

**State of Maine**  
**2026 Candidate's Guide**  
**to Ballot Access**



**State of Maine**  
**Secretary of State**



## Office of the Secretary of State

I am pleased to present the 2026 edition of the State of Maine Candidate's Guide to Ballot Access.

If you are considering becoming a candidate, or have already decided to run for public office, I hope this guide will be helpful to you.

Public service through elected office is among the oldest and most noble traditions in our democratic system. While the decision to seek public office can be a highly personal one, it can be both a challenging and rewarding experience.

The Secretary of State's Division of Elections is available to assist you with any questions regarding the conduct of elections. The office can be reached at (207) 624-7650, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., state and federal holidays excepted. The Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices is also available to assist you with any questions regarding campaign finance laws and reporting requirements. The Commission can be reached by calling (207) 287-4179, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

If you have any questions, or if I can be of further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact my office directly at (207) 624-7736.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Julie L. Flynn".

Julie L. Flynn

Deputy Secretary of State

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# DIRECTORY

## **Department of the Secretary of State**

Division of Elections

Office Location: 111 Sewall Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Augusta

Mail: 184 State House Station, Augusta, Maine, 04333-0184

Telephone: (207) 624-7650 Fax: (207) 287-6545

Website: [www.maine.gov/sos](http://www.maine.gov/sos) Email: [cec.elections@maine.gov](mailto:cec.elections@maine.gov)

## **Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices**

Office Location: 45 Memorial Circle, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Augusta

Mail: 135 State House Station, Augusta, Maine, 04333-0135

Telephone: (207) 287-4179 Fax: (207) 287-6775

Website: [www.maine.gov/ethics](http://www.maine.gov/ethics) Email: [ethics@maine.gov](mailto:ethics@maine.gov)

Electronic Filing: [www.mainecampaignfinance.com](http://www.mainecampaignfinance.com)

## **Federal Elections Commission**

1050 First Street, N.E.

Washington, D.C. 20463

Telephone: (800) 424-9530 or (202) 694-1100

Teletypewriter (Hearing Impaired): (202) 219-3336

Website: [www.fec.gov](http://www.fec.gov)

## **Federal Communications Commission**

Office of Political Programming

45 L Street, N.E.

Washington, D.C., 20554

Telephone: (202) 418-1440 Email: [campaignlaw@fcc.gov](mailto:campaignlaw@fcc.gov)

Website: <https://www.fcc.gov/media/policy/political-programming>

## **Department of Transportation**

Right of Way Maintenance Control Section

16 State House Station

Augusta, ME 04333-0016

Telephone: (207) 624-3611

Website: <https://www.maine.gov/dot/programs-services/csir/mlrc/tech/local-road-resources>

# INTRODUCTION

Candidates have filing and other important responsibilities with both the Secretary of State's office and the Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices.

***The Division of Elections within the Department of the Secretary of State*** administers elections for federal, state, and county offices. The Division advises election officials in approximately 500 municipalities and hundreds of state candidates regarding election laws and procedures.

The Division accepts and reviews primary (party) and non-party candidate nomination petitions. Through this petition process candidates qualify to have their names placed on the ballot for either the primary or general election. This Candidate's Guide to Ballot Access is a useful reference for candidates and the general public. Each chapter describes the election requirements and references the authorizing statutes, which may be viewed at the State's website: <https://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/>

The Department of the Secretary of State has taken care to make this guide concise and accurate. However, you should not substitute the information presented here for the applicable statutory provisions of the Election Law. The statutory requirements are controlling in the event of any omission in this publication. This Guide is current as of December 29, 2025. Its contents are subject to statutory changes enacted by the Legislature and rule changes approved under the Administrative Procedure Act.

***The Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices*** administers campaign finance law and the Maine Clean Election Act (MCEA), a publicly funded campaign financing option. Through the Commission, candidates register, declare their intention to run as an MCEA or traditionally financed candidate, and file required campaign finance reports. The Commission has published guidebooks for legislative and county candidates running in 2026, which are posted on the Commission's website and can also be obtained by contacting the Commission. Below are some helpful links to the Ethics Commission's website:

- <https://www.maine.gov/ethics/candidates> - Main page for candidate resources, providing links to the guidebooks prepared by the Ethics Commission.
- <https://www.maine.gov/ethics/candidates/filing-campaign-finance-reports> - Forms and guides for campaign finance reporting.

# UPDATES TO MAINE ELECTION LAW

(Effective 9/24/2025)

## PL 2025 C.397 AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAWS GOVERNING ELECTIONS

Section of Title 21-A	Subject Area	Type of Change	Section of PL 2025 C. 397	Description of the Change
§335 (2)	Primary Petitions: Party Option for who may sign	Amended	Sec. 18	Any qualified party may file a notice with the Secretary of State by December 31 <sup>st</sup> of the year before the state primary (or by October 1 <sup>st</sup> before a presidential primary) electing to allow unenrolled voters to sign nominating petitions for all primary elections held in the following year.
§§336 (4) and 355 (4)	Primary and Non-Party Petitions: Registrar Certification and Candidate Consent required	New	Sec. 20, 23	Provides the Secretary of State may not accept a candidate consent form (whether a party or a non-party candidate) unless it contains or is accompanied by the registrar's certification of candidate enrollment.  The candidate may complete these two requirements on separate forms.  This amendment clarifies a candidate's filing is not complete unless both these required certifications are submitted by the deadline along with the minimum number of certified signatures of voters on the candidate petitions.
§§337(1) and 356(1)	Primary and Non-Party Petitions: Maximum Signatures	Amended	Sec. 21, 24	Clarifies the Secretary of State may receive petitions containing more than the maximum permitted number of valid signatures but may not validate any signatures submitted above the maximum number.
§601(2) (B-1)	Secretary of State's Responsibilities: Ballot Preparation	Amended	Sec. 29	Sets a deadline of 70 days prior to the election for a candidate to notify the Secretary of State they wish to have their name appear differently on the ballot than it does on their candidate's consent form.
§§682(3) and 683(6)	Political Activities: Regulated at the Voting Place	Amended and New	Sec. 42	Amends the remaining language in §682, sub-§3(B) that bans political advertising at the voting place to clarify the ban now includes political advertising on apparel.  Adds a new provision in §683 which makes it clear only municipal officials can distribute or collect voter registration applications at the voting place or within 250 feet of the voting place on election day.

**PL 2025 C. 331 AN ACT TO AMEND ELECTION POLLING PLACE CANDIDATE RESTRICTIONS**

<b>Section of Title 21-A</b>	<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Type of Change</b>	<b>Description</b>
§§682 (2), 682 (7), 682 (1-A)	Voting Place: Candidate Restrictions	New	<p>Clarifies that the prohibition against influence in or around the voting place applies to influencing a person's decision regarding a candidate for an office on the ballot that day even if that candidate's name is not on the ballot (i.e., is a write-in candidate).</p> <p>Adds new prohibited activities by candidates in and around the voting place by stating a candidate or their representative may not collect or solicit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Voter signatures on a petition in support of the candidate's candidacy for an office the candidate is seeking in that election year;</li><li>• Contributions in support of the candidate's candidacy for an office the candidate is seeking in that election year; or</li><li>• Qualifying contributions under the Maine Clean Election Act in support of the participating candidate's candidacy for an office the candidate is seeking in that election year.</li></ul>



# RANKED-CHOICE VOTING (RCV)

The Primary Elections on June 9, 2026 for U.S. Senate, U.S. Congress, Governor, State Senate, and State Representative to the Legislature will be decided by a system of ranked-choice voting if three or more candidates qualify for the ballot, or if two candidates qualify for the ballot and there is a declared write-in candidate in the race, instead of by plurality. The General Election on November 3, 2026 for U.S. Senate and U.S. Congress will also be decided by a system of ranked-choice voting if three or more candidates qualify for the office, or if two candidates qualify for the ballot and there is a declared write-in candidate in the race. However, the General Election on November 3, 2026 for Governor, State Senate, and State Representative to the Legislature will be decided by plurality, regardless of the number of candidates who qualify for the race. Elections determined by ranked-choice voting are defined in 21-A MRS §1(27-C).

On election night, municipal officials count only the first-choice selections for each ranked-choice voting contest. If it appears that no candidate received more than 50% of the first-choice votes, the memory devices containing the results (for tabulator municipalities) and the paper ballots (for hand-count municipalities) are delivered to the Secretary of State in Augusta for a central ranked-choice voting tabulation. Results from all memory devices and scanned paper ballots are uploaded into one database. The cast vote records are extracted and then processed through the ranked-choice voting software to produce final results.

An informative outline of the history of ranked-choice voting in the State of Maine:

<https://legislature.maine.gov/lawlibrary/ranked-choice-voting-in-maine/9509>

Helpful ranked-choice voting resources:

<https://www.maine.gov/sos/elections-voting/resources-for-ranked-choice-voting>

# CHAPTER ONE

## BECOMING A CANDIDATE

### Who is a Candidate?

A candidate is a person who has completed any one or a combination of the following:

- Filed a petition and has qualified to be nominated by the primary election as a party candidate;
- Filed a petition and has qualified as a “non-party” candidate;
- Filed a declaration with the Secretary of State as a “write-in” candidate;
- Received contributions or made expenditures with the intent of qualifying as a candidate; or
- Given their consent for any other person to receive contributions or make expenditures with the intent of qualifying as a candidate.

**NOTE:** A person may be a candidate for only one federal, state or county office in any election and may choose only one method (primary election or non-party petition) to gain access to the printed general election ballot.

**Exception:** A person may be a candidate for a **presidential elector** or a **county charter commission member** and may also be a candidate for one additional office at the same election.

## Offices and Requirements

### *Federal and State Offices*

In addition to the residency requirements outlined below, no person may be a candidate unless they are a resident of the district they seek to represent at the time of their nomination for placement on the primary, general, or special election ballot.

Maine election law (21-A MRS §336(1) for party candidates and §355(1) for non-party candidates) requires the Secretary of State to provide a separate consent form that includes a list of statutory and constitutional requirements for the office sought by the candidate. For more information, see page 16 for “Primary Candidate’s Consent” and page 23 for “Non-party Candidate’s Consent”.

Office Type	Office	Minimum Age	Citizenship: Minimum Number of Years	Residency	Statute Reference
Federal	U.S. Senator	30	9	Resident of Maine	U.S. Constitution, Article I, §3
Federal	Representative to Congress	25	7		U.S. Constitution, Article I, §2
State	Governor	30	15	5 years Maine resident	Maine Constitution, Art. V, Part First, §4
State	Senator <sup>1</sup>	25	5	1 year Maine resident; reside in district for 3 months before the election	Maine Constitution, Art. IV, Part Second, §6
State	Representative to the Legislature <sup>1</sup>	21			Maine Constitution, Art. IV, Part First, §4

**Note 1:** Maine law bars State Senators and Representatives from serving more than 4 consecutive terms per office.

## County Offices

In addition to the residency requirements outlined below, no person may be a candidate unless they are a resident of the district they seek to represent at the time of their nomination for placement on the primary, general, or special election ballot.

Somerset County's county officers (apart from District Attorney) are elected in non-partisan elections and appear only on the general election ballot. Candidates follow the requirements for non-party candidates, except they do not have to be an unenrolled voter. Individuals running for a Somerset County office must request petitions drafted specifically for their county.

Knox and Aroostook Counties follow a similar procedure for electing the Knox County Budget Committee and Aroostook County Finance Committee. Candidates for these offices also must request the petition specific for them.

Office Type	Office	Minimum Age	Citizenship: Minimum Number of Years	Residency	Statute Reference
County	County Commissioner	18	A candidate for any County Office must be a resident and voter in the electoral district which the candidate seeks to represent as of the date that the candidate files nomination petitions in the year of the election. (21-A MRS §333 and §352).		30-A MRS §61
	County Treasurer				30-A MRS §151
	District Attorney <sup>1</sup>				30-A MRS §251
	Judge of Probate <sup>2</sup>				Maine Constitution, Art. VI, §6; 4 MRS §301
	Register of Probate				Maine Constitution, Art. VI, §6; 18-C MRS §1-501
	Register of Deeds				33 MRS §601
	Sheriff <sup>3</sup>				Maine Constitution, Art. IX, §10; 30-A MRS §371-B

**Note 1:** Candidate must be an attorney who is a member in good standing of the Maine bar.

**Note 2:** Candidate must be an attorney admitted to the general practice of law in Maine.

**Note 3:** Candidates for sheriff must file a “Candidate’s Consent for Sheriff” with the Secretary of State along with the nomination papers, confirming they comply with the following qualifications:

1. Must swear to or affirm the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics;
2. Must never have been convicted of a Class C or higher crime;
3. Must apply to the Secretary of State for a criminal background investigation;
4. Must submit written certification from the Maine Criminal Justice Academy they:
  - Are currently certified as a law enforcement officer and have met the basic law enforcement training standards under Title 25 MRS §2804-C; or
  - Were previously certified as a law enforcement officer and agree to meet the basic law enforcement training standards under Title 25 MRS §2804-C within one year of taking office; and
5. Must swear to or affirm they have at least 2 years of supervisory employment experience in law enforcement or corrections or a combination of both and submit the name, address, and telephone number for the relevant employer or employers.

Any person who served as a full-time law enforcement officer employed by a municipal police department or a state agency, including the University of Maine System, on or before July 1, 1990, or is serving in the office of sheriff on June 26, 2021, or served prior to that date, is deemed to meet these minimum qualifications.

#### **Legal References**

Definition of a Candidate	21-A MRS § 1(5)
Limitations to Candidacy	21-A MRS §§ 331 and 351
Qualifications for County Office	21-A MRS §§ 333 and 352
Qualification for County Sheriff	30-A MRS § 371-B

# CHAPTER TWO

## GETTING ON THE BALLOT: THE PETITION PROCESS

### All Candidates

Petitions are available to download and print on the Department of the Secretary of State's Division of Elections' website, or for physical pickup at the Division of Elections office at Burton M. Cross State Office Building, 4<sup>th</sup> floor, 111 Sewall Street, Augusta. You may pick up the petitions in person, have another person obtain them for you, or have the petitions mailed to you. Candidates requesting pre-filled forms should contact the Elections Division.

Downloaded petitions have been formatted to print on 8.5 x 14 inch (legal size) paper.

**Petitions must be printed double-sided on 8.5 x 14 inch (legal size) paper** so that:

- The Secretary of State can confirm that all signers were able to see the candidate information on the front side before signing;
- The text is large enough for voters to read easily; and
- The petition lines are large enough for voters to keep their information on one line.

You may begin circulating petitions on January 1, 2026, and they must be submitted by the applicable deadline. Once submitted to the Secretary of State, petitions will be reviewed to ensure all required elements have been properly completed. If all requirements of law are met and the minimum number of signatures are submitted, the petitions will be accepted and filed by the Secretary of State. You will be notified of the acceptance of the petitions once the filing deadline and challenge period have passed.

### Primary (Party) Candidates

Parties meeting the qualifications of 21-A MRS Chapter 5 are eligible to participate in the Primary Election on June 9, 2026. As of December 29, 2025, Maine has four (4) parties qualified for the 2026 election: Democratic, Green Independent, Libertarian, and Republican. Qualified parties may participate in primary elections. There is one additional party (Constitution Party) seeking qualified status by enrolling at least 5,000 voters by January 2, 2026. An updated Citizen's Guide will be posted if there are any changes to the status of any of the parties.

If you are not enrolled in the party in whose primary you plan to run as a primary (party) candidate, you must file an application to change enrollment prior to **January 1, 2026**. If you are not currently enrolled in a party (Unenrolled) and are a primary (party) candidate, you must enroll in the party named in the petition on or before **March 16, 2026**, or by the date you file your petitions, if earlier. Petitions must be filed with the Secretary of State on or before **5 p.m. on March 16, 2026**.

Before submitting your petitions to the Secretary of State, ensure you have completed all the items in the “Primary (Party) Petition Filing Checklist” on page 12.

**Note:** If you move between January 1 and March 15, 2026, you cannot change parties and run as a primary candidate at the new residence.

### ***Required Number of Signatures – Primary (Party) Candidates***

The required number of valid signatures of registered voters on primary (party) petitions is:

<b>Office</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
U.S. Senator	2,000	2,500
Governor	2,000	2,500
U.S. Representative to Congress	1,000	1,250
State Senator	100	150
Representative to the Legislature	25	40
County Commissioner	50	75
Other County Officers	150	200

### **Other Points Pertinent to Primary (Party) Candidate Petitions**

- Petition forms must be typed or printed in ink, except where an original signature is required.
- A separate petition form should be used for each municipality in which signatures are submitted. Registrars are not permitted to certify signatures from other municipalities. If candidates collect signatures from multiple municipalities on the same form, they are responsible for submitting the original form to each listed municipality in turn, with sufficient time to allow each to validate the signatures of its residents.
- **The circulator** must personally witness every signature on the petition and be able to take an oath to that effect. The circulator of a petition does not have to be a Maine resident or Maine registered voter.
- A voter may only sign each candidate’s petition once and must be a registered voter in the same party as the candidate, unless the candidate’s party has elected to allow unenrolled voters to sign nominating petitions for primary elections in 2026.
- A voter may sign for more than one (1) candidate running for the same office in a federal, state, or county election.
- To ensure the registrar will be able to certify a voter’s signature, the voter should sign a petition in the same manner as they registered to vote. However, immaterial irregularities will not invalidate a signature provided the registrar can determine the signer is the voter on the municipality’s list. Immaterial irregularities include, but are not limited to, misspelling, inclusion or omission of initials, and substitution of initials or nicknames for given names.

## Primary (Party) Petition Filing Checklist


- ☐ Collect at least the minimum number of signatures for the office you are seeking as indicated in the chart “Required Number of Signatures – Primary (Party) Candidates” provided on the previous page. Signers must be registered voters of the electoral district of the candidate and enrolled in the party named in the petition, unless the candidate’s party has elected to allow unenrolled voters to sign nominating petitions for primary elections in 2026.
- ☐ Have each petition form verified by its circulator. The “Circulator’s Oath” must be completed before a notary public on each petition form – see page 15 for further details.
- ☐ Have all signatures certified by the applicable Registrar of Voters prior to filing with the Secretary of State – see page 15 for further details.
- ☐ Sign the “Candidate’s Consent” section of *the Candidate’s Consent and Certification of Enrollment* (a separate form from the petition) before a notary public – see pages 16 and 17 for further details.
- ☐ Have the Registrar of Voters in the municipality where you are registered to vote complete the “Certification of Candidate’s Enrollment,” which is printed as part of the *Candidate’s Consent and Certification of Enrollment* form – see page 17 for further details.
- ☐ Present the petition(s) and the *Candidate’s Consent and Certification of Enrollment* form to the Secretary of State for review on or before **5 p.m. on March 16, 2026**.

**NOTE:** The Secretary of State strongly encourages candidates to file in advance of the March 16, 2026, deadline to allow time for review of the petitions and correction of any deficiencies.

- ☐ Comply with Maine campaign finance law regarding registration, record keeping, and reporting requirements (*please refer to Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices for information and reporting forms*).



## Primary (Party) Candidate Petition



**STATE OF MAINE**  
**PRIMARY NOMINATION PETITION**  
**June 9, 2026 State Primary Election**

**DATE FILED**  
With Secretary of State

**1** \_\_\_\_\_ *Party*

Legal name of candidate as it will appear on the ballot\*:  
**2** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last name and suffix, if any) (First name) (Middle name or initial)

Office: **3** \_\_\_\_\_ Electoral division: **4** \_\_\_\_\_ Term: N/A **5**  
(Title of office – for example: Rep. to the Legislature) (Name of district – for example: District 1)

Voting residence of candidate **6** \_\_\_\_\_  
(City, town, plantation, or township)

Mailing address of candidate: **7** \_\_\_\_\_

*\*See Title 21-A, §601(2)(B-1, H) for requirements for listing candidate names on the ballot.*

*Petition must be submitted to municipal registrar for certification prior to filing with Secretary of State. Deadline for filing petitions and Candidate's Consent and Certification of Enrollment with Secretary of State: 5 p.m. March 16, 2026.*

### Instructions for Candidate Information Section

1. Write the name of the qualified party in which the candidate is enrolled.
2. Write the candidate's legal name on the petition in one of the following forms:
  - a. last name (and suffix, if any), first name, middle name
  - b. last name (and suffix, if any), first name, middle initial
  - c. last name (and suffix, if any), first initial, middle name
  - d. last name (and suffix, if any), first name

The name should be written as it will appear on the ballot and must be in one of the forms listed above, as required by 21-A MRS §601(2)(H). The candidate must also sign the "Candidate's Consent" in the same manner. A candidate's legal name is approved by the Probate Court, if applicable, pursuant to 18-C MRS §1-701, or in the absence of a court order, the name consistently used by the candidate during the last 2 years in filings with governmental agencies and other legal transactions. See 21-A MRS §601(2)(B-1)

3. Write the exact title of the office sought (e.g., Representative to Congress, State Senator, Representative to the Legislature, etc.).
4. Write the electoral division to be represented (e.g., District 1, Androscoggin County, etc.).
5. Write the term of office only when 2 U.S. Senators are to be nominated (not applicable in 2026).

6. Write the candidate's municipality of residence (city/town/plantation/township) where the candidate is registered to vote.
7. Write the mailing address of the candidate. A P.O. Box is acceptable.

**NOTE:** The information required on the petition must be completed prior to circulation. If a petition missing the required information is filed with the Secretary of State, it may be rejected.

### Instructions for Collection of Signatures

For registrar use only	Signature of voter (Not printed name)	Printed name of voter (Not signature)	Date signed	Street address (Not P.O. Box)	Municipality (Where registered)
1.					
2.					
3.					

1. The petition may only be signed by voters who (1) reside in the electoral district in which the nomination is sought and (2) are enrolled in the party named in the petition or, if the candidate's party has elected to allow unenrolled voters to sign nominating petitions in 2026, are unenrolled. The voter must sign their name personally, except a voter who is physically unable to sign the petition and who is registered to vote as provided in 21-A MRS §153-A(3) may direct another Maine registered voter to sign the petition in the voter's presence. The individual assisting the voter must sign the voter's name on one line and then sign the individual's own name on another line, and attest the individual is signing on the voter's behalf. The assistant must complete the rest of the information on both lines for the voter and themselves.
2. The printed name of the voter, the date signed, the street address, and the municipality may be completed by either the voter or the circulator. Ditto marks are permitted only for street address and municipality of registration.
3. **Signatures may not be collected prior to January 1, 2026.**

## Instructions for Circulator's Oath

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### **Circulator's Oath**

I hereby make oath that I am the circulator of this petition; that I personally witnessed all of the signatures to this petition; and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, each signature is that of the person whose name it purports to be, and each person is enrolled in the party named on this petition, or authorized by the party to sign, and is a resident of the electoral division named in the petition. If any voter was unable to sign due to a physical disability, I hereby verify that the voter authorized another voter to sign at the voter's direction and in the voter's presence.

Signature of circulator \_\_\_\_\_ Printed name of circulator \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of notary \_\_\_\_\_ Printed name of notary \_\_\_\_\_

Subscribed to and sworn before me on this date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date my notary commission expires: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date must be completed by notary)

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After the circulator has gathered all the signatures on a particular petition form, the circulator must take an oath before a notary public (or other official authorized to administer oaths) affirming:

- The circulator **personally witnessed** all of the signatures to the petition;
- Each signature is that of the person whose name it purports to be;
- Each signer is a registered voter of the electoral district named on the petition and enrolled in the party designated on the petition; and
- If a voter was unable to sign due to a physical disability, the voter authorized another voter to sign at the voter's direction and in their presence.

The circulator must take the oath for each petition circulated. **Once the circulator has taken the oath before a notary, no signatures may be added to that petition form.**

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## Instructions for Registrar's Certification

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### **Registrar's Certification**

Municipality \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL VALID \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL INVALID \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that the names of all the petitioners listed as valid appear on the voting list as registered voters in this municipality, in the electoral division named in the petition, and are enrolled in the party named on this petition or authorized by the party to sign.

DATE & TIME PETITION RECEIVED:

Signature of registrar: \_\_\_\_\_

Date petition certified: \_\_\_\_\_

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The registrar of voters or municipal clerk must certify that each person whose signature appears on the petition is registered to vote in that municipality, in the electoral district named on the petition, and is either enrolled in the party named on the petition, or is unenrolled if the candidate's party is allowing unenrolled voters to sign nominating petitions in 2026. The registrar may not certify the names of voters from other municipalities.

## Primary Candidate's Consent and Certification of Enrollment

**Primary Candidate's Consent and Certification of Enrollment  
For Representative to the Legislature**

\_\_\_\_\_ Party

**Legal name of candidate as it will appear on the ballot\*:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Last name and suffix, if any)                      (First name)                      (Middle name or initial)

Phonetic pronunciation of name for accessible audio ballot: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Ex: Colin Boucher - "KO-Lin BOW-cher" or "Kollin Bushy")

Voting residence address of candidate: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street address - not P.O. Box)                      (City, town, plantation, or township; zip code)

*\*See Title 21-A, §601(2)(B-1, H) for requirements for listing candidate names on the ballot.*

**Qualifications of Representative to the Legislature (Maine Constitution, Article IV, Part First, Section 4)**

At the time of nomination for placement on the primary election ballot, the person shall:

- Be a resident in the district which the person seeks to represent.

At the commencement of the period for which that person is elected, the person shall:

- Have been a citizen of the United States for at least 5 years;
- Be at least 21 years of age;
- Have been a resident of this State at least one year; and
- Have been a resident in the district which the person seeks to represent for the 3-month period immediately preceding the election.

-----

**Candidate's Consent**

I hereby declare my consent to accept the nomination of the primary election. I further declare that my residence is in the municipality listed above; that I am enrolled in the party named on this consent; that I meet the qualifications to hold this office; and that this declaration is true.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of candidate)

Subscribed to and sworn before me on this date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)                      (Signature of notary public)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Printed name of notary public)

-----

**Certification of Candidate's Enrollment**  
(To be completed by the registrar in the candidate's municipality of residence)

I hereby certify that, \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of candidate as it appears on municipality's voting list)

is enrolled in the party named on this consent as of this date, and has not filed an application to change enrollment on or after January 1, 2026.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of registrar/municipal clerk)                      (Date)                      (Name of city, town, plantation, or township)

-----

**Filing deadline for "Candidate's Consent and Certification of Enrollment" and "Primary Nomination Petitions" to be received by the Division of Elections is **5 p.m., Monday, March 16, 2026.****

**NOTE:** This is a sample form only. You must obtain the correct consent and enrollment form from the Division of Elections for the specific office you are seeking.

### Instructions for Candidate's Consent and Certification of Enrollment

**Candidate's Consent:** The candidate's consent is a separate document from the petition. The consent forms are customized with the qualifications for each office. Candidates must ensure they meet the qualifications for the office and the consent form submitted is the correct one for the office sought. The full residence address is required on the consent form. Upon written request by the candidate to the Secretary of State, the Secretary of State may deem the candidate's street name and number confidential

provided they are not material to the candidate’s qualifications to serve (i.e., the candidate’s municipality of residence is wholly within the relevant electoral district).

Candidates must complete the phonetic pronunciation section following the candidate’s name section, ensuring their name will be pronounced correctly on the accessible audio ballot. Example: If your name is Colin Boucher, write your name phonetically “KO-lin BOW-cher” or “Kollin Bushy” as you would like it to be pronounced on the audio ballot.

The candidate must sign the candidate’s consent form before a notary public (or other official authorized to administer oaths), which includes a statement the candidate will accept the nomination of the primary election, a declaration of the candidate’s municipality of residence and party designation, and a statement the candidate meets the qualifications of the office sought. The signature of the candidate on the consent form must appear the same as the name of the candidate on the petition form(s).

**Certification of Candidate’s Enrollment:** The certification of enrollment is included as part of the candidate’s consent form. The registrar of voters or municipal clerk in the candidate’s municipality of residence must certify the candidate is enrolled in the party named on the petition as of the date the petition is certified **and no later than March 16, 2026**.

### ***Restrictions on Candidate Withdrawal***

A candidate for an office on the primary ballot may withdraw by submitting a signed written notice to the Secretary of State. The deadline for withdrawal to have the candidate’s name removed from the June 9, 2026 Primary ballot is 70 days before the primary election **(5 p.m. on Tuesday, March 31, 2026)**.

If a primary candidate submits a withdrawal notice to the Secretary of State less than 70 days before the primary, their name will not be removed from the ballot. However, the Secretary of State will instruct the appropriate local election officials to distribute notices with absentee ballots requested after that date and to post a notice at each voting place informing voters the candidate has withdrawn and votes for them will not be counted. Notice of the late withdrawal will also be posted on the Secretary of State’s website.

A candidate nominated by a party at the June 9, 2026 State Primary Election must withdraw on or before 5 p.m. on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday in July **(July 13, 2026)** preceding the general election in order to be replaced by the party no later than 5 p.m. on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday in July **(July 27, 2026)** preceding the November 3, 2026 General Election.

<b>Legal References</b>	
Qualification of (Party) Candidates - Primary Election	21-A MRS § 334
Primary Petition Requirements	21-A MRS § 335
Consent of Primary (Party) Candidate	21-A MRS § 336
Deadline for Withdrawal - Primary	21-A MRS § 371
Requirements for Candidate’s Name on Ballot	21-A MRS § 601(2)

## Non-Party Candidates

If you are enrolled in a party and wish to be a non-party candidate, you must withdraw from that party on or before March 1, 2026, or by the date you file your petitions, if earlier. Petitions must be filed with the Secretary of State on or before **5:00 p.m. on June 1, 2026**. The candidate must remain unenrolled from March 1<sup>st</sup> until the general election to remain qualified as an unenrolled candidate for the office sought in the nomination petition in that election year. Before submitting your petitions to the Secretary of State, ensure you have completed all the items in the “Non-Party Petition Filing Checklist” below.

### ***Required Number of Signatures – Non-Party Candidates***

The required number of valid signatures of registered voters on non-party petitions is:

Office	Minimum	Maximum
U.S. Senator	4,000	5,000
U.S. Representative to Congress	2,000	2,500
Governor	4,000	5,000
State Senator	200	300
Representative to the Legislature	50	80
County Commissioner	100	150
Other County Officers	300	400

### **Other Points Pertinent to Non-Party Candidate Petitions**

- Petition forms must be typed or printed in ink, except where an original signature is required.
- A separate petition form should be used for each municipality in which signatures are submitted. Registrars are not permitted to certify signatures from other municipalities. If candidates collect signatures from multiple municipalities on the same form, they are responsible for submitting the original form to each listed municipality in turn, with sufficient time to allow each to validate the signatures of its residents.
- **The circulator** must personally witness every signature on the petition and be able to take an oath to that effect. The circulator of a petition does not have to be a Maine resident or Maine registered voter.
- A voter may only sign each candidate’s petition once.
- A voter may sign for more than one candidate running for the same office in a federal, state, or county election.
- To ensure the registrar will be able to certify a voter’s signature, the voter should sign a petition in the same manner as the voter is registered to vote. However, immaterial irregularities will not invalidate a signature provided the registrar can determine that the signer is the voter on the municipality’s list. Immaterial irregularities include, but are not limited to, misspelling, inclusion or omission of initials, and substitution of initials or nicknames for given names.

## Non-Party Petition Filing Checklist

- ☐ Collect at least the minimum number of signatures for the office you are seeking as indicated in the chart “Required Number of Signatures – Non-Party Candidates” provided on page 18. Signers must be registered voters of the electoral district of the candidate.
- ☐ Have each petition verified by its circulator. The “Circulator’s Oath” must be completed before a notary public on each petition – see page 22 for further details.
- ☐ Have all signatures certified by the applicable registrar of voters prior to filing with the Secretary of State – see page 22 for further details. Petitions must be submitted to the appropriate registrars for certification by 5 p.m. on May 26, 2026.
- ☐ Sign the “Candidate’s Consent” section of the *Non-Party Candidate’s Consent and Certification of Unenrollment* (a separate form from the petition) before a Notary Public – see pages 23 and 24 for further details.
- ☐ Have the Registrar of Voters in the municipality where you are registered to vote complete the “Certification of Candidate Unenrollment” which is printed as part of the *Non-Party Candidate’s Consent and Certification of Unenrollment* form – see page 24 for further details.
- ☐ Present the petitions and the *Non-party Candidate’s Consent and Certification of Unenrollment* to the Secretary of State for review on or before **5 p.m. on June 1, 2026.**

**NOTE:** The Secretary of State strongly encourages candidates to file in advance of the June 1, 2026 deadline to allow time for review of the petitions and correction of any deficiencies.

- ☐ Comply with Maine campaign finance law regarding registration, record keeping, and reporting requirements. (*Please refer to the Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices for information and reporting forms.*)

## Non-Party Candidate Petition



### State of Maine NON-PARTY NOMINATION PETITION November 3, 2026 General Election

DATE FILED  
With Secretary of State

Legal name of candidate as it will appear on the ballot: *(Title 21-A, §601(2)(B-1, H) for requirements))*

1  
(Last name and suffix, if any) \_\_\_\_\_ (First name) \_\_\_\_\_ (Middle name or initial) \_\_\_\_\_

Office: 2 \_\_\_\_\_ Electoral division: 3 \_\_\_\_\_ Term: N/A 4  
(Title of office – for example: Rep. to the Legislature) (Name of district – for example: District 1)

Voting residence of candidate: 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
(City, town, plantation, or postal address)

Mailing address of candidate: 6 \_\_\_\_\_

Political Designation: 7 \_\_\_\_\_  
(Designation may not exceed 3 words in length, and may not incorporate the candidate's name or the designation of a qualified party) Title 21-A, §334(1)

Petition must be submitted to municipal registrar for certification prior to filing with Secretary of State.

*Deadline for submitting petitions to municipal registrar for certification: 5 p.m., May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026*

*Deadline for filing petitions and Candidate's Consent with Secretary of State: 5 p.m., June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026*

### Instructions for Candidate Information Section

1. Write the candidate's legal name on the petition in one of the following forms:

- last name (and suffix, if any), first name, middle name
- last name (and suffix, if any), first name, middle initial
- last name (and suffix, if any), first initial, middle name
- last name (and suffix, if any), first name

The name should be completed as it will appear on the ballot and must be in one of the forms listed above, as required by 21-A MRS §601(2)(H). The candidate must also sign the Candidate's Consent in the same manner. A candidate's name listed on the ballot must be the candidate's legal name and must be the name approved by the Probate Court, if applicable, pursuant to 18-C MRS §1-701, or in the absence of a court order, the name consistently used by the candidate during the last 2 years in filings with governmental agencies and other legal transactions. See 21-A MRS §601(2)(B-1)

- Write the exact title of the office sought, (e.g., Representative to Congress, State Senator, Representative to the Legislature, etc.)
- Write the electoral division to be represented, (e.g., District 1, Androscoggin County, etc.)



4. Write the term of office only when 2 U.S. Senators are to be nominated (not applicable in 2026).
5. Write the candidate's municipality of residence (City/Town/Plantation/Township). This is where the candidate is registered to vote.
6. Write the mailing address of the candidate. A P.O. Box is acceptable.
7. State the candidate's political designation which may not exceed 3 words in length and may not incorporate the candidate's name; the designation or an abbreviation of the designation of a party that is qualified to nominate candidates by primary election; or comprise language that is obscene, contemptuous, profane or prejudicial, promotes abusive or unlawful activity or violates any other provision of Maine law with respect to names. A candidate who intends to form a new party about that person's candidacy must use the proposed party's designation. See 21-A MRS §354(1)

#### Instructions for Collection of Signatures

For registrar use only	Signature of voter (Not printed name)	Printed name of voter (Not Signature)	Date signed	Street address (Not P.O. Box)	Municipality (Where registered)
1.					
2.					
3.					

1. The petition may be signed only by voters who reside in the electoral district in which the nomination is sought. The voter must sign their name personally, except a voter who is physically unable to sign the petition and who is registered to vote as provided in 21-A MRS §153-A(3) may direct another Maine registered voter to sign the petition in their presence. The individual assisting the voter must sign the voter's name on one line and then sign the individual's own name on another line and attest that the individual is signing on the voter's behalf. The assistant must complete the rest of the information on both lines for the voter and the assistant.
2. The printed name of the voter, the date signed, the street address, and the municipality may be completed by either the voter or the circulator. Ditto marks are permitted only for street address and municipality of registration.
3. **Signatures may not be collected prior to January 1, 2026.**

## Instructions for Circulator's Oath

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### **Circulator's Oath**

I hereby make oath that I am the circulator of this petition; that I personally witnessed all of the signatures to this petition; and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, each signature is that of the person whose name it purports to be, and is a resident of the electoral division named in the petition. If any voter was unable to sign due to a physical disability, I hereby verify that the voter authorized another voter to sign at the voter's direction and in the voter's presence.

Signature of circulator \_\_\_\_\_ Printed name of circulator \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of notary \_\_\_\_\_ Printed name of notary \_\_\_\_\_

Subscribed to and sworn before me on this date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date my notary commission expires: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date must be completed by notary)

---

After the circulator has gathered all the signatures on a particular petition form, the circulator must take an oath before a notary public (or other official authorized to administer oaths) affirming:

- The circulator **personally witnessed** all of the signatures to the petition;
- Each signature is that of the person whose name it purports to be;
- Each signer is a registered voter of the electoral district named on the petition; and
- If a voter was unable to sign due to a physical disability, the voter authorized another voter to sign at the voter's direction and in their presence.

The circulator must take the oath for each petition circulated. **Once the circulator has taken the oath before a notary, no signatures may be added to that petition form.**

## Instructions for Registrar's Certification

---

### **Registrar's Certification**

Municipality \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL VALID \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL INVALID \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that the names of all the petitioners listed as valid appear on the voting list as registered voters in this municipality, in the electoral division named in the petition.

DATE & TIME PETITION RECEIVED:

Signature of registrar: \_\_\_\_\_

Date petition certified: \_\_\_\_\_

---

The registrar of voters or municipal clerk must certify that each person whose signature appears on the petition is registered to vote in that municipality and in the electoral district named on the petition. The registrar must not certify the names of voters from other municipalities.

## Non-Party Candidate's Consent and Certification of Unenrollment

**Non-Party Candidate's Consent and Certification of Unenrollment  
for Representative to the Legislature**

Legal name of candidate as it will appear on the ballot\*:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Last name and suffix, if any)                      (First name)                      (Middle name or initial)

Phonetic pronunciation of name for accessible audio ballot: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Ex: Colin Boucher - "KO-Lin BOW-cher" or "Kollin Bushy")

Voting residence address of candidate: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street address - not P.O. Box)                      (City, town, plantation or township; zip code)

Political Designation: \_\_\_\_\_  
(To be expressed in not more than 3 words in length and may not incorporate the candidate's name or the designation of a qualified party)

*\*See Title 21-A, §601(2)(B-1, H) for requirements for listing candidate names on the ballot.*

**Qualifications of Representative to the Legislature (Maine Constitution, Article IV, Part First, Section 4)**

At the time of nomination for placement on the general election ballot, the person shall:

- Be a resident in the district which the person seeks to represent.

At the commencement of the period for which that person is elected, the person shall:

- Have been a citizen of the United States for at least 5 years;
- Be at least 21 years of age;
- Have been a resident of this State at least 1 year; and
- Have been a resident in the district which the person seeks to represent for the 3-month period immediately preceding the election.

-----

**Candidate's Consent**

I hereby declare my consent to accept the nomination of the general election. I further declare that my residence is in the municipality listed above; that I have not been enrolled in a qualified party after March 1, 2026; that I meet the qualifications to hold this office; and that this declaration is true.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of candidate)

Subscribed to and sworn before me on this date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)                      (Signature of notary public)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Printed name of notary public)

-----

**Certification of Candidate's Unenrollment**  
(To be completed by the registrar in the candidate's municipality of residence.)

I hereby certify that, \_\_\_\_\_, was not  
(Name of candidate as it appears on municipality's voting list)

enrolled in a qualified party after March 1, 2026.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of registrar/municipal clerk)                      (Date)                      (Name of city, town, plantation or township)

-----

Filing deadline for "Non-Party Candidate's Consent and Certification of Unenrollment" and "Non-Party Nomination Petitions" to be received by the Secretary of State is **5 p.m., Monday, June 1, 2026.**

**NOTE:** This is a sample form only. You must obtain the correct consent and unenrollment form from the Division of Elections specific to the office you are seeking.

### Instructions for Non-Party Candidate's Consent and Certification of Unenrollment

**Candidate's Consent:** The candidate's consent is a separate document from the petition. The consent forms are customized with the qualifications of each office. Candidates must ensure they meet the qualifications for the office and the consent form submitted is the correct one for the office sought.

The full residence address is required on the consent form. Upon written request by the candidate to the Secretary of State, the Secretary of State may deem the candidate's street name and number confidential provided they are not material to the candidate's qualifications to serve (i.e., the candidate's municipality of residence is wholly within the relevant electoral district).

Candidates must complete the phonetic pronunciation section following the candidate's name section, ensuring the candidate's name will be pronounced correctly on the accessible audio ballot. Example: If your name is Colin Boucher, write your name phonetically "KO-lin BOW-cher" or "Kollin Bushy" as you would like it to be pronounced on the audio ballot.

The candidate must sign the candidate's consent form before a notary public (or other official authorized to administer oaths), which includes: a statement the candidate will accept the nomination of the general election; a declaration of the candidate's municipality of residence and the candidate's status of unenrollment at the time of certification (and after March 1, 2026); and a statement the candidate meets the qualifications of the office sought. The signature of the candidate on the consent form must appear in the same manner as the name of the candidate on the petition form(s).

**Certification of Candidate's Unenrollment:** The certification of unenrollment is included on the candidate's consent form. The registrar of voters or municipal clerk in the candidate's municipality of residence must certify the candidate was not enrolled in a party as of the date the petition is certified (and no later than March 1, 2026).

### ***Restriction on Candidate Withdrawal***

A candidate for an office on the general election ballot may withdraw by submitting a signed written notice to the Secretary of State. The deadline for withdrawal, in order to have the candidate's name removed from the November 3, 2026 General Election ballot is 70 days before the general election (**by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, August 25, 2026**).

If a general election candidate submits a withdrawal notice to the Secretary of State less than 70 days before the general election, their name will not be removed from the ballot. However, the Secretary of State will instruct the appropriate local election officials to distribute notices with absentee ballots requested after that date and to post a notice at each voting place informing voters that the candidate has withdrawn and votes for them will not be counted. Notice of the late withdrawal will also be posted on the Secretary of State's public website.

#### **Legal References**

Qualification of Candidate - Nomination by Petition	21-A MRS § 353
Nomination by Petition (Non-party) Requirements	21-A MRS § 354
Consent of Petition (Non-party) Candidate	21-A MRS § 355
Withdrawal of Candidates - General Election	21-A MRS § 374-A
Requirements for Candidate's Name on Ballot	21-A MRS § 601(2)

# CHAPTER THREE

## WRITE-IN CANDIDATES

### Who is a write-in candidate?

A “write-in candidate” is a person:

- Whose name is not printed on the ballot;
- Who otherwise fulfills the qualifications for the office designated;
- Who receives one or more valid write-in votes for an office listed on a primary, general, or special election ballot;
- Who has filed a “Declaration of Write-In Candidacy” no later than **70 days prior** to the election in question:
  - By 5 p.m. on **Tuesday, March 31, 2026** for the June 9, 2026 Primary Election; or
  - By 5 p.m. on **Tuesday, August 25, 2026** for the November 3, 2026 General Election.

Declaration forms are available from the Secretary of State, Division of Elections and on the Secretary of State’s website: <https://www.maine.gov/sos/elections-voting/becoming-a-candidate>. **NOTE:** Declaration forms for the general election are not available until after the primary election.

### Enrollment Qualifications of a Primary Write-in Candidate

A write-in candidate for the primary election must:

1. Be enrolled on or before March 16, 2026 in the party in which the candidate is seeking a write-in nomination; and
2. Meet the same qualifications as a candidate filing a petition for nomination by primary election under 21-A MRS §144(3).

### Party Name or Designation of a Write-In Candidate

A write-in candidate for the primary election must indicate which party’s nomination the candidate is seeking by checking the appropriate box on the “Declaration of Write-in Candidacy”.

A write-in candidate for the **general** election may indicate a party or political designation by writing that designation in the appropriate space on the “Declaration of Write-in Candidacy.” The candidate may indicate the name of a qualified party or choose a political designation that meets the following requirements:

- May not exceed three words in length;

- May not incorporate the candidate's name, or the designation or an abbreviation of the designation of a party that is qualified to nominate candidates by primary election; and
- May not consist of or comprise language that is obscene, contemptuous, profane or prejudicial, promotes abusive or unlawful activity or violates any provision of Maine law with respect to names.

**NOTE:** A candidate who intends to form a new party based on that person's candidacy must use the political designation for the proposed party.

## Minimum Number of Write-in Votes Needed in Primary Election

A write-in candidate in the primary election must receive a minimum number of votes for nomination. The minimum number of votes needed to win the nomination is twice the minimum number of signatures required on a primary petition for that office. If more than one candidate receives the minimum number of votes for a ranked-choice contest, the person who receives the most votes in the final round of counting is nominated. In all other contests the candidate who receives the greatest number of votes is nominated.

Office	Primary election write-in: minimum valid votes needed for nomination
U.S. Senator	4,000
U.S. Representative to Congress	2,000
Governor	4,000
State Senator	200
Representative to the Legislature	50
County Commissioner	100
Other County Officers	300

## Minimum Number of Write-in Votes Needed in General Election

In the general election, a candidate needs to receive at least one vote. In a ranked-choice contest, the person who receives the most votes in the final round of counting is elected. In all other contests the candidate who receives the greatest number of votes is elected.

## Casting a Write-in Vote

A voter must mark the write-in oval as instructed on the ballot **and** write the name of the candidate in the blank space provided at the end of the list of candidates for that office. Stickers are not allowed to cast a write-in vote for **any** ballot.

Write-in Candidate Legal References	
Definition of Write-in Candidate	21-A MRS § 1(51)
Casting a Write-in Vote - Primary Election	21-A MRS § 691(2)
Casting a Write-in Vote - General Election	21-A MRS § 692(2)
Determination of Write-in Candidate	21-A MRS § 722-A
Write-in Votes Required - Primary Election	21-A MRS § 723(1)(A)

# CHAPTER FOUR

## RESTRICTED ACTIVITY

### Restricted Activity at the Voting Place

**Within the guardrail enclosure**, only the clerk, election officials, people providing assistance to voters who requested it, and not more than 2 voters in excess of the number of voting booths, are allowed. Party workers and others may remain in the voting place outside the guardrail enclosure provided they do not attempt to influence voters or interfere with their free passage.

On Election Day on public property within 250 feet of the entrance to the voting place as well as within the voting place itself, a person may not:

- **Interfere with the voters' free passage;**
- **\*AMENDED\*** Influence or attempt to influence another person's decision regarding a **candidate for an office that is on the ballot for the election that day, whether or not the candidate's name is on the ballot** or a **question that is on the ballot for the election that day;**
- **Use cellular phones, voice pagers or similar devices to make audible communication within the voting place** that influences or attempts to influence a voter's decision regarding a candidate or ballot issue;
- **\*AMENDED\*** Display advertising material, operate an advertising medium, or distribute campaign literature, posters, palm cards, buttons, badges, stickers, or **apparel** containing a candidate's name or otherwise intending to influence the opinion of any voter;
  - **Campaign buttons** may be worn only by persons who are present in the voting place solely for the purpose of voting. The longest dimension of the button may not exceed 3 inches. Everyone else is prohibited from wearing campaign buttons of any size. **Badges or stickers** containing a candidate's name or promoting a question on the ballot are prohibited.
- **\*NEW\*** **Distribute or collect voter registration applications** inside or on public property within 250 feet of the entrance (authorized election officials excepted).

The **voting place** is the building in which ballots are cast at an election.

The **guardrail enclosure** is the area within 6 feet of the voting booths and the ballot box.

The **warden** is the presiding officer at the voting place and is responsible for the enforcement of the law governing voting and counting procedures. The jurisdiction of the warden includes the voting place and the area within 250 feet of the entrance to the voting place.

The **municipal clerk** is the supervisor of elections and is responsible for advising the warden on election laws and procedures.

See 21-A MRS §1(49)

## Additional Candidate Restrictions

On Election Day on public property within 250 feet of the entrance to the voting place as well as within the voting place itself, **a candidate or no more than one designated representative** may not:

- **State the name of the office sought or ask a person to vote for them;**
  - Candidates are permitted within the voting place and may state their name and communicate orally with voters, as long as they do not attempt to influence their vote;
- **Wear any button, name tag, apparel or label or have or use any item or sign** displaying the candidate's name or the name of the office the candidate is seeking;
- **\*NEW\* Collect or solicit voter signatures on a petition** in support of the candidate's candidacy for an office the candidate is seeking in that election year;
- **\*NEW\* Collect or solicit contributions** in support of the candidate's candidacy for an office they are seeking in that election year;
- **\*NEW\* Collect or solicit qualifying contributions under the Maine Clean Election Act** in support of the candidate's candidacy for an office they are seeking in that election year.

### Legal References

Positions at the Voting Place	21-A MRS § 681
Political Influence	21-A MRS § 682(2)
Definition of Political Advertising	21-A MRS § 682(3)
Political Activities Prohibited by Candidates	21-A MRS § 682(7)
Regulated Activities at the Voting Place	21-A MRS § 683



# CHAPTER FIVE

## PLACEMENT OF POLITICAL SIGNS

### Letter from Maine DOT



Janet T. Mills  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
16 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0016

Dale F. Doughty  
ACTING COMMISSIONER

To Whom It May Concern:

As we approach another campaign season, the Maine Department of Transportation would like to take this opportunity to offer some information regarding the placement of temporary signs in the right-of-way on state and state aid highways.

Maine's Temporary Sign Law allows temporary signs, which include campaign signs, to be placed in the right-of-way for up to 6 weeks from January 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup> and another 6 weeks between July 1<sup>st</sup> and December 31<sup>st</sup>. The law further states that individual signs bearing substantially the same message must be placed at least 30 feet from one another and requires that each sign be labeled with the owner's name, address and the date on which the sign was erected. This will help MaineDOT discern whether a sign is in compliance and also allows the Department to contact an entity if a sign needs to be removed for any reason.

There are areas within the state's roadway system that are off-limits to temporary signs. These areas include the Maine interstate system, the Maine Turnpike Authority system, and Route 1 between Bath and Brunswick including all connecting interchanges and ramps. Along with the interstate system, some sections of state highways have been designated as "control of access" (C.O.A) roadways where ingress and egress to and from the highway is prohibited/limited. **No temporary signs of any kind can be placed along these control of access areas.** These areas have been officially designated with signage indicating the beginning and ending of a C.O.A. A sample of these signs has been provided below for your reference:



Note: The interstate, including the Maine Turnpike and all its ramps and the portion of Route 1 between Bath and Brunswick are not signed. The signage denoted here is for those other roadways that have C.O.A.

Temporary signs are also prohibited on traffic control devices (stop signs, yield signs, warning signs, guide signs, regulatory signs, etc.), on all utility poles and trees, on islands within a rotary/roundabout, and in medians/islands in the center of the road that are fewer than six feet wide.

Here are some questions that campaign personnel may ask regarding the placement of political signs:

**How do I recognize a "control of access" area?**

- *Aside from the interstate system, MaineDOT officials have marked C.O.A areas across the state. These areas will have signs indicating the beginning and ending of a C.O.A.*

**What will happen to my sign if it has been placed within a C.O.A. section?**

- *MaineDOT personnel have been advised to remove temporary signs from within the C.O.A. areas. Maintenance crews have also been instructed to safely store the signs until the owner of the sign can be contacted or for 60 days, whichever comes first.*

**Does MaineDOT enforce these sign placement restrictions statewide?**

- *MaineDOT is committed to providing the equitable enforcement of these sign restrictions upon notification of a violation.*
- *Per a recent statute change, temporary signs within urban compact areas may be enforced by the municipality they are within.*

**What do I need to know about placing my sign along the roadway?**

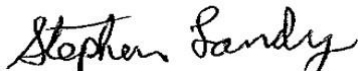
- *The first thing to consider in placement is the safety of the traveling public. Please do not install your signs where they will limit the sight line of anyone trying to pull out of a side road or driveway. Signs that block a driver's sight line will be removed and held at the closest MaineDOT maintenance lot to be picked up by the owner.*

In summary, when placing political signs, the important areas to avoid are the interstate system with the connecting interchanges, including the MTA system, and control of access areas across the state. Also, individual signs bearing the same message can be no closer than 30 feet from one another and must contain appropriate contact information and the date on which the sign was placed in the ROW. Candidates/referendums/special interest signage may want to work with sign making companies to have the contact information printed on their signs. MaineDOT will continue to provide the necessary information to help Maine's candidates.

For more information regarding the appropriate placement of political signs, please contact the department's legislative liaison, Meghan Russo, at [meghan.russo@maine.gov](mailto:meghan.russo@maine.gov).

MaineDOT appreciates your cooperation in this effort.

Sincerely,



Stephen Landry, P.E.  
State Traffic Engineer  
MaineDOT

# CHAPTER SIX

## VOTER REGISTRATION AND ABSENTEE VOTING

### Voter Registration

In order to be eligible to register to vote, a person must be:

- A United States citizen;
- At least 16 years of age; and
- A resident of the municipality where registering to vote.

**NOTE:** The registrar shall conditionally accept the registration and enrollment of any person who is 16 or 17 years of age and who is otherwise qualified to be a voter. The conditional registration automatically becomes effective on the person's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and the registrant is eligible to vote.

A person must be at least 18 years of age to vote, except 17 years olds who will be 18 years old by the general election may register and, if enrolled in a qualified party, participate in party caucuses and vote for candidates in the primary election.

### ***Voter Registration for Persons with Disabilities***

Title 21-A MRS §153-A provides a process for people with disabilities who are unable to sign their names to register to vote and sign candidate petitions and Maine Clean Election Act forms. The law defines a signature to include a signature stamp, a signature written by another voter under the alternative registration procedure, and a mark. Any voter who wishes to register to vote under this process must file an *Alternative Registration Signature Statement* with the registrar of voters in the municipality where the person resides. The assistant who completes and signs the *Alternative Registration Signature Statement* and the voter registration application for the voter must sign the forms at the direction of the applicant and in the presence of a corroborating witness.

### ***Voter Registration Deadline***

Maine has same day voter registration allowing a person to register to vote and cast a ballot on the same day, including on Election Day. However, all applications for voter registration and party enrollment **delivered by mail or by a third person** (a person other than the voter) must be received by the registrar no later than the close of business 21 days before Election Day. Any applicant who is a new Maine registered voter and mails the application to the municipal registrar of voters must include a copy of the applicant's Maine driver license or a utility bill or government document showing the applicant's name and

residence address or provide the Maine driver license/state ID number or, if they do not have those forms of ID, the last 4 digits of the social security number to be matched and verified by the registrar.

**The deadline to register using online voter registration is 5 p.m. on the 21<sup>st</sup> day before Election Day.** A person who registers during the “closed period,” which begins at the close of business on the 21<sup>st</sup> day before Election Day through and including Election Day, must register in person and show proof of identity and residency, and cast a challenged ballot. The following section on AVR at BMV branches is the only exception to this requirement.

### ***Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) submitted at Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV)***

The deadline for receipt of voter registration applications transmitted by BMV is midnight on the 7<sup>th</sup> day before an election. An application for voter registration by a person who otherwise qualifies as an **absentee voter** may be accepted by the clerk at any time. The receipt of a completed absentee ballot application by the clerk establishes a presumption of qualification, sufficient for the clerk to issue an absentee ballot to the voter, along with a voter registration application. The voter must complete and return the voter registration application to the registrar, separate from the absentee ballot, **by 8 p.m. on Election Day, for the absentee ballot to be counted.**

## **Absentee Voting**

Any registered voter may cast an absentee ballot instead of voting in person at the voting place on Election Day. The voter does not need to have a specific reason or be unable to vote at the polls on Election Day to ask for and receive an absentee ballot.

The **deadline to request** an absentee ballot is the close of business on the 3<sup>rd</sup> business day before Election Day (i.e., close of business on Thursday for an election held the following Tuesday). There are five instances under which a voter may request an absentee ballot after the deadline. The voter must complete and sign a special circumstances application stating that the voter meets one of the following qualifications:

- 1) Unexpected absence from the municipality during the entire time the polls are open on Election Day;
- 2) Physical or mental disability;
- 3) Inability to travel to the polls if the voter is a resident of an island ward or precinct;
- 4) Incapacity or illness that has resulted in the voter being unable to leave home or a treatment facility; or
- 5) Being a caregiver who is unable to attend the polls due to the incapacity or illness of another person.

During the 45 days preceding an election (or as soon as absentee ballots are provided to the municipality by the State) and during the time when the clerk's office is open and may be conducting absentee voting, the display or distribution of any **advertising material** intended to influence a voter's choice regarding a candidate or ballot issue for that election is prohibited within the clerk's office and on public property within 250 feet of the entrance to the clerk's office or on the property on which the clerk's office stands.

A candidate or members of the candidate's immediate family may not handle or deliver absentee ballots (except their own ballots). Immediate family member means a person's:

- spouse or domestic partner,
- parent (including step-parent),
- grandparent (including step-grandparent),
- child (including step-child),
- grandchild (including step-grandchild),
- sibling (including half- and step-siblings),
- parent-in-law,
- sibling-in-law,
- child-in-law,
- guardian or former guardian,
- the half-sibling of a person's spouse, or
- the spouse of a person's half-sibling.

Absentee ballots delivered by a third person (someone other than the voter or an immediate family member of the voter) must be properly witnessed. A third person may not have more than **five** absentee ballots from a single municipality in their possession at any one time.

An **absentee voter** may not be influenced or observed in the marking of their ballot by any other person, except a voter may request assistance from an aide in reading or marking their ballot because of physical disability, illiteracy, or religious faith. In this event, another individual must act as a witness but may not observe how the ballot is marked by the absentee voter or aide.

### ***Accessible Absentee Ballot***

The Secretary of State developed an online accessible absentee ballot request service in 2020 in coordination and input from advocates at Disability Rights Maine. It is intended for voters with print disabilities, which may include vision impairment or blindness, physical dexterity limitations, learning disabilities or cognitive impairment, all of which prevent the individual from independently marking a paper

ballot. An accessible absentee ballot option is available on the Secretary of State's Absentee Ballot Request (ABR) Service prior to each election.

#### **Legal References**

Voter Eligibility	21-A MRS §§ 111-115
Voter Registration and Enrollment Requirements	21-A MRS §§ 121-145
Registration and Primary Voting by 16- and 17-Year Olds	21-A MRS § 155
Alternative Registration Procedure for Voters with Disabilities	21-A MRS § 153-A
Absentee Voting	21-A MRS §§ 751-783
Special Circumstances (After Deadline) Absentee Request	21-A MRS § 753-B(2)(D)