

Thurston County Local Voters' Pamphlet Administrative Rules for Candidates

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Purpose

These rules establish submission guidelines for candidates who appear on the ballot. Precinct Committee Officer (PCO) candidates do not appear in the local voters' pamphlet. Each candidate, except for candidates running for PCO will have the opportunity to submit a biography, statement, contact information and photo.

General Provisions Applicable to All Submissions Statements

- Microsoft Word will be used to verify word counts (See statement format for exceptions).
- No changes will be allowed after the deadline.

Biography

The biographical information is limited to 100 words or less.

Biographical information can be organized into the four subsection headings listed below. Subsection headings are not included in the statement word count.

Elected Experience

Other Experience

Education

Community Service

When a candidate doesn't submit information for a particular subsection heading, "No information submitted" will appear in that subsection area.

Statements

Each statement shall be limited to 200 words for local candidates. (The biography is not included in the statement word count.) State candidates will utilize the State Candidate Guide or the Online Voters' Pamphlet submission tools where word counts are specified in RCW 29A.32.121.

If a statement exceeds the word limit it will be shortened to the word limit by removing words from the end of the last paragraph. The Auditor's Office is not responsible for candidates submitting statements that are too long. Candidates should check their word count before submission.

The same statement will be used in the Primary and General Election Pamphlets.

Exception: If a declared write-in candidate for a primary election advances to the general election, they may submit a statement & photo for the general local voters' pamphlet. In that case, the other candidate advancing from the primary in that race would be allowed to revise their statement. This is the only time a candidate statement will change between elections. These statements are due the Tuesday following the primary election (WAC 434-381-120).

Statement Format

Up to four paragraphs may be used for local races. Candidates for state and federal offices must use the number of paragraphs specified in the State Candidate Guide. Italics may be used to emphasize specific words or sentences. Other formatting such as all caps, bolding, underlining, lists, and bullets are not allowed and will be printed as italics or separated with commas. Hyphenated words are allowed to a point. Words typed out and separated by a slash, using symbols or no spaces will count accordingly. Example: "ideas/thoughts" would be counted by Microsoft Word as 1 word; we will consider it 2 words. "#1GoalNewPrograms:" would be 4 words. Do not use alternate characters except where necessary or as part of a proper noun.

Photo rules:

- **Send us a head and shoulders portrait; everything else will be cropped out.**
- Must be submitted electronically
- Must be at least 1200x1500 pixels
- Current
- Plain, light colored background
- File size should be less than 5MB

Photos may not:

- Include scenery, flags, or other background settings.
- Show judicial robes, law enforcement, fire, or military uniforms.
- Show clothing or insignia suggesting that you hold a public office.
- Be an informal candid photo, cartoon, caricature of any other image that does not accurately portray the candidate.
- Be a group photo.

In general, a recent portrait of yourself taken with most modern cellphone cameras against a clean background will be acceptable.

Photos may be rejected that do not meet the criteria outlined above. The Auditor's Office has discretion to accept updated photos, crop or adjust photos.

Submitted photos are public record. The Auditor's Office will not be responsible if a candidate photo appears in publications other than the local voters' pamphlet.

If you have questions about your photo, contact us at pamphlet@co.thurston.wa.us

Candidate Contact Information

A candidate's campaign name, address, email address, website, and phone number as submitted on the declaration of candidacy may be printed in the local voters' pamphlet. If the candidate submits updated information as part of their statement they must provide instructions clearly stating they want to use the updated contact information in the local voters' pamphlet. Contact information is not part of the 200-word count for local candidate statements.

Be certain that mail, email, web addresses, and phone numbers are accurate, functional, and not confidential or private. We will use the information submitted to communicate with you, primarily via email.

Late changes to contact information are subject to the discretion of the Auditor. No changes may be made within three days of going to print.

Jurisdictions in more than one county

Candidates filing for office in a jurisdiction that spans multiple counties will follow the Administration Rules of the lead county. The lead county is the county with the largest number of registered voters.

How and When to Submit Statements, Photos and Contact Information:

Statements, photos, and campaign contact information **must** be submitted electronically using the State provided link after your candidate filing has been approved or emailing them to pamphlet@co.thurston.wa.us.

The contents of candidate statements, photo, and contact information are the sole responsibility of the authors. Candidates are responsible for ensuring their statements and photos are received in the Auditor's Office by the deadline.

Submissions for inclusion in the Primary and General Local Voters' Pamphlets are due 11 calendar days following the close of filing week at 4:30 p.m. No extensions will be granted.

In an election that takes place in an odd numbered year, General-Election-only candidates must submit their documents by 4:30 pm 14 days after the close of filing week. No extensions will be granted.

The Auditor's Office will confirm receipt of voter pamphlet materials by email

If a submission is not received by the deadline, the text "No photo submitted", "No information submitted", and/or "No statement submitted" will appear in the applicable voter pamphlet sections.

Review Proofs

A proof copy of the statement as it will appear in the local voters' pamphlet will be sent to each candidate for review. Only errors made by the Thurston County Auditor's Office may be corrected.

Disclaimer

Submissions do not represent the position of the Thurston County Auditor or Thurston County. Neither the Thurston County Auditor nor Thurston County is responsible for the validity or accuracy of submissions.

Submissions should be edited and prepared as carefully as one would edit and prepare a resume. Spelling, grammar and punctuation errors **will not** be corrected. Statement content will be printed exactly as received, if it complies with format and content rules.

Public Inspection of Statements

Statements submitted for publication in the local voters' pamphlet shall not be available for release to the public until all statements pertaining to the race have been received and approved for publication. Requests for public inspection of statements shall be made in the same manner as requests for public records.

Content Rejection and Appeal Process (RCW 29A.32.230)

Rejection

The Auditor's Office reserves the right to reject any submission to the local voters' pamphlet, if it does not meet submission requirements, or is deemed to be libelous or otherwise inappropriate.

Material submitted for publication in the local voters' pamphlet may be rejected if:

- It is obscene.
- It is libelous.
- Contains a commercial advertisement.
- Website directs to anything other than candidate information
- Contains matter prohibited by law from distribution through the mail.
- Contains matter not limited to the candidate himself or herself or to the political office for which the candidate is filing.
- Contains matter that is otherwise inappropriate or that does not comply with applicable law.
- Photo does not meet statutory or administrative criteria.
- Was received after the submittal deadline.

If a statement, photo or contact information is rejected by the Elections Division Manager, a written notice of rejection shall be sent to the candidate by email within 48 hours after receipt and shall explain specific grounds for rejection.

The candidate will have 24 hours from the time of notification to submit an adjusted statement, photo or contact information if their rejected material was submitted on time.

Appeal

Any candidate whose submission is rejected may appeal the Elections Division Manager's decision to the Thurston County Auditor. A written notice of appeal shall be submitted to the Auditor by email (TCAuditor@co.thurston.wa.us) not more than 48 hours after notice of rejection was sent and shall set forth the specific grounds for appeal. The Auditor shall issue a written decision granting or denying the appeal by email not more than 48 hours after receiving the notice of appeal. The decision of the Auditor to grant or deny an appeal shall be final.

If material is rejected, the local voters' pamphlet will be printed with the rejected material omitted and the appropriate space left blank.