2020

# OHIO CANDIDATE REQUIREMENT GUIDE

Frank LaRose
Ohio Secretary of State

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# Candidate Requirement Guide

If you are considering running for office in Ohio, this guide can help you navigate the legal requirements to becoming a candidate. This guide is only a brief summary and not a complete digest of laws. The information in this guide is current as of the date printed on the front cover of this guide. Legislative or judicial action may change the information in this guide. For the most up-to-date information, visit the Ohio Secretary of State's website at www.OhioSoS.gov and always consult your own legal counsel

Refer to the sections below for the office you are seeking:

- Federal Offices
- Ohio General Assembly
- State Board of Education
- County Offices
- Judicial Offices
- Political Party Members

Each of these sections contains information on the terms of office and the conditions candidates must meet, including residency requirements, minimum or maximum ages, and other necessary qualifications. Each section also outlines different petition filing requirements, including deadlines, forms, filing fees and locations, and the number of signatures needed for each office.

Within this guide:

- "U.S. Const." refers to the United States Constitution.
- "OH Const." refers to the Ohio Constitution (www.OhioSoS.gov).
- "R.C." refers to the Revised Code of Ohio. (Visit codes.ohio.gov for more.)
- "O.A.G." refers to an Opinion of the Ohio Attorney General (www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov)

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# Federal Offices

## President

For more information, please refer to the 2020 Presidential Candidate Requirement Guide.

## U.S. Representative

**Term of Office**

Two years (U.S. Const. Art. I, §2)

**Qualifications**

- **Residency Requirement**: Must be an inhabitant of the state from which elected (U.S. Const. Art. I, §2)
- **Minimum Age**: 25 years (U.S. Const. Art. I, §2)
- **Other**: Must be a U.S. citizen for seven years prior to election (U.S. Const. Art. I, §2)
- **Filing Deadline**:
  - By 4 p.m. on December 18, 2019, (90 days before the primary election) for **party candidates**, or
  - By 4 p.m. on March 16, 2020, (the day before the primary election) for **independent candidates** (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.257)
- **Filing Fee**: $85 (R.C. 3513.10(A) and (B))
- **Petition Form Numbers**:
  - Form 2-E for party candidates (seeking nomination of a political party to the general election through the primary election)
  - Form 3-F for independent candidates (candidates unaffiliated with a political party seeking nomination to the general election)
- **File with**: Board of elections of the most populous county within the congressional district (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.257, R.C. 3513.261)

  See page 26 for a list of the most populous county for each district.
- **Signature Requirements**: (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.257)
  - **Major party candidates:** 50 signatures
  - **Recognized minor party candidates:** 25 signatures
  - **Independent candidates**: Based on the number of votes cast in the congressional district in the last general election for governor:

| Number of votes cast | Number of signatures |
|---|---|
| Fewer than 5,000 | 25, or a number equal to 5 percent of the vote (whichever is less) |
| 5,000 or more | 1 percent of vote |

# Ohio General Assembly

## State Senator and State Representative

**Term of Office**

**Senator**: Four years (OH Const. Art. II, §2)

**Representative**: Two years (OH Const. Art. II, §2)

**Qualifications**

- **Residency Requirement**: Must be a resident of the district, have resided in the district for one year immediately preceding the election and be a registered elector (OH Const. Art. II, §3, OH Const. Art. XV, §4, R.C. 3.15)
- **Filing Deadline**:
  - By 4 p.m. on December 18, 2019, (90 days before the primary election) for **party candidates**, or
  - By 4 p.m. on March 16, 2020, (the day before the primary election) for **independent candidates** (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.257)
- **Filing Fee**: $85 (R.C. 3513.10(A) and (B))
- **Petition Form Numbers**:
  - Form 2-F for party candidates (seeking nomination of a political party to the general election through the primary election)
  - Form 3-G for independent candidates (candidates unaffiliated with a political party seeking nomination to the general election)
- **File with**: Board of elections of the most populous county within the district (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.257, R.C. 3513.261)

  See page 26 for a list of the most populous county for each district.
- **Signature Requirements**: (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.257)
  - **Major party candidates:** 50 signatures
  - **Recognized minor party candidates:** 25 signatures
  - **Independent candidates**: Based on the number of votes cast in the district in the last general election for governor:

| Number of votes cast | Number of signatures |
|---|---|
| Fewer than 5,000 | 25, or a number equal to 5 percent of the vote (whichever is less) |
| 5,000 or more | 1 percent of vote |

# State Board of Education

**Term of Office**

Four years (R.C. 3301.02)

**Qualifications**

- **Residency Requirement**: Must be a qualified elector residing in the district (R.C. 3301.03, OH Const. Art. XV, §4)
- **Other:** Shall not, during the term of office, hold any other office of trust or profit or be an employee or officer of any public or private elementary or secondary school (R.C. 3301.03)
- **Filing Deadline**: By 4 p.m. on August 5, 2020, (90 days before the general election) (R.C. 3513.259)
- **Filing Fee**: $55 (R.C. 3513.10 (A) and (B))
- **Petition Form Number**:
  - Form 3-Z Nominating Petition for Member of the State Board of Education
- **File with**: Board of elections of the most populous county within the district (R.C. 3513.259)

  See page 26 for a list of the most populous county for each district.
- **Signature Requirements**: 100 signatures (R.C. 3513.259)

# County Offices

## Commissioner, Coroner, Engineer, Prosecuting Attorney, Recorder, Sheriff, and Treasurer

**Term of Office**

Four years (R.C. 305.01, R.C. 309.01, R.C. 311.01, R.C. 313.01, R.C. 315.01, R.C. 317.01, R.C. 319.01, R.C. 321.01)

**Qualifications**

- **Residency Requirement**:
  - **Sheriff:** Must be a qualified elector who has resided in the county at least one year immediately prior to the applicable qualification date (R.C. 311.01(B)(1)(2) and (H))
  - **All Other Offices:** Must be a qualified elector of the county (OH Const. Art. XV, §4, R.C. 3.15)
- **Special Qualifications**:
  - **Coroner:** Must be licensed to practice as a physician in Ohio for at least two years immediately preceding election or appointment as coroner (R.C. 313.02)
  - **Engineer:** Must be a registered professional engineer and registered surveyor, licensed to practice in Ohio (R.C. 315.02)
  - **Prosecuting Attorney**: Must be an attorney-at-law, licensed to practice in Ohio (R.C. 309.02)
  - **Sheriff:** Please see R.C. 311.01 for additional qualifications and requirements.
- **Filing Deadline**:
  - By 4 p.m. on December 18, 2019, (90 days before the primary election) for **party candidates**, or
  - By 4 p.m. on March 16, 2020, (the day before the primary election) for **independent candidates** (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.257)
- **Filing Fee**: $80 (R.C. 3513.10(A) and (B))
- **Petition Form Numbers:**
  - Form 2-G for party candidates (seeking nomination of a political party to the general election through the primary election)
  - Form 3-H for independent candidates (candidates unaffiliated with a political party seeking nomination to the general election)
- **File with**: County board of elections (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.08, R.C. 3513.257, R.C. 3513.261)
- **Signature Requirements**: (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.257)
  - **Major party candidates:** 50 signatures

- **Recognized minor party candidates:** 25 signatures
- **Independent candidates:** Based on the number of votes cast in the county in the last general election for governor:

| Number of votes cast | Number of signatures |
|---|---|
| Fewer than 5,000 | 25, or a number equal to 5 percent of the vote (whichever is less) |
| 5,000 or more | 1 percent of vote |

# Judicial Offices

## Supreme Court Justice

**Term of Office**

Six years (OH Const. Art. IV, §6, R.C. 2503.02, R.C. 2503.03)

**Qualifications**

- **Maximum Age**: 70 years (OH Const. Art. IV, §6)
- **Residency Requirement**: Must be a qualified elector residing in Ohio (OH Const. Art. XV, §4, R.C. 2701.04)
- **Other:** Must be admitted to practice as an attorney in this state and have, for a total of at least six years preceding the commencement of the term, engaged in the practice of law in Ohio or served as a judge of a court of record in any jurisdiction in the U.S., or both (R.C. 2503.01)
- **Filing Deadline**:
  - By 4 p.m. on December 18, 2019, (90 days before the primary election) for **party candidates;** or
  - By 4 p.m. on March 16, 2020, (the day before the primary election) for **independent candidates** (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.257)
- **Filing Fee**: $150 (R.C. 3513.10(A) and (B))
- **Petition Form Numbers:**
  - Form 2-D for party candidates (seeking nomination of a political party to the general election through the primary election)
  - Form 3-E for independent candidates (candidates unaffiliated with a political party seeking nomination to the general election)
- **File with**: Ohio Secretary of State's Elections Division - Columbus (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.257, R.C. 3513.261)
- **Signature Requirements:** (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.257)
  - **Major party candidates:** 1,000 signatures
  - **Recognized minor party candidates:** 500 signatures

- **Independent candidates:** 5,000 signatures

## Court Of Appeals Judge

**Term of Office**

Six years (R.C. 2501.02)

**Qualifications**

- **Maximum Age**: 70 years (OH Const. Art. IV, §6)
- **Residency Requirement**: Must be a qualified elector residing in the district (OH Const. Art. XV, §4, R.C. 2701.04)
- **Other:** Must be admitted to practice as an attorney in this state and have, for a total of six years preceding the commencement of the term, engaged in the practice of law in Ohio or served as a judge of a court of record in any jurisdiction in the U.S., or both (R.C. 2501.02)
- **Filing Deadline**:
  - By 4 p.m. on December 18, 2019, (90 days before the primary election) for **party candidates;** or
  - By 4 p.m. on March 16, 2020, (the day before the primary election) for **independent candidates** (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.257)
- **Filing Fee**: $80 (R.C. 3513.10(A) and (B))
- **Petition Form Numbers:**
  - Form 2-FJ for party candidates (seeking nomination of a political party to the general election through the primary election)
  - Form 3-G for independent candidates (candidates unaffiliated with a political party seeking nomination to the general election)
- **File with**: Board of elections of the most populous county within the district (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.257, R.C. 3513.261)

  See page 26 for a list of the most populous county for each district.
- **Signature Requirements:** (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.257)
  - **Major party candidates:** 50 signatures
  - **Minor party candidates:** 25 signatures
  - **Independent candidates**: Based on the number of votes cast within the district in the last general election for governor:

| Number of votes cast | Number of signatures |
|---|---|
| Fewer than 5,000 | 25, or a number equal to 5 percent of the vote (whichever is less) |
| 5,000 or more | 1 percent of vote |

## Court Of Common Pleas Judge

**Term of Office**

Six years (R.C. 2301.01)

**Qualifications**

- **Maximum Age**: 70 years (OH Const. Art. IV, §6)
- **Residency Requirement**: Must be a qualified elector residing in the county (OH Const. Art. XV, §4, R.C. 2301.01, R.C. 2701.04)
- **Other:** Must be admitted to practice as an attorney in this state and have, for a total of at least six years preceding the commencement of the term, engaged in the practice of law in Ohio or served as a judge of a court of record in any jurisdiction in the U.S., or both (R.C. 2301.01)
- **Filing Deadline**:
  - By 4 p.m. on December 18, 2019, (90 days before the primary election) for **party candidates;** or
  - By 4 p.m. on March 16, 2020, (the day before the primary election) for **independent candidates** (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.257)
- **Filing Fee**: $80 (R.C. 3513.10(A) and (B))
- **Petition Form Numbers:**
  - Form 2-GJ for party candidates (seeking nomination of a political party to the general election through the primary election)
  - Form 3-H for independent candidates (candidates unaffiliated with a political party seeking nomination to the general election)
- **File with**: County board of elections (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.257, R.C. 3513.261)
- **Signature Requirements:** (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.257)
  - Major party candidates: 50 signatures
  - Minor party candidates: 25 signatures
  - **Independent candidates**: Based on the number of votes cast in the county in the last general election for governor:

| Number of votes cast | Number of signatures |
|---|---|
| Fewer than 5,000 | 25, or a number equal to 5 percent of the vote (whichever is less) |
| 5,000 or more | 1 percent of vote |

## County Court Judge

**Term of Office**

Six years (R.C. 1907.13)

**Qualifications**

- **Maximum Age**: 70 years (OH Const. Art. IV, §6)
- **Residency Requirement**: Must be a qualified elector residing in the county court district at the time of filing a nominating petition for the office or at the time of appointment to the office and during the judge's term of office (OH Const. Art. XV, §4, R.C. 1907.13)
- **Other:** Must be admitted to practice as an attorney in this state and have been, for a total of at least six years, engaged in the practice of law in Ohio (R.C. 1907.13)
- **Filing Deadline**: By 4 p.m. on August 5, 2020 (90 days before the general election) (R.C. 1907.13)
- **Filing Fee**: $80 (R.C. 3513.10(A) and (B))
- **Petition Form Number:**
  - Form 3-J Nominating Petition for Judge of the County Court
- **File with**: County board of elections (R.C. 3513.261)
- **Signature Requirements:** 50, or a number not less than 1 percent of the number of electors who voted for governor at the most recent general election for governor in the district, whichever is less (R.C. 1907.13)

## Clerk of Courts

**Term of Office**

Four years (R.C. 2303.01)

**Qualifications**

- **Residency Requirement**: Must be a qualified elector residing in the county (OH Const. Art. XV, §4, R.C. 3.15)
- **Filing Deadline**:
  - By 4 p.m. on December 18, 2019, (90 days before the primary election) for **party candidates**, or
  - By 4 p.m. on March 16, 2020, (the day before the primary election) for **independent candidates** (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.257)
- **Filing Fee**: $80 (R.C. 3513.10(A) and (B))
- **Petition Form Numbers:**
  - Form 2-G for party candidates (seeking nomination of a political party to the general election through the primary election)
  - Form 3-H for independent candidates (candidates unaffiliated with a political party seeking nomination to the general election)
- **File with**: County board of elections (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.257, R.C. 3513.261)
- **Signature Requirements**: (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.257)
  - **Major party candidates:** 50 signatures
  - **Recognized minor party candidates:** 25 signatures
  - **Independent candidates:** Based on the number of votes cast in the county in the last general election for governor:

| Number of votes cast | Number of signatures |
|---|---|
| Fewer than 5,000 | 25, or a number equal to 5 percent of the vote (whichever is less) |
| 5,000 or more | 1 percent of vote |

# Political Party Committee Members

## Major Political Party, State Central Committee

**Term of Office**

**Democratic Party** – Four years, per party rules. (R.C. 3517.03) ***Note:*** *Members of the State Central Committee for the Democratic Party appeared on the ballot in 2018 and will not appear on the ballot again until 2022.*

**Republican Party** – Two years, per party rules. (R.C. 3517.03)

**Qualifications**

- **Residency Requirement**: Must be a qualified elector residing in the district from which elected (OH Const. Art. XV, §4, R.C. 3517.02)
- **Filing Deadline**: By 4 p.m. on December 18, 2019 (90 days before the primary election) (R.C. 3513.05)
- **Filing Fee**: None (R.C. 3513.10(C))
- **Petition Form Number:**
  - Form 2-J for candidates for Member of State Central Committee seeking to be elected in the party primary
- **File with**: Board of elections of the most populous county in the state senate or state congressional district, as determined by outgoing party controlling committee (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3517.03) **(For both major political parties, state central committee members are currently elected by state senatorial district.)**

  See page 26 for a list of the most populous county for each district.
- **Signature Requirements:** Five signatures (R.C. 3513.05)

## Major Political Party, County Central Committee

**Term of Office**

Two or four years, per party rules (R.C. 3517.03)

**Qualifications**

- **Residency Requirement**: Must be a qualified elector residing in the election precinct, city, ward or township from which elected, as determined by the outgoing committee ( OH Const. Art. XV, §4, R.C. 3517.02)
- **Filing Deadline**: By 4 p.m. on December 18, 2019 (90 days before the primary election) (R.C. 3513.05)
- **Filing Fee**: None (R.C. 3513.10(C))
- **Petition Form Numbers:**
  - Form 2-L or
  - Form 2-M, per party determination
- **File with**: County board of elections (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3517.03)
- **Signature Requirements:**
  - Form 2-L Five signatures, per party determination (R.C. 3513.05), or
  - Form 2-M No signatures, per party determination (R.C. 3513.051)

## Minor Parties

Prospective candidates of a minor party that has filed a party formation petition should follow the signature requirements and filing deadlines outlined in Chapter 13 of the Ohio Election Official Manual. Nominating petitions for use by prospective candidates of a minor party that has filed a party formation petition are available on the Secretary of State's website (Form 4-G).

Prospective candidates of a recognized minor party should follow the signature requirements and filing deadlines listed for minor party candidates in this guide below the office being sought.

# Write-in Candidates

Any person wanting to be a write-in candidate for most offices must file a Declaration of Intent to be a Write-In Candidate. Only write-in candidates who have filed a valid declaration of intent will have votes counted in the election for which the candidate filed. (R.C. 3513.041)

A write-in candidate must meet all of the qualifications of the office being sought. (Please review the qualifications in this guide for the specific office being sought.)

No write-in space may appear for the office of state central committee of a political party in Ohio. (O.A.G. 70-011)

- **Filing Deadline:**
  - **Write-in for Primary Election:** By 4 p.m. on January 6, 2020* (72 days before the primary election) (R.C. 3513.041)
  - **Write-in for General Election**: By 4 p.m. on August 24, 2020* (72 days before the general election) (R.C. 3513.041)

  ***Note:** In some instances, the statutory deadline falls on a day when the offices of the Secretary of State and boards of elections are closed. In those instances, the deadlines are extended, pursuant to R.C. 1.14, to the next succeeding business day when the appropriate office is open for regular business hours. The preceding dates reflect the extended deadline.*

- **Filing Fee**: A write-in candidate must pay the same filing fee as any other candidate for the office. Please review the filing fee information in this guide for the specific office being sought. (R.C. 3513.10)
- **Form Numbers:**
  - Form 13 all offices except United States Representative
  - Form 13-C United States Representative
- **File with**: A write-in candidate must file their Declaration of Intent to be a Write-In Candidate form with the appropriate county board of elections or the Secretary of State's office, as applicable. Please review the "File with" section in this guide for the specific office being sought. (R.C. 3513.05)

## Political Party Affiliation of Candidates for Party Nomination

A person may be a candidate for nomination of any political party at a primary election (regardless of party affiliation established by voting in a prior partisan primary) if either of the following apply:

- The person does not hold elective office, or
- The person holds an elective office for which candidates are not nominated at a primary election.

However, a person holding an elective office for which candidates are nominated at a party primary may become a candidate for a different political party if the person completes and files the Secretary of State's prescribed Form 10-Y, Declaration of Intent to Change Political Party Affiliation, **by 4 p.m. on the 30th day before the filing deadline for the primary election.** The completed Form 10-Y must be filed with the same office (e.g., Secretary of State, county board of elections) with which the person is required to file the declaration of candidacy and petition.

A person may file such declaration of intent only once during a period of 10 years after first filing a declaration of intent. (R.C. 3513.191)

Please see R.C. 3513.04 and R.C. 3513.052 for further candidacy information.

## Independent Candidates

An independent candidate must actually be unaffiliated from any political party, and the required claim of being unaffiliated must be made in good faith in order for the candidate to be qualified to run as an independent candidate. *Morrison v. Colley*, 467 F.3d 503 (6th Cir. 2006); *Jolivette v. Husted*, 694 F.3d 760 (6th Cir. 2012); *State ex rel. Davis v. Summit County Board of Elections*, 137 Ohio St.3d 222 (2013); *State ex rel. Morris v. Stark County Board of Elections*, 143 Ohio St.3d 507 (2015).

At the time a prospective independent candidate (other than a candidate for judicial office) files their nominating petition, the candidate may request to have the designation "nonparty candidate" or "other party candidate" printed underneath the candidate's name on the ballot. The designation "independent" may not appear on the ballot. Such request must be given to the office at which the nominating petition was filed. (R.C. 3505.03, R.C. 3513.257)

Please review the information regarding office qualifications, signature requirements, and filing deadlines for the specific office being sought. More information about independent candidates may also be found in Advisory 2007-05.

## Restrictions on Filing for Multiple Offices

No person shall seek nomination or election to any of the following offices or positions at the same election by filing a declaration of candidacy and petition, Declaration of Intent to be a Write-In Candidate, or a nominating petition; by becoming a candidate through a party nomination in a primary election; or by filling of a vacancy under R.C. 3513.30 or R.C. 3513.31:

1. Two or more state offices;
2. Two or more county offices;
3. A state office and a county office;
4. A federal and a state or county office; or
5. Any combination of two or more municipal or township offices, positions as a member of a city, local, or exempted village board of education, or position as a member of a governing board of an educational service center. (R.C. 3513.052)

The only exception to this prohibition is if a person "timely withdraws" their candidacy. A candidate who timely withdraws their candidacy prior to board action on their petition and prior to the filing deadline may file a new petition for the same or a different office in the same election as the withdrawn petition. (*State ex rel. Coble v. Lucas County Board of Elections*, et al., 130 Ohio St.3d 132 (2011))

Pursuant to R.C. 3513.052(H)(2), "timely withdraws" means either of the following:

1. Withdrawing as a candidate before the applicable filing deadline for filing a declaration of candidacy, Declaration of Intent to be a Write-In Candidate, or nominating petition for the subsequent office for which the person is seeking to become a candidate at the same election, or
2. Withdrawing as a candidate before the applicable deadline for the filling of a vacancy under sections R.C. 3513.30 or R.C. 3513.31 of the Revised Code, if the person is seeking to become a candidate for a subsequent office at the same election under either of those sections.

A candidate may withdraw only their candidacy. Once filed, a candidate may not withdraw the petition or other forms used to initiate the candidacy.

Candidates may also review Chapter 12 of the Ohio Election Official Manual for information about candidacies and/or consult with private legal counsel.

## Petitions

County boards of elections will provide at least one copy of a candidate petition form upon request. Candidates may make additional copies of the form as it is provided by the county board of elections.

Once the candidate has completed filling out and signing the petition, this signed part-petition may be copied prior to obtaining any elector signatures on the part-petitions. However, this original signed part-petition must be filed with the other part-petitions at the office of the appropriate filing entity. (R.C. 3513.09, R.C. 3513.261)

## Rules Governing Petitions

Below is an overview of the rules governing petitions. For additional information on rules governing petitions, please see Chapter 11 of the Ohio Election Official Manual.

1. The Declaration or Statement of Candidacy portion of each petition paper must be completely filled out and signed by the candidate(s) before being circulated. (R.C. 3513.07, R.C. 3513.09, R.C. 3513.261)
2. Candidates must designate the correct term commencing date on the declaration of candidacy or nominating petition, if more than one seat of that office is to be elected at the election. (R.C. 3513.08, R.C. 3513.28)
3. Only qualified electors who are eligible to vote on the candidacy may sign a petition. An elector's qualifications are determined as of the date the petition is filed. (R.C. 3501.38(A))
4. Each signature, written in ink, must be an original signature of an elector or the elector's duly appointed attorney-in-fact who is acting pursuant to R.C. 3501.382. Generally, signing or affixing a signature to petition requires a person's written, cursive-style legal mark written in that person's own hand unless the elector does not use a cursive-style mark during the course of their regular business or legal affairs. However, a voter with a disability may personally affix their signature through the use of a reasonable accommodation, including the use of assistive technology or an augmentative device such as a signature stamp. (R.C. 3501.011, R.C. 3501.382(F) and related O.A.G. 2015-012)
5. Each signer's residence address and the date of signing must be placed on the petition after the elector's signature. The voting address written on the petition must be the address appearing in the registration records of the board of elections. (R.C. 3501.38 (C))
6. Petitions for a candidate for party nomination must be signed and circulated by persons who are members of the same political party as the candidate. (R.C. 3513.07) An elector is considered to be a member of a political party if they voted in the primary election of that party within the preceding two calendar years, or if they did not vote in any other party's primary election within the preceding two calendar years. (R.C. 3513.05, 7th¶)
7. A candidate may circulate their own petition, although they may not sign their own petition as an elector. For purposes of circulating their own petition, a candidate is exempt from the party affiliation requirements described in number 6 of this section.

(R.C. 3513.191(C)(4)) A circulator may not sign the same petition paper that they are circulating. A circulator who is not a candidate may, however, sign a petition paper being circulated for the same candidacy by a different circulator.

8. A circulator must be at least 18 years of age. (R.C. 3503.06(C)) (The Ohio residency requirement is not currently in place based on the preliminary injunction in *Citizens in Charge v. Husted,* Case: 2:13-CV-00935 (S.D. Ohio 11/13/13); See also*, Citizens in Charge v. Husted,* 810 F. 3d 437 (6th Cir 2016)).
9. After circulating the petition, the circulator must sign a statement, under penalty of election falsification, indicating the following:
    a. The number of signatures contained on the petition;
    b. That the circulator witnessed the affixing of each signature on the petition;
    c. That all signers, to the best of the circulator's knowledge and belief, were qualified to sign;
    d. That each signature is, to the best of the circulator's knowledge and belief, the signature of the person whose signature it purports to be; and
    e. On the circulator's statement for a declaration of candidacy or nominating petition for a person seeking to become a statewide candidate, the circulator's name, the address of the circulator's permanent residence, and the name and address of the person employing the circulator to circulate the petition, if any.
10. If a circulator knowingly permits an unqualified person to sign a petition paper or permits a person to write a name other than the person's own on the petition paper, that petition paper is invalid; otherwise, the signature of a person not qualified to sign shall be rejected but shall not invalidate the other valid signatures on the petition paper. (R.C. 3501.38(F))
11. Once a candidate's petition has been filed with the appropriate election official, it cannot be changed, supplemented, or returned to the candidate.
12. The original petition with the candidate's original signature must be filed at the same time as all other part-petitions. (R.C. 3501.38(K), R.C. 3513.09)
13. Each petition paper shall be circulated by one person only and shall contain signatures of qualified electors of one county only. When petitions are circulated in a district that contains more than one county, separate petition papers must be circulated in each county. (R.C. 3501.38, R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.07, R.C. 3513.261)
14. No petition shall be accepted if it contains more than three times the minimum number of required signatures. (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.257, R.C. 3513.259) Or, in the case of a petition for county court judge, no nominating petition shall be accepted for filing or filed if it appears on its face to contain more than twice the minimum number of required signatures. (R.C. 1907.13)

15. All petitions must contain the following statement in boldface capital letters: "**WHOEVER COMMITS ELECTION FALSIFICATION IS GUILTY OF A FELONY OF THE FIFTH DEGREE**." (R.C. 3501.38(J), R.C. 3599.36)

    ***Note:*** The penalties for a fifth degree felony conviction are six to 12 months in prison and/or a fine of $2,500.

16. All petitions remain open for public inspection, under reasonable regulations, at the office of the county board of elections with which they were filed. (R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.262)

17. A signature on a nominating petition of a prospective independent candidate or nonpartisan candidate is not valid if it is dated more than one year before the date the petition was filed. (R.C. 3513.262)

# Protests

Protests against the candidacy of any person must be in writing, must set forth with specificity the legal ground(s) for the protest, and must be filed with the board of elections where the candidate filed their declaration of candidacy, nominating petition, or Declaration of Intent to be a Write-In Candidate. If the candidate filed with the Office of the Secretary of State, the protest must be filed with the Secretary of State. (R.C. 3513.041, R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.262, R.C. 3513.263)

After a valid protest is filed, the board of elections or, if applicable, the Secretary of State, must set a time and place for hearing the protest and give notice to both the person whose candidacy is being protested and the protestor. Both the protestor and the protested candidate, or their respective legal counsel, will have the opportunity to address the board or Secretary of State's hearing officer at the hearing. (R.C. 3513.041, R.C. 3513.05, R.C. 3513.262, R.C. 3513.263)

## Partisan Primary Election

### Party Candidate

**Protest against a party candidate who filed a declaration of candidacy for the primary election:** Protests against a candidate who has filed a declaration of candidacy and petition in a partisan primary may be made by the controlling committee of that party, or by any qualified elector who is a member of the same party as the candidate and who is eligible to vote for the candidate whose petition is the subject of the protest. (R.C. 3513.05)

The deadline to file a protest against any party candidate who filed a declaration of candidacy for the primary election is 4 p.m. January 3, 2020, or 74 days before the primary election. (R.C. 3513.05)

### Write-in Candidate

**Protest against a party candidate who filed a Declaration of Intent to Be a Write-In Candidate at the primary election:** Any elector eligible to vote on the candidacy of a write-in candidate may protest that candidacy.

The deadline to file a protest against a write-in candidate for the primary is 4 p.m. on January 10, 2020 (67 days before the primary election). (R.C. 3513.041)

## General Election

### Independent Candidate

**Protest against an independent candidate who filed a nominating petition:** Protest may be made by any qualified elector who is eligible to vote for the candidate whose petition is the subject of the protest. The deadline to file a protest against any candidate who filed a nominating petition as an independent candidate is 4 p.m. on June 12, 2020. (R.C. 3513.262)

### Nonpartisan Candidate

**Protest against a nonpartisan candidate who filed a nominating petition:** Any elector eligible to vote on the nonpartisan office may protest a candidacy. The deadline to file a protest against any candidate who filed a nominating petition as a nonpartisan candidate is 4 p.m. on August 21, 2020, or 74 days before the general election. (R.C. 3513.263)

### Write-in Candidate

**Protest against a candidate who filed a Declaration of Intent to Be a Write-In Candidate for the general election**: Any elector eligible to vote on the candidacy of the write-in candidate may protest that candidacy.

The deadline to file a protest against a candidate who filed a Declaration of Intent to Be a Write-In Candidate for the general election is 4 p.m. on August 28, 2020, or 67 days before the general election. (R.C. 3513.041)

## Unexpired Term Elections (Vacancy in Office)

Several statutes govern candidacies for unexpired term elections. R.C. 3513.31 is the general statute that must be consulted in connection with an unexpired term election for an office that, under Ohio law, is subject to party primaries. R.C. 3513.31(I) provides how and when party nominees are selected for unexpired term elections for such offices, while R.C. 3513.31(J) describes how persons become independent candidates for those unexpired term elections.

Candidates seeking nomination or election to an office for the balance of an unexpired term must include the unexpired term ending date on the petition. Ohio law requires each person filing a declaration of candidacy or nominating petition as a candidate for the remainder of an unexpired term to designate the date on which that unexpired term will end. (R.C. 3513.08, R.C. 3513.28) Failure to provide the correct term ending date on the petition will result in the petition being invalidated.

## Death or Withdrawal of Candidate

An individual's candidacy may cease to exist due to the individual's death or decision to withdraw from the election. If a candidate withdraws from an election, they must file a signed statement of withdrawal with the office where the original candidate petition was filed (county board of elections office or the Secretary of State's office).

If a candidate dies, the candidate's party organization, committee, or family should promptly notify the county board of elections or Secretary of State's office where the original candidate petition was filed of the candidate's death.

## Primary Election

A candidate may withdraw their candidacy at any time before the primary election by filing a written statement with the county board of elections or Secretary of State's office where the original candidate petition was filed. (R.C. 3513.30(B))

## General Election

A candidate nominated in a primary election may withdraw their candidacy at any time before the general election by filing a written statement with the county board of elections or Secretary of State's office where the original candidate petition was filed. (R.C. 3513.30(D))

If a candidate nominated in a primary election dies prior to the general election, the candidate's party organization, committee, or family should promptly notify the appropriate board of elections of the candidate's death.

The law provides procedures for the replacement of a candidate who dies or withdraws during the election cycle. The proper procedures are dictated by the specific facts surrounding the vacancy on the ballot (e.g., the office involved, when the vacancy occurred, why the vacancy occurred, the time remaining before the election, etc.). The two statutes that generally govern vacancies on the ballot are: R.C. 3513.30 and R.C. 3513.31.

## Education and Training Requirements

Many offices have education and training requirements that must be satisfied in order for a person to qualify as a candidate for the office, or in order for a person to qualify to hold the office. The Secretary of State's office cannot advise candidates or officials on what education and training requirements are required to obtain or hold an elective office.

Candidates are encouraged to seek information on education or training requirements for the office being sought.

## Campaign Finance Reporting

At the time petitions of candidacy are filed, each candidate should receive materials about campaign finance compliance and reporting.

Additional information regarding campaign finance rules, reporting requirements, and filing deadlines may be found on the Ohio Secretary of State's website.

## Securing your Campaign

The Department of Homeland Security ("DHS") and Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI") provide valuable resources to help mitigate the risk of cyber influence in elections. Every campaign committee should review the DHS Campaign Checklist and the FBI's Protected Voices video series to learn valuable tools for how to reduce risk and how to respond to incidents.

State and local campaign staff should report suspicious activity to their local FBI field office (Cincinnati: 513.421.4310 or Cleveland: 216.522.1400) and the Department of Homeland Security's National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center at 888.282.0870 or NCCICCustomerService@hq.dhs.gov.

For additional resources, the Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs has published a Campaign Playbook, as well as campaign handouts for campaign staff and family members of the candidate.

## Personal Financial Disclosure Statement

Any individual who becomes a candidate for or holds a state, county or city elected office, or the position of school board member in a school district with more than 12,000 students average daily membership, is required to file a personal financial disclosure statement. All public officials and candidates for elected office must file statements with the Ohio Ethics Commission, except members of and candidates for the General Assembly, who file with the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee, and judges and judicial candidates, who file with the Board of Commissioners on Grievances and Discipline of the Supreme Court.

For further information on the filing requirements and deadlines or to find a copy of a blank personal financial disclosure statement, visit the Ohio Ethics Commission's website at: www.ethics.ohio.gov. For further information, please contact the Ohio Ethics Commission at 614.466.7090.

- Candidates for the Ohio General Assembly may obtain additional information by contacting the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee at: 614.728.5100 or http://www.jlec-olig.state.oh.us.
- Judicial candidates can find information at: https://www.bpc.ohio.gov/financial-disclosure-statements or by calling the office of the Board of Professional Conduct at 614.387.9370.

## 2020 Ohio Elections Calendar

Click here to access the 2020 Ohio Elections Calendar

# Most Populous Counties by District

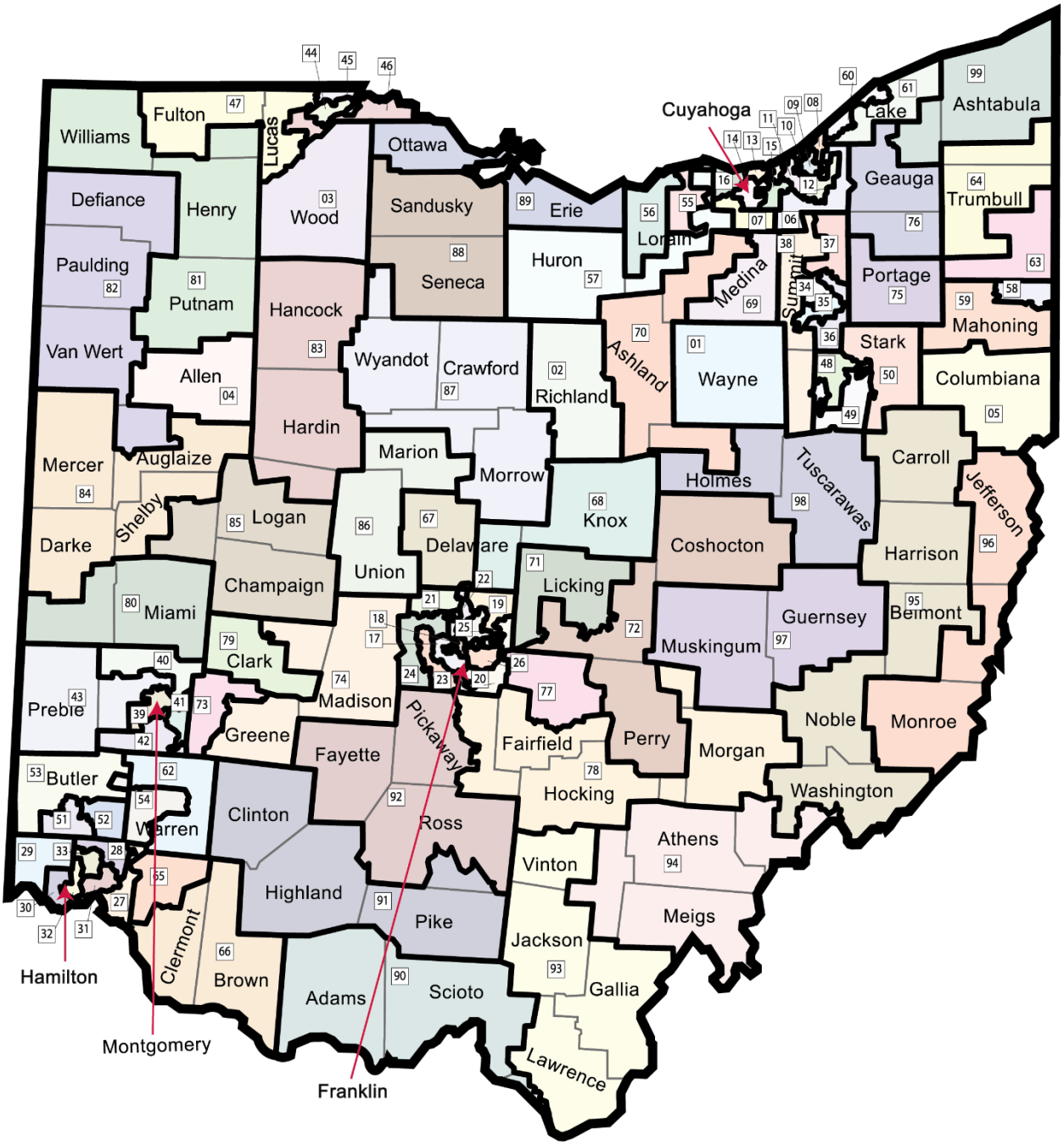
| Ohio Congressional | | Ohio House of Representatives | | | | Ohio Senate | | State Board of Education | | Ohio Court of Appeals | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Hamilton | 1 | Wayne | 51 | Butler | 1 | Hancock | 1 | Allen | 1 | Hamilton |
| 2 | Hamilton | 2 | Richland | 52 | Butler | 2 | Wood | 2 | Lucas | 2 | Montgomery |
| 3 | Franklin | 3 | Wood | 53 | Butler | 3 | Franklin | 3 | Montgomery | 3 | Allen |
| 4 | Lorain | 4 | Allen | 54 | Warren | 4 | Butler | 4 | Hamilton | 4 | Scioto |
| 5 | Lucas | 5 | Columbiana | 55 | Lorain | 5 | Montgomery | 5 | Cuyahoga | 5 | Stark |
| 6 | Columbiana | 6 | Cuyahoga | 56 | Lorain | 6 | Montgomery | 6 | Franklin | 6 | Lucas |
| 7 | Stark | 7 | Cuyahoga | 57 | Lorain | 7 | Warren | 7 | Trumbull | 7 | Mahoning |
| 8 | Butler | 8 | Cuyahoga | 58 | Mahoning | 8 | Hamilton | 8 | Stark | 8 | Cuyahoga |
| 9 | Cuyahoga | 9 | Cuyahoga | 59 | Mahoning | 9 | Hamilton | 9 | Franklin | 9 | Summit |
| 10 | Montgomery | 10 | Cuyahoga | 60 | Lake | 10 | Greene | 10 | Clermont | 10 | Franklin |
| 11 | Cuyahoga | 11 | Cuyahoga | 61 | Lake | 11 | Lucas | 11 | Cuyahoga | 11 | Lake |
| 12 | Franklin | 12 | Cuyahoga | 62 | Warren | 12 | Allen | | | 12 | Butler |
| 13 | Summit | 13 | Cuyahoga | 63 | Trumbull | 13 | Lorain | | | | |
| 14 | Lake | 14 | Cuyahoga | 64 | Trumbull | 14 | Clermont | | | | |
| 15 | Franklin | 15 | Cuyahoga | 65 | Clermont | 15 | Franklin | | | | |
| 16 | Cuyahoga | 16 | Cuyahoga | 66 | Clermont | 16 | Franklin | | | | |
| | | 17 | Franklin | 67 | Delaware | 17 | Ross | | | | |
| | | 18 | Franklin | 68 | Knox | 18 | Portage | | | | |
| | | 19 | Franklin | 69 | Medina | 19 | Delaware | | | | |
| | | 20 | Franklin | 70 | Medina | 20 | Fairfield | | | | |
| | | 21 | Franklin | 71 | Licking | 21 | Cuyahoga | | | | |
| | | 22 | Franklin | 72 | Licking | 22 | Medina | | | | |
| | | 23 | Franklin | 73 | Greene | 23 | Cuyahoga | | | | |
| | | 24 | Franklin | 74 | Greene | 24 | Cuyahoga | | | | |
| | | 25 | Franklin | 75 | Portage | 25 | Cuyahoga | | | | |
| | | 26 | Franklin | 76 | Geauga | 26 | Marion | | | | |
| | | 27 | Hamilton | 77 | Fairfield | 27 | Summit | | | | |
| | | 28 | Hamilton | 78 | Pickaway | 28 | Summit | | | | |
| | | 29 | Hamilton | 79 | Clark | 29 | Stark | | | | |
| | | 30 | Hamilton | 80 | Miami | 30 | Belmont | | | | |
| | | 31 | Hamilton | 81 | Williams | 31 | Licking | | | | |
| | | 32 | Hamilton | 82 | Defiance | 32 | Trumbull | | | | |
| | | 33 | Hamilton | 83 | Hancock | 33 | Mahoning | | | | |
| | | 34 | Summit | 84 | Mercer | | | | | | |
| | | 35 | Summit | 85 | Champaign | | | | | | |
| | | 36 | Summit | 86 | Marion | | | | | | |
| | | 37 | Summit | 87 | Crawford | | | | | | |
| | | 38 | Summit | 88 | Sandusky | | | | | | |
| | | 39 | Montgomery | 89 | Erie | | | | | | |
| | | 40 | Montgomery | 90 | Scioto | | | | | | |
| | | 41 | Montgomery | 91 | Highland | | | | | | |
| | | 42 | Montgomery | 92 | Ross | | | | | | |
| | | 43 | Montgomery | 93 | Lawrence | | | | | | |
| | | 44 | Lucas | 94 | Athens | | | | | | |
| | | 45 | Lucas | 95 | Belmont | | | | | | |
| | | 46 | Lucas | 96 | Jefferson | | | | | | |
| | | 47 | Lucas | 97 | Muskingum | | | | | | |
| | | 48 | Stark | 98 | Tuscarawas | | | | | | |
| | | 49 | Stark | 99 | Ashtabula | | | | | | |
| | | 50 | Stark | | | | | | | | |

# Ohio Congressional Districts 2012-2022

(As Adopted 2012)

# Ohio House Districts 2012-2022

(As Adopted 2012)



# Ohio Senate Districts 2012-2022

(As Adopted 2012)

# State Board of Education Districts 2012-2022

(As Adopted 2012)

# Ohio Court of Appeals Districts 2012-2022

(Oh. Const. Art. IV, Sec. 3 & R.C. 2501.01)

Frank LaRose
Ohio Secretary of State

**Elections**
OhioSoS.gov | election@OhioSoS.gov
877.767.6446 | TTY 877.889.6446
22 North Fourth Street |Columbus, Ohio 43215