 if extended.*)	☐
Code of Fair Campaign Practices	**Optional** for All Candidates	Filed with Declaration of Candidacy	
Statement of Economic Interests (Form 700)	All Candidates *(Excludes Congressional Candidates)*		
Campaign Disclosure Statements (FPPC)	All Candidates *(Excludes Federal refer to www.fec.gov - http://www.ethics.house.gov)*	Refer to www.FPPC.ca.gov & Section 6 on page 46	☐

*1 *Candidate Pre-Registration is an online submission form that allows a potential candidate to officially request all preliminary nomination paperwork to be Emailed or mailed to the candidate. The candidate may then complete and sign the paperwork prior to coming to our office. Preliminary nomination paperwork for submissions made prior to July 13, 2026 will be mailed to the candidate on July 13, 2026.*

*2 *5-day extension occurs for all candidates except the incumbent, only if the incumbent fails to file. Extension period, if applicable, ends August 12.*

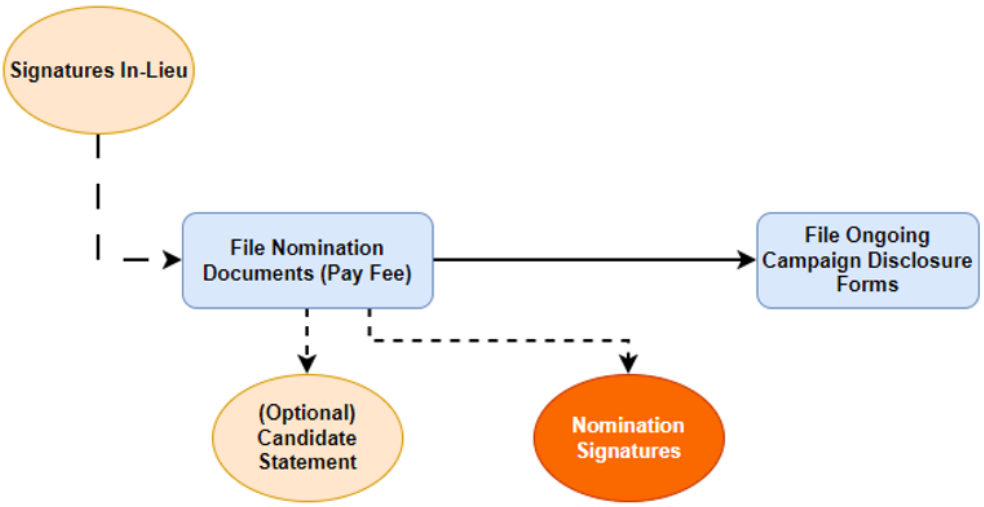
*3 *Vacancy in District 5 supervisor created shortened period. Values have been adjusted.*

Nomination Process Overview

Optional Step Required Step Required only for City Offices and Supervisor District 5.

Required path Optional Path May be required

Standard Nomination Process



Write-In Campaign

Signatures. All city offices require nomination signatures. These may be gathered via the Nomination Signatures phase. Requires official forms provided by the respective City Clerk's office.

Nomination Documents: There are several documents required at the time of filing. The deadlines are set by law. Refer to the Candidate Checklist.

Candidate Statement: To include the candidate's statement in the Voter Information Guide, it must be provided and paid for no later than 5pm on August 7, 2026, or 5pm on August 12, 2026 if the nomination period is extended. For more information, refer to Section 5 on page 37.

Campaign Disclosure: Refer to CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS on page 46 in this handbook or visit www.fppc.ca.gov *(Federal Offices visit www.fec.gov)*.

Guidelines for Gathering Signatures

(Read prior to gathering voter signatures)

Circulators (whether the candidate or another person) perform the important duty of obtaining signatures of properly registered voters for the Nomination Petition (City Offices only). If the signatures are not obtained properly and in accordance with the law, the candidate's right to be placed on the ballot could be questioned. If filing Signature In-Lieu signatures, file no later than July 8, 2026. For Nomination Signatures (if required), the filing deadline is August 7. File as soon as possible as there will be no ability to obtain additional signatures after August 7 at 5pm.

Petition Circulator Information

AFFIDAVIT OF CIRCULATOR (ELECTIONS CODE §102 & §104): All petition circulators **must** complete, in his/her own hand:

1) The printed name of the circulator.
2) The residence addresses of the circulator, giving street and number, or if no street or number exists, adequate designation of residence so that the location may be readily ascertained.
3) The dates between which all the signatures to the petition or paper were obtained.

Each declaration submitted pursuant to this section shall also set forth the following:

1) That the circulator circulated that section and witnessed the appended signatures being written.
2) That according to the best information and belief of the circulator, each signature is the genuine signature of the person whose name it purports to be.
3) The circulator is 18 years of age or older.

The circulator shall certify the content of the declaration as to its truth and correctness, under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California, with the signature of his or her name. The circulator shall state the date and the place of execution on the declaration immediately preceding his or her signature. A candidate for any office may obtain signatures to and sign his/her own nomination petition or signature-in-lieu of filing fee petition. His/her signature will be given the same effect as that of any other qualified signer. §106

Qualified Signers

Only a person who is a registered qualified voter at the time he/she signs the nomination petition or signatures in-lieu petition is entitled to sign it. Each voter shall, at the time of signing the petition or paper, to personally affix his or her signature, printed name and place of residence, giving street and number, and if no street or number exists, then a designation of the place of residence which will enable the location to be readily ascertained. Elections Code §100

Nomination Petition Signers shall be voters in the district or political subdivision in which the candidate is to be voted on. Elections Code §8068

Circulating Within 100 Feet of a Voting Location

Signatures to a Nomination Petition or any other petition shall not be obtained within 100 feet of any election booth or polling place. Elections Code §18370

Voters May Sign Only One Paper; Exceptions

No signer shall, at the time of signing the petition, have his or her name signed to any other Nomination Petition for any other candidate for the same office. Or, in case there are several places to be filled in the same office, signed to more Nomination Petition for candidates for that office than there are places to be filled. Elections Code §8069

Validation of Signatures

The following guidelines will be used when validating signatures on nomination petitions or signature-in-lieu of filing fee petitions.

A signature is **INVALID** if the signer:

- is not registered to vote;
- provides a signature on the petition that does not compare to the signature on the voter's affidavit of registration;
- does not reside in the appropriate district
- uses a P.O. Box number for residence;
- uses a mail drop number for residence address;
- provides an address that is different from the voter's residence address on the affidavit of registration on record;
- prints his or her name for the signature, unless registered as such;
- lists her name as Mrs. John Jones (signer must use his/her own name);
- uses ditto marks for an address;
- authorizes Power of Attorney to sign on his or her behalf.

Candidate Filing Documents

Documents	**Signatures In-Lieu of Filing Fee Petition** A candidate may submit a petition containing signatures of registered voters, in-lieu of paying the filing fee required to run for office. The signatures submitted may cover all, or a portion, of the filing fee. Signers shall be voters in the district or political subdivision in which the candidate is to be voted on. With respect to any candidacy for partisan office (*President and Central Committee only*), signers shall be affiliated registered voters who disclosed a preference, pursuant to Section 2151, for the party, if any, in which the nomination is proposed. Signers need not be registered voters who disclosed a preference for any party when signing candidacy papers for a candidate seeking nomination to a voter-nominated office. Signatures in lieu of filing fee petitions may be submitted to the elections official on an on-going basis. (Administrative Code §20533) The petitions must be filed with the county elections official in the county where circulated. No additional signatures may be filed after the July 8, 2026 deadline (§8106(b)(3)). The elections official shall notify the candidate of the number of invalid signatures within 10 days of filing. Judicial candidates shall cover the deficiency by paying the balance due of the filing fee no later than the deadline for filing the Declaration of Intention. All other candidates shall cover the deficiency by paying the balance due of the filing fee no later than date of filing a Declaration of Candidacy. If a petition is submitted containing numerous duplicate signatures in order to file a larger number of signatures-in-lieu, those signatures will be disqualified and credit toward the filing fee will not be given to them. The candidate must either pay the full amount remaining of the filing fee or forfeit the opportunity to be a candidate. **That portion of the filing fee not covered by the signatures must be paid in full before the Declaration of Intention, Declaration of Candidacy or Nomination Petition may be filed.** If forms are issued as Signatures-In-Lieu Petitions, they must be returned by the deadlines listed above. DO NOT use the Signatures-In-Lieu Petitions for collecting nomination signatures during the Nomination Petition signature gathering period from July 13, 2026 to August 7, 2026. Candidates must obtain a Nomination petition during that period in order to collect any nomination signatures that may be needed. The names and addresses of candidates requesting Signature-In-Lieu Petitions is considered public information. (Elections Code §8105, 8106)
Who Files	**Optional** for All Offices that require a filing fee. (County Supervisor, District 5)
Where to File	With the San Benito County Elections Department
Deadline	Filed no later than 5 p.m. on: July 8, 2026

Documents	**Nomination Papers (Petition) – City Offices and County Supervisor, District 5** The Nomination Petition consists of a petition that must contain anywhere from 20-40 valid signatures. The petition may be obtained and filed prior to filing the Declaration of Candidacy. We recommend that all nomination documents be filed at the time the Nomination Petition is filed. The Nomination Petition may be issued by the appropriate City Clerk's Office. No more signers shall be secured for any candidate than the maximum specified in this handbook. If, however, through miscalculation or otherwise, more signers are secured than the maximum number, the officer with whom the nomination petitions are filed shall, with the written consent of the candidate, withdraw the excess number. Signers shall be voters in the district or political subdivision in which the candidate is to be voted on. No signer shall, at the time of signing a certificate, have his or her name signed to any other nomination petition for any other candidate for the same office or, in case there are several positions to be filled in the same office, signed to more nomination petition for candidates for that office than there are places to be filled. Elections Code §8020, 8041, 8062-8070, 8081
Who Files	All candidates for City Offices and County Supervisor, District 5
Where to File	San Benito County Elections Department: Supervisor, District 5 With the appropriate City Clerk: All City Offices
Deadline	Filed when the Declaration of Candidacy is filed. No later than August 7
	Extended, ONLY if the incumbent fails to file. Extensions are by office and do NOT apply to any incumbents. Deadline: August 12 NOTE: This is no incumbent for Supervisor, District 5, therefore there will be no extension period.

Documents	**Declaration of Candidacy & Ballot Designation Worksheet – All Candidates** The Declaration of Candidacy is the official nomination document, wherein the candidate indicates how his/her name and ballot designation is to appear on the ballot. Additionally, the candidate declares that he/she meets the statutory and/or constitutional qualifications for the office sought, and that if nominated, the candidate will accept the nomination and not withdraw. The Oath of Office on the Declaration of Candidacy form must be taken and signed by the candidate before a person authorized to administer oaths. The election officials and notaries public are so authorized. A candidate for a voter-nominated office may indicate his or her party preference, or lack of party preference, as disclosed upon the candidate's most recent statement of registration, upon his or her Declaration of candidacy. If a candidate indicates his or her party preference on his or her declaration of Candidacy, it shall appear on the primary and general election ballot in conjunction with his or her name. The candidate's designated party preference on the ballot shall not be changed between the primary and general election. A candidate for voter-nominated office may also choose not to have the party preference disclosed upon the candidate's most recent affidavit of registration indicated upon the ballot. The candidate is required to execute the Declaration of Candidacy in the office of the elections official, unless a written statement is signed and dated by the candidate designating a person to receive the Declaration of Candidacy form from the elections official and deliver it to the candidate. The written statement from the candidate shall include language indicating that the candidate is aware that the Declaration of Candidacy must be properly executed and delivered to the elections official in the county of the candidate's residence by the 88th day prior to the election. Candidates that choose to list a Ballot Designation (Occupation) on the Declaration of Candidacy will be required to submit a Ballot Designation Worksheet that supports the use of that ballot designation by the candidate, in a format prescribed by the Secretary of State. This form is mandatory and must be filled out completely prior to filing the Declaration of Candidacy. Additional Information regarding Ballot Designation limitations follow in this Section "Name & Ballot Designation". If you have any questions about the rules and usage of your Ballot Designation (Occupation) please speak with an Election's Division staff member.
Who Files	All candidates
Where to File	With the San Benito County Elections Department or the appropriate City Clerk for City Offices.
Deadline	No later than August 7
	Extended, ONLY if the incumbent fails to file. Extensions are by office and do NOT apply to any incumbents. Deadline: August 12

Documents	**Candidate Statement of Qualifications** A statement by the candidate describing his or her education and qualifications to be printed in the County Voter Information Guide. Alternatively, candidates may choose to have a Candidate Statement posted online electronically only for a reduced cost. The statement must be paid for at the time of filing the Declaration of Candidacy unless the district has agreed to pay for the statement. For candidates running for offices that cross into other counties may file separate candidate statements with each county within the jurisdiction by the end of the filing period. Contact the appropriate counties for current filing fees. If the candidate chooses to file a statement in their county of residence, it must be file at the same time the Declaration of Candidacy is filed. Filed statements may be withdrawn on the first business day following the filing deadline. Candidates for US Senate may purchase space for a 250-word statement in the State Voter Guide. These statements are not filed with the local county election official. US Senate statements are filed with the Secretary of State between the state filing period. Candidates for U.S. Congress, State Senate and State Assembly may purchase space for a 250-word statement and all other local candidates may purchase space for a 200-word statement. The San Benito County Elections Department requires all candidates regardless of whether they are submitting a statement or not complete a local form. Refer to Section 5 beginning on page 37 for more information about filing a Candidate Statement of Qualifications. Elections Code §9084, 13307; Government Code §85601
Who Files	**Optional** for all Candidates **State Legislative Candidates** who agree to adhere to the spending limitations of Prop. 34 may file a statement for printing in the County Voter Information Guide. **US Senate Candidates** may file a candidate statement with the Elections Division of the Secretary of State's Office in Sacramento. **All other candidates** may file a candidate statement to be printed in the County Voter Information Guide.
Where to File	With the San Benito County Elections Department or the appropriate City Clerk for City Offices. For non-County residents only, statements may be filed and paid for, by completing the Candidate Statement Acknowledgement Form found on our website.
Deadline	Filed when the Declaration of Candidacy is filed. No later than August 7
	Extended, ONLY if the incumbent fails to file. Extensions are by office and do NOT apply to any incumbents. Deadline: August 12

Documents	**Code of Fair Campaign Practices** In 1982, legislation was passed which established a "Code of Fair Campaign Practices" in California which could be voluntarily subscribed to by candidates for public office. The code reads as follows: There are basic principles of decency, honesty, and fair play which every candidate for public office in the State of California has a moral obligation to observe and uphold in order that, after vigorously contested but fairly conducted campaigns, our citizens may exercise their constitutional right to a free and untrammeled choice and the will of the people may be fully and clearly expressed on the issues. THEREFORE: (1) I SHALL CONDUCT my campaign openly and publicly, discussing the issues as I see them, presenting my record and policies with sincerity and frankness, and criticizing without fear or favor the record and policies of my opponents or political parties that merit this criticism. (2) I SHALL NOT USE OR PERMIT the use of character defamation, whispering campaigns, libel, slander, or scurrilous attacks on any candidate or his or her personal or family life. (3) I SHALL NOT USE OR PERMIT any appeal to negative prejudice based on a candidate's actual or perceived race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, sexual orientation, sex, including gender identity, or any other characteristic set forth in Section 12940 of the Government Code, or association with another person who has any of the actual or perceived characteristics set forth in Section 12940 of the Government Code. (4) I SHALL NOT USE OR PERMIT any dishonest or unethical practice that tends to corrupt or undermine our American system of free elections, or that hampers or prevents the full and free expression of the will of the voters including acts intended to hinder or prevent any eligible person from registering to vote, enrolling to vote, or voting. (5) I SHALL NOT coerce election help or campaign contributions for myself or for any other candidate from my employees. (6) I SHALL IMMEDIATELY AND PUBLICLY REPUDIATE support deriving from any individual or group that resorts, on behalf of my candidacy or in opposition to that of my opponent, to the methods and tactics which I condemn. I shall accept responsibility to take firm action against any subordinate who violates any provision of this code or the laws governing elections. (7) I SHALL DEFEND AND UPHOLD the right of every qualified American voter to full and equal participation in the electoral process. Elections Code §20400-20444
Who Files	**Optional** for All Candidates
Where to File	With the San Benito County Elections Department or the appropriate City Clerk for City Offices.
Deadline	Filed when the Declaration of Candidacy is filed. No later than August 7
	Extended, ONLY if the incumbent fails to file. Extensions are by office and do NOT apply to any incumbents. Deadline: August 12

Documents	**Statement of Economic Interests (Form 700)** State law (the Political Reform Act of 1974) requires candidates for federal, state and county offices to disclose their interests in real property and income within the past 12 months in a Statement of Economic Interests (Form 700) to be filed with the Declaration of Candidacy. **EXCEPTION:** This statement is not required of a candidate who has filed a statement for the same jurisdiction as an officeholder within sixty (60) days prior to assuming office or filing the Declaration of Candidacy. Candidates for federal offices file under federal rather than state disclosure laws. For information, candidates for U.S. Representatives should write to: Office of the Clerk of the House of Representatives, 1036 Longworth House Office Building, Washington D.C.,(202) 225-1300. Under state law, persons filing economic interest's statements as candidates are required to disclose investments and interests in real property and income within the past 12 months. Statements of Economic Interests are public record. They may be inspected by anyone, and copies may be purchased from the filing officer for 10 cents per page. Visit Section 6 - Campaign Disclosure Statements on page 46 or the FPPC Website for more information at http://www.fppc.ca.gov/Form700.html Gov. Code §81008, 87200- 87203, 87500
Who Files	All Candidates EXCEPT Federal Offices
Where to File	With the San Benito County Elections Department or appropriate City Clerk's Office for City Offices
Deadline	Filed no later than 5 p.m. on: August 7, 2026 Extended, ONLY if the incumbent fails to file. Extensions are by office and do NOT apply to any incumbents. Deadline: August 12 at 5 p.m.

Documents	**Campaign Disclosure Statements (FPPC)** Periodic statements disclosing contributions made to and expenditures made by the candidate or committee. Must be filed at least once and possibly several times during an election cycle if more than $2,000 is raised or spent (Refer to Section 6 beginning on page 46 for detailed information): • Under $2,000 (Forms 501 & 470) • Over $2,000 (Form 501, 410 & 460) • Other forms may be required depending on your specific campaign. Government Code §84200, 84218
Who Files	All Candidates must file either a short form or a long form depending on how much money will be raised or spent.
Deadline	Refer to Section 6 beginning on page 46.

Name & Ballot Designation

Name on Ballot

The candidate states on the Declaration of Candidacy how his/her name should appear on the ballot. This should be recognizable as the name under which the candidate is registered, though the two need not be identical. Example: A candidate registered as "Jonathan William Smith" may use such variations as

- John W. Smith
- John Smith
- J. William "Bud" Smith

If a candidate changes his or her name within one year of any election, the new name shall not appear upon the ballot unless the change was made by either of the following: (a) Marriage; or (b) Decree of any court of competent jurisdiction. (Elections Code §13104)

Ballot Designation

The ballot designation is the word or group of words that will appear on the ballot under the candidate's name, designating the principal profession, vocation, or occupation of the candidate. The purpose is to ensure the accurate designation of the candidate upon the ballot in order that an informed electorate may intelligently elect one of the candidates.

A "Ballot Designation Worksheet" must be completed at the time of filing. Elec. Code §13107.3 states:

(1) A candidate who submits a ballot designation pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 13107 shall file a ballot designation worksheet that supports the use of that ballot designation by the candidate, in a format prescribed by the Secretary of State.

(2) The ballot designation worksheet shall be filed with the elections official at the same time that the candidate files his or her declaration of candidacy.

(3) In the event that a candidate fails to file a ballot designation worksheet in accordance with subdivision (a), no designation shall appear under the candidate's name on the ballot.

Ballot Designation - Legislative Requirements

The ballot designation is the word or group of words that will appear on the ballot under the candidate's name, designating the principal profession, vocation, or occupation of the candidate.

Elections Code Sections 13107, 13107.3 and 13107.5 govern the ballot designation that a candidate may use. All candidates (except candidates for Justice of the State Supreme Court or Court of Appeal) may choose a ballot designation to appear immediately under their name on the ballot. Each candidate who submits a ballot designation shall file, in addition to the nomination documents filed pursuant to §8020, a ballot designation worksheet that supports the use of that ballot designation by the candidate. The Ballot Designation Worksheet is obtained from the Elections Department.

The ballot designation must be chosen from one of the four categories below:

I. **Elective Office**: Words designating the elective city, county, district, state, or federal office which the candidate holds at the time of filing the nomination documents to which he or she was elected by a vote of the people, or to which he or she was appointed, in the case of a superior court judge.

II. **Incumbent**: The word "incumbent" may be used if the candidate is a candidate for the same office that he or she holds at the time of filing the nomination papers, and was elected to that office by a vote of the people, or, in the case of a superior court judge, was appointed to that office.

III. **3-word Profession/Occupation/Vocation**: No more than three words designating either the current principal professions, vocations, or occupations of the candidate. If there is no current position, the candidate may use the principal professions, vocations, or occupations of the candidate during the calendar year immediately preceding the filing of nomination documents. For purposes of this section, all California geographical names shall be considered to be one word. If more than one profession, vocation or occupation is listed, it shall be separated by a slash ("/").

IV. **Appointed Incumbent**: The phrase "appointed incumbent" may be used if:

1) the candidate holds an office other than a judicial office by virtue of appointment, and the candidate is a candidate for the election to the same office, or,
2) if the candidate is a candidate for election to the same office or to some other office, the word "appointed" and the title of the office.

In either instance, the candidate may not use the unmodified word "incumbent" or any words designating the office unmodified by the word "appointed." However, the phrase "appointed incumbent" shall not be required of a candidate who seeks reelection to an office that he or she holds and to which he or she was appointed, as a nominated candidate, in lieu of an election.

Community Volunteer ballot designation. (Elections Code §13107.5.)

(a) A candidate's ballot designation as "community volunteer" shall constitute a valid principal vocation or occupation for purposes of subdivision (a) of Section 13107, if not otherwise in violation of any of the restrictions set forth in that section, and subject to the following conditions:
   i. A candidate's community volunteer activities constitute his or her principal profession, vocation, or occupation.
   ii. A candidate is not engaged concurrently in another principal profession, vocation, or occupation.
   iii. A candidate may not use the designation of "community volunteer" in combination with any other principal profession, vocation, or occupation designation.

(b) The Secretary of State shall by regulation define what constitutes a community volunteer for purposes of this section.

Titles or Degrees Prohibited

No title or degree shall appear on the same line on a ballot as a candidate's name, either before or after the candidate's name, in the case of any election to any office. (Elections Code §13106)

Unacceptable Designations

Pursuant to Elections Code §13107(e), neither the Secretary of State nor any other election official shall accept a designation of which any of the following would be true:

1) It would mislead the voter.
2) It would suggest an evaluation of a candidate, such as outstanding, leading, expert, virtuous, or eminent.
3) It abbreviates the word "retired" or places it following any word or words that it modifies.
4) It uses a word or prefix, such as "former" or "ex", which means a prior status. The only exception is the use of the word "retired".
5) It uses the name of any political party, whether or not it has qualified for the ballot.
6) It uses a word or words referring to a racial, religious, or ethnic group.
7) It refers to any activity that is prohibited by law.

Rejected Ballot Designations

If, upon checking the nomination documents and the ballot designation worksheet described in Section 13107.3, the elections official finds the designation to be in violation of any of the restrictions set forth in this section, the elections official shall notify the candidate by registered or certified mail return receipt requested, addressed to the mailing address provided on the candidate's ballot designation worksheet.

The candidate shall, within three days, excluding Saturday, Sunday, and state holidays, from the date he or she receives notice by registered or certified mail, or from the date the candidate receives actual notice of the violation, whichever occurs first, appear before the elections official or, in the case of the Secretary of State, notify the Secretary of State by telephone, and provide a designation that complies with subdivision (a).

In the event the candidate fails to provide a designation that complies with subdivision (a) within the three-day period specified in paragraph (1), no designation shall appear after the candidate's name. EC §13107(f)(2)

Ballot Designation May Not be Changed after Filing

No ballot designation given by a candidate shall be changed by the candidate after the final date for filing nomination papers, except as specifically requested by the election official.

Ballot Designation in Both Primary and General Elections

The designation shall remain the same for all purposes of both primary and general elections, unless the candidate, at least 98 days prior to the general election, requests in writing a different designation which the candidate is entitled to use at the time of the request. (EC §13107(h))

Format of Ballot Designation

In all cases, ballot designations shall be printed in 8-point uppercase and lowercase type.

If the designation selected is so long that it would conflict with the space requirements of Elections Code §13207 and 13211, the election official shall use a type size for the designation for each candidate for office sufficiently smaller to meet these requirements.

Whenever a foreign language translation of a candidate's designation is required under the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C.A. 1971), as amended, to appear on the ballot in addition to the English version, it shall be as short as possible, as consistent as is practicable with Section 13107, and shall employ abbreviations and initials wherever possible in order to avoid undue length.

No Ballot Designation

A candidate who does not want a ballot designation should indicate this in the space provided for ballot designation on the Declaration of Candidacy by writing "NONE", or the space may be left blank. If no designation is given, it will be assumed that none is desired.

Secretary of State – Ballot Designation Regulations is available upon request or visit

http://www.sos.ca.gov/administration/regulations/current-regulations/elections/ballot-designations/

Candidate Appearance on Ballot

Position on the Ballot

Randomized Alphabet Drawing and Rotation Requirements

Names of candidates will be arranged on the ballot in accordance with the random alphabet and legal rotation scheme per the Secretary of State.

On August 13, 2026 at 11:00 am, the Secretary of State and each County will conduct a random drawing of the alphabet. Most offices will follow the State random to order candidates on the ballot; however, each county which has state legislative offices overlapping with other counties will draw their own random alphabet and candidates from each county will appear according to each separate county's drawing. Statewide and legislative offices will rotate by Assembly District based on the Secretary of States rotation scheme. §13112

Insufficient Number of Candidates

All offices in a primary election will appear on the ballot, regardless of the number of candidates, except for Superior Court Judge. However, in a general election, non-partisan offices may have insufficient candidates, which may cause the nominated candidates to be appointed to the office and the office will not appear on the ballot. §10229, 10515

For the office of Superior Court Judge, if, by 5 p.m. on August 7, only the incumbent has filed nomination papers, his or her name shall not appear on the ballot unless there is filed, within 10 days, a petition indicating that a write-in campaign will be conducted for the office. This petition must be signed by at least 0.1 percent of the registered voters in the county, provided that the petition contains at least 100 signatures but need not contain more than 600 signatures. §8203

Incompatibility of Offices

(a) A public officer, including, but not limited to, an appointed or elected member of a governmental board, commission, committee, or other body, shall not simultaneously hold two public offices that are incompatible. Offices are incompatible when any of the following circumstances are present, unless simultaneous holding of the particular offices is compelled or expressly authorized by law:

(1) Either of the offices may audit, overrule, remove members of, dismiss employees of, or exercise supervisory powers over the other office or body.
(2) Based on the powers and jurisdiction of the offices, there is a possibility of a significant clash of duties or loyalties between the offices.
(3) Public policy considerations make it improper for one person to hold both offices.

(b) When two public offices are incompatible, a public officer shall be deemed to have forfeited the first office upon acceding to the second. This provision is enforceable pursuant to Section 803 of the Code of Civil Procedure. Government Code Section 1099

Write-In Candidates

Filing Dates: September 7 through October 20, 2026

Candidates who desire to be a write-in candidate and allow his or her name written on the ballot of an election shall fulfill the requirements of Part 3 of Subdivision 8 of the Elections Code, commencing at Section 8600.

Write-In Candidacy Procedure

Persons who did not file a Declaration of Candidacy and fulfill their nomination requirements to place their name on the ballot may run for office as a write-in candidate. Write-in votes will be counted and certified in the Statement of Vote only for qualified write-in candidates who file the required forms with the Elections Department, or appropriate City Clerk office for City offices, no later than 14 days prior to Election Day.

Voters may write-in any person they wish for any office regardless of whether the person has qualified or not. However, the votes will only be tabulated for qualified write-in candidates.

To qualify as a write-in candidate, a person must file with the Elections Department, or the appropriate City Clerk office for City offices, the following documents:

- A “Statement of Write-in Candidacy” which shall contain the candidate's name, residence address, a declaration stating that he or she is a write-in candidate, the title of the office for which he or she is running, candidate’s 10-year political party preference history (if running for a voter-nominated office); and the date of the election.
- A “Nomination Petition” with the requisite number of sponsor signatures required for the office sought.

Signers of nomination petitions for write-in candidates shall be voters in the district or political subdivision in which the candidate is to be voted on. No filing fee or charge shall be required of a write-in candidate.

No filing fee or charge shall be required of a write-in candidate.

Write-in candidates are subject to the same requirements as other candidates with regard to disclosure of economic interests and campaign disclosure. Gov. Code §82007; Elections Code §305

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a person may not be a write-in candidate at the general election for a voter-nominated office. §8606

The Elections Department will provide Vote Centers with a list of qualified write-in candidates.

Offices Omitted from Ballot

Prospective write-in candidates should note that write-in candidacy is possible only if the office appears on the ballot.

The following offices will be omitted from the ballot if the number of persons qualifying for the ballot does not exceed the number of places to be filled: Superior Court Judges (if only the incumbent files), County Central Committees/County Councils, Cities, School, Water and Special districts.

Elections Code §8203; 10229; 10515; Ed. Code §5326

Write-ins for Voter-Nominated Offices

A person may not run as a write-in candidate at the General Election for a voter-nominated office. §8600(c)

Section 5 - CANDIDATE STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

Candidate Statements

All candidates must file a "Candidate's Statement Acknowledgment" with the county elections official (or appropriate City Clerk for City offices) whether they are filing a statement or not. This form officially states that the candidate shall or shall not file a statement.

In addition to the restrictions set forth in Section §13307, any candidate's statement submitted pursuant to Section §13307 shall be limited to a recitation of the candidate's own personal background and qualifications and shall not in any way make reference to other candidates for that office or to another candidate's qualifications, character, or activities. The elections official shall not cause to be printed or circulated any statement that the elections official determines is not so limited or that includes any reference prohibited by this section. §13308

Only State Senate and Assembly legislative candidates, who choose to keep their campaign spending under specified dollar limits, may prepare a 250-word candidate statement in the County Voter Information Guide.

Government Code section §85601(c)

Each candidate for nonpartisan elective office in any local agency, including any city, county, city and county, or district, may prepare a 200-word candidate statement. §13307

Any candidate who is not a resident of San Benito County and wishes to submit a candidate statement for the San Benito County Voter Information Guide, may do so by coming to our office, or by completing Candidate Statement Acknowledgement Form found on our website. Please be sure to follow all instructions found on the form. §13307.7

Where, When and How to File

PERIOD FOR FILING:	**July 13, 2026 - August 7, 2026 by 5 p.m.** The statement must be paid for and filed no later than August 7, 2026 at 5 p.m.. §13307(a)(2)
EXTENDED PERIOD:	**August 10, 2026 - August 12, 2026 by 5 p.m.** If the Nomination filing period is extended, then all persons, other than the incumbent, have until the end of the extended period, to file their Candidate's Statement along with their Declaration of Candidacy
PUBLICATION	Candidates have the option of publishing the Candidate's Statement in the County Voter Information Guide when printed, or in the online version only (note: "Online Only" is offered only if the district has approved the use of online only Candidate Statements).
METHOD OF SUBMITTAL	1. Prior to submission, the candidate shall email (word format or in the body of the email) one electronic copy of the statement to sbcvote@sanbenitocountyca.gov. 2. Candidate shall provide 1 printed paper copy of the statement at the time of submission.
WHERE:	Appropriate City Clerk's office if the office is a city office. OR San Benito County Elections Department, 1601 Lana Way, Hollister, CA 95023, 831-636-4016 for all other offices. Candidate's Statements cannot be filed by fax pursuant to Secretary of State Guidelines.
CONTENTS:	The statement contains the candidate's: 1. Name 2. age (optional) 3. occupation (optional), and 4. a brief description, not exceeding 250 words for US Congress, State Senate and Assembly, or 200 words for local offices, of the candidate's education and qualifications expressed by the candidate. The word count for items 1-3 above does NOT count towards the word limit. §13307(a)(1)
RESTRICTIONS:	The candidate's statement shall not include the party affiliation of the candidate nor membership or activity in partisan political organizations. §13307(a) (1)
PUBLICATION:	Candidate Statements are not made public until 5 p.m. on the last filing day.
WITHDRAWAL / CHANGES:	**The statement may be withdrawn, but not changed,** during the period for filing nomination papers and until 5 p.m. of the next working day after the closing of the nomination period. §13307(a)(2) & 13307(a)(3)
PAYMENT:	Estimated cost for printing a candidate's statement in the Voter's Information Guide shall be paid at the time of filing the statement with the Declaration of Candidacy. Checks are made payable to: "**SBC Elections**" §13307(c)

Cost of Printing Candidate's Statements

COST FORMULA

The cost for the Candidate's Statement is based on a quarter page for 200-word statements or half page for 250 & 400-word statements. Please note that San Benito County is required to publish in both English and Spanish, so every 200-word candidate statement is required to utilize two quarter pages. 400- and 450-word statements require two half pages.

For a 200-word statement (1/4 page for each language) printed in the county Voter Information Guide and posted online, the fee is $250, plus $.05 per voter* in the district for printing and mailing the voter guide.

For a 250-word statement (1/2 page for each language) printed in the county Voter Information Guide and posted online, the fee is $400, plus $.05 per voter* in the district for printing and mailing the voter guide.

For a 400-word statement (1/2 page for each language) printed in the county Voter Information Guide and posted online, the fee is $450, plus $.05 per voter* in the district for printing and mailing the voter guide. Jurisdictions must authorize 400-word statements when submitting their resolution for consolidation.

The governing body may authorize candidates to submit a statement to be posted online only, for $150. Online statements are not printed in the county Voter Information Guide. The guide will contain a statement that will alert voters that additional statements are available on the Elections Department's Accessible Sample Ballot and Voter Information Guide website.

* For non-presidential general elections, voter registration is based upon the 15-day Report of Registration. Registration (prior to the primary) numbers.

PAYMENT

The statement may be paid for by check made payable to the "**SBC Elections**." or cash if the candidate is using personal funds. The fee shall be paid when the statement is submitted if the candidate wants to have a statement printed in the County Voter Information Guide.

If the Candidate's Statement is withdrawn by 5 p.m. on *August 10, 2026 (or by August 13, 2026 if there is an extension) the fee will be refunded in full. *Adjusted to the next business day after the close of nominations.

PRINTING IN SPANISH

San Benito County is required to print candidate statements in both English and Spanish in the County Voter Information Guide. The cost of printing candidate statements in both English and Spanish is included in the Candidate Statement Fee.

OVERLAPPING DISTRICTS

Important notice to candidates in districts that encompass more than one county. Procedures, requirements, fees, formats and public examination periods for candidates' statements may vary between counties. It is the candidate's responsibility to **FILE** in **each county** in which he or she wishes to have a

statement printed. **San Benito County cannot accept candidate statement on behalf of another County (refer to "Neighboring Counties" contact page for filing locations.)**

Candidates' statements shall be filed in the office of the election official of **each county** within the district in which the candidate wishes a statement to be printed when filing nomination documents, not later than 5:00 p.m. on August 7 (the 88th day prior to the election), or in the event that the nomination period has been extended, until 5:00 p.m. on August 12 (the 83rd day prior to the election).

It is strongly recommended that the candidate file the statement personally. If the statement is filed by someone other than the candidate, that person should have the authority to make corrections or deletions to the statement if errors or an excess number of words are detected prior to filing the statement. Statements may not be changed after filing unless authorized by a court order. They may however be withdrawn only until the 1st business day after the nomination filing period ends for the office sought.

To learn more about Candidate Statement Fees in this election, please refer to the table found in Candidate Statement Fees on page 7.

Procedure, Content, Word Count & Format

PROCEDURE

1. Candidates are to submit their Statement in an electronic format (Word or placed in the body of an email is accepted.) Electronic formatted statements must be emailed to the Election's Department email account: sbcvote@sanbenitocountyca.gov
2. Candidates will also submit a typed copy of their statement on paper.
3. Candidates may type their statement and attach it to the required "Candidate Statement Acknowledgement" form.
4. The Department will print one copy of the electronic format version for the candidate to verify and sign.
5. If there is a discrepancy between the content of the printed hard copy and the content submitted electronically, the content of the candidate signed hard copy will prevail.

CONTENT

1. Be accurate. Documents will be printed as submitted. Spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors cannot be corrected by the Elections Department.
2. Candidates for nonpartisan offices shall not include the party affiliation of the candidate nor membership or activity in partisan political organizations. (§13307(a)(1))
3. Statements may not make reference to other candidates or to another candidate's qualifications, character, or activities. (§13308)
4. No statement shall contain any demonstrably false, slanderous or libelous statements (§13307(e)).
5. The heading includes the candidate's name and office sought, followed by a line for the candidate's occupation and age (if provided). These are standardized headings which are included in the quarter

page space provided. These words, however, do not count toward the number of words allowed for the statement.

6. The "Occupation" field in the Candidate's Statement is NOT governed by the laws and regulations pertaining to the ballot designation that appears underneath the candidate's name on the ballot. Therefore, it may be different from the candidate's ballot designation. However, if its length extends beyond one line, words appearing on the second line will be counted toward the 200-word maximum.

WORD COUNT

1. Candidates for Local City, and County Offices are limited to 200 words.
2. Candidates for US Congress, State Senate and State Assembly are limited to 250 words.
3. School Districts may vary, so refer to "Candidate Statement Word Limits & Cost" on page 7.
4. See the chart "How to Count Words" included in this section.

FORMAT

1. Statements are printed in the Voter's Information Guide in type of uniform size, darkness and spacing.
2. Format all text flush left. Centering or right-flush formatting is not permitted.
3. Bolding, CAPITALIZING, underlining, and bullets, are not permitted. (Exception) Capitalizing abbreviations or acronyms is acceptable.
4. Statements that contain non-permitted formats will be converted to normal text without these attributes.
5. Refer to the Sample Candidate Statements section seen beginning on page 38.

REMEMBER

1. eMail an electronic copy, in Word format, to sbcvote@sanbenitocountyca.gov before you file your nomination papers
2. Have a printed copy of the statement with you when the nomination papers are filed.
3. Check for accuracy before you file.
4. The Elections Department CANNOT make any corrections once the statement has been filed. §13307(a)(2)

Formatted Candidate's Statement of Qualifications

Below are samples of Candidate's Statement of Qualifications, as it would be formatted for the Voter Information Guide. San Benito County is required to print the Voter Information Guide in both English and Spanish.

STATEMENT OF CANDIDATE FOR
SAN BENITO COUNTY SUPERVISOR
DISTRICT 6

CHRIS CANDIDATE **Age**: 58
Occupation: Teacher
Education & Qualifications:

I was not born in San Benito County, but I was raised here and lived here since I was 6 years old.

My father was a government servant, and raised my brother and I. We each attended local schools, including Sunnyslope, R.O. Hardin, Fremont, Spring Grove, and San Benito High School. San Benito County and its residents have been good to us, and I wish to repay that generosity.

In 1989, I attended and graduated from UC Davis. I went on to spend 9 years serving a support role for our armed forces.

If you give me the opportunity, I will partner with our residents to dramatically increase community involvement, and prioritize the needs of the residents, not the board.

Vote for Chris. www.chriscandidate.com 410-555-1212

STATEMENT OF CANDIDATE FOR
SAN BENITO COUNTY SUPERVISOR
DISTRICT 6

JILL CANDIDATE
Occupation: Businesswoman
Education & Qualifications:

I can bring to the office a diversity of viewpoints and experience. I was born and raised in Hollister, with my family going back 3 generations, I can appreciate the concerns of the local population. On the other hand, having been in business since I was 20, I appreciate the practical housing requirements of our community.

My credentials include: Graduate of local high schools; Married and parent of 3 San Benito High School students; and Homeowner

If elected to this office, I will strive to be a candidate of the people, for the people.

Your vote will be sincerely appreciated.

Feel free to call and ask about me: 410-555-2121

STATEMENT OF CANDIDATE FOR
SAN BENITO COUNTY SUPERVISOR
DISTRICT 6

JUNG POET **Age**: 21
Occupation: Poet
Education & Qualifications:

Roses are red
Violets are blue
Vote for me
And I'll be true to you.

STATEMENT OF CANDIDATE FOR
SAN BENITO COUNTY SUPERVISOR
DISTRICT 6

IVANTURE VOTE **Age**: 64
Occupation: Retired CEO
Education & Qualifications:

I am not the youngest candidate. I am a retired CEO of a Silicon Valley company. I moved to San Juan Bautista upon my retirement, and I have made San Benito County my home.

Retirement has shown me one thing; that I am not ready to stop leading. I wish to put my CEO experience to work for the County of San Benito. I know how to manage a budget. I know how to look forward. I know how to put the best interest of the County in front of my own.

In short, my experience makes me the best choice as your next Supervisor.

How to Count Words on Candidate Statements and Measures

(Pursuant to Elections Code Section 9)
This section shall not apply to counting words for ballot designations.

Applies to Candidate Statements, Ballot Measures, Arguments, and Rebuttals.

Each word is counted as one word except:

Punctuation:	Punctuation is not counted.
Titles:	Words used in the title of arguments, rebuttals, and analyses, such as "Argument in Favor of Measure A" are not counted. All words used in the 75-word ballot question are counted except for the letter designating the measure. Words used in the heading of a candidate's statement, including the office title, candidate's name, occupation, and age are not counted.
Cities / Counties	All geographical names shall be counted as one word. Areas that have political boundaries with an elected or appointed board are considered geographic areas by this office. For example, "County of San Benito" and "Hollister Unified School District" shall each be counted as one word.
Abbreviations:	Each abbreviation for a word, phrase, or expression shall be counted as one word.
Hyphenations:	Hyphenated words that appear in any generally available dictionary shall be considered as one word. Each part of all other hyphenated words shall be counted as a separate word.
Dates:	Dates shall be counted as one word regardless of how they are written (1/1/2024 or January 1, 2024).
Numbers:	Any number consisting of a digit or digits shall be considered as one word. • "100" shall be counted as one word Any number that is spelled shall be considered as separate words. • "one hundred" shall be counted as two words
Phone & Internet:	Website addresses and telephone numbers are one word.
Number Symbols:	**Percent Signs (%), Number Signs (#), etc**.: It is the San Benito County Election Department's policy to count numbers consisting of a digit or digits used with a dollar sign ($), cent sign (¢), percentage sign (%), or number sign (#) as one word.

Legal Examination of Candidate Statements and Writs of Mandate

Examination Period for Candidate Statements

After the filing deadline for candidate statements, the statements may be reviewed by the public for 10-calendar days. During this 10-calendar day examination period any voter of the jurisdiction in which the election is being held may take legal action to challenge the contents of the statement. The first filing deadline is Friday, August 7 and the 10-calendar day deadline is Monday, August 17, 2026. The extension period filing deadline is Wednesday, August 12 and the 10-calendar day deadline would be Tuesday, August 25, 2026.

We recommend that anyone wishing to pursue a legal challenge to a candidate statement file a petition for a writ of mandate (along with an ex parte application) early in the 10-calendar day period. Waiting until the end of the examination period leads to the risk that a judge may deny the request due to the fact that any changes will interfere with the printing and distribution of the sample ballots to voters.

Elections Code Section 13313 states:

(a) The elections official shall make a copy of the material referred to in Section 13307 available for public examination in the elections official's office for a period of 10-calendar days immediately following the filing deadline for submission of those documents. Any person may obtain a copy of the candidate's statements from the elections official for use outside of the elections official's office. The elections official may charge a fee to any person obtaining a copy of the material, and the fee may not exceed the actual cost incurred by the elections official in providing the copy.

(b)(1) During the 10-calendar day public examination period provided by this section, any voter of the jurisdiction in which the election is being held, or the elections official, himself or herself, may seek a writ of mandate or an injunction requiring any or all of the material in the candidates statements to be amended or deleted. The writ of mandate or injunction request shall be filed no later than the end of the 10-calendar day public examination period.

(2) A peremptory writ of mandate or an injunction shall issue only upon clear and convincing proof that the material in question is false, misleading, or inconsistent with the requirements of this chapter, and that issuance of the writ or injunction will not substantially interfere with the printing or distribution of official election materials as provided by law.

(3) The elections official shall be named as respondent and the candidate who authored the material in question shall be named as the real party in interest. In the case of the elections official bringing the mandamus or injunctive action pursuant to this subdivision, the board of supervisors of the county shall be named as the respondent and the candidate who authored the material in question shall be named as the real party in interest.

Procedure for Writs

Any person desiring to file an ex parte application for a writ of mandate may wish to consult the California Rules of Court, Rules 3.1200 through 3.1207, in addition to any other relevant rules or statutes, for the proper procedure. The California Rules of Court may be located online at the California Judicial Council's website: http://www.courts.ca.gov/rules.htm.

Including Improper Material in Candidate Statements

Elections Code section 13307(d) provides that:

Nothing in this section shall be deemed to make any such statement or the authors thereof free or exempt from any civil or criminal action or penalty because of any false, slanderous, or libelous statements offered for printing or contained in the Voter Information portion of the Sample Ballot.

Elections Code section 18351 further provides that:

Any candidate in an election or incumbent in a recall election who knowingly makes a false statement of a material fact in a candidate's statement, prepared pursuant to Section 11327 or 13307, with the intent to mislead the voters in connection with his or her campaign for nomination or election to a nonpartisan office is punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars ($1,000) or the current fine amount required by law.

Section 6 - CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS

General Information

It is the responsibility of candidates and/or committees to be aware of and to file the required campaign disclosure statements in a correct and timely manner.

Late Filings

There are no provisions for granting "extensions" of the filing deadlines.

If a candidate, officeholder, or committee is required to file a statement and has failed to do so by the deadline, the San Benito County Elections Department staff will:

a. Telephone the responsible party.

b. Provide written notice that the statement must be filed within 10 days (5 days for 2nd Pre-Election Statement) noting that a fine of $10 per day beginning the day after the filing deadline until the date the statement is filed will be assessed. The **maximum** penalty is $100 or the total amount of contributions received or the total amount of expenditures made (whichever is greater) during the period covered by the late statement.

c. Send an email to the Principal Officer and/or Treasurer.

Failure to file a statement after appropriate notice will be referred to an enforcement official and can result in substantial criminal, civil and administrative penalties.

Multiple Committee Filing Requirements

Whenever a candidate or officeholder has more than one committee, whether the committees are formed for the same office, or a different office in the same jurisdiction, all committees must file statements each time a committee statement is due.

Whenever an elected officeholder in one jurisdiction runs for an elected office in another jurisdiction, the officeholder and all committees he/she controls must file campaign disclosure statements with the filing officer in the jurisdiction in which the officeholder holds office **AND** in which the officeholder is seeking office.

Campaign Disclosure Forms

Below is a list of the most commonly used FPPC forms with brief explanations of who must file the form. If you have questions about your obligations under the Act, or with forms not listed here, you may Request Advice from the FPPC.

Form 700

Form 700 Statement of Economic Interests

Every public official who makes or participates in making governmental decisions is required to file a Statement of Economic Interest, commonly referred to as the Form 700.

- Form 700 - Statement of Economic Interests

Campaign Forms

Form 410 Statement of Organization

The Form 410 must be filed within 10 days of receiving a total of $2,000 in contributions. When filing the Form 410, include a $50 payment made payable to the Secretary of State. If your committee has not yet reached the $2,000 threshold, mark the "not yet qualified" box. The $50 fee is requested at this time but is not legally required until the group qualifies as a committee.

- Form 410 - Statement of Organization Supplemental
- Form 410 Supplemental Instructions - For Multipurpose Organizations Including Nonprofits

Form 460 Consolidated Campaign Disclosure Form

The Form 460 is filed by recipient committees to report expenditures and contributions. The Form 460 can be used to file a pre-election statement, semi-annual statement, quarterly statement, termination statement, special odd-year report, or an amendment to a previously filed statement.

- Form 460 - Consolidated Campaign Disclosure Form
- Supplemental Form 460 Instructions - For Multipurpose Organizations Including Nonprofits

Form 465 Supplemental Independent Expenditure Report

The Form 465 is filed by officeholders, candidates, recipient committees, major donor committees, and independent expenditure committees that make independent expenditures totaling $1,000 or more in a calendar year to support or oppose: a single candidate, a single measure, or the qualification of one single measure. File the Form 465 in the same period (s) the candidate or committee supported or opposed by the independent expenditure(s) is required to file.

- Form 465 - Supplemental Independent Expenditure Report

Form 470 Officeholder/Candidate Campaign Statement-Short Form and Form 470 Supplement

The Form 470 is filed by officeholders and candidates who do not have a controlled committee, do not receive contributions totaling $2,000 or more during the calendar year, and do not spend $2,000 or more during the calendar year.

- Form 470 - Officeholder/Candidate Campaign Statement-Short Form and Form 470 Supplement

Form 496 24-hour Independent Expenditure Report

The Form 496 is filed by committees that make independent expenditures whose combined total is $1,000 or more to support or oppose a single candidate for elective office, or a single ballot measure.

File the Form 496 within 24-hours of making the expenditure during the 90 days immediately preceding the election.

- Form 496 - 24-hour Independent Expenditure Report
- Supplemental Form 496 Instructions - For Multipurpose Organizations Including Nonprofits

Form 497 24-hour Contribution Report

The Form 497 is filed by state and local committees making or receiving contribution(s) whose combined total is $1,000 or more in the 90 days before an election, committees reporting contributions of $5,000 or more in connection with a state ballot measure, and state candidates as well as state ballot measure committees that receive $5,000 or more at any time other than a 90-day election cycle.

- Form 497 - 24-hour Contribution Report

Form 501 Candidate Intention Statement

The Form 501 is filed each election by candidates for state or local office. The Form 501 must be filed before you solicit or receive any contributions or before you make expenditures from personal funds on behalf of your candidacy.

- Form 501 - Candidate Intention Statement

California Contribution Limits

Candidates seeking a state or local office and committees that make contributions to state candidates are subject to contribution limits from a single source. Contributions from affiliated entities are aggregated for purposes of the limits. (Regulation 18215.1.) For local offices, for the November 2026 election, the contribution limit is $5,900.00. For any county office or countywide measure, the contribution limit is: $2,500.00.

An up-to-date table showing the contribution limits (changed every 2 years) can be found at https://www.fppc.ca.gov/learn/campaign-rules/state-contribution-limits.html

Campaign Disclosures (Federal Candidates)

Provisions of the Political Reform Act do not apply to elections for federal offices, including U.S. Senate and U.S. Representative in Congress. Candidates for federal offices and committees that participate in federal campaigns are subject to federal disclosure requirements. Assistance for federal candidates and committees may be obtained from the:

Federal Election Commission - 800-424-9530
999 E Street, N.W. - Washington, D.C. 20463

Campaign Filing Schedule (State)

Candidates for State Office, Committees primarily formed to support/oppose candidates for State Office, and Committees primarily formed to support/oppose state measures should visit the FPPC website at www.fppc.ca.gov for the current "State Filing Schedule".

Campaign Filing Schedule (Local)

Candidates and Controlled Committees for Local Offices

Filing Deadline	Type of Statement (Form)	Period Covered [1]	Method to Submit
Within 24 Hours	Late Contributions and Independent Expenditures of $1000 or More (497)	8/5/2026 - 11/3/2026	• Personal Delivery • Email • Guaranteed Overnight Service • Fax • Online, via eCampaign[2]
July 31, 2026	Semi-Annual (460 or 425)	1/1/2026[1] - 6/30/2026	• Personal Delivery • First Class Mail • Online via eCampaign[2]
September 24, 2026	1st Pre-Election (460 or 470)	7/1/2026 - 9/19/2026	• Personal Delivery • First Class Mail • Online via eCampaign[2]
October 22, 2026	2nd Pre-Election (460)	9/20/2026 - 10/17/2026	• Personal Delivery • Guaranteed Overnight Service • Online via eCampaign[2]
February 1, 2027	Semi-Annual (460)	10/18/2026 - 12/31/2026	• Personal Delivery • First Class Mail • Online via eCampaign[2]

[1] Period Covered: The period covered by any statement begins on the day after the closing date of the last statement, or January 1, if no previous statement has been filed.

[2] eCampaign is the County's online electronic Campaign Finance filing system. Accounts are created for all candidates and login information is provided at the time of filing Candidacy paperwork.

- **Filing Deadlines**: Deadlines are extended when they fall on a Saturday, Sunday, or an official state holiday. This extension does not apply to the deadline for the Form 497 that is due the weekend before the election. Such reports must be filed within 24 hours regardless of the day of the week. Statements filed after the deadline are subject to a $10 per day late fine.
- **Method of Delivery**: All paper filings are filed by personal delivery or first-class mail unless otherwise noted. A paper copy of a report may not be required if a local agency requires online filing pursuant to a local ordinance.

- **Form 501**: All candidates must file Form 501 (Candidate Intention Statement) before soliciting/receiving contributions.
- **Form 460**: Candidates who have raised/spent $2,000 or more file the Form 460. The Form 410 (Statement of Organization) must also be filed once $2,000 or more has been raised/spent.
- **Form 470**: Candidates who do not have an open committee and do not raise or spend $2,000 in 2026 may file Form 470 on or before September 24, 2026. If, after filing the Form 470, a campaign committee must be formed in connection with the election, a Form 470 Supplement and a Form 410 must be filed.
- **Form 497** – 24-Hour Contribution Report: File if a contribution of $1,000 or more is made in connection with a candidate or measure being voted upon in another city, county or state election, or made to a political party committee 90 days before a state election in 2024.
- **Candidates**: After an election, reporting requirements will depend on whether the candidate is successful and whether a campaign committee is open.
- **Local Ordinance**: Always check whether additional local rules apply.
- **Public Documents**: All forms are public documents. Campaign manuals and instructional materials are available at www.fppc.ca.gov.
- Candidates listed on the November 3, 2026, ballot who make expenditures other than those for their own campaign should contact the FPPC for additional filing requirements.

Local & State Candidate Campaign Disclosure Manuals

The campaign disclosure and lobbying manuals are prepared to assist candidates, committees and lobbyists in complying with the Act's numerous and often detailed rules. The manuals are written in a "user friendly" format and contain several examples, FAQs and Quick Tips. If a committee's or lobbyist's activity raises issues not discussed in the applicable manual, contact the FPPC for assistance.

To help better serve you, in addition to providing a link to the entire manual, there are links to each chapter of each manual for faster download. (These links are available via the FPPC website at http://www.fppc.ca.gov/learn/campaign-rules/campaign-disclosure-manuals.html)

The links for the manual 2, most often used in San Benito County, can be found below.

Campaign Disclosure Manual 2 Information for Local Candidates, Superior Court Judges, Their Controlled Committees, and Primarily Formed Committees for Local Candidates (Revised 06/2020)

- Entire Manual 2
- Introduction
- Chapter 1 - Getting Started

- Chapter 2 - Finance Rules
- Chapter 3 - Contributions
- Chapter 4 - Contribution Restrictions
- Chapter 5 - Use of Campaign Funds
- Chapter 6 - Communications
- Chapter 7 - Advertisement Disclaimers
- Chapter 8 - Committee Reports (Form 460)
- Chapter 9 - When and Where to File Form 460
- Chapter 10 - Additional Reports
- Chapter 11 - After the Election
- About the Political Reform Act/How to Get Help

Local & State Candidate Campaign Disclosure – Things to Remember

The Franchise Tax Board is authorized under Section 90001 of the California Government Code to audit Campaign Disclosure Statements. The audit can include tests of the accounting records and other such auditing procedures.

The purpose of campaign disclosure is to provide the public with the identity of contributors and the amounts they give, as well as the amount officeholders, candidates and committees spend. The laws passed to enforce that purpose can be challenging for the unwary, therefore some often overlooked requirements, some identified in audit reports, are provided here:

- Even unopposed candidates are subject to the campaign disclosure provisions of the Political Reform Act. (Gov. Code §82007)
- Prior to soliciting or receiving any contribution (including a loan), all elected officeholders and all candidates must file a Form 501 (candidate intention).
- Contributions include **PERSONAL FUNDS** and are subject to the same disclosure requirements.
- A Statement of Organization (Form 410) must be filed within 10 days by any person who receives contributions totaling $2,000 or more during a calendar year. Candidates for county offices (excludes judges, school boards and special district boards) must file a Form 410 prior to the acceptance of any campaign contribution totaling $50 or more or the making of any expenditure intended to influence the outcome of any election.
- Officeholders and candidates who receive contributions or make expenditures must establish a campaign checking account in California and report it on a Form 410.

- Loans to a candidate are considered contributions unless the loan is from a financial institution. The Federal Election Campaign Act (52 U.S.C. Subtitle III, §30118 & 30121) prohibits contributions from national banks, national corporations, and foreign nationals in connection with any local, state, or federal election to political office.
- Filing fees and candidate statement fees may be paid in cash if the candidate is using personal funds and will not be reimbursed through the committee. (Gov. Code §85200) Otherwise, campaign disclosure laws require that expenditures of $100 or more be made by written instrument containing the names of both the payee and payer. (Gov. Code §84300)
- Never accept or spend $100 or more in cash.
- For contributions of $100 or more, including loans, and in-kind contributions, you must disclose the contributor's name, address, occupation and employer. Contributions of $100 or more may not be made in the form of a money order or cashier's check. Contributions may continue to be made with a credit card. (Gov. Code §84300)
- Maintain details on contributions and expenditures of $25 or more, even if you are spending less than $2,000. Refer to record-keeping guidelines in Manual A.
- Make copies of all contributor checks.
- Itemize expenditures of $500 or more made by an agent or campaign consultant.
- No candidate or committee shall 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 which shall be in a color or print which contrasts with the background so as to be easily legible. A post office box may be stated in lieu of a street address if the organization's address is a matter of public record with the Secretary of State. (GC §84305(a))
- Candidates must disclose employer information for all contributors and keep all records of occupation and employer information.
- **NO PERSONAL USE OF CAMPAIGN FUNDS**. Use campaign funds only for political, legislative, or governmental purposes.
- The source for each loan must be disclosed.
- All expenditures of $100 or more must be itemized on the campaign statements, and then summarized on the Campaign Disclosure Statement Summary Page.
- As long as a committee is in existence, a Semi-Annual Campaign Statement must be filed. If the candidate has filed a long form (460) previously in the calendar year, a 460 must be filed as the Semi-Annual Statement even if there is no activity.
- Payee addresses must be disclosed on the campaign statements for expenditures made.
- If the committee changes its treasurer, an amendment to the Form 410 Statement of Organization must be filed.
- If $1,000 or more is received from one contributor during the last 90 days before the election, disclose receipt within 24 hours, even if the contribution is from your personal funds.

Campaign Finance Prohibitions

State law provides for the following prohibitions regarding campaign funds:

- No contribution of one hundred dollars ($100) or more shall be made or received in cash. If a cash contribution is made, it shall not be deemed received if it is refunded within 72 hours of receipt or in the case of a late contribution, within 48 hours of receipt.
- No expenditure of one hundred dollars ($100) or more shall be made in cash.
- The value of all in-kind contributions of one hundred dollars ($100) or more shall be reported in writing to the recipient upon the request in writing of the recipient. (Gov. Code §84300)
- No contribution shall be made, directly or indirectly, by any person in a name other than the name by which such person is identified for legal purposes. (Gov. Code §84301)
- No person shall make an anonymous contribution or contributions to a candidate, committee or any other person totaling one hundred dollars ($100) or more in a calendar year. An anonymous contribution of one hundred dollars ($100) or more shall not be kept by the intended recipient but instead shall be promptly paid to the Secretary of State for deposit in the General Fund of the state. (Govt. Code §84304)
- No contribution shall be commingled with personal funds of the recipient or any other person. (Govt. Code §84307)
- Contributions made by a husband and wife may not be aggregated. A contribution made by a child under 18 years of age is presumed to be a contribution from the parent or guardian of the child. (Gov. Code §85308)
- No newsletter or other mass mailing shall be sent at public expense. (Gov. Code §89001)
- Every person who contrives, prepares, sets up, proposes, or draws any lottery or raffle, is guilty of a misdemeanor. (Penal Code §319, 320)

How to get help from the FPPC

Assistance by Telephone

Call Toll-Free
1-866-**ASK-FPPC**
(1-866-275-3772)
or
1-916-322-5660

Enforcement Complaints

1-866-275-3772

Assistance by Mail

Fair Political Practices Commission
428 J Street, Suite 620
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assistance by e-Mail

advice@fppc.ca.gov

Assistance by Fax

1-916-322-0886

There are two types of advice that the Fair Political Practices Commission may provide; Informal and Formal.

Formal Advice

If you have a more complicated question about your obligations under the Act and you would like legal advice from the FPPC's staff attorneys, you may request formal advice by submitting your inquiry in writing to Advice@fppc.ca.gov. To ensure the most expedious review of the request, the FPPC encourages the submission of the advice request via email. It is unnecessary to submit a hard copy of the request by regular mail, and a requestor should receive a confirmation of the receipt of the request within 2 business days.

If you are unable to submit an advice request via email, you can mail the request to the FPPC's Legal Division at 1102 Q Street, Suite 3000, Sacramento, CA 95811. Advice requests submitted by regular mail may be subject to processing delays.

If the request for advice contains sufficient information and the question is within the FPPC's jurisdiction, the FPPC must provide formal written advice within 21 working days. The response will be provided in the form of an "advice letter."

A formal advice letter can provide the requestor immunity from enforcement actions by the FPPC. It also provides evidence of good faith conduct in any relevant civil or criminal proceeding brought by another party, so long as the facts presented in the request for advice are accurate and the requestor follows the guidance provided in the FPPC's advice letter. Formal advice does not provide immunity to any person other than the requestor.

The FPPC saves and posts all advice letters. Go to the Search Advice Letters page to search. The letters may be searched and used for guidance only – they will not provide immunity to any person other than the original requestor.

Written Advice (formal advice)

Formal written advice should be emailed to advice@fppc.ca.gov or if that is not possible, it may be mailed to:

Fair Political Practices Commission
1102 Q Street, Suite 3000
Sacramento, CA 95811

The request must:

- Be in writing,
- Provide specific information about the requestor, and
- Contain sufficient information for the FPPC's staff attorneys to conduct a complete legal analysis.

If a request does not meet these criteria, the FPPC may provide an informal written reply with general guidance. This type of advice does not provide the requestor with immunity from enforcement actions.

Commission Opinions

Another form of formal advice is a Commission Opinion. Any individual or entity (or their authorized representative) may request a formal opinion from the Commission concerning their duties under the Act. The Commission's Executive Director must accept or reject a request for a formal opinion within 14 days.

A request will normally be rejected if the question can be answered under existing statutes or regulations, or does not otherwise present a significant policy issue. In addition, since the process requires formal action by the full Commission, it normally takes several months after the question is submitted and accepted before a formal opinion may be issued. Due to the topic restrictions and the processing time, Commission Opinions are infrequent.

A Commission Opinion provides the requestor with immunity from civil or criminal prosecution under the Act so long as the facts presented by the requestor are accurate and the requestor acts within the confines of the opinion. More details about the formal opinion process can be found in sections 18320 through 18326 of Title 2 of the California Code of Regulations. Prior Commission Opinions are available online, on the Search Commission Opinions page.

You may submit your request for an official Commission opinion to ExecutiveDirector@fppc.ca.gov or by mailing your request to the FPPC at the address provided above.

Informal Advice (Telephone and Email)

The FPPC is dedicated to ensuring that candidates, public officials, and campaigns have resources available to help them comply with the Act. The FPPC offers email and telephone advice for the regulated public to have basic questions answered by experienced staff regarding their responsibilities under the Act. Please note informal advice does not provide immunity from prosecutions by the FPPC and **does not** qualify as legal advice.

Third party questions, hypothetical questions, and enforcement related matters will not be answered through the advice service.

This advice is considered informal assistance and conservative responses are provided. In most instances, email advice will link you to the appropriate reference material posted on the FPPC website.

Assistance by Email (informal advice)

Members of the public may submit questions regarding compliance with the Act to advice@fppc.ca.gov.

Some of the benefits of email advice include:

- emails may be submitted at any time (24/7!) and are not limited to a timeframe for submission;
- most emails are responded to within 24 to 48 hours, though depending upon the nature of the question some may take longer;

- receiving a written response on the advice given to keep with committee or filer records; and
- opportunities for helpful fact sheets, guides, manuals, and other written materials to be provided to the requestor for additional guidance.

Email advice provides the opportunity for the regulated public to receive timely written responses on their obligations under the Act. Questions with specific sets of facts such as gift reporting, reporting travel, use of campaign funds, conflicts of interests are better suited for email advice.

Assistance by Telephone (informal advice)

Members of the public may call the FPPC advice line for help with basic questions regarding compliance with the Act. Please note that questions on reporting on campaign statements, filing schedules, the Form 700, lobbying reports are best suited for telephone advice.

Toll-Free: 1-866-ASK-FPPC (1-866-275-3772) or 1-916-322-5660

Telephone advice is available Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Call the numbers listed above and press 2 to speak to a political reform consultant in the Technical Assistance Division.

Enforcement Complaints

To report a violation of the Act, contact the Enforcement Division:

- complaint@fppc.ca.gov or
  1-866-ASK-FPPC (1-866-275-3772)

Section 7 - CAMPAIGN LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Campaign Practices

Use of Public Resources

Gov. Code §8314

(a) It is unlawful for any elected state or local officer, including any state or local appointee, employee, or consultant, to use or permit others to use public resources for a campaign activity, or personal or other purposes which are not authorized by law.

(b) For purposes of this section:

(1) "Personal purpose" means those activities the purpose of which is for personal enjoyment, private gain or advantage, or an outside endeavor not related to state business. "Personal purpose" does not include the incidental and minimal use of public resources, such as equipment or office space, for personal purposes, including an occasional telephone call.

(2) "Campaign activity" means an activity constituting a contribution as defined in Section 82015 or an expenditure as defined in Section 82025. "Campaign activity" does not include the incidental and minimal use of public resources, such as equipment or office space, for campaign purposes, including the referral of unsolicited political mail, telephone calls, and visitors to private political entities.

(3) "Public resources" means any property or asset owned by the state or any local agency, including, but not limited to, land, buildings, facilities, funds, equipment, supplies, telephones, computers, vehicles, travel, and state-compensated time.

(4) "Use" means a use of public resources which is substantial enough to result in a gain or advantage to the user or a loss to the state or any local agency for which a monetary value may be estimated.

(c) (1) Any person who intentionally or negligently violates this section is liable for a civil penalty not to exceed one thousand dollars ($1,000) for each day on which a violation occurs, plus three times the value of the unlawful use of public resources. The penalty shall be assessed and recovered in a civil action brought in the name of the people of the State of California by the Attorney General or by any district attorney or any city attorney of a city having a population in excess of 750,000. If two or more persons are responsible for any violation, they shall be jointly and severally liable for the penalty.

(2) If the action is brought by the Attorney General, the moneys recovered shall be paid into the General Fund. If the action is brought by a district attorney, the moneys recovered shall be paid to the treasurer of the county in which the judgment was entered. If the action is brought by a city attorney, the moneys recovered shall be paid to the treasurer of that city.

(3) No civil action alleging a violation of this section may be commenced more than four years after the date the alleged violation occurred.

(d) Nothing in this section shall prohibit the use of public resources for providing information to the public about the possible effects of any bond issue or other ballot measure on state activities, operations, or policies, provided that (1) the informational activities are otherwise authorized by the constitution or laws of this state, and (2) the information provided constitutes a fair and impartial presentation of relevant facts to aid the electorate in reaching an informed judgment regarding the bond issue or ballot measure.

(e) The incidental and minimal use of public resources by an elected state or local officer, including any state or local appointee, employee, or consultant, pursuant to this section shall not be subject to prosecution under Section 424 of the Penal Code.

Mass Mailing

Each candidate filing a Declaration of Candidacy is to be apprised of Government Code §84305, which is produced here for your information:

(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 so as to be easily legible. A post office box may be stated in lieu of a street address if the candidate's, candidate-controlled committee established for an elective office for the controlling candidate's, or 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 a disclosure pursuant to Section 84502 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 6-point type that is in a color or print that contrasts with the background so as to be easily legible. A post office box may be stated in lieu 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 pursuant to 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).

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

(1) Mass electronic mailing” means sending more than two hundred substantially similar pieces of electronic mail within a calendar month.

(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 pursuant to Sections 84200 to 84217, 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.

Mass mailing definition (Gov. Code §82041.5)

“Mass Mailing" means over two hundred substantially similar pieces of mail, but does not include a form letter or other mail that is sent in response to an unsolicited request, letter or other inquiry.

Mass mailing by incumbents (Gov. Code §89001)

No newsletter or other mass mailing shall be sent at public expense.

Slate Mailers

Slate mailer definition (Gov. Code §82048.3)

“Slate Mailer" means a mass mailing that supports or opposes a total of four or more candidates or ballot measures.

Slate mailer organization (Gov. Code §82048.4)

(a) “Slate mailer organization" means, except as provided in subdivision (b), any person who, directly or indirectly, does all of the following:

(1) Is involved in the production of one or more slate mailers and exercises control over the selection of the candidates and measures to be supported or opposed in slate mailers.

(2) Receives or is promised payments totaling $500 or more in a calendar year for the production of one or more slate mailers.

(b) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), a slate mailer organization shall not include any of the following:

(1) A candidate or officeholder or a candidate's or officeholder's controlled committee.

(2) An official committee of any political party.

(3) A legislative caucus committee.

(4) A committee primarily formed to support or oppose a candidate, officeholder, or ballot measure.

(c) The production and distribution of slate mailers by a slate mailer organization shall not be considered making contributions or expenditures for purposes of subdivision (b) or (c) of §82013. If a slate mailer organization makes contributions or expenditures other than by producing or distributing slate mailers, and it reports those contributions and expenditures pursuant to §84218 and 84219, no additional campaign reports shall be required of the slate mailer organization pursuant to §84200 or 84200.5.

Slate mailer requirements (Gov. Code §84305.5)

(a) No slate mailer organization or committee primarily formed to support or oppose one or more ballot measures shall send a slate mailer unless:

(1) The name, street address, and city of the slate mailer organization or committee primarily formed to support or oppose one or more ballot measures are shown on the outside of each piece of slate mail and on at least one of the inserts included with each piece of slate mail in no less than 8-point Roman type which shall be in color or print which contrasts with the background so as to be easily legible. A post office box may be stated in lieu of a street address if the street address of the slate mailer organization or committee primarily formed to support or oppose one or more ballot measures is a matter of public record with the Secretary of State's Political Reform Division.

(2) At the top or bottom of the front side or surface of at least one insert or at the top or bottom of one side or surface of a postcard or other self-mailer, there is a notice in at least 8-point Roman, boldface type, which shall be in a color or print which contrasts with the background so as to be easily legible, and in a printed or drawn box and set apart from any other printed matter. The notice shall consist of the following statement:

NOTICE TO VOTERS

THIS DOCUMENT WAS PREPARED BY (name of slate mailer organization or committee primarily formed to support or oppose one or more ballot measures), **NOT AN OFFICIAL POLITICAL PARTY ORGANIZATION**. Appearance in this mailer does not necessarily imply endorsement of others appearing in this mailer, nor does it imply endorsement of, or opposition to, any issues set forth with this mailer. Appearance is paid for and authorized by each candidate and ballot measure which is designated by an *.

(3) The name, street address, and city of the slate mailer organization or committee primarily formed to support or oppose one or more ballot measures as required by paragraph (1) and the notice required by paragraph (2) may appear on the same side or surface of an insert.

(4) Each candidate and each ballot measure that has paid to appear in the slate mailer is designated by *. Any candidate or ballot measure that has not paid to appear in the slate mail is not designated by *.

(5) The * required by this subdivision shall be of the same type size, type style, color or contrast, and legibility as is used for the name of the candidate or the ballot measure name or number and position advocated to which the * designation applies except that in no case shall the * be required to be larger than 10-point boldface type. The designation shall immediately follow the name of the candidate, or the name or number and position advocated on the ballot measure where the designation appears in the slate of candidates and measures. If there is no slate listing, the designation shall appear at least once in at least 8-point boldface type, immediately following the name of the candidate, or the name or number and position advocated on the ballot measure.

(6) The name of any candidate appearing in the slate mailer who is a member of a political party differing from the political party which the mailer appears by representation or indicia to represent is accompanied, immediately below the name, by the party designation of the candidate, in no less than 9-point Roman type which shall be a color or print that contrasts with the background so as to be easily legible. The designation shall not be required in the case of candidates for nonpartisan office.

(b) For purposes of the designations required by paragraph (4) of subdivision (a), the payment of any sum made reportable by subdivision (c) of §84219 by or at the behest of a candidate or committee, whose name or position appears in the mailer, to the slate mailer organization or committee primarily formed to support or oppose one or more ballot measures, shall constitute a payment to appear, requiring the * designation. The payment shall also be deemed to constitute authorization to appear in the mailer.

(See the Information Manual issued by the Fair Political Practices Commission for campaign disclosure reporting requirements in connection with slate mailers.)

Nominations

Fictitious name to nomination petition (Elections Code §18200)

Every person who subscribes to any nomination petition a fictitious name, or who intentionally subscribes thereto the name of another, or who causes another to subscribe a fictitious name to a nomination petition, is guilty of a felony and is punishable by imprisonment in the state prison for 16 months or two or three years.

Defacing or destroying a nomination paper (Elections Code §18201)

Any person who falsely makes or fraudulently defaces or destroys all or any part of a nomination paper, is punishable by a fine not exceeding $1,000 or by imprisonment in the state prison for 16 months or two or three years or by both the fine and imprisonment.

Deliberate failure to file nomination paper (Elections Code §18202)

Every person acting on behalf of a candidate is guilty of a misdemeanor who deliberately fails to file at the proper time and the proper place any nomination paper or declaration of candidacy in his or her possession that is entitled to be filed under the provisions of this code.

False declaration of candidacy (Elections Code §18203)

Any person who files or submits for filing a nomination paper or declaration of candidacy knowing that it or any part of it has been made falsely is punishable by a fine not exceeding $1,000 or by imprisonment in the state prison for 16 months or two or three years or by both such fine and imprisonment.

Suppression of nomination paper (Elections Code §18204)

Any person who willfully suppresses all or any part of a nomination paper or declaration of candidacy either before or after filing is punishable by a fine not exceeding $1,000 or by imprisonment in the state prison for 16 months or two or three years or by both the fine and imprisonment.

Paying candidates to withdraw (Elections Code §18205)

A person shall not directly or through any other person advance, pay, solicit, or receive or cause to be advanced, paid, solicited, or received any money or other valuable consideration to or for the use of any person in order to induce a person not to become or to withdraw as a candidate for public office. Violation of this section shall be punishable by imprisonment in the state prison for 16 months or two or three years.

Code of Fair Campaign Practices

Chapter 855, Statutes of 1982, established a Code of Fair Campaign Practices that could be voluntarily subscribed to by candidates for public office.

The County Clerk is required to provide each individual who files nomination papers or other papers evidencing intentions to become a candidate for public office with a copy of the provisions of the Chapter and a form on which to subscribe to the code.

Subscription to the code is voluntary. Completed forms are to be filed with the County Clerk and shall be retained for public inspection until 30 days after the election. (Elections Code §20400 - 20444)

Misrepresentation by Candidates

Misleading of voters; incumbency; public officer (Elections Code §18350)

Every person is guilty of a misdemeanor who, with intent to mislead the voters in connection with his or her campaign for nomination or election to a public office or in connection with the campaign or another person for nomination or election to a public office, shall do either of the following acts:

Assume, pretend, or imply, by his or her statements or conduct, that he or she is the incumbent of a public office when that is not the case.

Assume, pretend, or imply, by his or her statements or conduct, that he or she has been acting in the capacity of a public officer when that is not the case.

Any violation of this section may be enjoined in a civil action brought by any candidate for the public office involved.

False statements in candidate statement; fine (Elections Code §18351)

Any candidate in an election or incumbent in a recall election who knowingly makes a false statement of a material fact in a candidate's statement prepared pursuant to Section §11327 or §13307, with the intent to mislead the voters in connection with his or her campaign for nomination or election to a nonpartisan office is punishable by a fine not to exceed $1,000.

Representation requirements (Elections Code §20007)

No candidate or committee in his or her behalf shall represent in connection with an election campaign either orally or in campaign material, that the candidate has the support of a committee or organization that includes as part of its name the name or any variation upon the name of a qualified political party with which the candidate is not affiliated, together with the words “county committee,” “central committee,” “county,” or any other term that might tend to mislead the voters into believing that the candidate has the support of that party's county central committee or state central committee, when that is not the case.

This section shall not be construed to prevent a candidate or committee from representing that the candidate has the support of a committee or group of voters affiliated with another political party, which committee or group is identified by the name of that party, where the name of the committee or group also includes the name of the candidate.

Any member of a central committee or state central committee may commence an action in the superior court to enjoin misrepresentation by a candidate or committee in his or her behalf, in the manner prohibited by this section, to the effect that the candidate has the support of the state or county central committee involved.

Deceptive Online Activities

“Political cyberfraud” defined (Elections Code §18320)

(a) This act shall be known and may be cited as the "California Political Cyberfraud Abatement Act."

(b) It is unlawful for a person, with intent to mislead, deceive, or defraud, to commit an act of political cyberfraud.

(c) As used in this section:

(1) "Political cyberfraud" means a knowing and willful act concerning a political Web site that is committed with the intent to deny a person access to a political Web site, deny a person the opportunity to register a domain name for a political Web site, or cause a person reasonably to believe that a political Web site has been posted by a person other than the person who posted the Website, and would cause a reasonable person, after reading the Website, to believe the site actually represents the views of the proponent or opponent of a ballot measure. Political cyberfraud includes, but is not limited to, any of the following acts:

(A) Intentionally diverting or redirecting access to a political Web site to another person's Web site by the use of a similar domain name, meta-tags, or other electronic measures.

(B) Intentionally preventing or denying exit from a political Web site by the use of frames, hyperlinks, mousetrapping, popup screens, or other electronic measures.

(C) Registering a domain name that is similar to another domain name for a political Web site.

(D) Intentionally preventing the use of a domain name for a political Web site by registering and holding the domain name or by reselling it to another with the intent of preventing its use, or both.

(2) "Domain name" means any alphanumeric designation that is registered with or assigned by any domain name registrar, domain name registry, or other domain registration authority as part of an electronic address on the Internet.

(3) "Political Web site" means a Web site that urges or appears to urge the support or opposition of a ballot measure.

Political Advertising

Political advertisement requirements (Elections Code §20008)

Any paid political advertisement that refers to an election or to any candidate for state or local elective office and that is contained in or distributed with a newspaper, shall bear on each surface or page thereof, in type or lettering at least half as large as the type of lettering of the advertisement or in 10-point Roman type, whichever is larger, the words “Paid Political Advertisement.” Such words shall be set apart from any other printed matter.

As used in this section “paid political advertisement” shall mean and shall be limited to published statements paid for by advertisers for purposes of supporting or defeating any person who has filed for an elective state or local office.

False or forged campaign materials (Penal Code §115.2)

No person shall publish or cause to be published, with actual knowledge, and intent to deceive, any campaign advertisement containing false or fraudulent depictions, or false or fraudulent representations, of official public documents or purported official public documents.

For purposes of this section, “campaign advertisement” means any communication directed to voters by means of a mass mailing as defined in §82041.5 of the Government Code, a paid newspaper advertisement, an outdoor advertisement, or any other printed matter, if the expenditures for that communication are required to be reported by Chapter 4 (commencing with §84100) of Title 9 of the Government Code.

Any violation of this section is a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment in the county jail, or by a fine not to exceed $50,000, or both.

Simulated Ballots

Printing of Simulated Sample Ballots (Elections Code §18301)

In addition to any other penalty, any person who prints or otherwise duplicates, or causes to be printed or duplicated, a simulated ballot or simulated sample ballot which does not contain the statement required by Section 20009 or which uses an official seal or insignia in violation thereof, is guilty of a misdemeanor.

Simulated ballot requirements (Elections Code §20009)

(a) Every simulated ballot or simulated sample ballot shall bear on each surface or page thereof, in type or lettering at least half as large as the type or lettering of the statement or words or in 10-point Roman type, whichever is larger, in a printed or drawn box and set apart from any other printed matter, the following statement:

NOTICE TO VOTERS (Required by Law) This is not an official ballot or an official county voter information guide prepared by the county elections official or the Secretary of State. This is an unofficial, marked ballot prepared by ____ (insert name and address of the person or organization responsible for preparation thereof)."

This section shall not be construed as requiring this notice in any editorial or other statement appearing in a regularly published newspaper or magazine other than a paid political advertisement.

(b) A simulated ballot or simulated county voter information guide referred to in subdivision (a) shall not bear an official seal or the insignia of a public entity, and that seal or insignia shall not appear upon the envelope in which it is mailed or otherwise delivered.

(c) The superior court, in a case brought before it by a registered voter, may issue a temporary or permanent restraining order or injunction against the publication, printing, circulation, posting, or distribution of any matter in violation of this section, and all cases of this nature shall be in a preferred position for purposes of trial and appeal, so as to assure the speedy disposition of cases of this nature.

Campaign Literature

Use of Seal in Campaign Literature (Elections Code §18304)

(a) Any person who uses or allows to be used any reproduction or facsimile of the seal of the county or the seal of a local government agency in any campaign literature or mass mailing, as defined in Section 82041.5 of the Government Code, with intent to deceive the voters, is guilty of a misdemeanor.

(b) For purposes of this section, the use of a reproduction or facsimile of a seal in a manner that creates a misleading, erroneous, or false impression that the document is authorized by a public official is evidence of intent to deceive.

(c) For purposes of this section, the term "local government agency" means a school district, special or other district, or any other board, commission, or agency of local jurisdiction.

Corruption of the Voting Process

Fraud in Connection with Vote Cast (Elections Code §18500)

Any person who commits fraud or attempts to commit fraud, and any person who aids or abets fraud or attempts to aid or abet fraud, in connection with any vote cast, to be cast, or attempted to be cast, is guilty of a felony, punishable by imprisonment for 16 months or two or three years.

Public Official who Knowingly Allows Fraud Shall Forever be Disqualified From Holding Office (Elections Code §18501)

Any public official who knowingly violates any of the provisions of this chapter, and thereby aids in any way the illegal casting or attempting to cast a vote, or who connives to nullify any of the provisions of this chapter in order that fraud may be perpetrated, shall forever be disqualified from holding office in this state and upon conviction shall be sentenced to a state prison for 16 months or two or three years.

Interference with Election Officers (Elections Code §18502)

Any person who in any manner interferes with the officers holding an election or conducting a canvass, or with the voters lawfully exercising their rights of voting at an election, as to prevent the election or canvass from being fairly held and lawfully conducted, is punishable by imprisonment in the state prison for 16 months or two or three years.

Corruption of Voters

Fine for Solicitation Requesting Voter Disclosure of His or Her Ballot (Elections Code §18403)

Any person other than an elections official or a member of the precinct board who receives a voted ballot from a voter or who examines or solicits the voter to show his or her voted ballot is punishable by a fine not exceeding ten thousand dollars ($10,000), by imprisonment in the state prison for 16 months or two or three years or in a county jail not exceeding one year, or by both the fine and imprisonment. This section shall not apply to persons returning a vote-by-mail ballot pursuant to Sections 3017 and 3021 or persons assisting a voter pursuant to Section 14282.

Promise of Employment (Elections Code §18520)

A person shall not directly or through another person give, offer, or promise any office, place, or employment, or promise to procure or endeavor to procure any office, place, or employment to or for any voter, or to or for any other person, in order to induce that voter at any election to:

(a) Refrain from voting.
(b) Vote for any particular person.
(c) Refrain from voting for any particular person.

A violation of any of the provisions of this section shall be punishable by imprisonment in the state prison for 16 months or two or three years.

Consideration for Voting (Elections Code §18521)

A person shall not directly or through any other person receive, agree, or contract for, before, during or after an election, any money, gift, loan, or other valuable consideration, office, place, or employment for himself or any other person because he or any other person:

(a) Voted, agreed to vote, refrained from voting, or agreed to refrain from voting for any particular person or measure.
(b) Remained away from the polls.
(c) Refrained or agreed to refrain from voting.
(d) Induced any other person to:
    (1) Remain away from the polls.
    (2) Refrain from voting.
    (3) Vote or refrain from voting for any particular person or measure.

Any person violating this section is punishable by imprisonment in the state prison for 16 months or two or three years.

Consideration for Voting (Elections Code §18522)

Neither a person nor a controlled committee shall directly or through any other person or controlled committee pay, lend, or contribute, or offer or promise to pay, lend, or contribute, any money or other valuable consideration to or for any voter or to or for any other person to:

(a) Induce any voter to:
    (1) Refrain from voting at any election.
    (2) Vote or refrain from voting at an election for any particular person or measure.
    (3) Remain away from the polls at an election.
(b) Reward any voter for having:
    (1) Refrained from voting.
    (2) Voted for any particular person or measure.
    (3) Refrained from voting for any particular person or measure.
    (4) Remained away from the polls at an election.

Any person or candidate violating this section is punishable by imprisonment in the state prison for 16 months or two or three years.

Bribery at Election (Elections Code §18523)

A person shall not directly or through any other person advance or pay, or cause to be paid, any money or other valuable thing to or for the use of any other person, with the intent that it, or any part thereof, shall be used in bribery at any election, or knowingly pay or cause to be paid any money or other valuable thing to any person in discharge or repayment of any money, wholly or in part, expended in bribery at any election.

Any person violating this section is punishable by imprisonment in the state prison for 16 months or two or three years.

Payment for Securing Vote (Elections Code §18524)

A person shall not directly or through any other person advance or pay, or cause to be paid, any money or other valuable thing to or for the use of any other person, with the intent that it, or any part thereof, will be used for boarding, lodging, or maintaining a person at any place or domicile in any election precinct, ward, or district, with intent to secure the vote of that person or to induce that person to vote for any particular person or measure.

Any person violating this section is punishable by imprisonment in the state prison for 16 months or two or three years.

Intimidation of Voters

Compelling Another in Voting (Elections Code §18540)

(a) Every person who makes use of or threatens to make use of any force, violence, or tactic of coercion or intimidation, to induce or compel any other person to vote or refrain from voting at any election or to vote or refrain from voting for any particular person or measure at any election, or because any person voted or refrained from voting at any election or voted or refrained from voting for any particular person or measure at any election is guilty of a felony punishable by imprisonment pursuant to subdivision (h) of Section 1170 of the Penal Code for 16 months or two or three years.

(b) Every person who hires or arranges for any other person to make use of or threaten to make use of any force, violence, or tactic of coercion or intimidation, to induce or compel any other person to vote or refrain from voting at any election or to vote or refrain from voting for any particular person or measure at any election, or because any person voted or refrained from voting at any election or voted or refrained from voting for any particular person or measure at any election is guilty of a felony punishable by imprisonment pursuant to subdivision (h) of Section 1170 of the Penal Code for 16 months or two or three years.

Solicitation Dissuading Persons From Voting (Elections Code §18541)

(a) A person shall not, with the intent of dissuading another person from voting, within the 100 foot limit specified in subdivision (b), do any of the following:

(1) Solicit a vote or speak to a voter on the subject of marking the voter's ballot.

(2) Place a sign relating to voters' qualifications or speak to a voter on the subject of the voter's qualifications except as provided in Section 14240.

(3) Photograph, video record, or otherwise record a voter entering or exiting a polling place.

(4) Obstruct ingress, egress, or parking.

(b) The activities described in subdivision (a) are prohibited within 100 feet of either of the following:

(1) The entrance to a building that contains a polling place as defined by Section 338.5, an elections official's office, or a satellite location specified in Section 3018.

(2) An outdoor site, including a curbside voting area, at which a voter may cast or drop off a ballot.

(c) A person shall not, with the intent of dissuading another person from voting, do any of the following within the immediate vicinity of a voter in line to cast a ballot or drop off a ballot:

(1) Solicit a vote.

(2) Speak to a voter about marking the voter's ballot.

(3) Disseminate visible or audible electioneering information.

(d) A violation of this section is punishable by imprisonment in a county jail for not more than 12 months, or in state prison. Any person who conspires to violate this section is guilty of a felony.

Pay Envelopes May Not Contain Political Material (Elections Code §18542)

Every employer, whether a corporation or natural person, or any other person who employs, is guilty of a misdemeanor if, in paying his or her employees the salary or wages due them, encloses their pay in pay envelopes upon which or in which there is written or printed the name of any candidate or any political mottoes, devices, or arguments containing threats, express or implied, intended or calculated to influence the political opinions or actions of the employees.

Challenge Without Probable Cause (Elections Code §18543)

(a) Every person who knowingly challenges a person's right to vote without probable cause or on fraudulent or spurious grounds, or who engages in mass, indiscriminate, and groundless challenging of voters solely for the purpose of preventing voters from voting or to delay the process of voting, or who fraudulently advises any person that he or she is not eligible to vote or is not registered to vote when in fact that person is eligible or is registered, or who violates Section 14240, is punishable by imprisonment in the county jail for not more than 12 months or in the state prison.

(b) Every person who conspires to violate subdivision (a) is guilty of a felony.

Fine for Person in Possession of Firearm or Unauthorized Uniformed Personnel (Elections Code §18544)

(a) Any person in possession of a firearm or any uniformed peace officer, private guard, or security personnel or any person who is wearing a uniform of a peace officer, guard, or security personnel, who is stationed in the immediate vicinity of, or posted at, a polling place [Vote Center] without written

authorization of the appropriate city or county elections official is punishable by a fine not exceeding ten thousand dollars ($10,000), by imprisonment in the state prison for 16 months or two or three years or in a county jail not exceeding one year, or by both the fine and imprisonment.

(b) This section shall not apply to any of the following:

(1) An unarmed uniformed guard or security personnel who is at the polling place to cast his or her vote.

(2) A peace officer who is conducting official business in the course of his or her public employment or who is at the polling place [Vote Center] to cast his or her vote.

(3) A private guard or security personnel hired or arranged for by a city or county elections official.

(4) A private guard or security personnel hired or arranged for by the owner or manager of the facility or property in which the polling place [Vote Center] is located if the guard or security personnel is not hired or arranged solely for the day on which an election is held.

Fine for Hiring of Person in Possession of Firearm or Uniformed Personnel (Elections Code §18545)

Any person who hires or arranges for any other person in possession of a firearm or any uniformed peace officer, private guard, or security personnel or any person who is wearing a uniform of a peace officer, guard, or security personnel, to be stationed in the immediate vicinity of, or posted at, a polling place [Voting Location] without written authorization of the appropriate elections official is punishable by a fine not exceeding ten thousand dollars ($10,000), by imprisonment in the state prison for 16 months or two or three years or in a county jail not exceeding one year, or by both the fine and imprisonment. This section shall not apply to the owner or manager of the facility or property in which the polling place [Vote Center] is located if the private guard or security personnel is not hired or arranged solely for the day on which the election is held.

Definition of Elections Official and Immediate Vicinity (Elections Code §18546)

As used in this article:

(a) "Elections official" means county election official, registrar of voters, or city clerk.

(b) "Immediate vicinity" means the area within a distance of 100 feet from the room or rooms in which the voters are signing the roster and casting ballots.

Literature Containing Vote Center Location(s)

Campaign Literature §18302)

(b) A person is guilty of a misdemeanor who, with actual knowledge and intent to deceive, causes to be distributed or distributes, including distribution by mail, radio or television broadcast, telephone call, text message, email, or any other electronic means, including over the Internet, literature or any other form of communication to a voter that includes any of the following:

(1) The incorrect location of a vote center, office of an elections official, satellite office of an elections official where voting is permitted, vote by mail ballot drop box, or vote by mail ballot drop-off location.

(2) False or misleading information regarding the qualifications to vote or to register to vote.

(3) False or misleading information regarding the qualifications to apply for, receive, or return a vote by mail ballot.

(4) False or misleading information regarding the date of an election or the days, dates, or times voting may occur at a place described in paragraph (1).

Voting Locations

Electioneering on Election Day

100 Feet Rule

Pursuant to Elections Code Section 18370:

(a) A person shall not, on election day, or at any time that a voter may be casting a ballot, within the 100-foot limit specified in subdivision (b), do any of the following:

(1) Circulate an initiative, referendum, recall, or nomination petition or any other petition.

(2) Solicit a vote or speak to a voter on the subject of marking the voter's ballot.

(3) Place a sign relating to voters' qualifications or speak to a voter on the subject of the voter's qualifications except as provided in Section 14240.

(4) Do any electioneering as defined by Section 319.5.

(b) The activities described in subdivision (a) are prohibited within 100 feet of either of the following:

(1) The entrance to a building that contains a polling place as defined by Section 338.5, an elections official's office, or a satellite location specified in Section 3018.

(2) An outdoor site, including a curbside voting area, at which a voter may cast or drop off a ballot.

(c) A person shall not, on election day, or at any time that a voter may be casting a ballot, do any of the following within the immediate vicinity of a voter in line to cast a ballot or drop off a ballot:

(1) Solicit a vote.

(2) Speak to a voter about marking the voter's ballot.

(3) Disseminate visible or audible electioneering information.

(d) Any person who violates any of the provisions of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor.

Poll Watchers

Poll watchers are allowed at the voting location as long as they obey the law and election procedures. Persons observing the polls may:

- Inspect the Roster of Voters. Any such inspection, however, must be done without impeding, interfering or interrupting the normal process of voting and counting.
- Inspect the Public's Alpha Index updated regularly by the precinct workers. The index may not be removed from the polling place.
- Observe all activities at the polling place, including activities after the polls close, providing they do not interfere with the normal processing of voters. §14221, 14252, 14253, 14294 & 18370

Exit Polling

The Secretary of State and Attorney General have reviewed the Electioneering provisions and have determined that these provisions do not apply to the Press and Media conducting "Exit Polls." However, no one may interfere with the conduct of the election. Therefore, news media have been advised to remain at least 25 feet from the entrance to the polls. The media may take pictures or run a television camera inside the Vote Center providing they respect the voters' privacy and do not interfere with voting. They may not speak to voters regarding how they are voting within 25 feet of the entrance to the Vote Center.

Political Signs

Outdoor Political Advertising - State Laws

Section 5405.3 of the State Outdoor Advertising Act (Business & Professions Code) authorizes the placing of "temporary political signs" separate and apart from the normal outdoor advertising controls. No political sign may be placed within the right-of-way of any highway or within 660 feet of the edge of and visible from the right-of-way of a landscaped freeway. **Note**: Section 5405.3 of the State Outdoor Advertising Act may be superseded or expanded upon by County or City Ordinance. Refer to the proper jurisdiction related to the placement of your signs.

Temporary political signs are those that meet the following criteria:

- Encourages a particular vote in a scheduled election;
- Is placed not sooner than 90 days prior to the scheduled election (August 5, 2026) and is removed within 10 days after the election (November 13, 2026);
- Is no larger than 32 square feet;
- Has had a "Statement of Responsibility" filed with the State Department of Transportation, Division of Traffic Operations, Outdoor Advertising Program, P.O. Box 94287, MS-36, Sacramento, 94274-0001, certifying a person who will be responsible for removing the signs. Forms are provided by the San Benito County Elections Department during the nomination filing. Call (916) 654-5327 for more information.

The law directs the Department of Transportation to remove signs that do not comply with the regulations before an election and to bill the responsible party for removal costs after the election.

Penal Code Sections 556, 556.1 and 556.3 provide that it is a misdemeanor for any person to place a sign to advertise on public or private property (without consent); and that it shall be considered a public nuisance.

The Department of Transportation (Caltrans) requires a “Statement of Responsibility” form be submitted prior to placing outdoor political signs. The San Benito County Elections Department will provide this form when you file your candidacy paperwork.

County and City Ordinance References:

- County: §25.07.016(C)(9)
- City of Hollister: §17.20.60.A21
- City of San Juan Bautista: §11.10.80(B)

Section 8 - SERVICES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

Registration Data

Confidential Voter File

Pursuant to Elections Code Sections 2188 and 2194, voter registration information is available to persons or groups for election, scholarly, journalistic or political purposes, or governmental purposes, as determined by the Secretary of State. Each written request to view, purchase, or use voter registration information must be submitted in person and with identification on an application available at the San Benito County Elections Department.

Permissible Usage

The California Code of Regulations, Division 7, Article 1, Section 19003, specifies permissible uses for any data obtained from voter registration files.

(a) Voter registration information obtained from a source agency shall be used solely for the following purposes:

(1) Election: for any person to communicate with voters in connection with an election by means that shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

(A) Communicating with voters for or against any candidate or ballot measure in any election;

(B) Communicating with voters regarding the circulation or support of, or opposition to, any recall, initiative, or referendum petition;

(C) Surveying voters in connection with any specific election campaign or specific potential election campaign in which any voter registered to vote may vote;

(D) Surveying voters in connection with an election-related exploratory committee;

(E) Soliciting contributions or services as part of any election campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office or any political party or in support of or opposition to any ballot measure, initiative, or referendum petition.

(2) Scholarly: students working on theses, professors researching voting patterns, and other academics involved in research related to political or election activities.

(3) Journalistic: members of the press for any purpose related to political or election activities.

(4) Political: for any person to communicate with voters to influence public opinion related to political or election activities. The content of such communications shall include, but shall not be limited to: news and opinions of candidates, elections, education related to political matters, political party developments, ballot measures, initiatives, referendum positions, and related political matters.

(5) Governmental: Any request from a governmental agency or for a use related to a governmental function by means including, but not limited to:

(A) Encouraging participation in the United States Census;

(B) Conducting any survey of opinions of voters by any government agency or its contractors;

(C) Any official use by any local, state, or federal governmental agency, which shall include use in connection with any judicial proceeding or investigation involving or being conducted by any local, state, or federal governmental agency.

(6) Record review: For any person to conduct an audit of voter registration lists for election, scholarly, journalistic, political, or governmental purposes. Record review includes, but is not limited to, detecting voter registration fraud, evaluating voter registration information accuracy, and evaluating compliance with applicable Federal and California laws.

(7) Vendor: By any vendor to compile and/or organize voter registration information for another person's use consistent with this Article.

(b) Requests for voter registration information for a purpose not specifically listed in subdivision (a), and not prohibited by section 19004, shall be evaluated for compliance with the Elections Code by the source agency.

(c) A source agency shall review each application for compliance with the Elections Code and this Article independent of decisions made on other applications.

Impermissible Usage (Code of Regulations 19004):

(a) Using voter registration information in a manner contrary to the authorized uses specified in Elections Code section 2194 is impermissible. Impermissible uses include, but shall not be limited to:

(1) Any communication for any personal, private, or commercial purpose other than for those purposes permitted by Section 19003.

(2) Solicitation of contributions or services for any personal, private, or commercial purpose.

(3) Conducting any survey of opinions of voters other than for those purposes permitted by Section 19003, subdivision (a).

(4) Using the voter registration information to harass any voter or the voter's household, including, but not limited to, any conduct prohibited by Elections Code sections 18540 and 18543.

(b) Voter registration information shall not be sent outside of the United States, as specified in Elections Code section 2188.5.

(c) Notwithstanding section 19003, a source agency may reject a request for voter registration information based on a reasonable belief or determination that it is being requested for use in a manner prohibited by law, including, but not limited to, uses contrary to the prohibitions or authorized uses specified in Elections Code sections 2188.5 and 2194 or that is contrary to Elections Code section 10. An impermissible purpose may include requests for voter registration information for an impermissible purpose-submitted for fraudulent purposes or in bad faith or for the purpose of harassing or defrauding a person or entity. In such instances, the source agency shall provide the applicant its reasons for refusal. An applicant whose application is rejected shall not be prohibited from filing a new application.

Election Data Available for Purchase

All requests must be made on the Application for Voter Registration Information found on our website https://sanbenitocounty-ca-cre.gov/RegData

Voter Lists on USB

- Applications will only use the exact information provided therefore answer each question as descriptively as possible.
- A copy of the ID of the requestor is required with each application.
- Payment must be made in advance of any purchase. Please check with the Elections Department for pricing.
- Applications will be processed within 3-4 working days.

List of Vote Centers / List of Candidates on the Ballot

- A list of the Vote Centers in an election and a list of candidates' names and addresses are available via phone or on our website:
    - Vote Centers: https://sanbenitocounty-ca-cre.gov/VoteCenters
    - Candidates' names: https://sanbenitocounty-ca-cre.gov/OfficialList (available after the start of the nomination period - July 13, 2026)

Maps

- Precinct Maps will be available upon completion of the consolidation process. Please contact our office for an update of when they will be available.
- Current District or Trustee Area Maps are always available online and printed for a fee.
- Indicate the type of map under "What specific info are you requesting" on the application.
- Map prices vary by size printed.

Daily List of Vote-by-mail Voters

- A daily list of who has requested, issued and then returned a vote-by-mail ballot may be purchased.
- Payment must be made in advance of any purchase. Please check with the Elections Department for pricing.

Photocopying

- Copies of candidate's campaign reporting documents (Forms 410, 460, etc.) are available for $0.10 per page. Forms may also be viewed online at: https://www.southtechhosting.com/SanBenitoCounty/CampaignDocsWebRetrieval/

Election Night Results

Where?

Ballots are scanned and tabulated at the main elections office:

1601 Lana Way
Hollister, California 95023

Vote-by-Mail Results

The results of all Vote-by-Mail ballots received by our department and scanned prior to election day, will be released immediately after the close of the polls at 8 p.m. Please note, that a large percentage (upwards of 50% or more) of all Vote-by-Mail ballots are returned on Election Day. These ballots cannot be processed, verified, opened, and counted on election night. The canvass period may take up to 29 days, this includes curing and counting challenged / damaged / unreadable Vote-By-Mail ballots.

Election Results

The most up to date results can always be found on our website at:

https://sanbenitocounty-ca-cre.gov/results

Telephones will be staffed until all the in person voted ballots are counted election night for callers to phone in and obtain results.

CALL 831-636-4016 or toll free 877-777-4017

Election results by contest are simple to provide over the phone. However, if you are interested in obtaining more specific voting result information, we encourage you to be present.

Semi-Official and Final Results

It will take up to 29 days of canvass to process all Vote-by-Mail ballots. At least twice a week, an update to the Semi-Official results will be released. Once the last ballot is counted, a Final Election Summary Report will be available from the Elections Department. It will also be posted on our web site.

Official Canvass/Final Results

The official canvass will begin no later than Thursday, November 5, 2026 (E.C. §15301(a)). It may take a full 29 days to complete the canvass. Please call to verify our canvass schedule.

Our website and social media will be updated throughout the canvass.

The official canvass of ballots (as defined in E.C. §15302) includes:

(a) An inspection of all materials and supplies returned by poll workers.
(b) A reconciliation of the number of signatures on the roster with the number of ballots recorded on the ballot statement.
(c) In the event of a discrepancy in the reconciliation required by subdivision (b), the number of ballots received from each polling place shall be reconciled with the number of ballots cast, as indicated on the ballot statement.
(d) A reconciliation of the number of ballots counted, spoiled, canceled, or invalidated due to identifying marks, overvotes, or as otherwise provided by statute, with the number of votes recorded, including vote by mail and provisional ballots, by the vote counting system.
(e) Processing and counting any valid vote by mail and provisional ballots not included in the semifinal official canvass.
(f) Counting any valid write-in votes.
(g) Reproducing any damaged ballots, if necessary.
(h) Reporting final results to the governing board and the Secretary of State, as required.

Important Telephone Numbers and Contacts

San Benito County

Elections Department
1601 Lana Way
Hollister, CA 95023
831 636-4016 / FAX 831 636-2939
sbcvote@sanbenitocountyca.gov https://www.sanbenitocounty-ca-cre.gov

Neighboring Counties

Below is a list of counties that are adjacent to San Benito County or with whom we share a Congressional, State Senate or State Assembly District.

MONTEREY
1441 Schilling Place - North Building
Salinas, CA 93901
(831) 796-1499
(831) 755-5485 Fax
Hours: M-F 8 – 5 (appointments suggested)
www.montereycountyelections.us

MERCED
2222 M Street, Room 14
Merced, CA 95340
Phone: (209) 385-7541
Fax: (209) 385-7387
Hours: M-F 8 - 5
www.co.merced.ca.us/elections

FRESNO
2221 Kern Street
Fresno, CA 93721
(559) 600-VOTE or (8683)
(559) 488-3279 Fax
Hours: M-F 8:30 - 5:00
www.co.fresno.ca.us

SANTA CRUZ
701 Ocean Street, Room 210
Santa Cruz, CA 95060-4076
(831) 454-2060
Hours: M-F 8 – 5
www.votescount.com

SANTA CLARA
1555 Berger Drive, Bldg. 2
San Jose, CA 95112
(408) 299-VOTE (8639)
408) 998-7314 Fax
Hours: M – F 8 – 5
www.sccvote.org

SAN LUIS OBISPO
1055 Monterey Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408-3237
(805) 781-5228
(805) 781-1111 Fax
Hours: M-F 8 - 5
www.slocounty.ca.gov/clerk/elections.htm

State and Federal Offices

Fair Political Practices Commission

1102 Q Street, Suite 3000
Sacramento, CA 95811
916-322-5660 / FAX: 916-322-0886
Toll Free: 1-866-275-3772 (1-866-ASK-FPPC)
Enforcement Violations: 1-866-275-3772
Website: www.fppc.ca.gov

Secretary of State Dr. Shirley N. Weber

1500 11th Street, 5th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-657-2166
Website: www.sos.ca.gov

Political Reform Division

916-653-6224 / FAX: 916-653-5045
E-Mail: PoliticalReform@sos.ca.gov

The Secretary of State's Political Reform Division administers provisions of California's Political Reform Act of 1974 that requires the disclosure of financial activities related to political campaigns and lobbying.

Specific activities of the Political Reform Division include:

- Register and issue identification numbers for all state and local campaign committees that raise funds in connection with elections (non-federal) throughout California.
- Receive notices from all state and local candidates of their intentions to raise campaign funds and establish separate bank accounts for these funds.
- Receive campaign disclosure statements (itemizing contributions received and expenditures made) filed by individuals and committees raising or spending campaign funds to support or oppose state candidates or ballot.
- Measures. (Local campaign committees file their itemized disclosure statements with local filing officers. For California federal campaigns, the Political Reform Division receives copies of itemized disclosure statements filed with the Federal Election Commission in Washington, D.C.)
- Provide technical assistance regarding campaign disclosure provisions of the Political Reform Act to state and local candidates and elected officials, treasurers of campaign committees, and the general public.
- Review campaign documents to ensure compliance with reporting requirements.
- Provide public access to all campaign disclosure documents.
- Publish campaign financing reports that summarize and analyze the extensive information contained in campaign documents filed with the Political Reform Division.
- Determine if campaign documents have been filed on time and impose and collect fines for late filings.

Elections Division

916-657-2166 / FAX: (916) 653-3214
TDD: 1-800-833-8683
1-800-345-VOTE or 1-800-345-8683
E-Mail: Elections@sos.ca.gov

Responsible for:

- certifying the official lists of candidates;
- determining which types of voting systems are acceptable for use in California;
- advising candidates and local elections officials on the qualifications and requirements for running for office, providing guidance on choosing acceptable candidate ballot designations, and determining the order of the candidates on the ballot;
- tracking and certifying ballot initiatives;
- coordinating the tabulation of the votes from each county on election night;
- producing the official Statements of Vote after each election;
- printing registration forms, encouraging registration and voter turnout, and producing several voter information publications;
- investigating voter fraud

Campaign Filing Offices for Statewide Offices Or Measures

Statewide candidates and officeholders, Supreme Court justices, state ballot measure committees, and other committees that support or oppose state candidates and ballot measures, or that support or oppose candidates and ballot measures in more than one county, file campaign reports with:

- the Secretary of State and
- the election officials for the counties in which they are domiciled - unless filed electronically with the Secretary of State.

State committees are no longer required to file their forms with San Francisco or Los Angeles.

Federal Election Commission

999 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20463
800-424-9530
For the hearing impaired, TTY 202-219-3336
Website: www.fec.gov

- Federal Campaign Disclosure
- Contributions from National Banks, National Corporations, and Foreign Nationals

State Franchise Tax Board

800-852-5711
Website: www.ftb.ca.gov

- Committee Tax Status
- Tax Deductible Contributions
- Charitable Non-Profit Groups
- Audit of Campaign Disclosure Statements

Internal Revenue Service

800-829-1040
Website: www.irs.gov

- Federal Taxpayer I.D. Numbers
- Any other Tax-related questions

State Attorney General

P.O. Box 944255
Sacramento, CA 94244-2550
800-952-5225
Website: www.oag.ca.gov

- Legal Opinions
- Incompatibility of office
- Quo Warranto actions
- Brown Act requirements

Who Should you Contact About Violations or Fraud?

In response to the many inquiries we receive regarding possible election violations or fraud, we have the following list of resources regarding whom to contact for the various types of violations. The San Benito County Clerk/Elections Department is NOT an enforcement agency and is therefore unable to investigate any violations. Reports may be called into our office at (831) 636-4016, or by using our Election Complaint Form. Note, this form is sent directly to the Registrar of Voters and not shared with staff. When our department receives reports of violations, we refer them to the agencies listed below:

- **False or misleading campaign materials** (No agency enforcement. These issues are dealt with in court)
- **Violations of the Political Reform Act** (Title 9 of the California Government Code at Sections 81000 through 91015), i.e. mass mailing requirements; slate mailers; campaign disclosure; proper use of campaign funds; disclosure of economic interests: contact the Fair Political Practices Commission at www.fppc.ca.gov, 800-561-1861

- **Election fraud**: contact your local district attorney, 831-636-4120, or the California Secretary of State at www.sos.ca.gov, 916-657-2166
- **Unlawful use of public funds, violations of the Elections Code, the Penal Code, or any laws other than the Political Reform Act**: contact your local district attorney, 831-636-4120, or the California State Attorney General at oag.ca.gov, 800-952-5225
- **Federal campaigns, Congress, U.S. Senate, President of the United States, etc**.: contact the Federal Election Commission at www.fec.gov, 800-424-9530
- **Open meeting laws (Brown Act)**: contact your local district attorney, 831-636-4120, or the California State Attorney General at www.oag.ca.gov, 800-952-5225

Frequently Asked Questions

Can anyone circulate a nomination petition?

Any person, 18 years old or older may circulate a petition. Any number of qualified people may circulate petitions for a candidate. A candidate may also circulate his or her own petition. A candidate is the only person who may circulate petitions in a county besides the one they reside in.

What happens if some of the signatures I obtain on my nomination petition are not registered voters or do not live within the jurisdiction I seek to represent?

Any signatures submitted of voters who do NOT reside within the jurisdiction will be marked invalid and will not count towards your signature requirements. The elections department will notify you of any insufficiencies. If you file early, there will be time to submit additional signatures.

The Elections Department may issue you voter registration cards to have available while circulating the petition. Submit completed registration cards with the petition.

When and where can I pick up and file my nomination documents?

The candidate filing period is July 13, 2026 - August 7, 2026. Nomination documents may be picked up at respective City Clerk's office for City offices, or the San Benito County Department of Elections for all other offices. Nomination documents may only be filed where they are issued.

When is the candidate nomination extension period and can an incumbent file nomination documents during an extension period?

No, the candidate nomination extension period is August 10, 2026 - August 12, 2026. An incumbent cannot file during an extension period as it is only for any candidate other than the incumbent to pick up or file their nomination.

May I change or correct the wording or spelling on my candidate statement after submission?

No, you may not. Statements cannot be changed for any reason after they have been filed.

If I submit a voluntary candidate statement and I change my mind, may I withdraw the statement and receive a refund?

Yes. The candidate statement may be withdrawn, but not changed, during the period for filing nomination papers and until 5:00 p.m. of the next working day after the close of the nomination period. If you withdraw your statement within this time frame, you will receive a refund. After this time frame, your statement cannot be withdrawn, nor a refund given. If you withdraw your candidate statement, you will not be allowed to file another one.

Can I choose what languages my candidate statement will be printed in?

No, our office is federally mandated to print our Sample Ballots/Voter Information Guides in English and Spanish.

May my spouse, relative, friend or campaign manager pick up and/or file nomination documents for me or can I mail them to you?

Yes, all forms may be picked up or filed by a candidate or a representative of the candidate. However, if someone other than the candidate is picking up nomination papers, they must have specific written authorization to do so. However, candidates are urged to file in person. The reasons are twofold:

A. The oath of office on the Declaration of Candidacy must be administered by a member of the Department of Election's staff, an authorized public official, or a notary public. We strongly recommend that a candidate file the nomination papers in person and have the oath administered at the time he or she files; and

B. The signature of the candidate, as well as other data, is required on many documents involved in the nomination process. If through an oversight the nomination papers are incomplete, the problem can easily be rectified when a candidate files in person.

If the candidate wishes to mail the nomination papers, they must be sent by certified mail and arrive in our office by the close of the nomination period, regardless of the postmark.

Am I required to file financial documents related to my campaign?

Yes, every candidate must file some type of financial documents at specified deadlines. Refer to the "Campaign Finance Disclosure Information" section of this guide for more information.

I am unable to complete and file any of my FPPC campaign disclosure statements by the filing deadline. May I obtain an extension and will I be fined?

No, there is no provision in the Political Reform Act that permits any filing officer to extend a filing deadline. Statements that are filed late are subject to a fine of $10.00 per day until the statement is filed. You will be fined for filing your statements late.

Can I place campaign signs anywhere I want?

No, there are city, county and state regulations concerning placement of campaign signs. Please refer to the "Outdoor Political Advertising Guidelines" section of this guide.

Can I charge with a credit card to pay my filing fee, purchase voter material, or to pay my candidate statement fee?

- For local candidates only, the filing fee and voter materials may be paid using a credit card.
- For Legislative candidates, only cash and check are acceptable forms of payment.
- For all candidates, Cash, check, or money orders are the only acceptable forms of payment for candidate statements.

How soon will a list of qualified candidates be available after the close of nomination?

The nomination period ends at 5:00 p.m. on August 7, 2026, but if an incumbent does not file, the nomination period is extended until August 12, 2026. A list of local candidates will be prepared in the following days and should be available for distribution by noon on August 13, 2026. The certified list of State candidates is not available to us until August 27, 2026. Therefore, our state candidate list should be available for distribution on the first week of January 2026. You may come into the office and view the candidate list at no charge or purchase a copy of it.

Can I come into the Department of Elections prior to election night to view the ballot counting preparation for tabulation?

Yes, in fact you can come into our office at any point to view any part of the election process, including the Vote-by-Mail board, ballot scanning, and the Post-Election activities. If you wish to view any specific part of the process, please call ahead to find out when we will be performing specific activities.

Can I come into the Department of Elections on election night and view the tabulation of the votes?

Yes, you are more than welcome to view any or all of the ballot tabulation process. Doors open at 7:45pm, with first results posted no later than 8:30pm. The doors close when the last Vote Center has reported, and the ballots tabulated.

Can I obtain election night results on the Internet?

Yes, you may obtain the most up-to-date election night results on our website at https://sanbenitocounty-ca-cre.gov/results

Why is there so much paperwork involved in being a candidate?

Election law specifies documents required, as well as format, filing dates, etc. The filing requirements are not discretionary.