

How to Run
for Office

Prowers
County

2026



How to Run for Office – A Candidate’s Guide to General Requirements for Access to The Ballot for County Elected Offices

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HOW TO RUN FOR OFFICE

CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACKET

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NOTICE

This manual was created for reference and training purpose only and should not be used as a substitute for legal advice. It is a candidate's responsibility to obtain the actual knowledge of the campaign finance laws and regulations.

For more information, call (719) 336-8011

INTRODUCTION

Congratulations, on taking an interest in a County Elected position. This publication will guide you through the general requirements for each of the County Offices and accessing the ballot either by Assembly, Petition or Write-In. It will also provide you with information regarding the Colorado Secretary of State TRACER system for filing your financial paperwork, as well as, frequently asked questions.



We also encourage you to become familiar with the requirements of Article XXVIII of the Colorado Constitution; Campaign and Political Finance, Title 1, Article 45, C.R.S. Fair Campaign Practices Act; and Title 1, Article 4, C.R.S. Access to Ballot by Candidates.

If you have any additional questions regarding your candidate qualifications, access to the ballot or other requirements for running for a county office, please contact our Elections Division at (719) 336-8011, Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., e-mail at election@prowerscounty.net.

If you are considering running for a statewide office (i.e. Governor, Secretary of State, etc.), State House or Senate seat in the General Assembly, Judge or District Attorney, please contact your political party and/or the Colorado Secretary of State.

Colorado Secretary of State www.sos.state.co.us 303-894-2200

Colorado Court Administrator www.courts.state.co.us 720-625-5000

Colorado State Democratic Party www.coloradodems.org 303-623-4762

Colorado State Republican Party www.cologop.org 303-758-3333

If you are seeking information related to the County or District Court Judge, contact the Secretary of State or the Office of the State Court Administrator as indicated above.

The Prowers County Clerk and Recorder have prepared this summary to outline Prowers County candidate qualifications and access to the ballot. This document provides a general overview of candidate qualifications and should be used as a **reference guide only**. As always, refer to the Colorado Constitution, Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) for applicable laws, or the Colorado Secretary of State's Office and Municipal candidates should contact their Municipal Clerk's Office.

General Requirements for County Offices

County Commissioner

Number of County Commissioner Seats

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 6; C.R.S §1-4-205(2)]

County Commissioner seats are voted on at-large by all eligible Prowers County voters.

Prowers County has three (3) Commissioner Seats

- Commissioner Districts 1 and 3 will expire in January, 2027. These seats will be open for Election in November, 2026.
- Commissioner District 2 will expire in January, 2028. This seat will be open for Election November, 2027.

Term of Office

4 years [Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 6; C.R.S §1-4-205(1)(a)]

Minimum Age Requirement

18 years
[C.R.S. §1-4-501(1)]

Residency Requirement

Registered elector and resident of the district for at least 1 year prior to the election
[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 10; C.R.S. §1-4-205(1)(b)]

Citizenship

U.S. Citizen
[C.R.S. §1-2-101(1)(a)]

County Clerk and Recorder

This seat will expire January 2027 but will be open for Election November, 2026.

Term of Office

4 years
[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 8; C.R.S. §1-4-206; C.R.S §30-10-401]

Residency Requirement

Registered elector and resident of the county for at least 1 year prior to the election
[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 10; C.R.S. §1-4-205(1)(b)]

Minimum Age Requirement

18 years
[C.R.S. §1-4-501(1)]

Citizenship

U.S. Citizen
[C.R.S. §1-2-101(1)(a)]

County Treasurer

This seat will expire January 2027 but will be open for Election November, 2026.

Term of Office

4 years

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 8; C.R.S. §1-4-206; C.R.S. §30-10-701]

Minimum Age Requirement

18 years

[C.R.S. §1-4-501(1)]

Residency Requirement

Registered elector and resident of the county for at least 1 year prior to the election
[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 10; C.R.S. §1-4-205(1)(b)]

Citizenship

U.S. Citizen

[C.R.S. §1-2-101(1)(a)]

County Sheriff

This seat will expire January 2027 but will be open for Election November, 2026.

Term of Office

4 years

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 8; C.R.S. §30-10-501; C.R.S. §1-4-206]

Minimum Age Requirement

18 years

[C.R.S. §1-4-501(1)]

Residency Requirement

Registered elector and resident of the county for at least 1 year prior to the election

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 10; C.R.S. §1-4-205(1)(b)]

Citizenship

U.S. Citizen

[1-2-101(1)(a) C.R.S.]

Education Requirement

Possess a high school diploma or its equivalent or a college degree
[C.R.S. §30-10-501.5(b)]

Other Requirements

- Complete set of fingerprints taken by a qualified law enforcement agency and submit a receipt evidencing such fingerprinting at the time of filing his or hers written acceptance or candidate affidavit. Cost of \$39.50 for fingerprints.
[C.R.S. §30-10-501.5(c)]
- A person cannot have been convicted of or pleaded guilty or entered a plea of nolo contendere to any felony charge under federal or state law unless pardoned.
[C.R.S. §30-10-501.5(1)(c)]

County Coroner

This seat will expire January 2027 but will be open for Election November, 2026.

Term of Office

4 years

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 8; C.R.S. §1-4-206; C.R.S. §30-10-601.5]

Minimum Age Requirement

18 years [C.R.S. §1-4-501(1)]

Residency Requirement

Registered elector and resident of the county for at least 1 year prior to the election

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 10; C.R.S. §1-4-205(1)(b)]

Citizenship

U.S. Citizen

[C.R.S. §1-2-101(1)(a)]

Education Requirement

Possess a high school diploma or its equivalent or a college degree
[C.R.S. §30-10-601.5(b)]

Other Requirements

- Complete set of fingerprints taken by a qualified law enforcement agency and submit a receipt evidencing such fingerprinting at the time of filing his or hers written acceptance or candidate affidavit. Cost of \$39.50 for fingerprints. [C.R.S. §30-10-501.5(c)]
- A person cannot have been convicted of or pleaded guilty or entered a plea of nolo contendere to any felony charge under federal or state law unless pardoned [C.R.S. §30-10-601.5(3)(b)]

County Assessor

This seat will expire January 2027 but will be open for Election November, 2026.

Term of Office

4 years

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 8; C.R.S. §1-4-206; C.R.S. §30-10-801]

Minimum Age Requirement

18 years

[C.R.S. §1-4-501(1)]

Residency Requirement

Registered elector and resident of the county for at least 1 year prior to the election

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 10; C.R.S. §1-4-205(1)(b)]

Citizenship

U.S. Citizen

[C.R.S. §1-2-101(1)(a)]

County Surveyor

This seat will be open for Election November, 2026.

Term of Office

4 years

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 8; C.R.S. §1-4-26; C.R.S. §30-10-901]

Minimum Age Requirement

18 years

[C.R.S. §1-4-501(1)]

Residency Requirement

Registered elector and resident of the county for at least 1 year prior to the election

[Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 10]

Citizenship

U.S. Citizen [C.R.S. §1-2-101(1)(a)]



Access to the Ballot

If you are considering running for public office, you will need to become familiar with the requirements of Article XXVIII of the Colorado Constitution (Campaign and Political Finance), Title 1, Article 45 (Fair Campaign Practices Act), Title 1, Article 4, C.R.S. (Access to Ballot by Candidates). In order to view these requirements, you can visit the Secretary of State website at:

www.sos.state.co.us or <https://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/elections/Candidates/county.html>

Get your name on the ballot

Contact your county clerk's office for information about candidate qualifications and see page 4 (listed above), ballot access filings (such as assembly forms, petitions formats, etc.) and other requirements for running for a county office.

Become a candidate

County candidates are required to file their Candidate Affidavit and Committee Registration with the Secretary of State's office. The personal financial disclosure statement is NOT required.

Step 1: Are you qualified?

Candidates must meet the basic qualification for office listed above starting on page 4.

Step 2: Campaign finance laws and rules

Candidates are required to understand and comply with the following provisions;

- [Colorado Campaign and Political Finance rules](https://ballotpedia.org/Article_XXVIII,_Colorado_Constitution)
- https://ballotpedia.org/Article_XXVIII,_Colorado_Constitution

Step 3: Publicly announce your intent to run for office

Step 4: Register a candidate committee OR are you a standalone candidate?

A candidate committee is required if you intend to accept contributions. If you will not be accepting contributions (only spending your own money) in support of your candidacy you are not required to register a committee and are therefore a standalone candidate. Committee registration must be submitted and approved prior to receiving contributions.

[1-45-108 C.R.S.]

Step 5: Receive or spend money in support of your candidacy

You become a candidate when you publicly announce your intent to run for office *and thereafter* receive a contribution or make an expenditure in support of your candidacy.

You must register a candidate committee before receiving or spending any money.

Step 6: File a candidate affidavit and voluntary spending acceptance, if applicable

Within 10 days of announcing your candidacy:

1. Complete the Candidate Affidavit form. [Section 2(2), article XXVIII of the Colorado Constitution] [1-45-110(1) C.R.S.]

The affidavit is an attestation that you are familiar with campaign finance laws and regulations, so be sure to read the laws before signing.

2. If applicable, complete the Voluntary Spending Acceptance section of the candidate affidavit. [Section 4(3) and 9(1)(c), article XXVIII of the Colorado Constitution]

All candidates for nominations to be made at any primary election shall be placed on the primary election ballot either by certificate of designation by party assembly or by petition.

[C.R.S. §1-4-102]

Certificate of Designation by Party Assembly

- **Major Political Party**

- No person shall be eligible for designation by assembly as a candidate for nomination at any primary election unless the person was affiliated with the political party holding the assembly, as shown on the registration books of the county clerk and recorder, no later than the first business day of the January immediately preceding the primary election, unless otherwise provided by party rules. [C.R.S. §1-4-601(4)(a)]
- Assembly of major political parties may make assembly designations of candidates for nomination on the primary election ballot. An assembly shall be held no later than 72 days preceding the primary election.
[C.R.S. §1-4-601(1)]
- A candidate must receive 30% or more of the votes cast by the assembly. [C.R.S. §1-4-103] The names of two or more candidates receiving an equal number of votes for designation by assembly shall be placed on the primary ballot in the order determined by lot in accordance with section [C.R.S. §1-4-601(2)]. Candidates by petition for any particular office shall follow assembly candidates and shall be placed on the primary election ballot in an order established by lot.
- If no candidate receives 30% or more of the votes cast, a second ballot shall be cast on all the candidates for that office by the assembly. If on the 2nd ballot no candidate receives 30% or more of the votes cast, the two (2) candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be certified as candidates for that office by the assembly. [C.R.S. §1-4-601(2)]
- Certificate of designation by assembly must be filed no later than 4 days after the adjournment of the assembly. [C.R.S. §1-4-604(3)]
- Original acceptance must be filed no later than 4 days after the adjournment of the assembly at the County Clerk's Office. [C.R.S. §1-4-601(3)(a)]

- **Minor Political Party**

- Assembly of minor political parties shall be held no later than 73 days preceding the Primary Election. [C.R.S. §1-4-1304(1.5)(b)(I)]
- Minor Party Candidates cannot have been affiliated with a major political party for at any time after the first business day of the January immediately preceding the general election for which the person was nominated, unless otherwise provided in the constitution or bylaws of the minor political party. [C.R.S. §1-4-1304(2)(c)]
- Minor Party Candidates nominated by assembly are placed on the General Election ballot unless there is more than one candidate for that office nominated by assembly and/or petition; then the candidates for that office are placed on the Primary Election Ballot. [C.R.S. §1-4-1304(1.5)(c)]

Political Party Petition

Petition Requirements

- Nomination petition formats must be approved prior to circulation by the designated election official. [1-4-905 and 905.5 C.R.S.]

Signature Requirements

- Only eligible electors registered as affiliated with the political party for at least 29 days and residing within the district for which the petition is being circulated may sign the petition; and that the signer has not signed any other petition for any other candidate for the same office. [C.R.S. §1-4-904(2)(a); C.R.S. §1-4-801(2)(b)]
- Must be signed by eligible electors within the county commissioner district or political subdivision for which the office is to be elected. [C.R.S. §1-4-801(2)(a)]
- Signers equal in number to 20% of the votes cast in the political subdivision at the contested or uncontested primary election for the political party's candidate for the office for which the petition is being circulated or, if there was no primary election, at the last preceding general election for which there was a candidate for the office. [C.R.S. §1-4-801(2)(a)]

Additional Information

- No person shall be placed in nomination by petition on behalf of any political party unless the person was affiliated with the political party, as shown on the registration books of the county clerk and recorder, no later than the first business day of the January immediately preceding the election for which the person desires to be placed in nomination. [C.R.S. §1-4-801(3)]
- No person who attempted and failed to receive at least 10% of the votes for the nomination of a political party assembly for a particular office shall be placed in nomination by petition on behalf of the political party for the same office. [C.R.S. §1-4-801(4)]
- Party petitions shall not be circulated nor any signatures be obtained prior to the first Monday in February. Petitions shall be filed no later than 85 days before the primary election. [C.R.S. §1-4-801(5)]
- Candidates by petition follow assembly candidates and are placed on the primary election ballot in an order established by lot. [C.R.S. §1-4-103]
- Petitions are filed with the County Clerk and Recorder. [C.R.S. §1-4-907]

Petitions for Minor Party or Unaffiliated Candidates

Petition Requirements

- Nomination petition formats must be approved prior to circulation by the designated election official. [C.R.S. §1-4-905 and 905.5]

Signature Requirements

- Shall be signed by eligible electors residing within the district or political subdivision in which the office is to be elected. [C.R.S. §1-4-802(1)(c)]
- Number of required signatures: The lesser of 750 or 2% of the votes cast for all candidates for that office in the most recent general election for any county office. [C.R.S. §1-4-802(1)(c)(VII)]

Additional Information

• Minor Political Party

- No petition to nominate a minor political party candidate shall be circulated nor any signatures obtained thereon earlier than the first Monday in February in the general election year. [C.R.S. §1-4-802(1)(d)(II)]
- Petitions to nominate candidates of minor political parties shall be filed no later than 85 days before the primary election. [C.R.S. §1-4-802(1)(f)(II)]
- For general elections, no person shall be placed in nomination by petition unless the person is an eligible elector of the political subdivision or district in which the officer is to be elected and unless the person was registered as affiliated with a minor political party or as unaffiliated, as shown on the registration books of the county clerk and recorder, no later than the first business day of the January immediately preceding the general election for which the person desires to be placed in nomination; except that, if such nomination is for a nonpartisan election, the person shall be an eligible elector of the political subdivision or district and be a registered elector, as shown on the registration books of the county clerk and recorder, on the date of the earliest signature on the petition. (For partisan election). [C.R.S. §1-4-802(1)(g)(II)]
- Minor Party Candidates nominated by petition are placed on the General Election ballot unless there is more than one candidate for that office nominated by assembly and /or petition; then the candidates for that office are placed on the Primary Election Ballot. [C.R.S. §1-4-1304(1.5)(c)]
- Petitions are filed with the County Clerk and Recorder. [C.R.S. §1-4-907]

• Unaffiliated

- No petition to nominate an unaffiliated candidate shall be circulated or any signatures obtained thereon earlier than 173 days before the general election. [C.R.S. §1-4-802(1)(d)(I)] **May 14, 2026.**
- Petitions (for unaffiliated candidates) shall be filed no later than 3:00 p.m. on the 117 day before the general election. [C.R.S. §1-4-802(1)(f)(I)] **July 9, 2026**
- No person shall be placed in nomination of petition unless the person is an eligible elector of the political subdivision or district in which the office is to be elected and was registered as affiliated with a minor political party or unaffiliated for at least 12 months prior to the last date the petition may be filed (for partisan election). [C.R.S. §1-4-802(1)(g)(II)]
- Petitions are filed with the County Clerk and Recorder. [C.R.S. §1-4-907]

Write-In Candidates

- Affidavit of intent shall be filed stating candidate desires the office and is qualified to assume duties, if elected. Primary: **April 24, 2026**, General **July 16, 2026** [C.R.S. §1-4-1102(1)]
- Affidavit of intent shall be filed with County Clerk and Recorder if it is for a county office. [C.R.S. §1-4-1101(1)]
- Affidavit of intent shall be filed by the close of business on the 67th day before a primary election and by the close of business on the 110th day before any other election. [C.R.S. §1-4-1102(1)]

Filing Campaign Finance Information

If you are considering running for public office, you will need to become familiar with the requirements of Article XXVIII of the Colorado Constitution (Campaign and Political Finance), Title 1, Article 45, C.R.S. (Fair Campaign Practices Act), Title 1, Article 4, C.R.S. (Access to Ballot by Candidates)

All county candidates, candidate committees, issue committees, political committees, independent expenditure committees, and small donor committees file with the Secretary of State's website (www.sos.state.co.us) for current year election and campaign finance filing calendars.

How to become an official candidate for campaign finance purposes.

When you officially become a candidate after making a public announcement and thereafter receiving a contribution or making expenditures in support of your candidacy, you are required to register with Colorado Campaign Finance Department within 10 days of announcing. Campaign Finance: <https://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/elections/CampaignFinance/home.html?menuheaders=5>

Candidate Affidavit

This form is filed electronically when you complete your online campaign finance filing when becoming a candidate.

Campaign Finance Filings

Campaign Finance filings will need to be completed online with the Secretary of State. Visit the Secretary of State website at www.sos.state.co.us.

If you have any questions regarding your filing you can e-mail the Secretary of State Campaign Finance Support Team at cpfhelp@sos.state.co.us or by telephone at (303) 894-2200, extension 6383

Timeline for filing Campaign Finance Filings

A calendar for Campaign Finance filings can be obtained from the Secretary of State website at www.sos.state.co.us. You can locate the calendar from the Campaign Finance section of the website.

Current Officeholder

If you have not decided if you want to run for office in the next election you can still maintain a candidate committee. You are still considered a candidate while your candidate committee is open. Rule 3.1 requires that you file an amended committee registration within 5 days of any change.

Frequently Asked Questions



Q: When are the 2026 Elections?

A: The Primary and General Election: June 30th and November 3, 2026.

The Primary Elections determines each party's nominees for the General Election

The General Election is November 3, 2026

Q: What do I file at the County Clerk and Recorder's Office?

A: The following forms will need to be filed at the Prowers County Elections Division.

- Candidate Acceptance Forms
- Designation of Assembly
- Candidate Petition Forms
- Write-In Affidavits

Important! Campaign Finance Forms will need to be filed with the Secretary of State's Office with their online system. www.sos.state.co.us

Candidates for Municipal Office need to file with their Municipal Clerk in the city/town where they reside.

Q: Is there a timeline regarding when I file my Campaign finance paperwork?

A: Yes, refer to the Secretary of State website for the Campaign and Political Finance calendar at www.sos.state.co.us.

Q: Is there a timeline regarding when I file my Ballot Access filings with the County Clerk & Recorder?

A: Yes, refer to Title 1 Article 4 of the Colorado Revised Statutes. Specifically, C.R.S. §1-4-604(3), C.R.S. §1-4-601(3)(a),

§1-4-801(5), §1-4-802(1)(f)(II), §1-4-802(1)(f)(I), §1-4-1304(3)(4), §1-4-1102(1), also refer to the 2026 Election Calendar located at www.sos.state.co.us

Q: How do I verify my status and affiliation as a registered voter?

A: You may review your voter registration record at the Colorado Secretary of State's website at www.govotecolorado.gov click on "Verify your voter Registration." The Prowers County Elections Division can also verify your registration status, affiliation, affiliation date, etc. at (719) 336-8011 or election@prowerscounty.net or jcoen@prowerscounty.net or jwilliams@prowerscounty.net

Q: Who do I contact with questions pertaining to candidate qualifications, assembly paperwork, petition format, write-in affidavit, access to the ballot or general questions regarding requirements for running for County Office?

A: Contact the Prowers County Elections Division at (719) 336-8011 Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. or by e-mail at election@prowerscounty.net or jcoen@prowerscounty.net or jwilliams@prowerscounty.net

Q: How can I get a list of voters?

A: Upon completion of a written request and payment you may contact the Election Office at 719-336-8011 or send an e-mail request. Payment is required before a list will be processed.

Q: How can I find out who the other candidates are?

A: You can visit the Secretary of State website at:

<http://tracer.sos.colorado.gov/PublicSite/Search.aspx>

This option allows you to search by Candidate name, Committee and Jurisdiction. In order to search for candidates, enter the following information:

Political Party
Election Year
Jurisdiction
Office
District
Status

Q: Where can I find Election Results?

A: Results will be posted after 7:00 p.m., election night at www.prowersco.gov or on the Secretary of State's website at: www.sos.state.co.us



Contact Information:

Prowers County Elections Division
Jana Coen, Prowers County Clerk
Jill Williams, Prowers County Deputy Election Clerk

Website: www.prowerscounty.net
Phone: (719) 336-8011
Fax: (719) 336-5306

E-Mail: selection@prowerscounty.net or jcoen@prowerscounty.net or jwilliams@prowerscounty.net

Also:

Colorado Secretary of State

Website: www.sos.state.co.us
Phone: (303) 894-2200
E-Mail: cpfhelp@sos.state.co.us and govotecolorado.gov