



# NORTH CAROLINA

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## STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

# 2026 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

A CANDIDATE'S GUIDE TO  
ELECTIONS IN NORTH CAROLINA



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# MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS AND IMPORTANT CANDIDATE FILING DATES

The information provided in this part of the guide is relevant to candidates running for office in municipal elections and includes information on election processes relevant to those candidates.

The statutes relevant to municipal elections are primarily found in Articles 23 and 24 of Chapter 163 of the North Carolina General Statutes. These statutes may be accessed at the following link:

[www.ncleg.gov/Laws/GeneralStatutes](http://www.ncleg.gov/Laws/GeneralStatutes)

If legislative action or legal developments affect the information within this document, such changes will be noted on the website of the State Board of Elections. Candidates can direct questions to their county board of elections.

## **Important Candidate Filing Dates:**

Candidate filing for municipalities with even-numbered year elections begins at county offices' regular business hours for the county board of elections office on Monday, July 6, 2026, and ends at noon on Friday, July 17, 2026. Candidates file at the appropriate county board of elections office. Any person seeking to become a candidate must (1) file a notice of candidacy form and (2) pay the specified filing fee or submit a petition in lieu of the filing fee.

The candidate has two options: 1) file the notice of candidacy and pay the filing fee in person at the appropriate board of elections; or 2) mail or deliver by commercial courier service the candidate's notice of candidacy to the appropriate board of elections, provided it is received by the end of the filing period.

The deadline for a candidate to withdraw the notice of candidacy and receive a refund is 5pm on Tuesday, July 14, 2026. Any person who has filed a notice of candidacy for an office has the right to withdraw it. Candidates who wish to withdraw must complete a Candidacy Withdrawal Form, which is located on the State Board of Election's website or can be obtained at the county board of elections office.

## GENERAL CANDIDACY REQUIREMENTS

The following are general candidacy requirements:

- Candidate must be 21 years old on Election Day.
- Candidate must be a registered voter of the municipality at the time they file for office. If they are not already registered to vote, they can register at the same time as they file their notice of candidacy.
- Candidate must reside within the municipal corporate limits.
- For an office that is elected by a district or ward, the candidate must reside within the district or ward.
- Candidate must file a notice of candidacy with the county board of elections office in the county of their residence and pay a filing fee set by the municipal governing board during the filing period. The minimum is \$5 with a maximum of 1% of the annual salary of the office sought.
- The notice of candidacy includes a question about any previous felony convictions and will require disclosure of any convictions, as discussed further below.

**ONLY FILE FOR ONE OFFICE PER ELECTION:** If a person has filed a notice of candidacy for one office with the county board of elections, then a notice of candidacy may not later be filed for any other municipal office for that election unless the notice of candidacy for the first office is withdrawn first.

# NOTICE OF CANDIDACY FORM

The State Board of Elections provides a Notice of Candidacy form, which is available from any county board of elections or on the State Board's website at [www.ncsbe.gov/candidates/filing-candidacy/notice-candidacy](http://www.ncsbe.gov/candidates/filing-candidacy/notice-candidacy).

## Where and How to File the Notice of Candidacy

Candidates must file for municipal office at their county board of elections office. Candidate filings via surrogate cannot be accepted. During any candidate filing period, the boards of elections will only accept notices of candidacy that are 1) signed and submitted in person by the candidate, or 2) certified and delivered via mail or commercial courier service, per [N.C.G.S. § 163-106\(a\)](#) and [N.C.G.S. § 163-294.2\(a\)](#).



When signing the notice of candidacy, the candidate must sign the notice with their legal name and, at their discretion, any nickname by which they are commonly known in the form that they wish it to appear on the ballot. A candidate may also, in lieu of their legal first name and legal middle initial or middle name (if any), sign their nickname, provided that they append to the notice of candidacy an affidavit that they have been commonly known by the nickname for at least five years prior to the date of making the affidavit. The candidate should also include with the affidavit the way that candidate's name (permitted by law) should be listed on the ballot if another candidate with the same last name files a notice of candidacy for that office.

If mailing the notice of candidacy, please note that the candidate is not considered to have filed their notice of candidacy until the appropriate board of elections receives it, and it must be received before the end of the filing period.

**Completing the Notice of Candidacy: Candidate’s Name**

Official ballots must contain the names of the candidates as they appear on their notice of candidacy, per [N.C.G.S. § 163-165.5\(a\)\(3\)](#). Furthermore, under this law, the ballot cannot contain a title, appendage, or appellation indicating rank, status, or position in connection with a candidate’s name, though candidates may use the title Mr., Mrs., Miss, or Ms.

Legitimate nicknames may be permitted on official ballots, but only if listed on the notice of candidacy. The nickname, which appears in parentheses on the ballot, may not mislead voters or unduly advertise the candidacy. If a candidate is providing an affidavit to permit the use of a nickname with his or her legal last name, the affidavit must include the way the ballot should list the candidate’s name (as permitted by law) in the event that another candidate with the same last name files for the same office.

The table below provides examples of what is and what is not acceptable for the candidate’s name on ballot if the candidate’s name is George Eugene Smith.

Candidate Name on Ballot		Candidate Name on Ballot Examples:	
		Allowed	Not Allowed
1	A candidate may use either first or middle name before the last name (no nickname affidavit necessary)	George Smith Eugene Smith	
2	A candidate may abbreviate using the first letter of either first or middle name (but not last name) (no nickname affidavit necessary).	G. Smith G.E. Smith George E. Smith G. Eugene Smith	George S. G.E.S.
3	A candidate may choose to include a suffix (no nickname affidavit necessary)	George Smith George Smith, Jr. George Smith III	George Smith, Esq. George Smith, MD
4	The ONLY title allowed along with a name is Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms.	Mr. George Smith	General George Smith Judge George Smith Hon. George Smith
5	If a nickname affidavit is completed, the nickname must either be used in place of the first or middle name or following the first or middle name in parentheses. Nicknames that indicate rank, status, or position are prohibited. Any shortening of a proper name as it appears in the voter record, other than abbreviation to the first letter, requires a nickname affidavit (such as “Dave” if the voter registration lists the first name as “David”)	George (Joey)Smith George E. (Joey) Smith George Eugene (Joey) Smith Eugene (Joey) Smith Joey Smith	George (Da Bomb) Smith George (Vote For Me) Smith George (The Judge) Smith George (Winner) Smith
6	<b>Hyphenated Surname</b> as listed on the candidate’s voter registration record- Unless the candidate’s voter registration has been updated, the surname to appear on the ballot <b>must</b> match the voter registration record.	George Eugene-Smith (how candidate’s name appears on the voter registration record)	George Eugene Smith (not allowed unless voter registration has been updated)

## **Completing the Notice of Candidacy: Disclosure of Felony Conviction**

The Notice of Candidacy form provided by the State Board of Elections includes a statement that asks the following question: “Have you ever been convicted of a felony?” Candidates who answer “yes” to this question must complete a separate form providing the name of the offense, date of conviction, date of restoration of citizenship rights, and the county and state of conviction. It is a Class I felony for an individual to knowingly provide untrue information in response to this question. A candidate is not required to disclose a felony conviction if the conviction was dismissed because of a reversal on appeal or if it resulted in a pardon of innocence or expungement. A prior felony conviction does not preclude holding elective office if the candidate’s rights of citizenship have been restored (*i.e.*, they have completed their sentence).

If a candidate fails to answer the felony disclosure question, the board of elections that accepted the filing will notify the candidate of the omission, at which point the candidate has **48 hours** to provide the missing information. If a candidate does not provide this information at the time of filing or within **48 hours** after the notice, the individual’s filing is not considered complete, the individual’s name will not appear on the ballot as a candidate, and votes for the individual will not be counted. The **48 hours** to complete the statement is only if it is left completely blank.

The notice of candidacy is a public record in the office of the board of elections where the candidate files.

## **Filing Fee**

- You must pay the filing fee when you file a notice of candidacy. The minimum is \$5 with a maximum of 1% of the annual salary of the office sought.
- Any filing fee over \$50 must be payable with a personal check, money order, demand draft, cashier’s check, debit or credit card.
- If the filing fee is paid by the candidate’s personal account this is considered as an in-kind contribution and should be listed on the CRO-1210 & CRO-1510 on the next report due.

## **Withdrawal of Notice of Candidacy and Refund of Filing Fee:**

Any person who has filed a notice of candidacy for an office has the right to withdraw it and receive a refund at any time prior to the close of business on the third business day prior to the date on which the right to file for that office expires. A candidate can withdraw after that time, but they will not receive a refund.

## **Disqualification:**

When any candidate files a notice of candidacy with a board of elections, the board of elections is required to, immediately upon receipt of the notice of candidacy, inspect the registration records of the county, and cancel the notice of candidacy of any person who does not meet the constitutional or statutory qualifications for the office, including residency. The board must give notice of cancellation to any candidate whose notice of candidacy has been cancelled by mail or by having the notice served on the candidate by the sheriff, and to any other candidate filing for the same office. The candidate in question can then request a hearing on the cancellation of their notice of candidacy.

## VOTER REGISTRATION

Candidates and their campaigns may distribute voter registration applications and conduct voter registration drives. Voter registration forms are available to download, print, and distribute on the State Board website at <https://www.ncsbe.gov/registering/how-register>.

Any person who conducts a voter registration drive is responsible for understanding the legal requirements and the legal penalties for a failure to comply with those requirements.

Organizers and participants should carefully follow the voter registration drive information chart of requirements and **DOs** and **DON'Ts** on the following page of the State Board of Elections website:

[www.ncsbe.gov/registering/hosting-voter-registration-drives](http://www.ncsbe.gov/registering/hosting-voter-registration-drives)

### RETURN VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATIONS TO COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Voter registration applications that are collected from applicants must be delivered to the county board of elections of the county in which the applicant resides and must be delivered by the voter registration deadline for an election, which is no later than the 25<sup>th</sup> day prior to the election. It is recommended that the applications be delivered to the board of elections within five (5) days of receipt, keeping in mind the registration deadline. This will ensure that the applicant is registered timely and promptly receives his or her voter registration card.

Applications received by the State Board of Elections will be routed to the proper county board of elections, but voter registration drive organizers are strongly encouraged to route completed applications directly to the applicants' proper county board of elections.

The logo for the Voter Registration Drive features the words "VOTER", "REGISTRATION", and "DRIVE" stacked vertically in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The text is centered between two thick, solid red horizontal bars, one above and one below the text.

VOTER  
REGISTRATION  
DRIVE

## ABSENTEE VOTING RESTRICTIONS FOR CANDIDATES

It is important the candidate understands that there are legal limits on their activity with respect to providing assistance to the voter in the absentee voting process.

Candidates may not act as witnesses for persons who are not near relatives. As noted in [G.S. § 163-237\(c\)](#), it is a criminal offense for a person to act as a witness in any primary or election in which the person is a candidate for nomination or election, unless the voter is the candidate's near relative. Candidates also may not take possession of a non-relative's ballot for purposes of returning the ballot to the board of elections. Doing so is a violation of [G.S. § 163-226.3\(a\)\(5\)](#) and is a felony. A "near relative" as defined in [G.S. § 163-226\(f\)](#) is a spouse, brother, sister, parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, stepparent, or stepchild.

There is an exception for voters who need assistance due to a disability. A voter who needs assistance due to their disability may receive assistance in the voting process from a person of their choice, including a candidate. This exception, however, does not apply to a candidate serving as a witness unless the voter is a patient or resident of covered facility (i.e., a hospital, clinic, nursing home, or rest home). Questions about who is allowed to assist voters should be directed to the county board.

## ELECTIONEERING AT VOTING SITES

No electioneering may occur within the area immediately outside of the front entrance of a voting place. This area will be marked by signage to designate the area of the "buffer zone," which is typically 50 feet from the front entrance but must be at least 25 feet from the front entrance. Information regarding the buffer zone at each voting place will be made available by the county board of elections no later than 10 days before the opening of early voting at the voting place and no later than 30 days before election day for each election day voting place. Pursuant to [G.S. § 163-165.2\(b\)](#), no person other than a board of elections shall produce or disseminate a document substantially resembling an official ballot unless the document contains on its face a prominent statement that the document was not produced by a board of elections and is not an official ballot.

In accordance with [G.S. § 163-166.4](#), no person or group of persons shall hinder access, harass others, distribute campaign literature, place political advertising, solicit votes, or otherwise engage in election-related activity in the voting place or in the buffer zone. If a political sign is placed in this restricted area, it will be removed.

Under [NC G.S. 163-129 \(d\)](#) The county board of elections shall ensure that each precinct voting place permits candidates at least 36 hours prior to the opening of the voting place and at least 36 hours after the close of the voting place to place and retrieve political advertising. Any political advertising placed outside the times specified in this subsection may be removed by the property owner.

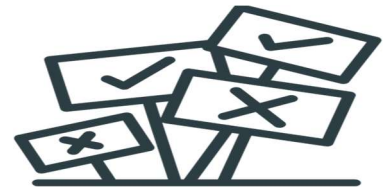
## CURBSIDE VOTING AT VOTING SITES

Every voting site will offer curbside voting in a designated area to allow voters who cannot enter the voting place due to their age or physical disabilities to cast their vote in a vehicle. If curbside voting is located outside of the “buffer zone,” then electioneering restrictions will still be in place to ensure the privacy of curbside voters. For more information about the area in which electioneering is restricted for a specific voting site, contact your county board of elections office.

## ISSUES OR COMPLAINTS AT VOTING SITES

Any issue or complaint relating to a voting site should first be brought to the attention of the polling place’s chief judge.

If the issue cannot be resolved by the election official at the voting site, contact your county board of elections office.



## REPORTING OF ELECTION RESULTS

All election results on election night are unofficial. Election results are not made official until all relevant canvasses are completed (the county canvass for local contests and the state canvass for multicounty contests).

### Absentee Ballots

County boards of elections must count all absentee ballots on Election Day if they were timely received, unless they have been challenged or still need to be cured. Absentee ballots from military and overseas voters that were timely mailed, but received after Election Day, are counted at a separate meeting before the county canvass.

- Civilian absentee ballots are timely if received by 7:30 p.m. on Election Day. If a voter needs to provide a document to cure their absentee ballot application, the deadline to do so is noon on the third day after Election Day.
- County boards of election must have an additional meeting following the day of the election and prior to the date of the county canvass to review and approve any military and overseas ballot envelopes/applications received timely after Election Day, and then count those approved ballots. Military and overseas ballots that are received after Election Day are timely if they were submitted for mailing, electronic transmission, or other authorized means of delivery not later than 12:01 a.m., at the place where the voter completes the ballot, on Election Day and are received no later than

5 p.m. on the last business day prior to the county canvass. If the ballot was mailed and is timely received, it may not be rejected on the basis that it has a late postmark, an unreadable postmark, or no postmark.

[NC G.S. § 163-234](#)

## **EARLY VOTING AND ELECTION DAY BALLOTS**

Ballots cast during early voting and on election day are counted after the close of the polls on election day. Polls close at 7:30 PM.

## **PROVISIONAL BALLOTS**

If an individual seeking to vote claims to be a registered voter and though eligible to vote in the election does not appear on the official list of eligible registered voters in the voting place, that individual may cast a provisional ballot. There are other

reasons a voter might vote provisionally that are related to their qualifications to vote in a specific contest or the photo ID requirements. Provisional ballots are researched after Election Day. If the provisional voter is determined to be eligible, their ballot will be approved and counted three days after election day by the county board.

Information on election night reporting and the State Board's Election Results Dashboard can be accessed here:

[www.ncsbe.gov/results-data/election-results](http://www.ncsbe.gov/results-data/election-results)

## CANDIDACY FORMS

*\*The displayed forms in this section are intended for reference purposes only. To access the appropriate form, please use the hyperlinks provided below each respective form or contact your county board of elections.*



# MUNICIPAL NOTICE OF CANDIDACY FORM

Each person seeking municipal office must file a Municipal Notice of Candidacy form with the appropriate county board of elections.

**North Carolina**  
**Municipal Notice of Candidacy**

Use this form to place your name on ballot as a candidate in a municipal election.

**Election information**

1 Title of the office sought \_\_\_\_\_  
 District or ward (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Election \_\_\_\_\_ Election date (m/m/yy) \_\_\_\_\_

**Candidate information**  
 You must provide your full legal name in this section. This information will be public.

2 Last name \_\_\_\_\_ Suffix (Jr., Sr., II, III, IV) \_\_\_\_\_  
 First name \_\_\_\_\_ Middle name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name to appear on ballot \_\_\_\_\_  
 Campaign phone number \_\_\_\_\_ Campaign email \_\_\_\_\_

**Residential address**  
 This information will be public.

3 Address (not P.O. Box) \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 County \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing address**  
 This information will be public.

4  Same as above  
 Address or P.O. Box \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Candidate's pledge**  
 Check 1 box and complete the pledge that applies to the office that you are seeking candidacy for.

5  I am filing for a partisan contest:  
 I hereby file notice as a candidate for nomination as \_\_\_\_\_  
 in the \_\_\_\_\_ party primary election to be held on (m/m/yy) \_\_\_\_\_  
 I affiliate with the \_\_\_\_\_ party (and I certify that I am now registered on the registration records of the precinct in which I reside as an affiliate of the \_\_\_\_\_ party).  
 I pledge that I have been affiliated with that party for at least 90 days as of the date of the filing of the notice of candidacy. I pledge that if I am defeated in the primary, I will not run for the same office as a write-in candidate in the next general election.

I am filing for a non-partisan contest:  
 I hereby file notice that I am a candidate for election to the office of \_\_\_\_\_ (at large)  
 for the \_\_\_\_\_ Ward in the regular municipal election to be held in \_\_\_\_\_  
 (municipality) on (m/m/yy) \_\_\_\_\_.

**Felony disclosure**

6 Have you ever been convicted of a felony?  Yes  No  
 If you have been convicted of a felony, you must complete a Candidate Felony Disclosure form within 48 hours of submitting this notice (G.S. 363-106). The required form can be obtained from any election officer or from the NC State Board of Elections website at [www.ncsbe.gov](http://www.ncsbe.gov). A prior felony conviction does not preclude holding elected office if rights of citizenship have been restored. Felony conviction need not be disclosed if the conviction was dismissed as a result of reversal on appeal or resulted in a pardon of innocence or expungement.

1

**Affidavit attesting to nickname**  
 Complete only if you would like an acceptable nickname to appear on the ballot in lieu of your legal name.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have been duly sworn, hereby state under oath that I have been commonly known by the nickname \_\_\_\_\_ for at least five years and request that my name be placed on the ballot as follows: \_\_\_\_\_ in the event that another candidate with the same last name as mine file notice of candidacy for the same office for which I am a candidate, my name should be listed as: \_\_\_\_\_

Even if your nickname is accepted, your legal last name will still appear on the ballot.

State of North Carolina, \_\_\_\_\_ County.  
 I hereby certify that \_\_\_\_\_ the candidate who signed this Affidavit attesting to nickname, personally appeared before me this day and signed this document in my presence.

7 Sworn to and subscribed before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_.

Name of notary \_\_\_\_\_  
 My commission expires (m/m/yy) \_\_\_\_\_

Notary seal

Notary, sign here

**Acknowledgment of notice of candidacy**  
 This section must be completed by the chair, secretary, or director of the board of elections, or by a notary. See G.S. 363-234.2(a).

The notice of candidacy shall be either signed in the presence of the chairman or secretary of the board of elections or the director of elections of that county, or signed and acknowledged before an officer authorized to take acknowledgments who shall certify the notice under seal. An acknowledged and certified notice may be mailed to the board of elections.

State of North Carolina, \_\_\_\_\_ County.  
 I hereby certify that \_\_\_\_\_ the candidate who signed this notice of candidacy, personally appeared before me this day and signed this document in my presence or acknowledged their signature to be the same.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_.

8 Name of certifying officer or notary \_\_\_\_\_  
 Title of certifying officer \_\_\_\_\_  
 My commission expires (m/m/yy) \_\_\_\_\_

Notary seal

Certifying officer or notary, sign here

**Candidate's certification**  
 I swear or affirm that the statements on this form are true, correct and complete to the best of my knowledge or belief.  
 Candidate, sign and date here (Required)

9  Date (m/m/yy) \_\_\_\_\_

Sign and date this section in the presence of the chair, secretary, or director of the board of elections, or the notary from section 8.  
 Submit this form to the board of elections in the county in which you plan to be a candidate.

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The Municipal Notice of Candidacy form can be found on the State Board's website at:

<https://www.ncsbe.gov/candidates/filing-candidacy/notice-candidacy>

Additionally, you can get the form from your county board of elections office.

# FELONY DISCLOSURE FORM

A candidate who answers “yes” to the felony question on the Municipal Notice of Candidacy form must use this form to disclose a felony conviction.



## North Carolina Felony Disclosure

Use this form to  
disclose a felony

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**Election information**  
Please print.

**1** Title of the office sought \_\_\_\_\_  
 Election \_\_\_\_\_ Election date (mm/dd/yyyy) \_\_\_\_\_  
 If the office you are seeking has a district, enter the jurisdiction type (e.g. NC Senate) and district (Dist 10):  
 Jurisdiction \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_

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**Candidate information**

**2** Last name \_\_\_\_\_ Suffix (Jr, Sr., II, III, IV) \_\_\_\_\_  
 First name \_\_\_\_\_ Middle name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

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**Residential address**

**3** Address (not P.O. Box) \_\_\_\_\_ Unit # \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 County \_\_\_\_\_

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**Felony disclosure**  
Provide the details of your felony convictions.

**4** A felony conviction need not be disclosed if the conviction was dismissed as a result of reversal on appeal or resulted in a pardon of innocence or expungement.  
 A prior felony conviction does not preclude holding elective office if the candidate's rights of citizenship have been restored.

Offense	Date of conviction	County of conviction	State of conviction	Date citizenship rights restored

---

**Candidate's affirmation for felony disclosure**  
Fraudulently or falsely completing this form is a Class I Felony under Chapter 163 of the NC General Statutes.

**5** I affirm that the information disclosed here is true, correct, and complete to the best of my knowledge.  
**Candidate, sign and date here (Required)**

X

Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

The information on this form is public record.  
 Submit this form to the same board of elections where you file your Notice of Candidacy form.


The Felony Disclosure form can be found on the State Board’s website at:

<https://www.ncsbe.gov/candidates/filing-candidacy>

Additionally, you can get the form at your county board of elections office.

# PETITION REQUEST FORM

The Petition Request form should be completed and submitted to the appropriate board of elections when a voter is interested in starting a petition to be listed as a candidate without paying the filing fee.



## North Carolina Petition Request

Request a petition to place a  
candidate or item on the ballot

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**Petitioner information**

1 Name of candidate or petition \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of contact person \_\_\_\_\_  
 Primary phone \_\_\_\_\_ Secondary phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Residential address**  
This information will be public.

2 Address (not P.O. Box) \_\_\_\_\_ Unit # \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 County \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Mailing address**  
This information will be public.

Same as above  
 3 Address or P.O. Box \_\_\_\_\_ Unit # \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 County \_\_\_\_\_

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**What is this petition for?**  
Use this form to request 1 petition type.  
  
 For multi-county or statewide petitions, and for district and superior court judges, send this form to the NC State Board of Elections.  
  
 For single county districts and local petitions, send this form to your county board of elections office.

To run as a candidate for office  
 Office \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_  
 I am requesting a petition to run as (check 1)  an unaffiliated candidate  a write-in candidate  
 Name of party \_\_\_\_\_  
 Jurisdiction (check 1)  Municipal  Single county  Multi-county  Statewide  Judicial

To form a new political party  
 Name of party \_\_\_\_\_

4 Name of party chairperson \_\_\_\_\_  
 Intended participation year \_\_\_\_\_

Other petitions (check 1)  
 ABC (alcoholic beverage sale) petition  Municipal incorporation or annexation  
 In lieu of paying filing fee  Municipal charter amendment  
 Bond referendum  Repeal of levy  
 School tax  Presidential party nomination  
 Other local petition (please specify type) \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Petitioner affirmation**  
Don't forget to check the box.

5 I affirm that:  
 -I will collect signatures on separate sheets for each county,  
 -I will not combine voter signatures from multiple counties on one sheet,  
 -I will submit signed sheets to the relevant county to be checked,  
 -I will only collect original (not digital) signatures in ink, and  
 -I will not allow anyone to sign on behalf of someone else.  
 I certify that my name did not appear on the ballot in a primary election.  
 By checking this box, I confirm that I have read and understand this information.  
 Submit this form to the board of elections in the jurisdiction in which you plan to be a candidate.

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This section is for Board of Elections use only. Petitioner, do not complete this section.

<b>Signature verification</b>	Number of signatures required (when based on registered voters on a future date, this will be an estimate) _____
<small>The county or state will complete this section and return a copy to you.</small>	Date signatures are due to county board of elections for verification _____
	Date signatures are due to State Board of Elections (if applicable) _____

2021.04


The Petition Request form can be found on the State Board's website at:

<https://www.ncsbe.gov/candidates/petitions>

Additionally, you can get the form at your county board of elections office.

# WITHDRAWAL OF NOTICE OF CANDIDACY

This form is utilized when a candidate would like to withdraw their Notice of Candidacy.



## North Carolina Withdrawal of Notice of Candidacy

Use this form to withdraw  
your Notice of Candidacy

---

**Election information**  
Please print.

1

Title of the office sought \_\_\_\_\_  
 Election \_\_\_\_\_ Election date (mm/dd/yyyy) \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Candidate information**  
Use the same information that you used to complete your notice of candidacy.

2

Last name \_\_\_\_\_ Suffix (Jr., Sr., II, III, IV) \_\_\_\_\_  
 First name \_\_\_\_\_ Middle name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 County \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone number \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Candidate's affirmation for withdrawal of candidacy**  
Fraudulently or falsely completing this form is a Class I felony under Chapter 163 of the NC General Statutes.

3

A person who has filed a notice of candidacy for an **even-year party nomination** has the right to withdraw it at any time prior to the close of business on the third business day prior to the date on which the right to file for that office expires and receive a refund of their filing fee.

A person who has filed a notice of candidacy for a **municipal office** may withdraw their candidacy at any time, but will only receive a refund of the candidate's filing fee if the withdrawal is prior to the close of business on the third business day on which the right to file for that office expires.

No general election candidate in a partisan contest may withdraw on or after the first day absentee ballots are distributed for the election.

I hereby affirm that I have filed as a candidate for office and I am withdrawing my notice of candidacy.

**Candidate, sign and date here** (Required)

<b>X</b>	Date (mm/dd/yyyy)
----------	-------------------

Submit this form to the office where you filed. Find the contact information for your local board of elections at the NCSBE website ([www.ncsbe.gov/ROEInfo](http://www.ncsbe.gov/ROEInfo)).

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**Please note:** Withdrawal of your notice of candidacy does not close your candidate committee. Your treasurer must continue to file disclosure reports until your committee is eligible to close under 08 NCAC 21 .0202 or to obtain inactive status under N.C.G.S. § 163-278.10.

The Withdrawal of Notice of Candidacy form can be found on the State Board's website at:

<https://www.ncsbe.gov/candidates/withdrawal-candidacy>

## CHALLENGES TO A CANDIDATE’S QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICE

A challenge to a candidate’s qualifications for office must be filed with the board of elections that received the notice of candidacy or petition no later than ten business days after the close of the filing period. The Municipal Candidate Filing Period for the 2026 municipal elections ends at 12 noon on Friday, July 17, 2026. The deadline to challenge a candidate’s notice of candidacy for municipal office is Friday, July 31, 2026. But if a challenger discovers one or more grounds for challenging a candidate after this deadline, the grounds may be the basis for an election protest under [G.S. § 163-182.9](#).

The challenge must be made in a verified affidavit by a challenger, and it must be based on the challenger’s reasonable suspicion or belief of the facts stated. **The grounds for filing a challenge are that the candidate does not meet the constitutional or statutory qualifications for the office, including residency.**

The State Board’s Candidate Challenge Procedures Guide and candidate challenge forms can be found on the State Board’s website here: <https://www.ncsbe.gov/about-elections/legal-resources/challenge-protest-appeal-and-complaint-forms>.

## GENERAL STATUTE LINKS

Relevant statutes for municipal elections:

General Statute	Brief Description
<a href="#">G.S. 163-279</a>	Time of municipal primaries and elections
<a href="#">G.S. 163-286</a>	Conduct of municipal and special district elections
<a href="#">G.S. 163-289</a>	Right to challenge; challenge procedure
<a href="#">G.S. 163-290</a>	Alternative methods of determining the results of municipal elections
<a href="#">G.S. 163-291</a>	Partisan primaries and elections
<a href="#">G.S. 163-292</a>	Determination of election results in cities using the plurality method
<a href="#">G.S. 163-293</a>	Determination of election results in cities using the election and runoff election method
<a href="#">G.S. 163-294</a>	Determination of election results in cities using nonpartisan primaries
<a href="#">G.S. 163-294.1</a>	Death of candidates or elected officers
<a href="#">G.S. 163-294.2</a>	Notice of candidacy and filing fee in nonpartisan municipal elections
<a href="#">G.S. 163-294.3</a>	Sole candidates to be voted upon in nonpartisan municipal elections
<a href="#">G.S. 163-294.4</a>	Failure of candidates to file; death of a candidate before election
<a href="#">G.S. 163-296</a>	Nomination by petition
<a href="#">G.S. 163-299</a>	Ballots; municipal primaries and elections

<a href="#">G.S. 163-301</a>	Chairman of election board to furnish certificate of elections
<a href="#">G.S. 163-278.10A</a>	Threshold of \$1,000 for financial reports for certain candidates

<b>General Statute</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>
<a href="#">08 NCAC 21.0106</a>	Electronic Filing Requirements
<a href="#">G.S. 163-278.39</a>	Disclosure Legends
<a href="#">G.S. 163-278.38Z(7)</a>	Print Media
<a href="#">08 NCAC 21.0501</a>	Billboards
<a href="#">G.S. 163-278.12(C)</a>	Special reporting of electioneering communications
<a href="#">G.S. 163-166.4</a>	Limitation on activity in the voting place and in a buffer zone around it

# CAMPAIGN FINANCE



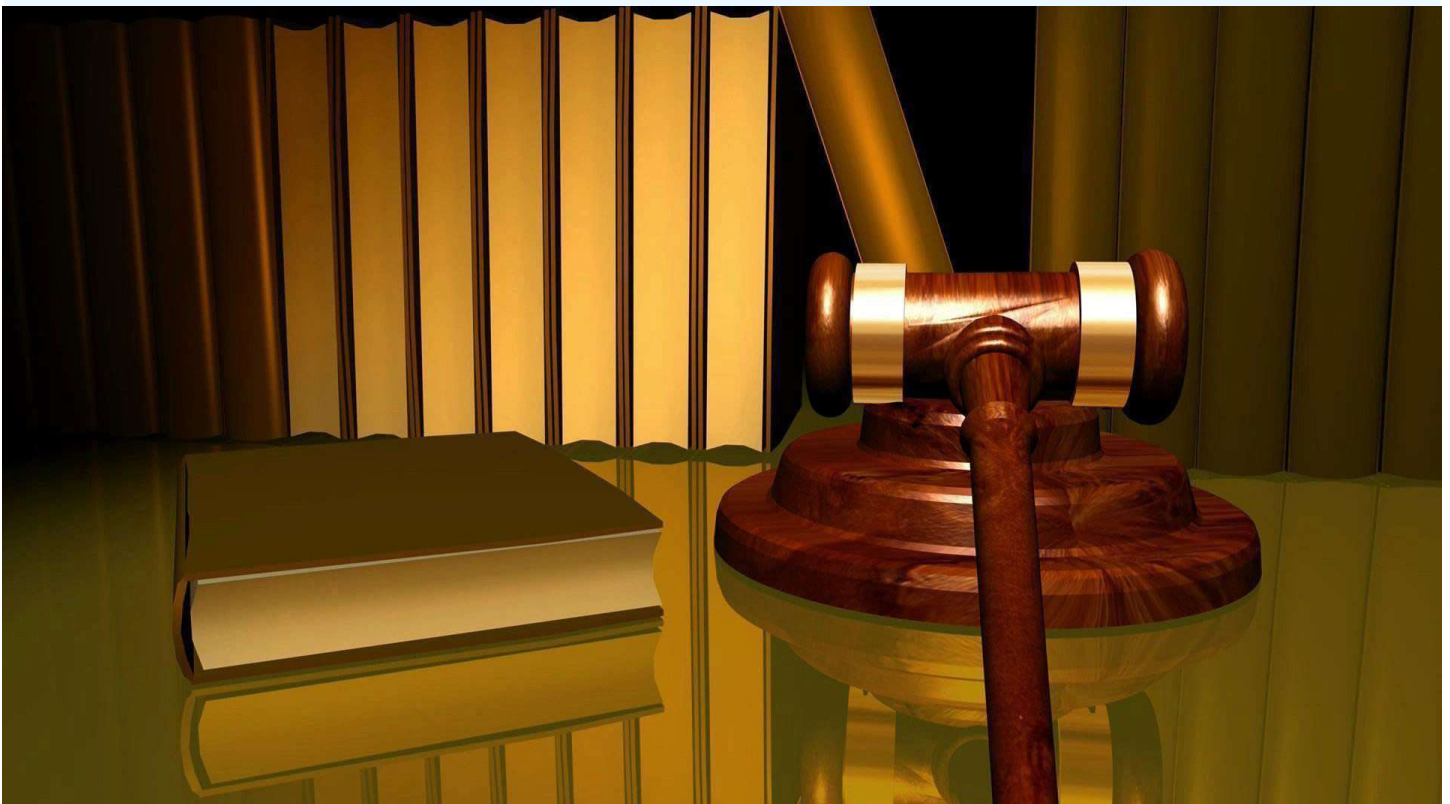
## CAMPAIGN FINANCE INFORMATION

The information provided in this part of the guide is relevant to candidates running in municipal elections. Candidates for municipal offices submit campaign disclosure reports with their county boards of elections.

The statutes relevant to candidate campaign finance are found in Article 22A and Article 22M of Chapter 163 of the North Carolina General Statutes. These statutes may be accessed at the following link:

[www.ncleg.gov/Laws/GeneralStatutes](http://www.ncleg.gov/Laws/GeneralStatutes)

If legislative action or legal developments affect the information within this document, such changes will be noted and made available on the Campaign Finance section of the website of the State Board of Elections.



# ORGANIZING THE COMMITTEE

## FIRST ACTIVITY:

Within 10 days of the following activities, the treasurer of a candidate committee must submit an organizational report:

Receiving contributions or making expenditures

Filing a notice of candidacy

Being certified as the nominee of a political party for a vacancy

## 2026

January							February							March							April								
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
				1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4		
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25		
25	26	27	28	29	30	31								29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30				
May							June							July							August								
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
					1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6				1	2	3	4							1			
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30					26	27	28	29	30	31	23	24	25	26	27	28	29			
31																					30	31							
September							October							November							December								
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
			1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26		
27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						27	28	29	30	31				

Jan 01: New Year's Day	Apr 05: Easter Sunday	Jul 04: Independence Day	Nov 26: Thanksgiving Day
Jan 19: M L King Day	May 25: Memorial Day	Sep 07: Labor Day	Dec 25: Christmas
Feb 16: Presidents' Day	Jun 19: Juneteenth	Oct 12: Columbus Day	
Apr 03: Good Friday	Jul 03: Independence Day Holiday	Nov 11: Veterans Day	

# FORMS REQUIRED TO SET UP THE COMMITTEE



## **New Committee Forms:**

### *Committees staying Under Threshold:*

- Mandatory: Statement of Organization – Candidate Committee (CRO-2100A)
- Mandatory: Certification of Financial Account Information (CRO-3500)
- Mandatory if running for an eligible office and seeking to operate “under threshold”:  
Certification of Threshold (CRO – 3600)
- Optional, but recommended: Candidate Designation of Committee Funds (CRO-3900)

### *Committees Over Threshold:*

- Mandatory: Statement of Organization – Candidate Committee (CRO-2100A)
- Mandatory: Certification of Financial Account Information (CRO-3500)
- Mandatory: Organizational Disclosure Report
- Optional, but recommended: Candidate Designation of Committee Funds (CRO-3900). Undesignated funds may escheat to the State upon the death of the candidate.

### *Mandatory as part of the committee’s organizational disclosure report:*

- Disclosure Report Cover (CRO-1000). Failure to submit may result in civil penalty.
  - Detailed Summary (CRO – 1100). Failure to submit may result in civil penalty.
  - Any other Disclosure Report forms based on the Detailed Summary
- \*If you are a candidate eligible to submit a Certification of Threshold, the Organizational Disclosure Report is not required. *See next section to determine Threshold eligibility.*

# CERTIFICATION OF THRESHOLD

If a municipal candidate does not intend to raise or spend more than \$1,000 in the election cycle, the treasurer may submit a Certification of Threshold (CRO – 3600). As long as the committee remains under the threshold, the treasurer is not required to submit regular disclosure reports. The organizational report for a committee under threshold consists only of CRO forms 2100A, 3500 and 3600, and the optional CRO-3900.

Note: All monies raised or spent count towards the \$1,000 threshold, including money that the candidate spends out of pocket, in-kind contributions, loans etc.

A committee that intends to remain under the threshold for the election cycle must submit form CRO-3600 with the committee's organizational documents, which are due within ten days of organizing or filing a notice of candidacy. To remain under threshold for subsequent election cycles, the committee must submit a CRO-3600 by the applicable due date in 08 NCAC 21 .0203. If a committee does not renew the certification by submitting a new CRO-3600 at the beginning of the next election cycle, the committee will be required to submit disclosure reports.

If the intent to stay within the threshold changes, or if the \$1,000 threshold is exceeded, the treasurer must immediately notify the county board and shall be responsible for submitting all future reports. Any contribution, loan or expenditure which would have been required to be reported on an earlier report must be disclosed on the next report required after the intent changes or the threshold is exceeded. G.S. § 163-278.10A.

Threshold committees that wish to close after the election and are eligible under 08 NCAC 21 .0202 must submit a Certification to Close Committee (CRO-3400). A committee is not eligible to close if the committee has failed to submit a report or the committee has a penalty assessed that remains unpaid within three years of the date the assessment was due.

Please note that the option to submit the Certification of Threshold is available ONLY to candidates seeking county or municipal offices.

Candidates for legislative, judicial, and statewide races are not eligible to submit a Certification of Threshold.

The image shows a form titled "Certification of Threshold" from the North Carolina State Board of Elections. The form includes the following sections:

- Header:** "VOTE NORTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS" with a logo.
- Title:** "Certification of Threshold" in a box.
- Text:** "This Certification is used to declare or withdraw a committee's intent to raise or spend \$1,000 or less in the current election cycle."
- Text:** "This Certification is only valid for political party committees and candidates for a county office, municipal office, local school board office, soil & water conservation district board of supervisors, or sanitary district board."
- Text:** "This Certification is filed at the Board of Elections office where the committee's campaign reports are filed."
- Section:** "FILED BY:"
- Fields:** Committee Name, Treasurer Name, Treasurer Address (include city, state, & zip), and Treasurer Phone.
- Text:** "Check One: I certify that this committee intends to neither receive nor expend more than \$1,000 during the current election cycle under the procedures set forth in G.S. 163-278.10A. This certification will remain in effect until the end of the election cycle for this committee. If this committee exceeds \$1,000 in contributions or expenditures during this election cycle, I understand that I must immediately notify the appropriate board of elections and file required campaign finance reports. THIS DECLARATION CAN ONLY BE MADE AT THE BEGINNING OF AN ELECTION CYCLE."
- Text:** "I am withdrawing my Certification to remain at or under the \$1,000 threshold. I will now be required to file the next scheduled report for all contributions and expenditures that have not been previously reported from the beginning of the current election cycle. I further agree to file all future reports required."
- Signatures:** Two lines for "Date Signed" and "Signature".
- Page Number:** "CRO-3600" and "Certification of Threshold" at the bottom.

# TREASURER TRAINING

Treasurer training is a mandatory course that provides instruction on campaign finance disclosure filing and compliance. The training is conducted in group sessions at the State Board of Elections, at regional locations various times during the year, and via monthly live webinar sessions. Training is also available via an online training module that can be completed any time. Visit our website at [www.ncsbe.gov/Campaign-Finance/training](http://www.ncsbe.gov/Campaign-Finance/training) for details. All treasurers MUST complete treasurer training within three months of appointment and once every four years, regardless of the amount of money that is raised or spent.

Treasurers for candidates that are eligible to submit the Certification of Threshold must also complete the required training.

Instructions for registering and a schedule of upcoming training sessions are available on the NCSBE website [www.ncsbe.gov/Campaign-Finance/training](http://www.ncsbe.gov/Campaign-Finance/training).

## The following are helpful tips to remember when attempting to register or complete the training.

The NC Learning Center may not immediately provide you with a listing of session dates. If this happens, log-out and wait 24-72 hours to log-in, the dates will then be available.

The online course currently does NOT contain audio.

Attendees arriving more than 15 minutes after the session begins may not receive credit and will need to reschedule.

The SBE reserves the right to cancel any session due to low registration, weather, or other unforeseen reasons. Only attendees that pre-register will be notified of any possible cancellation.

Software training is provided at the NCSBE office, via online webinar and on a one-to-one basis. There are short instructional videos, an Electronic Filing Software Manual and supplemental help topics that will get you started using the software on the NCSBE website.

[Campaign Finance Reporting Software | NCSBE](#) If you have campaign finance software questions please contact our office via the following email address. [campaign.reporting@ncsbe.gov](mailto:campaign.reporting@ncsbe.gov)

To learn about the electronic campaign filing software, including installation and tips, use the above Campaign Finance Reporting Software link.

PAC's and IE Committees should visit [www.ncsbe.gov/Campaign-Finance/training](http://www.ncsbe.gov/Campaign-Finance/training) for their specialized schedule.

## SUBMITTING DISCLOSURE REPORTS

### ARE ALL CANDIDATES REQUIRED TO SUBMIT DISCLOSURE REPORTS?

Most candidates are required to submit disclosure reports. Only candidates for county or municipal offices that do not intend to raise or spend more than \$1,000 are eligible to file a Certification of Threshold and thus be exempt from submitting disclosure reports. While eligible candidates that submit a Certification of Threshold are not required to submit reports, all information pertaining to contributions and expenditures are required to be accurately maintained in the committee's records. This includes records of the candidate's personal spending on behalf of the campaign. That is because if the committee exceeds threshold, the committee must then submit a disclosure report covering from the time the committee went under threshold through the end of the next report end date.

### WHEN ARE DISCLOSURE REPORTS FILED?

The reports that must be submitted in a municipal election vary depending on the jurisdiction. An overview of the schedules can be found in G.S. 163-278.40B, 40C, 40D and 40E. If you are unclear on how your city election is conducted, please contact your county board of elections. The county board of elections will provide notice before each report is due to the treasurer disclosed on the most recent Statement of Organization – Candidate Committee (CRO-2100A). The committee may also choose to have the candidate, any assistant treasurer, or custodian of books receive notices as well by checking the applicable box on the Statement of Organization. If a treasurer prefers to receive notices by email, he or she must check the applicable box on the Statement of Organization. A treasurer that does not make the selection on the Statement of Organization will only receive notices by U.S. Mail, not email.

Reporting schedules are available at the following link: [www.ncsbe.gov/Campaign-Finance/reporting-schedules](http://www.ncsbe.gov/Campaign-Finance/reporting-schedules). If you are unsure which schedule applies to your election, please contact your county board of elections.



# WHAT IS INCLUDED IN A DISCLOSURE REPORT?

Disclosure reports must include a "wet ink" signature on the Disclosure Report Cover form (CRO-1000), the Detailed Summary form (CRO 1100), and details for all contributions and expenditures occurring within the reporting period.

The Disclosure Report Cover is essential for showing the start and end dates of the reporting period, the type of report being submitted, and for providing a "wet ink" signature that attests to the truth of the report. A candidate/treasurer who signs a report must have completed the required training (unless the report is submitted within the 90-day training grace period).

The Detailed Summary form is also required even if there has been no financial activity, in which case zeroes should be entered on the appropriate lines. However, if contributions have been received or expenditures made or debts incurred, then additional forms containing those transactions must be included with the report.

A helpful hint to remember when completing disclosure reports using the paper forms is that the Detailed Summary form (CRO-1100) serves as a form guide as well as a summary of activity. The treasurer should refer to the transactions described on this form to determine which other forms, if any, are required to accompany the report. The required form for each transaction is noted on the same line as the transaction description.

This process is simpler for persons who use State Board software because the software generates the appropriate form for each transaction.

Disclosure Report Cover				Amendment <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Use this form for general report and committee information, must be signed and submitted along with other detailed forms. Do not use this form to update information.					
<b>I. Committee Information</b>				<b>c. ID Number</b>	
a. Full Name					
b. Mailing Address (include City, State and Zip Code)				<b>d. Date Filed</b>	
				e. Phone Number	
<b>2. Report Year</b>	<b>3. Period Start Date (month/day)</b>	<b>4. Period End Date (month/day)</b>	<b>5. Treasurer Full Name</b>		
<b>6. Type of Committee (Check One)</b>		<b>9. Type of Report (check only one type of report from one category)</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Candidate Campaign <input type="checkbox"/> PAC <input type="checkbox"/> Independent Expenditure <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Expense Fund <input type="checkbox"/> Booster Fund <input type="checkbox"/> Building Fund <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Party <input type="checkbox"/> Referendum <input type="checkbox"/> Joint Fundraiser <input type="checkbox"/> Municipal <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational <input type="checkbox"/> Thirty-five day <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-primary <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-election <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-runoff <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-annual <input type="checkbox"/> Mid Year <input type="checkbox"/> Year End <input type="checkbox"/> Final <input type="checkbox"/> Special			
<b>7. Type of Fund (if applicable, check one)</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> State/County		<input type="checkbox"/> Referendum	
<input type="checkbox"/> Organizational <input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly <input type="checkbox"/> First <input type="checkbox"/> Second <input type="checkbox"/> Third <input type="checkbox"/> Fourth <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-annual <input type="checkbox"/> Mid Year <input type="checkbox"/> Year End <input type="checkbox"/> Final <input type="checkbox"/> Special		<input type="checkbox"/> Organizational <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-referendum <input type="checkbox"/> Final <input type="checkbox"/> Supplemental Final <input type="checkbox"/> Annual <input type="checkbox"/> Special		<b>10. Special Report Name</b>	
<b>8. Number of Fundraisers this Report</b>					
<b>II. Account Information</b>			<b>II. Account Information</b>		
a. Financial Institution Full Name			a. Financial Institution Full Name		
b. Purpose		c. Account Code		b. Purpose	
d. Period Begin Balance		d. Period Begin Balance		d. Period Begin Balance	
\$		\$		\$	
<b>CERTIFICATION</b>					
I certify that the Committee or Fund is in compliance with all applicable provisions of Article 22A, 22B & 22D-22M of Chapter 163 of the NC General Statutes and that no funds are commingled with prohibited or other non-disclosed funds. I further certify that this report is complete, true and correct and that I have been trained by the NC State Board of Elections.					
_____		_____		_____	
Printed Name of Signer		Signature of Appointed Treasurer		Date	
<b>FOR OFFICE USE ONLY</b>					
Date Received: _____		Employee: _____		<b>Delivery Method</b>	
Date Postmarked: _____		Employee: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Normal Mail	
Date Scanned: _____		Employee: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Registered Mail	
Date Data Entered: _____		Employee: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Hand Delivered	
				<input type="checkbox"/> Electronically Filed	
				<input type="checkbox"/> Signer has not received mandatory training	
<b>Please Note:</b> This form cannot be used to amend committee information such as the committee address, treasurer, assistant treasurer, custodian of books information, or account information.					
You must amend the Statement of Organization (CRO-2100A-E) to make committee changes.					
CRO-1000		NC State Board of Elections		August 2008	

## METHODS AVAILABLE FOR FILING DISCLOSURE REPORTS

Any committee may submit disclosure reports electronically. Municipal candidates who have a cumulative total of more than \$10,000 in contributions, in expenditures, or in loans in an election cycle must submit reports electronically. G.S. § 163-278.9(i).

If a committee submits reports electronically BOTH the signed Disclosure Cover AND the data file (.cfd) MUST be TIMELY to avoid a penalty.

The State Board of Elections will accept a Disclosure Report Cover from electronic filers that is digitally signed via Adobe Acrobat Reader or other Adobe products using a certificate-based ID and is emailed to [campaign.reporting@ncsbe.gov](mailto:campaign.reporting@ncsbe.gov) on or before the report due date. For more information about how to sign the Disclosure Report Cover using this process, please visit <https://www.ncsbe.gov/campaign-finance/campaign-finance-reporting-software>.

A software manual, step-by-step instructions and new software instruction videos are available on our website: <https://www.ncsbe.gov/campaign-finance/campaign-finance-reporting-software>

Always check to see if the committee is using the current version of the Campaign Finance Remote Software at the start of each election cycle. <https://www.ncsbe.gov/campaign-finance/campaign-finance-reporting-software>

The Campaign Finance Reporting Forms can be found on the website at: <https://www.ncsbe.gov/campaign-finance/reporting-forms>

All other committees may submit reports on paper forms.

Download the Campaign Finance Manual at: [https://s3.amazonaws.com/dl.ncsbe.gov/Campaign\\_Finance/Campaign-Finance-Manual.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/dl.ncsbe.gov/Campaign_Finance/Campaign-Finance-Manual.pdf)

Review Reporting Schedules here: <https://www.ncsbe.gov/campaign-finance/reporting-schedules>

When mailing reports, the campaign finance office of the State Board of Elections strongly encourages treasurers to send all disclosure reports by certified mail or by other delivery services with proof of pickup and delivery dates. All Board of Election offices shall honor the date of postmark or equivalent marking by an authorized delivery service.

Link to search for County Addresses: <https://vt.ncsbe.gov/BOEInfo/>

SBOE Mailing Address here: <https://www.ncsbe.gov/campaign-finance/reporting-forms>

## PENALTIES FOR FILING DISCLOSURE REPORTS LATE

Committees will be assessed with civil penalties for reports that are not received or postmarked by the report due date. A candidate committee report that does not affect a statewide election is penalized at a rate of \$50 per day up to a maximum of \$500. G.S. § 163-278.34(a).

A candidate committee report that affects a statewide election is penalized at a rate of \$250 per day up to a maximum of \$10,000. A report affects a statewide election if the committee made any contributions to or in support of a statewide candidate.

Any willful attempt to conceal contributions or expenditures may result in civil penalties up to three times the amount attempted to be concealed. G.S. § 163-278.34(a).

If a committee fails to submit a report, in addition to civil penalties, the State Board may issue an order requiring the committee to submit the missing report, and if the report is not submitted, an order that the committee cease receiving contributions and making expenditures until the missing report is submitted and any civil penalty paid. G.S. § 163-278.34(c).



## WHEN SUBMITTING PAPERWORK...REMEMBER

- i. Forms can be typewritten or completed in blue or black ink (handwritten reports must not be completed in pencil).
- ii. Multiple documents should not be stapled together.  
  
Disclosure Reports may be stapled however, Certifications should not be staples to a report. Paperclips may be utilized.
- iii. Reports cannot be signed or filed until 12:00 am the day after the period end date of each report. See 08 NCAC 21 .0108.
- iv. Always enter the period start date and period end date on form Disclosure Report Cover (CRO-1000).
- v. A DATE and ORIGINAL "wet ink" signature are required on the CRO-1000, unless you are filing electronically and using a qualifying electronic signature.
- vi. Make sure reports are going to the correct Board of Elections. If unsure where to submit reports, call before you send.
- vii. Campaign Finance office strongly encourages treasurers to send all disclosure reports by certified mail or by other delivery services with proof of pickup and delivery dates.



### **E-Filers:**

Relevant Statute: G.S. § 163-278.9(i) available at [https://www.ncleg.gov/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/PDF/BySection/Chapter\\_163/GS\\_163-278.9.pdf](https://www.ncleg.gov/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/PDF/BySection/Chapter_163/GS_163-278.9.pdf).

Relevant Rule: 08 NCAC 21 .0106 available at <http://reports.oah.state.nc.us/ncac/title%2008%20-%20elections/chapter%2021%20-%20departmental%20rules/08%20ncac%2021%20.0106.pdf>.

# WHAT IS THE LAW REGARDING CONTRIBUTIONS?



Effective Jan. 1, 2025, no individual or political committee shall contribute in excess of \$6,800 to a candidate committee in any election. [G.S. § 163-278.13](#). A candidate or candidate's spouse may contribute unlimited amounts.

A candidate committee may not accept any contribution made by a corporation, business entity, labor union, professional association, or insurance company. G.S. § 163-278.15.

Do not "pass the hat" or collect any anonymous contributions. No matter how small the contribution, the first and last name of the contributor, date and form of payment must always be obtained.

For contributions over \$50, the treasurer must use the best efforts described in 08 NCAC 21 .0101 to gather and disclose the contributor's first and last name, mailing address, job title or profession, and employer's name or employer's specific field of business activity.

A cash contribution greater than \$50 is prohibited. All contributions greater than \$50 must be made by a verifiable form of payment, such as a check, money order, or credit card.

A person who purchases something from a candidate has made a contribution to that candidate's committee.

Volunteers raising contributions on behalf of the committee must turn those over to the treasurer within seven days of receipt so that the records are current, as required by State law.

Volunteers must follow all campaign finance laws. Make sure everyone accepting contributions on behalf of the committee understands what is acceptable and what is not.

An in-kind contribution is a non-monetary contribution, such as a good or service, provided to a candidate or candidate committee. **In-Kind Contributions** must be reported as a *contribution* on a Contributions from Individuals (CRO-1210) or Aggregated Contributions from Individuals form (CRO-1205) **AND** on an *In-Kind contribution form* (CRO-1510). This shows the money going into the committee and going out and not affecting the total.

## WHAT IS THE LAW REGARDING EXPENDITURES?

Candidate committees may only make expenditures as permitted by G.S. 163-278.16B. A candidate or candidate committee may use contributions only for the following purposes:

- i. Expenditures resulting from the candidate's campaign for public office.
- ii. Expenditures resulting from holding public office.
- iii. Donations to an organization described in Section 170(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. § 170(c)), provided that the candidate or the candidate's spouse, children, parents, brothers, or sisters are not employed by the organization.
- iv. Contributions to a national, State, district or county committee of a political party or a caucus of the political party or an affiliated party committee.
- v. Contributions to another candidate or candidate's campaign committee.
- vi. To return all or a portion of a contribution to the contributor.
- vii. Payment of any penalties against the candidate or candidate's campaign committee for violation of North Carolina's Campaign Finance Laws.
- viii. Payment to the Escheat Fund established by Chapter 116B of the General Statutes.
- ix. Legal expense donation not in excess of four thousand dollars (\$4,000) per calendar year to a legal expense fund established pursuant to Article 22M of Chapter 163 of the General Statutes.

If the candidate committee is required to submit disclosure reports, all expenditures must be reported.

Any expenditure that is made for media purposes must be paid for by check or other verifiable form of payment.

All expenditures of more than \$50 must be made with a verifiable form of payment.

Expenditures for non-media purposes that are less than \$50 may be reported without disclosing the payee. The report must still disclose the form of payment, date, amount, purpose, and account code for the account from which the expenditure was made.



## Basic Disclosure Requirements for Print, Radio, and Television Advertisements

Print media, radio, and television advertisements that are a reportable contribution, expenditure, independent expenditure, or electioneering communication must include a legend or statement disclosing certain information about the advertisement. G.S. § 163-278.39.

- Please note, there is a specific exception in G.S. § 163-278.39C for advertisements sponsored by individuals who make independent expenditures of less than \$1,000 in a political campaign.

The disclosure legend is only required for print media, radio, and television advertisements. North Carolina does not currently require disclosures on internet or social media advertisements. Defined in G.S. § 163-278.38Z(7), print media includes:

- Billboards (see definition in 08 NCAC 21 .0501)
- Cards
- Newspapers
- Newspaper Inserts
- Magazines
- Mass Mailings
- Pamphlets
- Fliers
- Periodicals
- Outdoor Advertising Facilities

**Effective December 1, 2021**, a billboard is any sign, flat surface, or other display greater than 50 square feet. 08 NCAC 21 .0501. Yard signs, posters, and magnetic signs with a print area of equal to or less than 50 square feet do not require a disclosure legend. 08 NCAC 21 .0501 also clarifies that flags and banners are not billboards.

### Contents of the Disclosure Legend

- The sponsor of the advertisement must be disclosed. The sponsor is the candidate, political committee, referendum committee, individual, or other entity that purchased the advertisement. G.S. § 163-278.38Z(10). The disclosure legend shall include the statement “Paid for by \_\_\_[Name of candidate, candidate committee, political party organization, political action committee referendum committee, or individual].” G.S. § 163-278.39(a)(1).
- If sponsored by a political committee or referendum committee, the name in the “Paid for by \_\_\_” statement shall be the same name that appears on the committee’s Statement of Organization. G.S. § 163-278.39(a)(2).
- If an advertisement is jointly sponsored, the disclosure legend shall name all sponsors.

- If the print media advertisement supports or opposes one or more clearly identified candidates, the advertisement shall disclose whether the advertisement was authorized by any candidate. The disclosure legend shall state either "Authorized by [name of candidate], candidate for [name of office]" or "Not authorized by a candidate." An "Authorized by" statement is not required if the advertisement is sponsored by the candidate or candidate committee. G.S. § 163-278.39(a)(3).
- If the print media advertisement identifies a candidate the sponsor is opposing, the advertisement shall name the candidate who is intended to benefit from the advertisement. This subdivision applies only when the sponsor coordinates or consults about the advertisement or the expenditure for it with the candidate who is intended to benefit. G.S. § 163-278.39(a)(4).

***Sample Disclosure Legend for a PAC:***

***Paid for by Citizens for John Smith. Authorized by John Smith, candidate for City Council.***

**Size Requirements for Print Media Advertisements.** G.S. § 163-278.39(b).

- The height of the disclosure legend shall be at least five percent (5%) of the height of the printed space of the advertisement, however, the type shall be no less than 12-point font.
- In an advertisement in a newspaper or a newspaper insert, the disclosure legend may be less than five percent (5%) of the height of the advertisement so long as the type is no less than 28-point font.
- If a single advertisement consists of multiple pages, folds, or faces, the disclosure legend only needs to appear on one page, fold or face.

**Size Requirements for Television Advertisements.** G.S. § 163-278.39(b).

- The visual disclosure legend shall constitute four percent (4%) of the vertical picture height.
- Where the television advertisement is paid for by a candidate or candidate committee, the visual disclosure legend shall appear simultaneously with an easily identifiable photograph of the candidate for at least two seconds.

**Radio Advertisements.** G.S. § 163-278.39(b).

- In a radio advertisement, the disclosure statement shall last at least two seconds. The statement shall be spoken so that its contents may be easily understood.

# MANDATORY ELECTRONIC FILING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## 1. I am expecting to have very little activity for my election. Do I still need to submit my reports electronically?

Any committee that raises or spends in excess of \$10,000.00 in an election cycle must submit reports electronically. Any committee that does not exceed the \$10,000.00 threshold will not be required to submit reports electronically but may choose to do so. All committees that submit electronic reports must comply with Rule 08 NCAC 21 .0106 in filing their reports.

## 2. What are the benefits of filing electronically?

The software performs calculations thereby making your committee reports more accurate and less time consuming for the user. In addition, the software maintains a database of all contributors and payees which saves time by eliminating the need to enter repetitive information.

## 3. How do I obtain the reporting software?

The Campaign Finance Remote Software is available on the State Board of Elections website at [www.ncsbe.gov/Campaign-Finance/reporting-software](http://www.ncsbe.gov/Campaign-Finance/reporting-software). The software is available for download onto a computer only. This is not a web-based system. There are short instructional videos, a manual and help topics to get your committee started. The software will be updated each year and/or if there are legislative changes to when the elections will be held. As reporting dates will need to be updated within the system to ensure proper reporting dates. Each year check the SBOE website to ensure your committee is using the latest version of the software.

A treasurer may use third-party software only if that software can generate reports that are capable of import into the State Board's central database. The import file formats and a validation tool to assist in verifying the format of import files are available on the NCSBE website.

## 4. I have a really old pc (dial-up, tablet, Mac), will this software work on my device?

The Reporting software is a stand-alone application built for the Windows operating system; there is no support for setting up the application to run over a network. It will not run Apple products.

## 5. When is the best time to start using the software?

You can start at any time but it's easier to start at the beginning of a committee or the beginning of an election cycle so that your election totals are correct.

**6. Can I create a pdf file and email that in as my electronic report?**

No. A pdf is not the correct format for electronic filing. Reports generated by the State Board software or third-party software must be submitted by e-mailing the generated data file (.cfd file) to [campaign.reporting@ncsbe.gov](mailto:campaign.reporting@ncsbe.gov).

**7. Why am I emailing my electronic reports to the State? I am a municipal/county candidate.**

Currently we do not have internal software that county boards of elections can use to receive electronic reports. All electronic reports are received by the State Board of Elections and made available on the NCSBE website. For where to submit your data file (.cfd) reference #6.

**8. How can I determine that my electronic report was received?**

When a committee sends the data file (.cfd) to [campaign.reporting@ncsbe.gov](mailto:campaign.reporting@ncsbe.gov), the committee will get an email from our email system within 48 hours. For those data files that are invalid/ blank files, a return email will be sent alerting them that a new file is needed in the correct data file (.cfd) format. All electronic reports will be available on the NCSBE website. Reports received and processed are typically posted online the following business day. Please note, daily volume may extend this timeline.

**9. I heard that the state was working on web-based software. Is that available?**

Modernization efforts are on-going; however, new software will not be available for this municipal election cycle.

**10. Do I still need to submit a signed cover page manually if I have submitted an electronic report?**

A signed Disclosure Report Cover (CRO-1000) is required for all reports. The State Board of Elections will accept a Disclosure Report Cover from electronic filers that is digitally signed via Adobe Acrobat Reader or other Adobe products using a certificate-based ID and is emailed to [campaign.reporting@ncsbe.gov](mailto:campaign.reporting@ncsbe.gov) on or before the report due date. For more information about how to sign the Disclosure Report Cover using this process, please visit <https://www.ncsbe.gov/campaign-finance/campaign-finance-reporting-software>.

Electronic filers may also continue to use a “wet ink” signature on the disclosure report cover and manually deliver or mail it to the board on or before the due date.

**11. We are planning to have three very large fundraisers. Will I be able to assist my treasurer with data entry duties using this software?**

Unfortunately, the software is a stand-alone application which cannot easily be shared between users. Downloading the software to a laptop which can be shared between users is what we would recommend.

**12. What happens if a committee exceeds \$10,000-00 and doesn't submit their reports electronically?**

The committee may be subject to civil penalties and/or other civil remedies under [G.S. 163-278.34](#).

**13. If I want to receive training for the software, how do I register my interest?**

Software training is provided via online webinar. There are short instructional videos, an Electronic Filing Software Manual and supplemental help topics that will get you started using the software on the NCSBE website. [Campaign Finance Reporting Software | NCSBE](#)

If you have campaign finance software questions, please contact our office via the following email address. [campaign.reporting@ncsbe.gov](mailto:campaign.reporting@ncsbe.gov)

To learn about the electronic campaign filing software, including installation and tips, use the above Campaign Finance Reporting Software link.

**14. If I have questions about how to use the software, who should I ask?**

You can email your questions at to NCSBE at [campaign.reporting@ncsbe.gov](mailto:campaign.reporting@ncsbe.gov), or, you can call 919-814-0700 and choose option 3.