



How to Run for County Office

Candidate Information Guide

2024



Garfield County Clerk and Recorder's Office
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Notice

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

Definition of a Candidate

COLORADO CONSTITUTION ARTICLE XXVIII (Amendment 27)

Section 2 (2) "'Candidate" means any person who seeks nomination or election to any state or local public office that is to be voted on in this state at any primary election, General Election, school district election, special district election, or municipal election. "Candidate" also includes a judge or justice of any court of record who seeks to be retained in office pursuant to the provisions of section 25 of article VI. A person is a candidate for election if the person has publicly announced an intention to seek election to public office or retention of a judicial office and thereafter has received a contribution or made an expenditure in support of the candidacy. A person remains a candidate for purposes of this Article so long as the candidate maintains a registered candidate committee. A person who maintains a candidate committee after an election cycle, but who has not publicly announced an intention to seek election to public office in the next or any subsequent election cycle, is a candidate for purposes of this article."

Steps for Candidacy

Following are recommended **steps to become a candidate for elected office in Garfield County Government**, including Assessor, Clerk and Recorder, Commissioner, Coroner, Sheriff, Surveyor and Treasurer.

STEP 1: Review the candidate requirements and office responsibilities and duties of county elected offices in the Colorado Constitution and Revised Statutes and ensure you meet the qualifications. These may be found online at www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/Colorado/. You will be required to swear and affirm by oath that you meet the qualifications for county elected office in a Candidate Affidavit (Step 7).

STEP 2: Review your voter registration at www.govotecolorado.gov to ensure that you are registered to vote and qualified to run for office, including your voter registration date, party affiliation and affiliation date.

STEP 3: 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 with the Secretary of State at tracer.sos.colorado.gov before receiving or spending any money.

STEP 4: Familiarize yourself with Colorado Campaign Finance rules and laws, as well as the Secretary of State TRACER system for all campaign finance disclosure reports and committee registration using the following resources:

- Colorado Campaign and Political Finance Manual published by the Colorado Secretary of State, available online at tracer.sos.colorado.gov.
- Colorado Constitution Article XXVIII (Campaign and Political Finance) and XIV (Counties)
- Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) Title I, Article 45 (Fair Campaign Practices Act) and Article 4 (Elections- Access to Ballot by Candidates)
- Current year Election Calendar and campaign finance filing calendars at www.coloradosos.gov. Be prepared to register a candidate committee and submit your campaign finance disclosure reports within the timeframes allotted by Colorado law. Failure to file on-time can result in monetary penalties.

STEP 5: Get your name on the ballot in one of three ways (see pages 6-9 for details):

- 1) Certificate of Designation by Assembly
- 2) Certificate of Designation by Petition
- 3) Certificate of Designation by Write-In

STEP 6: If you are running for County Coroner or Sheriff, you must have your fingerprints taken by a qualified law enforcement agency and submit a receipt evidencing the fingerprinting at the time of filing your written acceptance or candidate affidavit. If you are not running for County Coroner or Sheriff, disregard this step.

STEP 7: Complete a Candidate Affidavit Form within 10 days of becoming a candidate, and file electronically with the Colorado Secretary of State Office via TRACER.

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

Basic Qualifications for County Offices

The table below provides a general overview of **candidate qualifications for County elected offices** and should be used for reference only. Please review the Colorado Constitution and Colorado Revised Statutes for current applicable laws. Please note that no person is eligible to be a candidate for more than one office at a time, except for special district boards.

Office	Minimum Age	Residency Requirements	Citizenship	Length of Term	Educational Requirements	Other Requirements
County Assessor Colorado Revised Statutes Title 30, Article 10, Part 8	18 years	Registered elector and resident of the county for at least one year prior to election.	U.S. Citizen	4 years	N/A	N/A
County Clerk and Recorder Colorado Revised Statutes Title 30, Article 10, Part 4	18 years	Registered elector and resident of the county for at least one year prior to election.	U.S. Citizen	4 years	N/A	N/A
County Commissioner Colorado Revised Statutes Title 1, Article 4, Part 205 Colorado Revised Statutes Title 30, Article 10, Part 3	18 years	Registered elector and resident of the county and the Commissioner district for which they are running for at least 1 year prior to the election	U.S. Citizen	4 years	N/A	N/A
County Coroner Colorado Revised Statutes Title 30, Article 10, Part 6	18 years	Registered elector and resident of the county for at least one year prior to election.	U.S. Citizen	4 years	High School Diploma or its equivalent or a college degree	Complete set of fingerprints taken by a qualified law enforcement agency with receipt of fingerprinting submitted at the time of filing his or her written acceptance or candidate affidavit

Office	Age	Residency Requirements	Citizenship	Length of Term	Educational Requirements	Other Requirements
County Sheriff Colorado Revised Statutes Title 30, Article 10, Part 5	18 years	Registered elector and resident of the county for at least one year prior to election.	U.S. Citizen	4 years	High School Diploma or its equivalent or a college degree	Complete set of fingerprints taken by a qualified law enforcement agency with receipt of fingerprinting submitted at the time of filing his or her written acceptance or candidate affidavit A person who has been convicted of or pleaded guilty or entered a plea of nolo contendere to any felony charge under federal or state law is unqualified for the office of sheriff unless pardoned.
County Surveyor Colorado Revised Statutes Title 30 Article 10, Part 9	18 years	Registered elector and resident of the county for at least one year prior to election.	U.S. Citizen	4 years	N/A	Colorado licensed and registered land surveyor (see Section 12-120-301, (C.R.S.))
County Treasurer Colorado Revised Statutes Title 30, Article 10, Part 7	18 years	Registered elector and resident of the county for at least one year prior to election.	U.S. Citizen	4 years	N/A	N/A

Becoming a Candidate

There are three ways to get your name on the ballot, depending upon your party affiliation. These options include assembly nomination, petition, or write-in process. For detailed information, please see Colorado Revised Statutes Title 1, Article 4 on Access to the Ballot by Candidates at www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/Colorado/.

Certificate of Designation by Party Assembly

Major and minor party candidates may seek nomination to office at their political party's assembly, which is held no later than 25 days after the Precinct Caucus. **Candidates who want to be a part of this process should contact their political party for assembly protocol, date and rules.** See page 12 for party contact information.

At the assembly, the Party delegates vote on the candidates. The candidate must be registered as affiliated with that party no later than the first business day of January of the election year unless party rules state otherwise.

Major party candidates nominated by assembly are placed on the Primary Election ballot.

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 are placed on the Primary Election ballot.

The Certificate of Designation by Assembly must be filed by the political party with the designated election official no later than four (4) days after the adjournment of the assembly. [1-4-604(3) C.R.S.] Certificates of Designation may be transmitted by fax; however, the original certificate must also be filed and postmarked no later than ten days after the adjournment of the assembly.

Certificate of Designation by Petition

The petition process involves circulating a written petition to other registered electors who share your party affiliation and obtaining their signature in support of your candidacy.

Unaffiliated candidates must get on the ballot through the petition process. Unaffiliated candidates nominated by petition are placed directly on the General Election ballot; there is no primary election for unaffiliated candidates. An unaffiliated candidate must be registered as unaffiliated no later than the first business day of the election year to petition onto the ballot.

Affiliated candidates (major or minor party) may use the petition option when they do not believe they have their party's support to get on the Primary or General Election ballot through their party's assembly process, or do not wish to go through the assembly process. However, a candidate may *not* petition onto the ballot if they have attempted and failed to receive at least 10 percent of the votes for nomination for the same office at their party's assembly. A candidate must be affiliated with the political party no later than the first business day of the election year to petition onto the ballot.

The County Clerk must approve all petition formats for county offices prior to circulation. Each petition may contain only one candidate's name. The Clerk's Office also must verify signatures and notify the candidate of sufficiency or insufficiency. Please see Title 1, Article 4, Part 8 of Colorado Revised Statutes on Nomination of Candidates by Petition for requirements. Call our Elections Division at 970-384-3700 Ext. 1823 for more information about nomination by petition to be a candidate for county offices.

How many signatures are required for a major party candidate seeking to be placed on the primary election ballot by petition?

Major party candidates for Garfield County need petition signatures equal to the lesser of one thousand signers or signers equal in number to ten percent of the votes cast in the prior primary election for the office or, if no primary was held, 10% of the votes cast in the prior general election for the office. See Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) § 1-4-801(2)(a).

The number of signatures required for a 2024 petition is based on the cast vote totals from the 2020 Primary Election or 2020 General Election.

An unaffiliated voter is not eligible to sign a petition for a candidate of a major political party.

of Signatures required for Major Party Candidate Petitions for the 2024 Election cycle.

County Office	Republican	Democratic
Commissioner District 2	644	590
Commissioner District 3	639	591

of Signatures required for Minor Party and Unaffiliated Candidate Petitions for the 2024 Election cycle.

Minor Party and Unaffiliated Candidates need the lesser of one thousand signatures or two percent of the votes cast for all candidates for that office in the most recent general election CRS 1-4-802 (c) (VII).

County Office	Signatures Needed
Commissioner District 2	605
Commissioner District 3	596

	Major Party	Minor Party	Unaffiliated
Requirements for Petition Circulators:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Citizen of the US ▪ Must be at least 18 years old ▪ Circulators must wear an identification badge that states either Volunteer Circulator or Paid Circulator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Citizen of the US ▪ Must be at least 18 years old ▪ Circulators must wear an identification badge that states either Volunteer Circulator or Paid Circulator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ U.S. citizen ▪ Must be at least 18 years old ▪ Circulators must wear an identification badge that states either Volunteer Circulator or Paid Circulator
	Major Party	Minor Party	Unaffiliated
Petition Signers and Signatures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Only eligible electors from the political subdivision may sign the petition ▪ Signers must be affiliated with the political party named in the petition for at least 22 days prior to signing. ▪ For the number of signatures needed, see C.R.S. 1-4-802 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Only eligible electors from the political subdivision may sign the petition ▪ There are no party requirements as long as they have not signed another petition for the same office ▪ For the number of signatures needed, see C.R.S. 1-4- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Only eligible electors in the district or political subdivision ▪ Signers may be affiliated with a party or unaffiliated as long as they have not signed another petition for the same office ▪ For the number of signatures needed, see C.R.S. 1-4-802 ▪ Unaffiliated petitions may be amended once, no later than 3.p.m., 85 days before the General Election

16-January (Tuesday)	First day to circulate major party candidate petitions	1-4-801(5)
5-February (Monday)	First day to circulate minor party candidate petitions	1-4-802(1)(d)(II)
19-March (Tuesday)	Last day to file major party candidate petitions	1-4-801(5)
2-April (Monday)	Last day to file minor party candidate petitions	1-4-802(1)(f)(II)
22-April (Monday)	Last Day for a major party assembly vacancy committee to fill a vacancy resulting from the failure of a party assembly to designate a candidate	1-4-1002(3)(c)(I)
19-April (Thursday)	Last day a write-in candidate may file an Affidavit of Intent for the June 25 th Primary by close of business	1-4-1102(1)
16-May (Thursday)	First day an unaffiliated candidate may circulate or obtain signatures on a petition for nominations for the Nov 5, 2024 General Election	1-4-802(1)(d)(I)
11-July (Thursday) 3pm	Last day to file an unaffiliated candidate nomination petition	1-4-802(1)(f)(I)
18-July (Thursday)	Last day for a write-in candidate to file an Affidavit of Intent for the 2024 General Election	1-4-1102(1)
1-August (Thursday)	Last day for the designated election official to provide a notice of sufficiency/insufficiency regarding unaffiliated candidate nomination petitions for the 2024 General Election	1-4-908(3)

Any person wanting to circulate a petition to gain access to the primary or general ballot must meet with the Garfield County Clerk prior to circulating any petition for format approval.

Certificate of Designation by Write-In

A write-in candidate is a candidate whose name does not appear on the ballot, but for whom voters may vote nonetheless by writing in the person's name. Any person who wishes to be a write-in candidate must file an affidavit of intent with the County Clerk and Recorder by the 67th day before a Primary Election or by the 110th day before any other election.

Withdrawal Process

If you wish to withdraw your candidacy, the correct procedure depends upon your status on the ballot.

- If you have already been designated or nominated to the ballot by party assembly or by petition and wish to withdraw your candidacy, you may submit a signed and notarized **Statement of Withdrawal Form** to the designated election official. If the form is not filed in time for your name to be taken off the ballot, the election will proceed, and any votes cast for you will be deemed invalid and will not be counted.
- If you are a candidate but have not yet been designated or nominated to the ballot and wish to withdraw your candidacy, you may submit a **signed letter of withdrawal** to the designated election official. The designated election official for County elected offices is the Garfield County Clerk and Recorder.

Frequently Asked Questions

Where do I file my candidate paperwork for County office?

The following forms will need to be filed at the Garfield County Elections Division.

- Certificate of Designation by Assembly (provided by the political party at the assembly)
- Candidate Acceptance of Nomination by Designation (provided by the political party at the assembly)
- Major Party, Minor Party or Unaffiliated Designation Petition Forms (provided by the county)
- Candidate Acceptance of Nomination by Petition (provided by the county)
- Affidavit of Intent for Write-In (provided by the county)

The following forms will need to be filed electronically with the Secretary of State at www.coloradosos.gov

- Candidate Affidavit
- Campaign Finance Forms
- Committee Registration

When do I file my petition and certificate of designation for County office?

Please refer to the current year Election Calendar on the Secretary of State's website for important dates relating to your candidacy. Visit www.coloradosos.gov, click on 'Elections & Voting,' then 'Election Information'.

When do I file my campaign finance paperwork?

Please refer to the filing calendar at www.coloradosos.gov. Click on 'Elections & Voting,' then Campaign Finance.

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

You may review your voter registration www.govotecolorado.gov. Click on 'Find my registration.' You may also call the Garfield County Elections Division at 970-384-3700 Ext. 1770 to verify your registration status, affiliation, and affiliation date.

Who do I contact with questions about running for county elected office?

Please contact the Garfield County Elections Division at 970-384-3700 Ext.1823 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. or by e-mail to jharmon@garfield-county.com.

How can I get a list of voters in the county/municipality/district for which I am a candidate?

You can request a list of all registered voters at elections@garfield-county.com.

How can I find out who the other candidates are?

You can visit the Secretary of State website at tracer.sos.colorado.gov, and then go to 'Search Database' and 'Candidate Search.' This option allows you to search by several different options.

Where can I find results on Election night?

Unofficial election results are posted beginning at 7 p.m. on Election night at www.garfield-county.com.

Political Parties

Garfield Democratic Party

PO Box 2637

Glenwood Springs, CO 81602

Chairperson: Debbie Bruell

Phone: 970-379-0214

Email: garfieldcountymocrats@gmail.com

Web: www.info@garcodems.org

Garfield Republican Party

PO Box 2593

Glenwood Springs, CO 81602

Chairperson: Gregg Rippy

Phone: 970-945-7758

Email: garfieldcountyrepublicans@gmail.com

Web: www.garfieldcountyrepublicans.com

Colorado Democratic Party

789 Sherman St., Suite 110

Denver, CO 80203

Chairperson: Morgan Carroll

Phone: 303-623-4762

Fax: 303-623-2443

Web: www.coloradodems.org

Colorado Republican Party

5950 S. Willow Drive, Suite 210

Greenwood Village, CO 80111

Chairperson: Kristi Burton Brown

Phone: 303-758-3333

Fax: 303-753-4611

Web: www.cologop.org

Unaffiliated Voters

Randy Fricke

Director & COO

Western Colorado Independent Voters

PH 970-984-0843

Email: fricke_randy@yahoo.com Put an underscore between fricke_randy