



## **DIRECTIVE 2020-17**

August 26, 2020

To: All County Boards of Elections  
Board Members, Directors, and Deputy Directors

Re: Ballots for November 3, 2020 General Election

### **SUMMARY**

This Directive provides the certified form of the official ballot to be used in the November 3, 2020 General Election and the names of the candidates who have been certified by the Ohio Secretary of State.<sup>1</sup>

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

Please note that, in lieu of issuing a separate Directive with specific details covering ballot layout, proofing, and quantities, the Secretary of State's Office ("SOS") is issuing this Directive, which must be used in conjunction with [Chapter 4 \(Ballots\) of the Election Official Manual \("EOM"\)](#) when preparing ballots for this election. [Chapter 4 of the EOM](#) provides specific instructions on the following subjects:

- Ballot format;
- Voter instructions;
- Ballot stubs;
- Candidate ballots (names, restrictions, political party, rotation, etc.);
- Questions and issues ballot;
- Ballot proofs;
- Overlaps;
- Bid requirements;
- Ballot quantities;<sup>2</sup>
- Logic and accuracy testing; and
- Public test.

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<sup>1</sup> The filing deadline for write-in candidates is August 24, 2020. Major political parties must certify the names of their joint candidates for president and vice president to the Secretary of State by September 4, 2020. Accordingly, the Secretary of State's Office will certify the names of candidates for president and vice president as soon as the major political parties certify their nominees.

<sup>2</sup> [Directive 2020-11](#).

## I. VERIFYING DISTRICT RELATIONSHIPS

Before programming any aspect of the central tabulation system for the November 3, 2020 General Elections, boards of elections must verify the accuracy of district relationships in the central tabulation system against the county's voter registration system. This is to ensure that each voter receives the correct ballot style (i.e., the correct combination of candidate offices and issues) based upon the voter's residential address.

As part of the review for accuracy of district relationships between the county's voter registration system and its tabulating system, the board must ensure the following by September 11, 2020:

- A. The Secretary of State's precinct codes (three alphabet letters) are accurate in the tabulating system and, if appropriate, the county's voter registration system; and
- B. The precinct names correspond between the two systems.

**Note:** It is imperative that a board of elections upload to the statewide voter registration database ("SWVRD") any changes to district relationships (including wards and precincts) that have been made locally in the county's voter registration system ("VRS"). Using the report provided by Robin Fields on Thursday, September 3, 2020, each board must review the report to ensure that all SOS Precinct ID Codes provided on the report match the board's voter registration system. Boards will have until September 11, 2020 to return the reviewed report noting any changes.

In addition, the board must verify at least one voter record for each precinct in the SWVRD against the county's VRS to ensure accuracy.

## II. OFFICIAL BALLOT FORM <sup>3</sup>

The certified ballot form accompanying this Directive is for offices to be elected at the November 3, 2020 General Election. The ballot form contains the correct title for each office as that title should appear on your county's ballot and the order in which offices must appear on the ballot for all voting systems.

The names of all candidates, except those who have withdrawn, must be arranged, rotated, and printed upon the ballot in accordance with the provisions of Ohio Revised Code Chapters 3505, 3506, and 3513 and [Chapter 4 of the EOM](#).

## III. ORDER OF OFFICES FOR ALL GENERAL BALLOTS <sup>4</sup>

### A. The order of offices shall be as follows:

- President and Vice President
- Representative to Congress
- State Senator

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<sup>3</sup> [R.C. 3505.03](#), [3505.04](#), and [3505.10](#).

<sup>4</sup> [R.C. 3505.03](#) and [3505.10](#).

- State Representative
- County Commissioner (full term commencing 01-02-2021)<sup>5</sup>
- County Commissioner (full term commencing 01-03-2021)
- Prosecuting Attorney
- Clerk of the Court of Common Pleas
- Sheriff
- County Recorder
- County Treasurer
- County Engineer
- Coroner
- Member of State Board of Education
- Justice of the Supreme Court (full term commencing 1-01-2021)
- Justice of the Supreme Court (full term commencing 1-02-2021)
- Judge of Court of Appeals (full terms in order of date commencing)
- Judge of the Court of Common Pleas (full terms in order of date commencing)
- Judge of the County Court (full terms in order of date commencing)

If there is both a full and an unexpired term for the same office, place the full term first followed by the unexpired term.

#### **B. Write-In Vote Blank Spaces <sup>6</sup>**

A write-in space must be provided on the ballot for every office for which the board of elections or Secretary of State received a valid declaration of intent to be a write-in candidate. The Secretary of State will certify the names of valid write-in candidates for Justice of the Supreme Court or President and Vice President who filed with the Secretary of State's Office after the August 24, 2020 filing deadline.

#### **IV. QUESTIONS AND ISSUES <sup>7</sup>**

Offices for which candidates may be elected are presented on the ballot first, followed by the questions and issues. The ballot form contains examples of some of the local questions and issues that may appear on the ballot in your county. Not every category or type of question/issue will appear on every ballot in every county, so please apply as much of the form as is appropriate to the ballots in your county.

Additional instructions on headings, ballot language, and percentage of votes can be found in [Chapter 4 of the EOM](#).

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<sup>5</sup> If an unexpired term election is held for the office of County Commissioner (Unexpired term ending 12-31-2022) or County Auditor (Unexpired term ending 03-08-2021), the offices should appear after the offices for full term with the office of County Commissioner first, followed by County Auditor.

<sup>6</sup> [R.C. 3513.041](#).

<sup>7</sup> [R.C. 3505.06](#).

Questions and issues must be grouped together in the following political subdivision order for elections held in 2020:<sup>8</sup>

- Municipal
- Township
- School and Other Districts
- County

No statewide issue will appear on the November 3, 2020 General Election ballot.

Each board of elections may determine the specific order in which the questions/issues within each group are placed on the ballot in that county; however, a board should adopt a method for doing so (i.e., ordered alphabetically or by date filed, etc.). Absentee ballots must contain identical ordering of issues within groups to regular ballots.

Please review the appropriate sections of the Ohio Revised Code, local charter (if applicable), and the [Questions and Issues Handbook](#) for ballot language and formats that are not on the attached ballot form.

## V. ABSENTEE BALLOTS<sup>9</sup>

Each board of elections must have absentee ballots printed and ready for use **by Friday, September 18, 2020** (46 days before the November 3, 2020 General Election) for Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (“UOCAVA”) voters, and **by October 6, 2020** for regular (non-UOCAVA) absentee voters.

A copy of each absentee ballot (candidates and questions and issues) must be sent to the Secretary of State’s Office at least 47 days before the election, by Thursday, September 17, 2020. Absentee ballots must be uploaded to the SharePoint site.

## VI. CANDIDATES CERTIFIED BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE

### A. For President and Vice President

Because both major parties have not officially nominated their candidates as of this date, the list of candidates certified for President and Vice President will be provided in a subsequent Directive, including any independent or valid write-in candidates.

### B. For Justice of the Supreme Court (Full term commencing 1/1/2021)

- John P. O’Donnell
- Sharon L. Kennedy

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<sup>8</sup> [Ohio Ballot Questions and Issues Handbook](#), p. 1-12; [R.C. 3505.06\(B\)](#).

<sup>9</sup> [R.C. 3509.01](#) and [R.C. 3511.04](#)

**C. For Justice of the Supreme Court (Full term commencing 1/2/2021)**

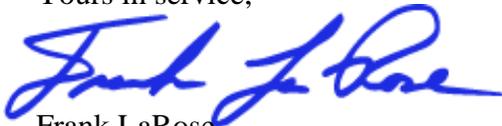
- Jennifer Brunner
- Judi French

**VII. CANDIDATES FOR OTHER DISTRICT OFFICE  
(e.g., Representative to Congress, Judge of the Court of Appeals, State Senate,  
and State Representative)**

Candidates for other district offices must be certified to the appropriate board(s) of elections by the most-populous county boards of elections of the district. A less-populous county of a district that has not received a list of candidates from the most populous county must contact the most populous county before programming ballots.

If you have any questions regarding this Directive or [Chapter 4 of the EOM](#), please contact the Secretary of State's election counsel at (614) 728-8789.

Yours in service,



Frank LaRose  
Ohio Secretary of State

# OFFICIAL GENERAL ELECTION BALLOT

<b>A</b> _____ County	<b>B</b> General Election	<b>C</b> November 3, 2020	
<p><b>Instructions to Voter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>To vote:</b> completely darken the oval ( ● ) to the left of your choice.</li> <li>● Note the permitted number of choices directly below the title of each candidate office. Do not mark the ballot for more choices than allowed.</li> <li>● If you mark the ballot for more choices than permitted, that contest or question will not be counted.</li> <li>● <b>To vote for a write-in candidate:</b> completely darken the oval ( ● ) to the left of the blank line and write in the candidate's name. Only votes cast for candidates who filed as write-in candidates can be counted.</li> <li>● Do not write in a candidate's name if that person's name already is printed on the ballot for that same contest.</li> <li>● <b>If you make a mistake or want to change your vote:</b> return your ballot to an election official and get a new ballot. You may ask for a new ballot up to two times.</li> </ul>	<p><b>For President and Vice President</b> (Vote for not more than 1 pair)</p> <p><small>A vote for any candidates for President and Vice President shall be a vote for the electors of those candidates whose names have been certified to the Secretary of State.</small></p>	<p><b>For State Senator</b> ( _____ District) (Vote for not more than 1)</p>	
	<p>Candidate information for the office of President and Vice President will be provided in a separate directive</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)</p>
	<p><b>For Representative to Congress</b> ( _____ District) (Vote for not more than 1)</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)</p>	<p><b>For State Representative</b> ( _____ District) (Vote for not more than 1)</p>
	<p><input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)</p>
	<p><input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)</p>
		Page 1 of 4	
<b>A</b> 001 _____ TWP A	<b>B</b> 0001:1	<b>C</b> 001	

This **SAMPLE** ballot provides the **CORRECT TITLES** and **ORDER OF OFFICES** for ballot layout for candidates for the November 3, 2020 General Election. The space for a write-in candidate should be provided only if applicable. See ballot directive and Chapter 4 (Ballots) in the Election Official Manual.

# OFFICIAL GENERAL ELECTION BALLOT

D	_____ County	E	General Election	F	November 3, 2020
<b>For County Commissioner</b> (Full term commencing 1-2-2021) (Vote for not more than 1)		<b>For County Recorder</b> (Vote for not more than 1)		<b>For Justice of the Supreme Court</b> (Full term commencing 1-1-2021) (Vote for not more than 1)	
<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)		<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)		<input type="radio"/> <b>Sharon L. Kennedy</b>	
<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)		<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)		<input type="radio"/> <b>John P. O'Donnell</b>	
<b>For County Commissioner</b> (Full term commencing 1-3-2021) (Vote for not more than 1)		<b>For County Treasurer</b> (Vote for not more than 1)		<b>For Justice of the Supreme Court</b> (Full term commencing 1-2-2021) (Vote for not more than 1)	
<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)		<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)		<input type="radio"/> <b>Jennifer Brunner</b>	
<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)		<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)		<input type="radio"/> <b>Judi French</b>	
<b>For Prosecuting Attorney</b> (Vote for not more than 1)		<b>For County Engineer</b> (Vote for not more than 1)		<b>For Judge of the Court of Appeals</b> (_____ District) (Full term commencing XX-XX-20XX) (Vote for not more than 1)	
<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)		<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)		<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b>	
<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)		<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)		<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b>	
<b>For Clerk of the Court of Common Pleas</b> (Vote for not more than 1)		<b>For Coroner</b> (Vote for not more than 1)		<b>For Judge of the Court of Common Pleas</b> (Full term commencing XX-XX-20XX) (Vote for not more than 1)	
<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)		<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)		<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b>	
<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)		<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)		<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b>	
<b>For Sheriff</b> (Vote for not more than 1)		<b>For Member of the State Board of Education</b> (_____ District) (Vote for not more than 1)		<b>For Judge of the County Court</b> (Full term commencing XX-XX-2021) (Vote for not more than 1)	
<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)		<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b>		<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b>	
<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b> (Insert party affiliation or ballot designation, if any)		<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b>		<input type="radio"/> <b>Print Candidate Name</b>	
				Page 2 of 4	
D	001 _____ TWP A	E	0001:1	F	001

This **SAMPLE** ballot provides the **CORRECT TITLES** and **ORDER OF OFFICES** for ballot layout for candidates for the November 3, 2020 General Election. The space for a write-in candidate should be provided only if applicable. See ballot directive and Chapter 4 (Ballots) in the Election Official Manual.

# OFFICIAL GENERAL ELECTION BALLOT

G _____ County	H General Election	I November 3, 2020
<p><b>Proposed Municipal Income Tax</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p>(name of subdivision)</p> <p><b>A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage.</b></p> <hr/> <p>Shall the Ordinance providing for a _____ per cent levy on income for _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>(brief description of purpose of the levy)</p> <p>be passed?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> <b>FOR THE INCOME TAX</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> <b>AGAINST THE INCOME TAX</b></p>	<p><b>Proposed Tax Levy (Renewal)</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p>(name of subdivision, district, college, library or board)</p> <p><b>A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage.</b></p> <hr/> <p>A renewal of a tax for the benefit of _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>(name of subdivision submitting resolution or public library)</p> <p>for the purpose of _____</p> <p>at a rate not exceeding _____ mills for each one dollar of valuation, which amounts to _____</p> <p>(rate expressed in dollars and cents)</p> <p>for each one hundred dollars of valuation, for _____,</p> <p>(life of indebtedness, number of years levy to run, or a continuing period of time)</p> <p>commencing in _____,</p> <p>(first year tax to be levied)</p> <p>first due in calendar year _____.</p> <p>(first calendar year tax due)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> <b>For the Tax Levy</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> <b>Against the Tax Levy</b></p>	<p><b>Proposed Tax Levy (Additional)</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p>(name of school district)</p> <p><b>A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage.</b></p> <hr/> <p>Shall a levy be imposed by the _____</p> <p>(name of school district)</p> <p>for the purpose of _____ in _____</p> <p>(purpose shall be <b>boldface</b> type of at least twice the size of the type immediately surrounding it)</p> <p>the sum of _____</p> <p>(annual amount the levy is to produce)</p> <p>and a levy of taxes to be made outside of the ten-mill limitation estimated by the county auditor to average _____ mills for each one</p> <p>(number of mills)</p> <p>dollar of valuation, which amounts to _____</p> <p>(rate expressed in dollars and cents)</p> <p>for each one hundred dollars of valuation, for a period of _____</p> <p>(life of indebtedness or number of years levy is to be imposed)</p> <p>years, commencing in _____,</p> <p>(first year tax to be levied)</p> <p>first due in calendar year _____?</p> <p>(first calendar year tax due)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> <b>FOR THE TAX LEVY</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> <b>AGAINST THE TAX LEVY</b></p>
<p><b>Proposed Tax Levy (Additional)</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p>(name of subdivision, district, college, library or board)</p> <p><b>A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage.</b></p> <hr/> <p>An additional tax for the benefit of _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>(name of subdivision submitting resolution or public library)</p> <p>for the purpose of _____ at a rate not exceeding _____ mills for each one dollar of valuation, which amounts to _____</p> <p>(rate expressed in dollars and cents)</p> <p>for each one hundred dollars of valuation, for _____,</p> <p>(life of indebtedness, number of years levy to run, or a continuing period of time)</p> <p>commencing in _____, first</p> <p>(first year tax to be levied)</p> <p>due in calendar year _____.</p> <p>(first calendar year tax due)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> <b>For the Tax Levy</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> <b>Against the Tax Levy</b></p>		<p>Page 3 of 4</p>
G 001 _____ TWP A	H 0001:1	I 001

This **SAMPLE** ballot provides the **CORRECT** ballot format for various questions and issues that may appear on your local ballot.

