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Frequently Asked Question: Seeking a Non-affiliated Nomination for Office In 2022

WHAT IS THE PROCESS TO SEEK A NON-AFFILIATED NOMINATION?

Candidates who are not members of any political party may file for partisan office in a general or special election in one of two ways: by submitting a completed Individual Electors nominating petition containing the required number of valid signatures, or by holding an Assembly of Electors and filing the assembly minutes that contain the required number of valid signatures of active Oregon voters.

Nomination by Individual Electors:

ORS 249.740 requires a candidate seeking nomination by petition to submit the required number of valid signatures from active Oregon registered voters in the district where the candidate is running for office. (If the boundaries of a district changed due to reapportionment, candidates running in that district may collect signatures from any active registered voter in Oregon. Candidates may begin gathering signatures before they file for office).

In 2022, non-affiliated gubernatorial candidates may begin collecting signatures before the first day to file candidacy for the general election. They may gather signatures throughout Oregon and must submit 23,744 valid signatures to qualify for the ballot.

To guarantee that the Elections Division has sufficient time to verify signatures, candidates must submit signatures by August 16, 2022.

Nomination by an Assembly of Electors:

ORS 249.735-737 requires a candidate seeking nomination through an Assembly of Electors to gather signatures of active Oregon registered voters in one place, on a single day during a single 12-hour period. The Assembly of Electors is a nominating convention; the minutes of the assembly include the signatures of the assembly participants, which are submitted to the Elections Division for verification. The Filing Requirements section on page 9 of [State Candidate Manual](#) lists required signatures and the deadline to submit completed forms.

In 2022, non-affiliated gubernatorial candidates should hold an Assembly of Electors between June 1 and August 16, 2022.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE NON-AFFILIATED NOMINATION:

When and how is candidate eligibility for office determined?

Article V of the Oregon Constitution requires candidates for governor to be at least 30 years old, to be citizens of the United States, and to have resided in Oregon for at least three years before the election. The Elections Division verifies these qualifications when the candidate files for office.

In 2022, non-affiliated gubernatorial candidates must file for office between June 1 and August 16, 2022. As described above, non-affiliated candidates for governor must also meet the requirements to be nominated by petition or assembly.

Who can sign a nomination petition? Can people who are registered Democrats or Republicans sign these petitions?

People who sign a nomination petition for a non-affiliated gubernatorial candidate must be active registered voters in Oregon. They may be from any political party.

How is a non-affiliated nomination different from an Independent Party nomination?

The Independent Party is a minor political party in the state of Oregon. In contrast, non-affiliated candidates are not associated with any political party. Non-affiliated candidates are frequently referred to as “independents” but they are not members of the Independent Party.

Candidates for minor party nomination to the ballot must seek nomination through a nominating convention that complies with the party’s bylaws and state law. Candidates who receive the party’s nomination have the party’s name printed next to their name on the ballot.

Non-affiliated candidates gain access to the ballot through a nominating petition or Assembly of Electors. Members of any party may sign a non-affiliated candidate’s petition or provide a signature at the candidate’s nominating convention. Candidates who gain access to the ballot as non-affiliated candidates have “non-affiliated” printed next to their name on the ballot.

How many signatures are required to receive a non-affiliated nomination by petition? How is this calculation determined?

Non-affiliated gubernatorial candidates seeking nomination by petition in 2022 must submit 23,744 valid signatures to qualify for the ballot. This is based on ORS 249.740, which requires that candidates must submit signatures equal to “one percent of the total votes cast in [Oregon], for all candidates for presidential electors at the most recent presidential election.”

What is the deadline to submit signatures for filing by petition?

To guarantee that the Elections Division has sufficient time to verify signatures, candidates must submit signatures by August 16, 2022.

How do candidates show campaign expenditures for this process?

The system developed by the Secretary of State to disclose campaign finance activity is called the Oregon Elections System for Tracking and Reporting (ORESTAR). ORESTAR is used to file campaign finance transactions electronically. The candidate is legally responsible for keeping detailed financial records current and filing transactions of received contributions and expenditures. Payments made to individuals for collection of signatures on a petition or to a company that pays petition circulators is an example of reportable expenditure transaction.

Can signature gatherers be paid? If so, do they need to file or register with the SOS?

Signature gatherers may be paid to collect signatures. Signature gatherers do not need to register with the Secretary of State to collect signatures. Unlike initiative petitions, candidates seeking nomination by individual electors are not required to post monthly updates on paid signature gathering.

Do signature sheets need to be approved by the SOS? How does that process work?

Before obtaining signatures, candidates must file form [SEL 114 Candidate Filing – Individual Electors](#), select the “prospective petition” option on the form, and designate the petition circulators’ pay status. The Elections Division will provide signature sheet template to use when gathering signatures.

What color are NAV signature sheets?

Signature sheets may be printed on white or colored paper stock to enable elections officials to readily verify signatures. Colored paper must be approved by the Elections Division before circulating.

How soon can candidates begin this process?

Candidates can gather signatures for a nomination petition even before filing for office, as long as they have received approval of their signature sheet. Candidates who are seeking nomination by an Assembly of Electors may begin preparing for the assembly before filing for office but may not hold the assembly until after June 1, 2022.

How are signatures verified? What is the statistical sample?

Elections Division staff who are trained in handwriting analysis compare the petition signature to signatures on file in the signer’s voter registration record. If the signature does not have sufficient points of similarity, it is rejected.

ORS 249.008(2) and OAR 165-0110 allow the Elections Division to verify petitions based on a random or samples of the signatures rather than verifying all of the signatures. The number of random signatures selected is based on the number of signatures turned in for verification.

What happens if a candidate does not submit the required number of signatures?

If the Elections Division determines the petition does not contain the required number of valid signatures and the filing deadline has not passed, the candidate may submit additional signatures. Candidates seeking nomination by petition must submit the required number of signatures by the deadline to qualify for the ballot.

Is the signature verification process open to the public?

Streaming observation is available upon request.

Can multiple non-affiliated candidates be nominated in a race?

Yes.

Where do I go if I have questions about this process?

For help, please contact Elections Division at 503-986-1518 or by email at elections.sos@sos.oregon.gov. Further information is contained in the State Candidate Manual and in ORS 249.720, 249.735 and 249.740.

Members of the media are encouraged to direct questions to Secretary of State Communications Director Ben Morris.